



Military Officers Association of America
Southwest Illinois Chapter

September
2017

A Welcome Message from our President

CONGRATULATIONS SOUTHWEST CHAPTER! We are recognized as one of 125 Chapters out of 176 entries to receive the coveted MOAA 5-Star Level of Excellence Award for 2016. Although the Board is responsible for the entry submission, it is the ENTIRE Chapter that contributes to this achievement. Without everyone working toward the goals we have set for ourselves and doing things like meeting monthly, supporting the Company Grade Officers Council, raising funds for scholarships, and taking part in awards ceremonies for the ROTC detachment and JROTC units, this would not be possible. So give yourselves a big pat on the back for your contribution! And if you'd like to be more involved with either Chapter leadership, or have an idea for a meeting location or speaker, please let us know! We want to make our efforts relevant and fun! Thanks again on behalf of the Southwest Board and the entire Chapter membership!

Bob Norman



**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY
US AIR
FORCE!**

Celebrating 70 years as a separate Service, September 17, 2017

You may recall that we bade farewell to Col (ret) **Dale Davidson**, USAF, as our ROTC/JROTC Liaison. Dale had been in that position for several years and had established a great rapport with the detachment at SIU Edwardsville and the six high school JROTC instructors. He and Maryanne have moved off to the plains of Kansas and we wish them Godspeed as they set up for the next chapter of their lives. We'll miss both of them. Good news, though! We have a new ROTC/JROTC Liaison—CDR **Tim Grout**, USN-ret—who has stepped up to take over that responsibility. I'm sure that he will perform equally as well as his predecessor and continue the great relationship between the Chapter and the units. Welcome to the Board, CDR Grout!

Treasurer's Report, August 2017

Checking Account Balance	\$2,123.60
Savings/Scholarship Balance ..	\$6,078.72
CDs	\$14,892.76
Total	\$23,095.08

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This Month's Program

Saturday, 9 September 2017

2016-2017 Kickoff and Membership Drive

Fletcher's Kitchen & Tap

6101 W Main St. Belleville IL

\$22.00/person

11:30 Social with heavy appetizers

Cash Bar

Attire: Summer Casual

For our first meeting after the summer break, we're meeting at Fletcher's Kitchen & Tap in Belleville.

This meeting will be an afternoon casual affair. Please consider inviting a fellow officer you may know who is not currently a chapter member.

We'll hold a short business meeting during the event.

"Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened."

Dr. Seuss

Menu

Spinach/Artichoke Dip	Sausage & Cheese Tray
Chips & Salsa	Asian Chicken Skewers
Chicken Salad Sandwiches	Tenderloin Sandwiches
Fruit Tray	Caesar Salad
Choice of: soft drinks, tea, coffee	

Upcoming Programs

Date	Venue	Topic
Oct 2017	Cardinal Creek Golf Course	Cyber Security
Nov 2017	Hop House Lunch (tentative)	TBD
Dec 2017	Cardinal Creek Golf Course	Christmas Auction
Jan 2018	TBD	TBD
Feb 2018	TBD	TBD
Mar 2018	TBD	TBD
Apr 2018	TBD	TBD
May 2018	TBD	Business Meeting
Jun 2018	Busch Stadium (tentative)	Watching the Cards!

Regarding Programs, I want to make sure our programs are enjoyable and worthwhile for our Chapter. If you have a Program idea, or you know someone you believe would provide an interesting and worthwhile topic at a future meeting, please email me at ricksunner@gmail.com with their topic and contact information.

Each year, Congress works on a budget to keep the government running for the next fiscal year. Last year, our support of MOAA initiatives helped stave off the cuts that would produce significant effects on the currently serving and retiree populations. As the budget proposals move to committees in the House of Representatives and Senate, we once again face the possibility of being the target for reductions. Now is the time to act. Here are some of the legislation ideas that we need to make our voice heard about:

Military Housing Allowances -- The Senate Armed Service Committee's draft of the annual defense bill contains cuts to housing allowances for dual military couples. The result would be a loss in hundreds of dollars a month in earned compensation for servicemembers. <http://capwiz.com/moaa/issues/alert/?alertid=78078626>

Impact Aid for Military Families -- The administration's proposed budget cuts all funding for Impact Aid. Impact Aid (Title VII), Section 7002 (Federal Properties) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act has helped students in school districts across the US for over 68 years. Cutting this aid would affect 200 school districts in 29 states that use payments for federal property to replace lost local revenue due to the federal land in their communities. This includes school districts near the Air Force and West Point Military Academies, as well as rural communities where members of our military serve. <http://capwiz.com/moaa/issues/alert/?alertid=77753626>

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

Repeal Sequestration – This may sound like a broken record, but unless current law is changed, sequestration will return next year and automatically trigger deep cuts to the Defense Department. These severe cuts will exhaust our resources and capabilities in immeasurable ways—the toll on our military and their families will likewise be incalculable. <http://capwiz.com/moaa/issues/alert/?alertid=74607626>

These and other issues are all available for viewing on the Legislative Action Center page of the MOAA Website (www.moaa.org).

In June, the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) subcommittees released their markups of the FY 2018 defense authorization bill, providing milder recommendations than in years past. The **active duty pay raise** will match the Employment Cost Index at 2.4 percent. The president's budget request of a 2.1-percent raise would have widened the existing pay gap between the military and private sector. For the first time in many years, the mark includes a provision aimed at supporting **military spouse employment**. It would allow for reimbursement of up to \$500 in expenses when a military spouse must acquire a new license or certification as a result of a PCS to a new state. On the **TRICARE** front, unlike the budget the DoD recently proposed, the HASC bill proposes no changes for TRICARE For Life, TRICARE Prime, or last year's new TRICARE Select, and it maintains the current grandfathered fee structure. The new fee structure begins only for

Federal Legislative News



those future service entrants after Jan. 1, 2018. This bill would continue to grandfather currently serving and retired servicemembers and families against the large fee hikes proposed in last year's defense authorization bill.

Earlier in the year, Congress was also focusing on several issues for the Guard and Reserve. These include:

Reserve Component Benefits Parity Act: This bill would amend the federal law to ensure that an order to serve on active duty under section 12304a or 12304b of Title 10, U.S. Code, is treated the same as other orders to serve on active duty for determining eligibility and for calculating deadlines for certain benefits. Those benefits include accruing eligibility credits towards the Post-9/11 GI Bill as well as access to pre- and post-deployment health care. (S. 667, introduced by Sen. Al Franken (D-Minn.); H.R. 1384, introduced by Rep. Steven Palazzo (R-Miss.))

Servicemember Retirement Improvement Act: This bill amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow members of the reserve components to make the maximum allowable contribution (\$18,000 in 2017) to their Thrift Savings Plans (TSPs) without limiting the amount members may contribute to a retirement plan based on other employment. The bill also doubles the maximum allowable contribution amount for federal employees in the Ready Reserve who are not eligible to make contributions to any plan other than the TSP. (S.492, introduced by Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas); H.R. 1317, introduced by Rep. Sam Johnson (R-Texas))

Justice for Servicemembers and Veterans Act of 2017: This bill would improve the enforcement of employment and reemployment rights of members of the uniformed services under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) and amend the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) to improve the protection of members of the uniformed services. More specifically, this bill would make mandatory arbitration clauses in contracts unenforceable against servicemembers using their legal rights under USERRA or SCRA. (S. 646, introduced by Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.))

Once again, we find our benefits are under the gun. Please consider taking the time to send the MOAA-prepared requests to your members of Congress and let them know how you feel. Many of the issues may not be directly relevant to you or your family, but to the country and the strength of a committed military force that we rely on, these are and will continue to be a struggle. Most people serving in the military may feel constrained to voice any concerns because of their position. We need to be their voice.

COLA Watch: The July CPI is 238.617, 1.5 percent above the FY 2016 COLA baseline. This was the first decline since November 2016. The CPI for August 2017 is scheduled to be released on September 14, 2017.

Locally, the VA will break ground in late August for a new outpatient facility for veterans on Fortune Blvd in Shiloh IL, behind the Target building in Green Mount Commons, that is planning to open in Spring 2018, replacing the Belleville Community-Based Outpatient Clinic. This facility will service acute outpatient care needs and is open to any veteran being provided services by the VA Health Care System.

If you've not kept up with what Congressman **Mike Bost** has been doing lately, here is a list (supplied by the Congressman):

Fighting for Southern Illinois Veterans

- Introduced the Veterans Appeals Improvement Modernization Act, bipartisan legislation that was

passed by the House to increase speed and efficiency for veterans' benefits appeals at the VA

- Introduced the Veterans Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act, bipartisan legislation that was passed by the House to ensure veterans receiving disability benefits from the VA are provided the same cost-of-living-adjustment as Social Security recipients
- Introduced the VA Health Center Management Stability and Improvement Act, bipartisan legislation passed by the House requiring the VA to report back to Congress with a plan to fill long-standing vacancies at VA medical centers across the country
- Demanding accountability at the VA so employees can be fired, demoted, or suspended for not doing their jobs

Working for Our Farmers

- Introduced the BALE Act to update lending programs at USDA to better reflect the challenges facing new and beginning farmers in need of credit.

Demanding Answers for the Cairo Housing Crisis

- Offered an amendment to H.R. 2842, the Accelerating Individuals into the Workforce Act, legislation that passed the House to better ensure people involuntarily displaced by a housing authority access wage assistance
- Met with HUD Secretary Ben Carson to discuss the crisis
- Authored a letter to the Department of Housing and Urban Development demanding documents related to HUD inspections and audits of the Alexander County Housing Authority

Growing Main Street Jobs and Economic Security

- Working toward a fairer, simpler tax code to give more money back to taxpayers and spur economic growth
- Voted to revitalize Main Street by repealing Dodd-Frank to give relief to community banks that small businesses rely on every day
- Expanding skills-based education and development to help Americans find new opportunities and the right skills to get better-paying jobs

Advancing Patient-Centered Health Care

- Voted for legislation to repeal Obamacare and replace it with a system that covers pre-existing conditions while bringing down costs and expanding choices for families
- Ending rampant medical malpractice lawsuits that drive up the cost of health care
- Restoring competition through association health plans for small businesses and a level playing field

Rebuilding our Military

- Voted to increase defense funding and authorizing additional resources to counter threats, increase end-strength, and enhance our military's readiness
- Voted to provide service members with their biggest pay raise in eight years
- Voted to add thousands of additional military personnel

Strengthening Our Communities

- Voted to add more resources to fight the opioid epidemic including treatment and prevention
- Voted for sweeping reforms to end human trafficking with tougher penalties for sex traffickers and increased support for victims
- Voted to increase resources for border security and reforming our immigration laws to protect law-abiding citizens from dangerous criminal aliens and crack down on sanctuary cities that impede immigration

tion enforcement

- Delivering affordable and reliable energy, so you can find relief in the prices at the pump and at home

Fixing Washington

- Offering record relief from Washington red tape with 15 bills to strike harmful regulations from the books
- Adding more accountability for unelected bureaucrats by making any major regulation subject to an



MOAA SW IL Chapter at the Illinois State Fair

This year the Illinois State Fair in Springfield featured a **Veterans and Gold Star Family Day**. The Illinois Council of Chapters and Southwest Chapter were there in force making our presence known among the visitors. The day was exceptional and we talked to several veterans and retirees about MOAA and our work on their behalf. This was a great success for the State Fair drawing in several more hundreds of people to the event. And along the same lines, Scott AFB Event Center will be the site of the **2017 Retiree Appreciation Day**. Held on a Saturday in late September, the event features speakers of interest to the retirees, along with several vendors who can talk about things like TriCare service, other veteran organizations, like MOAA (yes, Southwest will have a table!), and in the past, flu shots. Coffee, juice, pastries and fruit have also been available, so come on out and support the event! You may even learn something new about Scott in its centennial year of existence or other programs and organizations.

God bless you all for your continued participation and service to our country and military. You will be called again to take a role in helping the currently serving, veteran, retiree, and surviving spouse to realize their entitlements. It is only through your continual commitment that gains are possible. Congress and DoD will seek ways to cut the budget and we cannot stand by and allow inequality of the military members' share of that responsibility. Thank you and congratulations on your achievements! Let's make sure 2017 continues in that tradition for Southwest.

Chapter Officers

President	Col (ret) Bob Norman
1st Vice President	Open
2nd Vice President	Maj (ret) Rick Sunner
Secretary	Lt Col (ret) Ann Morey
Treasurer	Col (ret) Dick Glogowski
Communications	Maj (ret) Rick Sunner





**Lt Col (ret) Roderick T. French
(1918 - 2017)**

We were so sorry to hear about the passing of Lt Col (ret) Roderick T. French, 99, of O'Fallon. Born June 16, 1918 in Chicago, Ill., Rod passed away August 11, 2017 at Memorial East Hospital, Shiloh, Ill., following a brief illness.

Rod grew up in Ganges, MI and graduated from high school as a standout basketball player. In 1942, he enlisted in the US Army Air Corps Medic Group but jumped at the chance to train as an aviator. Upon graduation from pilot training, he was joined in California by his high school sweetheart, Marguerite Heinze and they married May 13, 1943 in Fresno, Calif. Soon after their wedding, Marguerite bravely saw him off to Kimbolton, England. While stationed there, Rod flew 33 missions in the B-17, while serving with the 326th Bomb Squadron. His many service decorations include the Distinguished Flying Cross, National Defense Service Medal, and the Air Medal with three oak leaf clusters. His military stations also included Labrador, Canada, Okinawa, Mississippi, Ohio, and Illinois, before his discharge in 1944. In 1952, he was recalled for non-combat service in the Korean Conflict, due to his skills in electronic radar construction and repair. In 1968, he retired from the Air Force as a Lieutenant Colonel, and settled in Illinois to continue his chiropractic service.

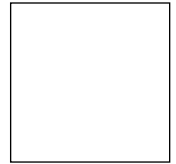
In his spare time, he enjoyed golfing, woodworking and hand-canning. Rod never met a card game that didn't challenge him to win; he outwalked anybody anywhere and lived for his wife's cooking. He scored a hole-in-one once, but rightfully attributed it to the favorable wind, not his skill. Surviving are his wife, Marguerite; daughter, Patricia; son, Rick; brother, Loren; grandchildren, Thorston (Julie Durkee) Tichenor, Joshua French and Chad (Aimie Jory-Hile) French; great-grandchildren, Daniel and Sophia; and a son-in-law, Peter Tichenor.

The full obituary can be found at:

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/belleville/obituary.aspx?n=roderick-t-french&pid=186422166&fhid=6304>

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Southwest Illinois Chapter
Military Officers Association of America
P.O. Box 735
O'Fallon, IL 62269



Meeting Announcement

Our first meeting after the summer break will be held on Saturday, **9 September 2017**, at Fletcher's Kitchen & Tap in Belleville IL. (See Program News for details.) Cost is **\$22.00** per person.

RESERVATION FORM FOR SWI MOAA CHAPTER MEETING

Reservation Deadline (Mail received by, email, or phone call): 4 September 2017

E-mail to swimoaa@charter.net, or complete this form and mail it along with your check for the cost of the meal(s) to: Southwest Illinois MOAA, P.O. Box 735, O'Fallon, IL 62269 **to be received by the deadline**. Alternatively, phone Dick Glogowski at 618-624-6115 with a commitment to pay at the door.

Number of Reservations Desired:

Member's Name: _____

Spouse/Guest: _____