



**MILITARY OFFICERS
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA**
Southwest Riverside County Chapter



NEWSLETTER
JANUARY 2009

Greetings from the President



CWO2 T. Michael Bircumshaw, USN Ret

Happy New Year

I trust you have all enjoyed a very merry Christmas and the happiest New Year. I am looking forward to this coming year with a sharp slate of officers and a highly motivated Board of Directors.

We will be looking for one more able minded person to fill the remaining "Director" position on the Board. There are a couple of other important vacancies and you will want to get your name in early so that we have the best person for the job. We are looking for a "Recording Secretary" and a "Newsletter Editor" and I am sure that there is someone within our ranks that has a bit of printer's ink flowing through their veins.

I want to thank Marti Treckman for her efforts and contributions to our minutes and newsletter for the past several years. She comes to all of our meetings with a bright smile and a willing attitude (great attributes for any attractive lady).

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CALENDAR

Sun City breakfast—Meetings suspended
Temecula/Murrieta—Wednesday, 21 Jan.,
11:30 am social hour, noon luncheon
meeting at the *Hungry Hunter*
Auxiliary luncheon meeting—Thursday,
Jan. 15, 11:30, *TGI Fridays* in Temecula
Board meeting—TBA

CHAPTER OFFICERS 2009

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President's Message

(continued from page 1)

Our newly elected Vice President, Willie Akana, is open to any suggestions you may have about our Chapter programs and speakers for this coming year. I have asked Willie to be our Guest Speaker at our January meeting on the 21st of January at the Hungry Hunter on Jefferson (between Winchester and Overland Dr).

If you missed the Christmas dinner, you really missed a fine dinner and tremendous entertainment (thanks to Jay Sweetnam). Jay brought in the TVHS Choir and they presented a spectacular a cappella program with a variety of tunes. Honest, they were terrific! For those of you that were there, I know you will be back next year if the Choir is there and for those who missed this year - make your reservations early for 2009!

In order to cut down on some of our costs and hopefully come up with a reduced dues schedule for 2010, I am going to attempt to send newsletters by e-mail (to those of you who have e-mail) so it will be paramount that you keep your e-mail address updated. Those who prefer to receive their newsletter in hard copy will continue to do so.

One consideration is to allow members who are coming to lunch to make their reservations by e-mail or phone and pay at the door. The collateral consideration is that once a reservation has been made, the money is due; although we do have a 48 hour cancellation window for those who encounter schedule conflicts or emergencies.

We will have a new Newsletter Editor for the February edition and all notices and columns are due no later than the fifth day of each month.

All notices, beginning in February, are to be sent to (see next column):

SWRC MOAA Newsletter POB 892616 Temecula, CA 92589-2616, or by e-mail to SWRCMOAA@yahoo.com.

We have a Chapter Web Page up at www.moaa.org/chapter/southwestriversidecounty and we are investigating the possibility of a Web Page for the Chapter to cover all of our events and post our Newsletters and photos.

My best to all of you,

Michael

T. Michael Bircumshaw
President SWRCC - 2009

MOAA Legislative Update

December 18, 2008

New Rules Ease Job Woes for Military Spouses

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) recently announced new proposed rules that would make it easier for spouses of military members to get jobs with the federal government. The new rules will allow federal agency managers to hire military spouses non-competitively – and skip the normal requirement to advertise a federal opening.

The new rules apply only to spouses who follow their military member on a military directed move and spouses of members seriously disabled or killed by service. The change will be retroactive for spouses who moved within one year of when the regulation takes effect.

OPM posted the new regulations on the Federal Register for a 30-day public comment period on December 5. After the public comment period and any subsequent revisions by OPM, the new rules will go into effect.

QUESTIONS

Why do doctors leave the room while you change? They're going to see you anyway.

If a deaf person has to go to court, is it still called a hearing?

If corn oil is made from corn, and vegetable oil is made from vegetables, what is baby oil made from?

JANUARY LUNCHEON

PROGRAM: WILLIAM AKANA

Our new Chapter Vice President, Lt. Col William "Willie" Akana USMC Ret will also be in charge of all upcoming programs. He will start out the year by presenting the program himself. He has an interesting background, so be sure to come to the luncheon meeting and get acquainted.

Willie is in charge of the JROTC at Murrieta Valley High School, having retired after 22 years in the Marine Corps. While serving, he was the Electronic Counter-Measures Officer, flying the EA-6B aircraft.

He will share his experiences in that position, as well as something about his cadets and JROTC generally.

Dear Members of Southwest Riverside County MOAA: Please send an e-mail with your correct phone numbers (home, work, and cell) to Michael Bircumshaw (Membership Chairman) as soon as possible to verify your correct contact & e-mail addresses. Send it to: SWRCMOAA@yahoo.com.

Also, it's time to pay your 2009 dues, so we would appreciate your payment at this time so we can continue to send you your newsletter. Form is enclosed.

Thank you!

"LADIES OF MOAA"

The monthly "Ladies of MOAA" luncheon meeting will be held on Thursday, January 15, 11:30, at TGI Fridays adjacent to the Promenade Mall in Temecula. No reservations are necessary. All Auxiliary members and MOAA officer wives are invited to this great fellowship.

"Ladies of MOAA" meetings are generally held on the third Thursday of every month, so be sure to reserve that day.



What Is an Auxiliary Member?

Auxiliary Members are surviving spouses of deceased members, and their Chapter dues are \$6. Many spouses of current MOAA Chapter members are also very active in the Auxiliary group. Spouses are most welcome to participate in Auxiliary activities and are not required to pay any Chapter dues on top of the \$35 regular dues paid by the MOAA member.

WRITE YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

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MOAA LEGISLATIVE YEAR IN REVIEW

The 2008 legislative year ended with a sense of disappointment when a flap over pork-barrel spending caused the Senate to abruptly drop consideration of numerous MOAA-endorsed amendments in the rush to finish the FY2009 Defense Authorization Act.

Among those were amendments that would have expanded concurrent receipt, improved compensation for military widows, and improved Guard and reserve retirement credit, among others.

While it's frustrating to see action deferred another year on those high-profile goals, it's also important to acknowledge that Congress did approve many other initiatives sought by MOAA and The Military Coalition:

Post-9/11 GI Bill: As of August 1, 2009, the new GI Bill will cover the full tuition at any state/public college or university, plus a stipend for books and housing. Additionally, eligible members willing to extend their current service for four or more years will be able to transfer the new benefits to a spouse and/or child(ren);

Medicare/TRICARE Physician Payments: Reversed a 10.6% cut in payments to doctors that would have threatened military beneficiaries' access to quality care, and substituted a 1.1% increase;

Military Pay Raise: Won a 3.9% military pay raise for active duty, Guard, and Reserve troops (one-half percentage point higher than the defense budget request);

TRICARE Fees: Barred a Pentagon proposal to impose large health fee increases for retirees under 65 and retail pharmacy copays for all TRICARE beneficiaries;

Reserve TRICARE Premiums. Won a major reduction in TRICARE Reserve Select premiums for currently serving Guard/Reserve members and families, effective in January 2009;

Preventive Care Services: Authorized the Pentagon to waive copays and deductibles for certain preventive health services to encourage military beneficiaries to pursue healthy lifestyles;

Tax Issues: Authorized disabled military retirees to file up to five years of amended income tax returns in the event of delays in award of a VA disability rating. Authorized survivors to deposit the \$100,000 military death gratuity into an IRA;

Paternity Leave: Authorized 10 days of leave, in addition to regular leave, to allow military fathers

to bond with a newborn child;

In-state tuition: All states must now provide continuity of in-state tuition when military parents move (14 states did not at the beginning of 2008);

Also during 2008, we realized the fruits of past years' labor on several fronts:

SBP age-62 annuity: As of April 1, 2008, all military survivors age 62 and older had their Survivor Benefit Plan annuities increased to equal 55% of the deceased member's covered retired pay. This was the final installment of a four-year phase-in that cumulatively raised SBP annuities by almost 60% for survivors age 62 and older. Before enactment of the MOAA-sponsored change, survivors received only 35% of covered retired pay;

Paid-up SBP: Effective Oct.1, 2008, military retirees who have attained age 70 and paid at least 30 years of SBP premiums have been awarded "paid-up SBP" status, so that premiums for SBP will no longer be deducted from their retired pay;

Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC): Thousands of members medically retired with less than 20 years of service due to combat- or operations-related injuries became eligible for CRSC;

Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance: As of October 1, survivors subject to deduction of VA survivor benefits from their SBP annuities began receiving a modest rebate of \$50 per month. We hope to build substantially on this tiny first step in coming years.

Source: MOAA Legislative Update
December 12, 2008

MORE QUESTIONS

Can you cry under water?

How important does a person have to be before they are considered assassinated instead of just murdered?

Why do you have to "put your two cents in" but it's only a "penny for your thoughts"?

Where's that extra penny going to?

Once you're in heaven, do you get stuck wearing the clothes you were buried in for eternity?

Why does a round pizza come in a square box?

What disease did cured ham actually have?

Did you ever notice that when you blow in a dog's face, he gets mad at you, but when you take him for a car ride, he sticks his head out the window?