

MOAA



VOICE

Military Officers Association of America
Redwood Empire Chapter

Post Office Box 2801
Santa Rosa, CA 95405-0801

VOLUME 38, NUMBER 9

“Serving Those Who Serve America”

SEPTEMBER 2008



PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

MOAA DAY ON THE U.S.S. HORNET was a big success. Our chapter was well represented by having 50 or so members and guests in attendance. We had tours of the ship, at least most of it, a truly good meal, overall an interesting experience. And no one fell overboard, although we almost left one person in Alameda.

As many of you already know, LCOL George Conners celebrated his 90th birthday with festivities in Sonoma...HAPPY BIRTHDAY, GEORGE!

The annual WINGS OVER WINE COUNTRY annual air show took place on 16-17 August and was a LOUD success, as anyone who attended the show knows, as well as anyone who lives near the airport. The performances were truly outstanding and the C-17 aircraft amazed the audience with its performance. And our chapter performance wasn't all that bad either, we picked up 7 potential members...at least they filled out information slips and asked that information and applications be mailed to them. Thanks to all that helped staff the booth over the two days - LTC Gary Meagher, CDR Don Confer, CWO2 Marty Wallach, Susan Linch, MAJ B.K. White, LTC Dennis Meredith, LCOL Bob Reinking, and CWO4 Bob Silva. Myrna Hurst also volunteered to help but put a BOO BOO on her car on the Friday before and could not make it down from Ukiah. Thanks anyway, Myrna. And thanks to everyone else.

The Nominating Committee, made up of CDMR Leigh Royston, COL Owen Reeves and CPT Lee Hoskins, has completed their search and will present the recommended slate to the Chapter Board at the October Board of Directors meeting, on 4 October. The approved slate will be published in the October edition of the MOAA VOICE, along with the Absentee Ballot and instructions for absentee voting. Voting for the chapter

officers and board members nominated to replace members whose terms expire on December 31, will take place at the General Membership meeting, October 23rd.

The Annual Council and Chapter President's Symposium will be held in So. Lake Tahoe, 16 - 18 October. Invitations were sent out by MOAA to council and chapter presidents, first vice presidents and personal affairs officers in 15 Western states, including Alaska and Hawaii. The symposium will feature a new workshop for chapter leaders and an improved chapter communications seminar. Our chapter will be fully represented at this gathering.

And last, but most importantly, don't forget the lobster feed, September 26th, at the Santa Rosa Veterans Memorial Building. Friends and family always welcome. Great way to repay dinner debts.

COL Pete Peterka, President

ELECTION OF CHAPTER OFFICERS -2009

The annual election of officers for the Redwood Empire Chapter will be held at the general membership meeting on Thursday, October 23rd, at the Quail Inn, Oakmont. Socializing begins at 11:00 and lunch will be served at 12:00 noon. Blank ballots and instructions for absentee voting will be included in the October VOICE. Absentee ballots must be in the hands of the Election Committee not later than October 22d. Mail-in ballots received after October 22d WILL NOT BE COUNTED.

MOAA BOARD MEETINGS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Sept. 6, 2008, 0930 hours - Santa Rosa Vet's Bldg Conference Room.

NEXT BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Saturday, October 4th, 2008, 0930 hours - Santa Rosa Vet's Bldg Conference Room.

Chapter members are always welcome at these meetings.
Coffee and donuts will be served.



MENDOCINO SUB-CHAPTER

The next luncheon meeting of the Mendocino County Subchapter, Redwood Empire Chapter, Military Officers Assn. of America, will be at 11:30 am, Saturday, 20 September 2008, at Hill House Inn Dining Room, Mendocino. Menu choices: \$20.-, pay as you arrive, all inclusive, are:

Mixed Green Salad, and Choice of:
Beef Bourguignon, or:
Red Snapper Vera Cruz, or:
Chicken Pot Pie, or:
Stuffed Red Bell Pepper (veggie option), and
Sorbet Dessert, and Bread and Butter and Coffee or
Tea, Hot or Iced

Please make luncheon reservations and menu choice with either: Ms. Myrna Hurst, Tel: 707-468-0146, email: myrna@pacific.net or en Booth, Tel: 707-964-2174, email: booth@mcn.org. Come join with your friends at a wonderful luncheon, and bring a new member!

Guest Speaker: Tentatively scheduled: Sergeant First Class Eric Kolesar, NCOIC, US Army Recruiting Station, Ukiah, who will speak on his tour as a Guard Of Honor at the Tomb Of The Unknowns, Arlington National Cemetery, subject to his duty requirements as an Army Recruiter.

LTC Ben Booth, Commander

SONOMA VALLEY SUB-CHAPTER

Our next meeting will be Thursday, September 11, 2008. We will meet this time at Issa's at the corner of Hwy 12 (Sonoma Highway) and Verano, across from both MacDonald's and Taco Bell. After some discussions with our members and among ourselves, BK, Ted and I decided it was time for a change of scenery. I will mail a personal letter about this change to each subchapter member within the next few days in order to be sure that everyone gets the word.

Our speaker this time will be Kris Van Giesen, Chief Development and Community Relations Officer at Hanna Boys Center. Kris will be telling us about the work they do and programs they have there, and he said he will most likely bring along a couple of the boys.

As always, luncheon will be served at about 1200, but by all means come early and enjoy a libation and some camaraderie. Spouses are of course always welcome, and we are always ready to welcome prospective members and other guests as well.

LTC Dennis Meredith, Commander

LAKE SUB-CHAPTER

No Report

HUMBOLDT/DEL NORTE SUB-CHAPTER

No Report

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

General Comments:

CPI Increase Update. At this time, even if there is no further increase in the CPI, our COLA increase will be around 6.2%. Given the current economic situation, we are still betting on a 7% or more increase.

Federal Issues:

FY2009 Defense Authorization Bill (H.R. 5658)

August is a slow month with Congress out of session. However, when they return this month they'll be working on the FY2009 Defense Authorization Bill. Therefore, you can expect requests for your support on some of the following issues:

- Eliminate the offset of retired pay by VA disability compensation,
- End unfair deductions in benefits for survivors of disabled servicemembers.
- Improve retirement benefits for the Guard and reserve.
- Secure career enhancement support for spouses through the support for their careers as well as the servicemember.
- Improve PCS payments.
- Avoid disproportionate TRICARE fee hikes for retirees under age 65.

A New Retirement Plan. Here we go again! Remember the famous REDUX from 1986 that finally was repealed in 1999 after almost fourteen years of failure? The 10th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation (QRMC) is coming up with a number of recommendations with appear to be, in many respects, a replay of the REDUX plan.

Basically, this Pentagon study group assumes piles of cash — offered at critical career points and paired with a much reduced “defined” retirement benefit — can be more effective in shaping a career force than the current 20-year retirement system

It has much in common with previous proposals to overhaul the military retirement system, including:

- greater emphasis on a 401(k)-style program
- delayed receipt of full military retired pay until age 57-60
- greater use of cash incentive bonuses at the discretion of the service
- retirement vesting for servicemembers with 10 or more years of service.

Basically, about the only people who are in favor of this new plan are the proponents and the economists who can quantify *everything* to "show a profit" at the end of the fiscal cycle. It makes good sense for the government, however, at what cost to the servicemembers? Really, it's another "pea under the shell" game.

We suggest that you all try to inform yourselves on this issue and be prepared to get your Congresspersons involved when it becomes a firm proposal for a law.

State Issues:

State Budget. The saga of the State Budget continues. Will we see a budget before September or October?

**BGEN Keith Kerr and LCOL Vern McNamee
Legislative Affairs Co-Chairmen**

Discussion Group Ends

It has been over ten years ago that I gathered a number of MOAA (then TROA) people into a loosely run group called the Discussion Group. We started out meeting once a month for lunch either in a restaurant or summers in Spring Lake Park. It wasn't long before we started meeting twice a month. Our discussions included war stories, politics, how to fix things, gardening, adventures in Space "A" and a myriad of other topics. We were fortunate to have people who were experts in everything from wine paring, carpentry, finance, electronics and even sheep raising. Sometimes the discussions were a bit heated but the camaraderie and friendship and learning experience were what I will remember most.

In the past few years, our membership has greatly declined through physical moves and passing on to that Great Discussion Group in the Sky. Those still around will meet for lunch from time to time. You are welcome to join us.

COL Mal Rivkins, 996-3783

POW/MIA Recognition Day

Saturday, September 20th, 2008, there will be a POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony at the Santa Rosa Veteran's Memorial Building. The ceremony will be conducted by the Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter #223, and will honor all known former POW's living in Sonoma County, as well as those still missing in action. As of this morning, the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command reports that there are still 78,000 missing from WWII; Korean War 8,142; Vietnam War 370; Cold War 120; Gulf War 1; Iraq War 3 (1 kidnapped-missing; 2 captured or killed). Last year our chapter conducted the ceremony and garnered an attendance of over 160 people. Would really like to see this kind of attendance continue, since before last year the largest attendance was around 40 or so.

VA Announces Online Claims

Week of July 28, 2008

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will now accept online applications from veterans, survivors and other claimants for disability compensation, pension, education, and vocational rehabilitation and employment benefits without the additional requirement of submitting a signed paper copy of the application. VA will process applications received through its VONAPP online application website without the claimant's signature. The online application also provides a link to apply for VA health care benefits and much more. For more information about VA benefits, go to VA's Website or call the toll-free number (800) 827-1000.

Publication Title: **MOAA-VOICE** is a newsletter of the Redwood Empire Chapter, Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). Statement of Frequency: Published monthly. Authorized organization's name and address: MOAA Redwood Empire Chapter, PO Box 2801, Santa Rosa, CA 95405-0801. Cost of publication: **FREE**

TRICARE Beneficiaries Can "Stay Alert" Through New Electronic Delivery Service

August 18, 2008

Falls Church, Va. - Need the latest TRICARE benefit news and don't want to hunt for it? Get it electronically - straight from TRICARE.

From the latest beneficiary newsletters and changes in coverage, to pharmacy updates and news releases, all 9.2 million TRICARE beneficiaries now have an easy way to stay informed by e-mail. A new electronic delivery system is up and running and subscribing is fast and secure by clicking on the "little red envelope" at <http://www.tricare.mil>.

"We're excited to offer beneficiaries a chance to sign up for the TRICARE benefit news they want and need," said Army Maj. Gen. Elder Granger, deputy director of TRICARE Management Activity. "We have offered some limited e-mail delivery options in the past, but this new subscription service enables anyone interested in TRICARE news to sign up for a wide range of topics. It's one-stop shopping."

Subscribers can choose alerts by topics or beneficiary category and delivery is safe and secure - an e-mail address is the only information collected. Subscribers also have a unique page they can manage 24/7 and they can choose to be notified as soon as news or benefit changes are posted, or select daily, weekly or monthly updates.

"One of our highest priorities is communicating with our beneficiaries and providers," said Granger. "E-mail is now the method most people use to receive news and that will only continue to increase. This new service helps us take advantage of the technology."

The new subscription service also links users up to similar alerts available on other Military Health System (MHS) Web sites including <http://www.health.mil>, which features MHS news, debates, videos and blogs; as well as Force Health Protection and Readiness and the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.

Partnership subscription options with other health-related federal Web sites currently include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and DisabilityInfo.gov.

MOAA Voice

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Online <http://www.redwoodwmpiremoaa.us>

TRICARE's e-alerts are sent through GovDelivery, which also provides services to dozens of other Department of Defense and federal agencies including the FBI, the United States departments of Health and Human Services, the CDC and the United States Food and Drug Administration.

SOURCE: TRICARE Web Site at <http://www.tricare.mil>

USAA expanding its membership base

Saturday Aug 9, 2008

Another 3 million people — including veterans who were discharged since Jan. 1, 1996 — are eligible to become members of USAA, according to company officials.

The newly eligible are:

- Military retirees, regardless of when they retired. That includes enlisted personnel who retired before USAA began accepting enlisted personnel in 1996.
- Military personnel who were honorably discharged on or after Jan. 1, 1996.
- Spouses and children of those in the above groups, once they become members.

Company officials cited steady growth in financial strength and operational capacity as factors in its membership expansion efforts. USAA provides financial planning, insurance, investments, and banking products to military members and their families.

"USAA is stronger today than at any time in our 86-year history, which enables us to offer the benefits of USAA membership to more people than ever before," said Joe Robles, USAA's president and chief executive officer, in an announcement of the expansion.

USAA members include 6.4 million current and former military members and their families.

For more information about the company, go to <http://www.usaa.com>.

Military Humor

"When the pin is pulled, Mr. Grenade is not our friend. - U.S. Marine Corps

(A Sonoma County Main Chapter event; all members are more than welcome)

To Secretary, MOAA, Redwood Empire Chapter, P.O. Box 2801, Santa Rosa, CA 95405

**LOBSTER FEED,
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26th**

*Veterans Memorial Building
1351 Maple Avenue, Santa Rosa*

*Menu: Maine Lobster 1 1/4 lb or larger, BBQ High Quality steaks, Baked Potatoes, Caesar Salad,
Garlic bread. Red and White wine on the table. Dessert*

\$25.00 each

6 PM: Social, No Host Bar

7 PM Lobster served (if ready)

Enclosed is my check for _____ persons @ \$25.00 each. \$ _____

Enclosed is \$ _____ for the Col. Brey Scholarship Fund
And/or \$ _____ for the Military Support Fund

Name: _____, Phone: _____

Guests: _____

Make check (s) payable to: **MOAA, Redwood Empire Chapter**

----- Check here if you will be able to bring a Raffle Prize.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- SEP: 6th Executive Committee Meeting
10th MOAA Wives Club Luncheon, Hungry
Hunter, S.R
15th Deadline for MOAA-VOICE Submissions
26th Friday, Lobster Feed, Santa Rosa
Veterans building
30th Executive Committee Meeting
- OCT: 4th BOARD MEETING - Scholarship winners
15th Deadline for MOAA-VOICE Submissions
23rd Luncheon, Election of Officers for 2009
- NOV: 1st Executive Committee Meeting
15th Deadline for MOAA-VOICE Submissions
- DEC: 6th Executive Committee Meeting
14th Sunday, Holiday Social
15th Deadline for MOAA-VOICE Submissions

**DECEASED
MEMBERS**



COL. JEROME W. KELLE-
HER,
U.S. Army (Ret)
Passed away May 1, 2008.
Spouse: Elena Kelleher
Member of the Mendocino County
Sub-Chapter

CAPT Eli Tepovich, USN (Ret.)
Passed away Aug. 22, 2008 at his home in
Sonoma.
Member of the Sonoma Valley
Sub-Chapter



Secretary/Treasurer - MOAA, Redwood Empire Chapter
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MOAA WIVES CLUB

(Sonoma County Main - All members welcome)

Connie Miller, President 568-3811
Barbara Confer, V. President 763-8198
Tina Lewis, Secretary 539-5546
Shirley Reeves, Treasurer 539-7839
Terry Silva, Family Services 544-6445

The regular meeting of MOAA Wives will be at Hunter Steak house on Wednesday, September 10. Menu choices are Oriental Chicken Salad: Fresh Greens tossed with other Vegetables and Crisp Wonton and topped with Sliced Chicken Breast or Caesar Salad with Grilled Shrimp. Fresh baked Bread, Butter, Dessert and Beverage are included for \$16. Lunch is served promptly at 12 Noon. If our Telephone Committee does not reach you, reservations (or cancellations) may be made with Susan Linch at 538-3342. Our program will be presented by Krista McAtee, an innovative and devoted teacher in our Public Schools. She will talk about the Young Writers' program which she began over a year ago and which has brought forth and encouraged talent from each and every child participating. You will enjoy Ms. McAtee! Our August meeting was full of surprises. Hostesses Mary Tillman and Terry Silva had "surprise" gift bags on each table with tea accessories. Barbara Confer, our intrepid Bingo leader, brought "surprise" gift bags as prizes. There was a real party atmosphere and everyone enjoyed it. Terry Silva, our Family Services Chairman, reported that get well cards have been sent to Evida Dewey, Ann Anderson, Betty Kappeler and Lee Owen. Happy to report that Lee attended the meeting with new-found vision.

Connie Miller, Publicity, 568-3811 conkrest@aol.com

Redwood Empire Chapter Officers and Directors for 2008

President:	COL Louis Peterka, USA	542-4076
Vice President:	CPT Tom Poulter, USA	576-0513
Secretary:	CPT Robert R. Safreno, USAR	795-3963
Treasurer:	LCOL Pete Rizzo, USA	539-3346
Past President:	LtCol Robert G. Reinking, USAFR	575-7873
Membership:	Vacant	
CAL-MOAA Director, Area 1:	LCOL Mort Jarvis, USAF	530-673-8402
Directors-at-large - Term 2007-2008		
	COL Tom Kelly, USAFR	542-3373
	Martina E. Lewis, AUX	539-5546
	LCOL Gary T. Meagher, AUS	544-4089
	LCDR Tim Morgan, USNR	C:695-9293
	LCOL Robert G. Reinking, USAFR	575-7873
	CWO-4 Robert J. Silva, USCG	544-6445
Directors-at-large - Term 2008-2009		
	CDR Don Confer, USN	763-8198
	CDR Leighton M. Royston, USN	578-4464
	COL Harold R. Warren, USMCR	763-6957
	LCOL Kevin Connolly, USAR	544-9338
Directors Representing Sub-Chapters:		
Humboldt/Del Norte:	LCDR Benjamin D. VanZandt, USNR	442-5898
Lake:	CAPT Daniel W. Christensen, USNR	263-3297
Mendocino:	Mrs. Myrna M. Hurst, AUX	468-0146
Sonoma Valley:	LCOL Dennis M. Meredith, USA	996-8819