



MOAA

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

STEVEN COLE — [SBCOLE@SBCGLOBAL.NET](mailto:sbcollection@sbcglobal.net)



MOAA GDC is appealing to you to come forward and help us in a big way. You should have received (or will shortly) your membership renewal notice in the mail. Please complete your renewal notice and get that back to us as soon as practical. Moreover, I want to respectfully request your renewed participation in MOAA GDC. We need all of your ideas, voices, and physical presences in many areas to continue the work in support of our service members and their families. Many of our Chapter position of leadership go unfilled, every year. I am asking you to, once again to serve, to lead, and to provide wise action to our Chapter. Contact me at sbcollection@sbcglobal.net. Tell me you want to be at the forefront of “how” and “why” we do our good work.

Thank you for being such an extraordinary group. I look forward to hearing from you.

October 7th – Save the date! Please join us in celebration of 50 years of the MOAA Greater Dallas Chapter.

Seats are going fast! Go to our website, RSVP and pay for a grand time to be had by all!

Where? Maggiano's Little Italy on the East side of Northpark at US 75 and Northwest Highway.
Costs? Only \$50 per person.

When? Social hours starts at 1600 (hours), dinner at 1700 (hours), and the program from 1800 (hours) to no later than 1930 (hours).

We are honored to have Lt Gen Dana Atkins USAF (ret), President and CEO of MOAA as our guest speaker. Thank you for making The Greater Dallas Chapter of MOAA a great organization!



Note: President's article continues on page 3.

MOAA-GDC receives 2016 Five-Star Level of Excellence Award



UPCOMING EVENTS:



Saturday October 7, 2017
Maggiano's Little Italy
Social 4:00 PM — Dinner 5:00 PM
— Program 6:00 to 7:30 PM

Our keynote speaker will be Lt. General Lt. Gen. Dana Atkins, USAF (Ret) current president of MOAA

See Page 4 for more information

Reserve online at:

moagreaterdallas.org/rsvp50th.html



PERSONAL AFFAIRS BY BEN COLE

Just ran across another bit of advice from TRICARE that might save you some more money when you need your meds. Some of my fellow retirees do this regularly and are glad that they do. Maybe you should consider doing likewise.

TRICARE says "SAVE WHEN FILLING PRESCRIPTIONS AT MILITARY PHARMACIES".

Did you know that you can fill your prescriptions at military pharmacies at no cost to you: Military pharmacies can fill prescriptions written by military or civilian providers for up to a 90-day supply of most drugs. You can find the military pharmacy closest to you at www.tricare.mil/MTF. Military pharmacies stock most drugs on the basic core formulary and many brand name maintenance drugs on the uniform formulary. Beneficiaries have NO COPAY for prescription drugs at military pharmacies.

Military pharmacies DO ACCEPT electronic prescriptions from civilian providers, which can save time and cut down on potential errors from using a paper prescription. If you call the military pharmacy and they cannot fill your prescription, you have other choices, including TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery and retail network pharmacies. The process to transfer a prescription to a military pharmacy is simple. Just take your prescriptions to the new pharmacy and they will work with your old pharmacy to move it.

You can pick up prescriptions for a family member or someone else at military pharmacies but the process may be different for each pharmacy. Get guidance from your military pharmacy to learn what you need to pick up another's prescription. Military pharmacies are usually found at a military hospital or clinic, but some are free-standing facilities located elsewhere on the post or base. For more information about using military pharmacies go to <https://www.tricare.mil/CoveredServices/Pharmacy/FillPrescriptions/MilitaryPharm>. (Try to say that in one breath.)

Fort Hood 43rd Annual Retiree Appreciation Day

Friday 27 OCTOBER 2017

0800 – 1600	Legal Assistance	BLDG 13, 52d St. & 761st Tank Bn
0800 – 1600	VA Mobile Vet Center	BLDG 18010, Battalion Ave
0900 – TBD	Retiree Golf Tournament	Courses of Clear Creek
0900 – 1130	Flu Shots – Copeland Soldier Service Center	BLDG 18010, Battalion Ave
1600 – 1700	Retirement Celebration	III Corps Flagpole
1730 – TBD	Friday Night Backyard Cookout **Prior Reservation Required** Sponsored by the Area Veterans Advisory Committee Limited to first 150 RSPV plus 1 Guest	Phantom Warrior Center 761 st Tank Bn & 37 th St

Saturday 28 OCTOBER 2017

0700 – 0845	Breakfast	Club Hood, BLDG 5764
0800 – 0900	County Fair Activities	Club Hood, BLDG 5764
0900 - 1000	Opening Ceremony	Club Hood, Main Ballroom
1000 – 1130	County Fair Activities	Club Hood, BLDG 5764
0900 – 1400	Health Fair, Carl R Darnall Army Medical Center	Santa Fe Ave BLDG 36065
0800 – 1400	VA Mobile Vet Center	BLDG 18010 Parking Lot
0900 – 1400	ID Card Issue & DEERS Transactions	BLDG 18010, Battalion Ave
1100 – 1600	Legal Assistance (Wills POA, etc.)	BLDG 13, 52d St.
1130 - 1400	Lunch	Theodore Roosevelt Dining Facility BLDG 9205 Battalion & 21 st St.
1200 – 1600	Museum	ICD, BLDG 2218 & 3d CR, BLDG 419
1400 – 1500	ICD Horse Detachment Demonstration	ICD Horse Stables
1700 - TBD	Retiree Round-Up Dinner Social Hour from 1730-1800 hrs.	Club Hood, BLDG 5764 ** Prior Reservation Required**

For more information, please contact:

Fort Hood Retirement Services, Copeland Soldiers Service Center, Room B118,
254-287-5210 Toll Free: 1-800-408-6640

PRESIDENT'S ARTICLE CONTINUED BY STEVEN COLE

September can be a busy month. Schools are active, so watch for school students when driving. Also, September holds significant dates for us:

September 11 – Patriot Day. The annual observance of September 11 to remember those injured or killed during the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2011

September 14 – North Texas Giving Day! I most strongly urge you to go on to www.northtexasgivingday.org and give to the Veterans Center of North Texas (VCONT). VCONT's mission is to assist North Texas veterans and their families to establish and maintain productive lifestyles in our communities. VCONT is manned by members of MOAA, along with other volunteers. Looking for a good work? Give and volunteer to VCONT!



September 15 – POW/MIA Recognition Day. A time set aside to remember those who were Prisoners Of War and those who are Missing In Action, as well as their families.

September 18 – Air Force Birthday!

September 24 – Gold Star Mother's Birthday and Family Day. The day set aside to honor the families of our nations fallen service members. Let us never forget.

SAGE SURVIVOR BY NANCY RUTHFORD SODEMAN

We cannot let our veterans down. Let's keep finding out about whatever our legislators are proposing, especially when military benefits are brought into question. Letters and emails make a difference.

Make sure you are signed up for MOAA Legislative Alerts.

To sign up and/or check your email preferences with MOAA, visit http://moaa.highroadsolution.com/moaa_preference_page/EmailSearch.aspx

We can also get involved personally and locally. For example, the church that I attend, St. Mark's Church in Plano, through St. Michael Society Military Support Ministry, helps several deployed troops in Afghanistan with supplies, including beef jerky, tuna, cookies and other treats.

These deployed troops are related to church members. This office is run by Dale Heidenreich whose email address is dheidenrichtx@aol.com and his telephone number is 972-596-4493. If you wish to donate you can leave food gifts in a bag. Please write St. Michael or Military on your donation and leave it in the usher's room beside the chapel at the back. St. Michael Society Military Support Ministry is also located at churches in Richardson, Dallas and Garland.

Perhaps you can form such a ministry to help our military at your own place of worship.

The Veterans Center of North Texas can always use volunteers and donations. Vcont.org or 214-600-2966.

On a bigger scope, Col. Steve dePyssler, Director of Retiree Activities Office at Barksdale AFB in Louisiana says we can consider a program for housing military veterans in our homes for which we would be reimbursed about \$1,500 a month. In a recent correspondence, he discusses this Medical Fostering Care.

For information call 202-461-6786. Or visit https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICS/Guide/LongTermCare/Medical_Foster_Homes.asp

We can think creatively to make sure our active servicemen and women and veterans are given the care they need.

PROGRAMS BY BEVERLY THOMPSON



50TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER

SATURDAY OCTOBER 7, 2017



Our keynote speaker will be Lt. General Lt. Gen. Dana Atkins, USAF (Ret) current president of MOAA. Lt. Gen. Atkins is a native of Portland, Ore. He earned his bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Portland and holds two master's degrees, one in aeronautical science from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and another in national security strategy from the National War College.



A command pilot with more than 4,000 hours in fighter aircraft, Atkins has served in a number of key command and staff positions, including commander, 20th Fighter Wing, Shaw AFB, S.C.; commander, 35th Fighter Wing, Misawa, Japan; vice commander, 7th Air Force and U.S. Air Force Korea; director of operations, U.S. Pacific Command; and special assistant to the supreme allied commander Europe during the air war over Serbia. During his career, he flew as a demonstration pilot for both the European A-10 Demonstration Team and the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds.

At the time of his retirement from the Air Force, Atkins served as commander, Alaskan Command, U.S. Pacific Command; commander, 11th Air Force, Pacific Air Forces; and commander, Alaskan North American Defense Region, Elmendorf AFB, Alaska.

He has been awarded the Defense Superior Service Medal with oak leaf cluster. Legion of Merit with three oak leaf clusters, Distinguished Flying Cross, Defense Meritorious Service Medal and many others.

He and his wife, Laura, were the 2004 recipients of the General and Mrs. Jerome F. O'Malley Award, which recognizes the wing commander and spouse whose contributions to the nation, the Air Force, and the local community best exemplify the highest ideals and positive leadership of a military couple.

Before becoming the ninth president of MOAA, Atkins served as president of Chronicle Media, a print and digital media company based in Augusta, Ga., that serves the southeastern U.S.

We look forward to seeing you at our 50th Anniversary Dinner.

Date: 7 October 2017

Location: Maggiano's Little Italy in the North Dallas (in the North Park shopping center).

Address: 8697 North Central Expressway, Dallas, TX 75225

Directions: Take the Northwest Highway exit off US 75 and head west on Northwest Highway. Turn right into the North Park Center shopping center at the first traffic light west of US 75 (about 1/4 mile). Maggiano's is directly ahead at the end of the parking lane. Free valet parking is available.

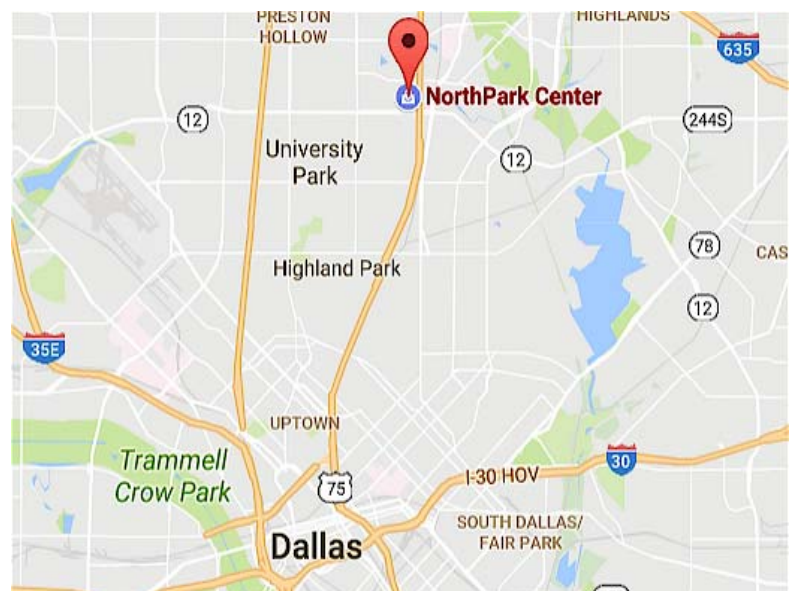
**Time: 4:00 to 5:00 PM Registration and Social
5:00 to 6:00 PM Dinner
6:00 to 7:30 PM Program
7:30 PM Adjourn**

Dress: Business Attire

Cost is \$50.00 per person

Reservations are available now through PayPal at moagreaterdallas.org/rsvp50th.html or you may mail the reservation coupon on page 7.

You may also contact Steven Cole (972) 333-4895 sbcole@sbcglobal.net





LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY SEPTEMBER 2017 BY JIM BROWN

President Trump Promises to Keep Our Veterans a Priority

On 23 August, President Trump delivered remarks to the American Legion's 99th National Convention and signed H.R. 2288, the Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017 (the "Act") in Reno, Nevada. He was joined by Secretary David Shulkin and Secretary Ben Carson.

"Today, we are here to honor you for the sacrifices you have made to defend our Nation and preserve our way of life. But we're also here for another reason: We are here to hold you up as an example of strength, courage, and resolve that our country will need to overcome the many challenges that we face. We are here to draw inspiration from you as we seek to renew the bonds of loyalty that bind us together as one people and one Nation," said President Trump.

"Every veteran here today is part of a long, unbroken chain of American heroes. We salute your service."

The Act was unanimously passed by the Senate earlier this month. This legislation will streamline the lengthy process that veterans undergo when appealing their claims for disability benefits with the Veterans Administration. More than 470,000 veterans are still waiting for decisions regarding their appeals. The new law will give veterans more options on how to appeal benefits decisions they think are unfair and do not compensate them enough.

"No longer will veterans be kept waiting for years to get an answer to their appeals. They will receive timely updates and they will get decisions much more quickly, in a fraction of the time," stated the President.

The Act gives veterans options for appeal better suited to individual circumstances. When a claim is denied, or a disability rating award disappoints, they will have three options to appeal.

Lane one is Local Higher-Level of Review. Veterans can request that a more experienced claims adjudicator review the same evidence considered by the original claims processor. The idea is to ensure that it was properly decided.

A second choice, the New Evidence lane, allows a veteran who has new evidence to support the claim to ask the Veterans Benefits Administration to reconsider the merits of the original claim based on that new information.

The third lane is a formal appeals process where jurisdiction for review transfers to the Board of Veterans Appeals. The veteran at this stage also can seek a hearing before a judge to review the case and that could include new evidence.

One key provision of the new law mandates that the VA improve original claim decision notices so they more clearly inform veterans of the reasoning behind VA decisions. This should help veterans determine whether to file an appeal and the best lane for them. It also should reduce unnecessary appeals, advocates contend.

For veterans dissatisfied with original claim decisions, they begin their appeal by filing a Notice of Disagreement. The VA's response to that notice is called the Statement of the Case (SOC). Veterans can file additional evidence following receipt of an SOC, and the VA will issue a Supplemental Statement of the Case (SSOC). Receipt of the SOC or SSOC is expected to be the trigger point for allowing veterans with pending appeals to switch into the new process.

Whether or not individuals with pending appeals decide to shift to the new system will be based on personal circumstance. Roughly 150,000 current appeals are pending before the Board for Veterans Appeals, or the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. Those are seen as too far along to allow transfer to the new process when the process starts operating.

By late November, the VA must deliver a comprehensive plan to the House and Senate veterans' affairs committees stating which veterans with current appeals pending will be allowed to shift from the old system into one of the new lanes.

"This is a big one," Trump said, pointing to the bill before signing it to a roar of applause. Prior to signing the bill, Trump reported several other VA reforms, including a promised White House veterans hotline and new legislation to more easily remove ineffective VA employees.

Note: Legislative article continues on page 6.

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY SEPTEMBER 2017 BY JIM BROWN

Sequestration Cuts Still Threaten Military Readiness

DoD is suffering from recent sequestration spending cuts, which Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said, "[did] more to harm the combat readiness of our military" than any enemy in the field. The defense budget is shrinking as a portion of federal spending, having fallen in every decade since the 1940s.

This year's defense bill provides some spending increases but does not remove the damaging effects of sequestration. Senate Armed Services Committee Chair John McCain (R-Ariz.) acknowledged, "With the present operational tempo and drastic reductions to defense spending, we will continue the downward spiral of military capacity and readiness that will compromise each service's ability to execute our Defense Strategic Guidance at a time of accumulating danger to our national security."

MOAA is determined to prevent past mistakes from reappearing, such as cutting critical career-service incentives, for the sake of balancing the budget. Those short-term gains inevitably result in unacceptable costs in the form of retention and readiness problems.

Recent Pro-Veteran Legislation

Here is a summary of significant veterans' legislation that Congress has sent to the White House for signature or considered during the past year:

- **Oct. 1, 2016.** The VA started the fiscal year with its full 2017 budget, including advance appropriations for FY 2018, while other federal agencies were forced to operate under a continuing resolution.
- **Jan. through March 2017.** Lawmakers introduced more than 200 bills to help veterans in the first quarter of the 115th session.
- **April.** The president extended the Veterans Choice program, commonly known as "Choice," before it was due to expire in August, giving the VA time to use remaining funds in the program and develop a better replacement program for veterans receiving care through private providers.
- **June.** The president signed the VA Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017, which provides the secretary of the VA additional authorities to expedite the removal of employees when warranted.
- **August 7.** Congress sent a bill to the president to establish a national memorial in honor of servicemembers who served in support of the global war on terrorism.
- **August 11.** Congress sent the Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017 to the president to sign. It modernizes the VA's appeals process and provides more rights and transparency in the system for veterans seeking benefits.
- **August 12.** The president signed an emergency funding bill to provide \$2.1 billion to fund Choice for an additional six months, giving Congress and the administration time to come up with a long-term plan for reforming the community care program.
- **August 16.** The president signed the "Forever GI Bill," making the Post-9/11 GI bill permanent for servicemembers entering the military beginning Jan. 1, 2018, and including other improvements like the "Shauna Hill" transferability provision, which authorizes unused benefits to be transferred to additional dependents if the originally designated dependent dies.

"We have been very encouraged and pleased with the collaborative and supportive efforts on behalf of the VA, Congress, and the administration to get these important bills through the process," said Cmdr. René Campos, USN (Ret), MOAA's director of government relations for veterans' health care.

MOAA members also deserve special thanks for taking the time to engage with their lawmakers and for keeping up on important legislation through these legislative updates and alerts - you are really the ones responsible for getting this legislation signed.

You can use MOAA's website to [find your legislators' local offices](#) and [send suggested messages to your representatives](#) on a number of key issues.

See Page 8 for Legislative Action Items

50TH ANNIVERSARY DINNER SATURDAY OCTOBER 7, 2017



Maggiano's Little Italy
East side of Northpark at US 75 and Northwest Highway.
8697 North Central Expressway, Dallas, TX 75225

Social 4:00 PM — Dinner 5:00 PM — Program 6:00 to 7:30 PM

_____ Person's at \$50.00 each Check enclosed \$ _____
payable to "MOAA - Greater Dallas Chapter"

Mail Reservation to:

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

 (Spouse/Guest)

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

Need a ride? _____ If yes, your ZIP code _____ Give a ride? _____ If yes, your ZIP code _____

CHAPTER OFFICERS—EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT CAPT Steven Cole, USNR (Retired)
PRESIDENT—ELECT Col William Dwiggins USMC (retired)
VICE PRESIDENT — TREASURER Lt Col David J. Schafer, USAF (Ret)
VICE PRESIDENT — MEMBERSHIP CDR James Bass, USN (Retired)
VICE PRESIDENT—LEGISLATIVE Lt Col James R. Brown USAFR (Ret)
VICE PRESIDENT—PROGRAMS Mrs. Beverly Thompson, Auxiliary
SECRETARY Lt Col Charles Kelley USAF, (Ret)

Phone

(972) 333-4895
(903) 669-7681
(214) 577-4107
(628)554-6657
(972) 407-1092
(972) 617-0858
(214) 559-3619

Email

sbcole@sbcglobal.net
billdwiggins@yahoo.com
moaschafer@att.net
jimbass9661@tx.rr.com
jimbrown510@sbcglobal.net
bevartalk@aol.com
chuck.kelley@yahoo.com

APPOINTED OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Editor **The Reporter** : William Hill, LCDR, USN, (Ret)
Chaplain: CAPT Ben Cole USNR, (Ret)
Legal Counsel: David C. Briggs, COL USA, (Ret)
Scholarship Committee: CH COL Lyle Metzler, USA (Ret)
Personal Affairs Committee: CAPT Ben Cole USNR, (Ret)
JROTC Liaison: OPEN
Career Transition: LTC Joel Batalisky, USA (Ret)
Auxiliary Liaison: Mrs. Beverly Thompson, Auxiliary
Webmaster and Email Distribution: Mrs. Sharon Hill, Auxiliary
Meeting Coordinator: OPEN
Greater Dallas Veterans Coalition representative: OPEN

(214) 321-8241 bill@hillengineeringservices.com
(972) 669-0619 ben19320428@att.net
(214) 559-3619 moaabriggs@gmail.com
(972) 772-5459 lmetzler@charter.neet
(972) 669-0619 ben19320428@att.net

(214) 908-3708 joelbat@aol.com
(972) 617-0858 bevartalk@aol.com
(214) 321-8241 moaagdc@yahoo.com

MOAA—GDC THE REPORTER is published monthly by the MOAA-Greater Dallas Chapter for the information and benefit of its members. Members are encouraged to submit letters and articles for publication to:
Editor, William Hill, LCDR, USN, Retired ♦ 8358 San Leandro Drive ♦ Dallas, TX 75218-4317
The MOAA-Greater Dallas Chapter is a nonprofit organization chartered on November 28, 1967.
Annual dues are \$20.00 for members and \$10.00 for auxiliary members.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER BY BEN COLE



King Solomon offered this advice many years ago:

“Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam....so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out...” Proverbs 17:14

Thinking back over our lives, we surely could have avoided a lot of unpleasant occasions, don't you think?

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The following is the meeting schedule for the Executive Committee of the Greater Dallas Chapter of the MOAA.

Meetings are held from 9 am to 11 am at the Point Building, C.C. Young Retirement Community, 4847 West Lawther Drive, Dallas, TX 75214.

2017

18 November

All Chapter members are welcome to attend any Executive Committee meeting.

Prevent Disproportional Health Care Cost Increases

The administration's FY2018 budget request includes large increases to TRICARE fees across the board. These fee increases are a direct result of the repeal of the 2017 National Defense Authorizations grand-fathering clause. The intention of the grand-fathering was to keep fees where they currently are for beneficiaries in the service prior to 1 January 2018.

These fee increases are disproportional and do not reflect the service and sacrifice of the beneficiaries who have earned the health care benefit. Please send your legislators this MOAA suggested message to prevent these hefty fee increases from negatively impacting servicemembers and their families.



<http://capwiz.com/moaa/issues/alert/?alertid=77639626>