

PRESIDENT'S ARTICLE (CONTINUED) BY BILL LAVALLEE

One often hears that there will be more pesticide residue on fruits and vegetables that are not organic. Of course all fruits and veggies should be washed by the consumer before use. Safety tests show that the amount of pesticide residue on either organic or non-organic produce is well below any toxic levels. Another confounding factor is the frequently heard claim that "chemicals" are making our food unsafe. One doesn't have to be a Chemistry or other Science major to realize that our world is made up of chemicals. We are exposed to chemicals every day because most chemicals occur naturally. It is estimated that over 99.9% of the chemicals that we ingest occur naturally. We even willingly apply a chemical [Sodium Chloride-salt!] to most of our foods. Our bodies also have inherent defenses against low doses of harmful chemicals wherever they come from.

Dietary supplements are a particularly difficult area to discuss. They are generally defined as products, taken by mouth, that contain vitamins, herbs, or other dietary ingredients or elements that are added to other eaten foods. It is obvious therefore, that almost anything can be labeled and sold as a supplement. Since they are neither "drugs", spices, preservatives, regular food or any other regulated product, they do not fall under the surveillance of the FDA. The government does not routinely check for the safety or effectiveness of supplements. The supplement industry has scores of lobbyists working to ensure that this does not change! If one eats a "balanced diet" (one that provides the essential nutrients) there is no reason to take supplements and there is a potential for harm since over consumption of certain minerals, even some vitamins, can cause bodily harm or adverse reactions. Since the ingredients in a supplement may be different from the labeled "contents" there is another worry to consider.

Another item that has received much attention regarding foodstuffs is Genetically Modified Organisms. (GMO's). These are products whose genetic makeup has been scientifically altered. This process has been employed for many years. The precursor to it goes back to "selective breeding" (as differentiated from Darwin's "natural selection") whereby many of our domestic animals arose over ten thousand years ago. In flowers and plants genetic engineering has been used to grow different colored flowers, to add disease or pest resistance to particular crops, to add vitamins to a produce, to extend the time before spoilage and to produce pharmaceuticals and biofuels. A main advantage of GM foods is the ability to grow much more food on the same acreage, because fewer crops are lost to disease or pests and crops can be planted closer together, increasing the yield. The nutrient value of the crop may also be increased; an important factor for developing country farming. Similarly, the costs of farming in these countries may be lowered because the expenses of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides may be prohibitive there. GM crops, especially soybeans, wheat, rice, and corn, have made feeding the increasing world population more achievable. (It is estimated that more than 840 million people in the world are still malnourished.) A GM rice, "golden rice", adds significant amounts of Vitamin A to that crop, helping to correct for the wide spread deficiency of that vitamin in developing countries. A similar GM solution, adding vitamin A, has been applied to South African corn and Cavendish bananas.

All scientific analyses have shown that GM foods are not unsafe and no riskier than conventional foods. There have been no reports in the entire world of ill effects from the consumption of GM foods. Despite this, there is a cadre of organizations that, for various reasons, want more regulation on GMO's, the first step of which is to require the labeling of all foods containing GMO's; potentially reducing their purchase by playing on unsubstantiated fears. Several European countries have caved in to such pressure and either require labelling or have banned these foods entirely. The cost of such labeling, in price as well as the attendant fear factor, is not insignificant.

Incidentally, the use of genetic modification has recently been applied to the male mosquito population in the Cayman Islands, resulting in a 80% reduction in these carriers of dengue fever, malaria and the Zika virus. Since over 1 million people die from malaria each year and about 75 million are affected by dengue fever (with 40 thousand deaths) the usefulness of genetic modifications seems indisputable.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER BY DOTTIE ALDER



Honor

At our April luncheon we honored the outstanding JORTC and what an outstanding group they are. They are sharp and showed great respect for Lt. Col. Allen West. He was our speaker and told us about his career.

Pray for our country and pray for the cadets. They are the future of our country.

PROGRAMS BY BEVERLY THOMPSON

LUNCHEON MEETING JUNE 28 PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH LIBRARY AND MUSEUM



The June luncheon will be held at the George W. Bush Library and Museum. The meeting will include a box lunch, a special presentation and viewing of the actual situation room used by President Bush, an overview of the Library from the Museum Director, Alan Lowe. The lunch and program will be followed by a guided tour of the museum's permanent and special exhibits. The permanent collection includes exhibits about how growing up in West Texas, family and faith influenced the principles used to guide his Presidency. You will learn about the hotly contested 2000 election and the domestic agenda set out in President Bush's first term. You will then face The Day of Fire – September 11, 2001 – and learn about how it turned the direction of the Bush administration and the country to a war time agenda. You will learn about lesser known initiatives of the Bush administration such as the freedom agenda, the President's

Emergency Relief Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), conservation efforts, and volunteerism. You will get to visit a full scale replica of the Bush oval office, learn about history of the oval office, and get your picture taken sitting at the Resolute Desk. You will get to "play President" by making decisions about critical issues in Decision Points Theater. All this and a lot more!



In the special exhibit, Path to the Presidency, you will learn about what it takes to run for president. Throw your hat into the ring, create a campaign slogan, establish a platform, campaign for office, and practice your acceptance speech – you get to do it all! See the results of every presidential election from George Washington to Barack Obama and view campaign artifacts both whimsical (Ronald and Nancy Reagan slippers) to serious (George Washington's letter declining to run for office in 1800). Relax in the 1960 living room and watch campaign ads (I Like Ike) and presidential debates (Kennedy versus Nixon and Bush versus Gore). Finally, cast your vote in one of the 4 election booths.

Parking is available in the museum parking lot. Cost is \$5 for the first hour and \$0.75 for each additional half hour. Additional parking is available on the SMU campus. Free parking is available at the Mockingbird DART station located about one mile from the museum. Free shuttle bus service between the Mockingbird DART station and the Bush Museum and Library. Shuttle busses run every 15 minutes.



The George Bush Presidential Library and Museum is a federal facility and weapons are not allowed in the building. All visitors entering the library and museum must pass through a security check with a metal detector. All bags will be x-rayed and possibly searched by security staff. Any weapons will be confiscated by security staff. This includes all guns, all knives, to include locking and non-locking blades, pocket knives of any length, or any other multipurpose tools, stun-guns, and any other items considered as less-than lethal weapons.



Directions and Parking: <http://bush41.org/directions>

Please send your reservations early to ensure we can make an accurate and timely reservation count. Mail the reservation coupon to MOAA-GDC Programs, PO Box 515495, Dallas, TX 75251; email Dave Schafer moaschafer@att.net or reserve online at www.moagreaterdallas.org/onlinersvp.html. You may also call Dave at (214)577-4107.

MOAA-GDC accepts **PayPal** for paying for your luncheon at our website which allows you to pay by credit card. <http://www.moagreaterdallas.org/onlinersvp.html>



Lt. Col. Allen West, US Army (Ret) and
MOAA-GDC President Bill Lavalley

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY MAY 2016 BY JIM BROWN

House health care proposals postpone Tricare fee increase

Military Times reported recently that broad changes could be coming to Tricare and the military health system under legislation being drafted by the House Armed Services Committee (HASC), but will *not* include the fee increases that were proposed in the Pentagon's fiscal 2017 budget.

House legislation would overhaul the military health system by reorganizing multiple Tricare programs into two options: the existing Tricare Prime program and Tricare Preferred — a network care option similar to Tricare Standard and Extra. The current fee structure would remain in place but could change in 2020 if the Defense Department meets certain standards for patient access and care.

The Pentagon's fiscal 2017 budget proposal would have forced all working-age retirees to pay annual enrollment fees regardless of which Tricare program they selected or forfeit their health care for a year. It would also have increased pharmacy fees across-the-board and imposed new enrollment fees, based on a percentage of gross retired pay, for the oldest military retirees and other Medicare eligible retirees.

Under the HASC proposal, all personnel now serving or who will retire before Jan 1, 2018, will elect to use Tricare Prime or Tricare Preferred and will pay the current fee structure, with enrollment fees adjusted to the cost of living. If by 2020 DoD has shown to Congress that it has improved the overall quality and access to care for beneficiaries, retirees using Tricare Preferred would start paying an annual enrollment fee of \$100 per an individual and \$200 for a family. Those on Tricare Prime would continue to pay the COLA-based enrollment fee. Active-duty families would not pay any enrollment fees until their sponsor retires.

Anyone enlisting after Jan. 1, 2018, would pay an annual fee of either \$180 for an individual and \$360 for a family for Tricare Prime or \$300 for an individual and \$600 for a family for Tricare Preferred. When they eventually retire, they would pay \$325 for an individual and \$650 for a family on Prime and \$425 for an individual and \$850 for a family for Tricare Preferred. Another change also would be implemented for new users in 2018: they would pay set amounts for primary and specialty care visits under Tricare Preferred, instead of the 20 percent or 25 percent rate currently used.

Beneficiaries who use Tricare Reserve Select, Tricare Retired Reserve or Tricare Young Adult would be moved into Tricare Preferred, which allows patients to see a network provider at a lower cost or go out of network without a referral. The fee structure for those programs would remain as they are.

Senate may not pass the House proposed 2.1% pay raise

Military Times reports that a bigger pay raise for troops next year will be a tough sell in the Senate.

The HASC has proposed a 2.1 percent pay raise for service members as part of the annual defense authorization bill. The move would be one-half of a percentage point above the Pentagon's pay raise request and cost an extra \$330 million in fiscal 2017 alone.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., who chairs the Senate Armed Services Committee's personnel panel, said Tuesday he isn't sure if his chamber will be able to find the money to back the House's pay plan. "I want to be generous to those who have sacrificed so much, and 1.6 percent or 2.1 percent is not as generous as we need to be," he said. "But given the constraints of sequestration coming down the road, anything that we do on the personnel side takes away from other areas. The White House has proposed a 1.6 percent pay raise as a way to both boost troops' take-home pay and save millions for readiness and modernization efforts. But by law, the annual military pay raise is supposed to be tied to the anticipated 2.1 percent rise in private-sector wages for the upcoming year. That estimate is for 2017, and not matching that figure means a cut in military families' purchasing power. But the House committee's plan to pay for the pay raise involves in part taking money from an overseas war account and hoping the next president will add supplementary military funds next spring. Senate officials have already said they do not plan on crafting their defense budget with that funding trade-off.

MOAA reports other defense authorization bill proposals:

Force Levels: increases force levels above the DoD budget request by 20,000 for the Army; 15,000 for Army National Guard; 10,000 for Army Reserve; 4,000 for the Air Force; and 3,000 for the Marine Corps. Approves the DoD request to reduce Navy forces by 6,300.

Commissary: allows DoD to implement variable pricing strategies and "house brand" products at commissaries nationwide, but specifies current patron savings and satisfaction must be maintained, benchmarks for those measures must be established, and quarterly reports must be provided to track progress. MOAA appreciates the Subcommittee's extra efforts to preserve benefit value for patrons while pursuing system efficiencies.

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY MAY 2016 - CONTINUED

MOAA reports other defense authorization bill proposals (continued):

Military Retirement: adopts a DoD proposal for flexibility in paying a continuation bonus between eight and 12 years of service for members under the new blended retirement system (taking effect in 2018), but does not include other DoD proposals to delay the onset of government Thrift Savings Plan matching until five years of service, increase the maximum government match, and extend matching beyond 26 years of service.

Uniform Code of Military Justice: adopts a long list of changes, including establishing new offenses involving use of government computers and credit card fraud, extending the statute of limitations for child abuse, and improving transparency of court records.

Impact Aid: provides \$30 million in assistance for local schools serving significant numbers of military children.

VA increases pressure on appeals reform: 'We're failing veterans'

Military Times has reported that White House officials are pushing Congress to overhaul the appeals process for veterans' benefits claims this year, noting the shrinking legislative window and calling the system a disaster. "We're failing veterans," said Veterans Affairs Deputy Secretary Sloan Gibson. "This process is failing veterans. Nobody can defend the status quo here."

More than 440,000 veterans have appeals cases pending in the benefits system, a caseload that has risen steadily in recent years as officials have focused on pulling down the number of backlogged first-time claims. But VA officials have insisted the two aren't connected, noting the percentage of cases appealed has remained steady. Instead, the problem has been the rising number of total claims from veterans, as more troops deal with issues from the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and even Vietnam.

Today, the average completion time for appeals cases decided by the Veterans Benefits Administration is three years; the average for cases decided by the Board of Veterans Appeals is five years. Officials have not seen increases in the rate of success among the appeals, but have noted that the process is frustratingly cumbersome for both veterans and staff. VA leaders have floated a plan to get that process down to under a year and a half for most cases, but they need congressional intervention to rework filing timelines and evidence submission rules. They're hoping the veterans' omnibus in the Senate will include those changes, and are making another lobbying push for its inclusion.

Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Johnny Isakson, R-Ga., said that appeals reform will be included in the pending omnibus, but warned it might not be the comprehensive plan floated by VA officials in recent months. The omnibus already is expected to include sweeping new changes to hiring and firing rules for VA employees, changes to the department's outside care programs, caregiver provisions and several dozen other pieces of veterans' legislation. Passing any comprehensive legislation after June 1 will be difficult, given the shift in attention to the fall elections.



Military Survivors Need Your Support

MOAA needs your help in urging congressional leaders to find the money needed to end unfair financial penalties imposed on thousands of military widows.

Please visit <http://capwiz.com/moaa/issues/alert/?alertid=71897626> and send your legislators the MOAA suggested message.

SAGE SURVIVOR BY NANCY RUTHFORD SODEMAN

The MILITARY OFFICER'S ASSOCIATION of AMERICA—Greater Dallas Chapter recently hosted a luncheon honoring outstanding JROTC cadets for their achievements. About half of these young people were women. My concern is that these cadets must realize their importance by keeping aware of the purposes of the military such as building a strong force and keeping recruits with the aid of fair compensation and benefits, representing families and survivors, working to make sure these compensations and benefits are kept intact and informing the public in letters to the editor and speeches about the military's exceptional expectations and sacrifices that they make in their daily lives.

It used to be that active duty troops and veterans accomplished these goals. But now many warriors and legislators in Washington D. C. have died. To fill the gap our military, MOAA among them as founding member, puts before the legislators issues that need to be addressed and solved. The incoming female recruits represent 20 percent of new recruits and by 2018 they will make up 10 percent of the veterans and the numbers continue to grow (according to THE MILITARY OFFICER, April 2016, p. 7).

That the women military, their families and their survivors are wise to join forces with their compatriots goes without saying. Let us raise our own voices. Let these women, along with the men join forces, find out the extraordinary value of the Military Coalition and do all they can to support these brave souls. In the feature story on the Internet entitled, "The Military Coalition," Donna Budjenska wrote:

Numbering 34 organizations today TMC (The Military Coalition) represents 5.5 million members and their families, making it so strong, in fact, the Military Update syndicated columnist Tom Philpott has said, "It may be the most formidable lobbying force ever to fight on behalf of servicemembers, retirees, and families."

Let us become aware and act upon our principles. The Military Coalition needs us.

TEXAS COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS APRIL MEETING BY DAVE SCHAFER

The MOAA Texas Council of Chapters (TCC) met in Waco, TX on April 29-30. Representatives from 14 of the 36 Texas MOAA chapters attended. Three representatives from the Greater Dallas Chapter attended the meeting. The TCC facilitates the exchange of information, lessons learned, and best practices among the Texas MOAA Chapters. The TCC also supports MOAA National's efforts to influence legislation at the federal level and coordinates the efforts of Texas MOAA chapters to influence legislation at the state level. The TCC meetings are open to all Texas MOAA chapter members. There are two more meetings scheduled for 2016 – July and October. The meetings will be held in Waco, TX about a 2 hour drive south of Dallas. The meetings start at 1500 on Friday and end at 1400 on Saturday. Contact Bill Lavalley, 469-383-4480, valleone@sbcglobal.net if you are interested in attending.

The Friday session at the April meeting included a review of the MOAA Storming the Hill effort in Washington DC, chapter reports, and a discussion about the TCC website. MOAA's Storm the Hill effort this year focused on two issues: convincing Congress to reject disproportional hikes to TROCARE fees and eliminate the Survivor Benefit Plan/Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (SBP/DIC) offset. Visit www.moaa.org and click on Take Action/Top Issues to learn more about these important issues. Chapters provided examples about how they raise money, retain members, and support JROTC/ROTC programs in their chapter reports. One disturbing piece of information we received was that MOAA National is considering charging chapters for the MOAA Leadership medals presented to JROTC cadets. This could cost our chapter \$500 or more for the medals for the 50 schools we currently support.

The Saturday session was focused on the Hazlewood Act. The Hazlewood Act, which provides education benefits for Texas veterans and their dependents, has come under attack in the Texas House and Senate due to spiraling costs and a federal court ruling that greatly expand eligibility. Sam Wilder, North Texas Chapter, provided recommended changes to the current Act to reduce costs and increase funding to participating colleges. Although the TCC did not accept the proposal as presented, it did accept the fact that veterans' organizations must accept changes in order to save this benefit for Texas veterans. The TCC laid out plans to finalize its position on changes to the Act and rally other veterans' organizations to accept the proposed changes. Contact Dave Schafer, 214-577-4107, or Jim Brown, 469-441-3572 if you questions about Hazlewood.



LUNCHEON MEETING — JUNE 28, 2016

PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH LIBRARY



Reservation for the June 28, 2016 Tuesday Luncheon Meeting

Social 11:00 AM — Lunch 11:30 — Followed By Tour

_____ Person's at \$28.00 each Check enclosed \$ _____
payable to "MOAA - Greater Dallas Chapter"

Mail Reservation to: Dave Schafer

MOAA-GDC Programs, PO Box 515495, Dallas, TX 75251

Please print name's below exactly as you wish you name badge's to read:

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TREASURER COL David C. Briggs, USA, (Ret)

Phone

(972) 291-8776

(972) 735-0870

(214) 577-4107

(972) 407-1092

(972) 617-0858

(214) 559-3619

(214) 343-9424

Email

valleeone@sbcglobal.net

sbcole@sbcglobal.net

moaschafer@att.net

jimbrown510@sbcglobal.net

bevarttalk@aol.com

chuck.kelley@yahoo.com

moaabriggs@gmail.com

APPOINTED OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Editor **The Reporter** : William Hill, LCDR, USN, (Ret)

Chaplain: Dottie Alder, Auxiliary

Legal Counsel: David C. Briggs, COL USA, (Ret)

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Webmaster and Email Distribution: Mrs. Sharon Hill, Auxiliary

Meeting Coordinator: Lt Col David J. Schafer, USAF (Ret)

Community Outreach: Lt Col David J. Schafer, USAF (Ret)

(214) 321-8241 bill@hillengineeringservices.com

(972) 412-3940 dottiealder@aol.com

(214) 559-3619 moaabriggs@gmail.com

(972) 772-5459 lmetzler@charter.neet

(972) 669-0619 ben.cole@sbcglobal.net

(972) 572-5018 maggie9982@sbcglobal.net

(214) 908-3708 joelbat@aol.com

(972) 617-0858 bevarttalk@aol.com

(214) 321-8241 moaagdc@yahoo.com

(214) 577-4107 moaschafer@att.net

(214) 577-4107 moaschafer@att.net

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APRIL LUNCHEON HONORED OUTSTANDING JROTC CADETS

BY DAVE SCHAFER

1-2-3 One, 1-2-3 Two . . . Our JROTC award winners got more than they bargained for at this year's JROTC Awards Luncheon. After his presentation, LTC Allen West, ISA (Retired), lined up the eight cadets and had them join him do 20 pushups. The surprised cadets did their best to keep up with Colonel West and everyone received a rousing applause. This is an event the cadets will talk about for years to come.

This year's luncheon was our best ever. We presented certificates to the five cadets who were awarded MOAA Greater Dallas scholarships. In addition, we presented certificates to 3 JROTC cadets who attended the 4-day Freedoms Foundation Spirit of America Youth Leadership Conference in Valley Forge, PA.

LTC West presented an inspirational message to the cadets. He talked about the impact his JROTC and JROTC experiences had on his life. He cited the names of each of his JROTC instructors and described how they helped him through difficult time and taught him about leadership, patriotism, and community service. He reminded the cadets of the important lessons their JROTC programs can teach them and challenged them to use their learnings throughout their life.

The 2016 MOAA Greater Dallas JROTC scholarship winners are:

Samuel Brasch	MacArthur HS
Alondra Acevedo	W.T. White HS
Kahlyn Ward	Lancaster HS
Jeremy Amorin	Allen HS
Arlette Ortiz	Bryan Adams HS

The 2016 Freedoms Foundation Spirit of America Youth Leadership Conference honorees are:

Cindy Salinas	Bryan Adams HS
Diane Bahena	MacArthur HS
Walter Veliz	MacArthur HS
Nicholas Howe	Bishop Lynch HS



CAREER TRANSITION – JOB FAIRS

BY JOEL BATALSKY, MOAA-GDC CAREER TRANSITION OFFICER

Irving Convention Center

500 W. Las Colinas Blvd.
Irving, TX 75039

May 11, 2016 11:00 AM—3:00 PM

Irving Convention Center Information

The event will take place in Exhibit Hall which is immediately accessible through the Main Lobby.

Parking Information

The parking garage is located on the West side of the Convention Center. *FREE* parking is available in the Irving Convention Center Parking Garage.

Driving Directions: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/500+W+Las+Colinas+Blvd,+Irving,+TX+75039/@32.8777052,-96.9453335,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x864e82987ba7c149:0xd2bebee2eca78c8c!8m2!3d32.8777052!4d-96.9431448>