

SOUNDINGS

Silver Strand Chapter of Military Officers Association of America

October 2007

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

CAPT Jim Cahill, USNR, Retired

As I wrote before, "This is deja vu all over again." said by Yogi Berra some years ago. Your Silver Strand Chapter has again been recognized as a Five Star Level of Excellence Chapter for 2006.

This is a very prestigious award to only the very best chapters in National MOAA. You will read of some of the goals a chapter has to reach for this award in Adm. Norbert R. Ryan's letter elsewhere in this newsletter.

The "streamer" shown in the picture will join other streamer awards on your Chapter banner.

The Silver Strand Chapter is one of six chapters in Area VIII, CAL-MOAA, and one of three in Area VIII to receive this award this year, duplicating the three awards last year. I will challenge any other Area in CAL-MOAA to match that record of 50% achievement. I will further challenge any other Area in

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Rear Admiral (Select) Garry J. Bonelli, Deputy Commander, Naval Special Warfare Command RADM Bonelli enlisted in the Navy in 1968 and was a member of the first ever Underwater Demolition Team (UDT)/SEAL boot camp company. He made two, ground combat deployments in Vietnam as a Navy Frogman with UDT-12. In 1976, as a drilling Reservist, he completed his master of science degree in Mass Communications received a direct commission in the Navy Reserve. He has served as the commanding officer of eight Navy Reserve units. He was mobilized in 1990 in support of Operations *Desert Shield* and *Desert Storm*, and served as the commanding officer of SEAL Team 5. He has the distinction of being the first and only Reservist to ever command an active duty SEAL Team. In 2001, he was selected to serve as the Deputy Commander at Navy Reserve Readiness Command Southwest. Recalled to active duty again in 2006, he served as the Chief of Staff for Naval Special Warfare Command. Recalled again in 2007, he now serves as the Deputy Commander, Naval Special Warfare Command. In his civilian profession, he is a staff director with the San Diego Association of Governments. **See Page 7 for more information on Chapter dinner Tuesday, 23 October**

Legislative Update

Senate Adopts Major Military Benefit Upgrades

The last week in September was a good week for the military community, as the full Senate approved a number of amendments including:

Majority Leader Harry Reid's (D-NV) amendment that would provide full, immediate concurrent receipt to disabled retirees deemed "unemployable" by the VA retroactive to January 1, 2005.

Sen. Bill Nelson's (D-FL) amendment that would accelerate 30-year paid-up Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) coverage to October 1, 2007 and bar deduction of VA survivor benefits from SBP annuities.

Sen. Frank Lautenberg's (D-NJ) and Sen. Chuck Hagel's (R-NE) amendment that would bar any increases in TRICARE fees for FY2008 and articulate the sense of Congress that military health care is a crucial offset to the adverse conditions of service and that military people pay substantial premiums up-front in extended service and sacrifice over and above any cash fees.

Sen. Saxby Chambliss's (R-GA) amendment that would reduce the Reserve retirement age by three months for each 90 days served on active duty since 9/11/01.

Sen. John McCain's (R-AZ) amendment that would increase the maximum annual points creditable for Reserve component retirement to 130 points (vs. 90) for 2007 and subsequent years.

Sen. Norm Coleman's (R-MN) amendment that would authorize paying increased reimbursements for mental health care if required to meet needs, and requiring a Pentagon report on military beneficiaries' adequacy of access to mental health services.

Sen. Blanche Lincoln's (D-AR) amendment that would authorize Guard or reserve members to use their mobilization GI Bill benefits up to 10 years after separating from the Selected Reserve.

Medicare, TRICARE Fixes Delayed

Earlier this year, the House passed the Children's Health and Medicare Protection Act, which, in addition to increasing coverage of lower-income children under Medicaid, would have reversed the 9.9% cut in Medicare/TRICARE payments to providers scheduled to take effect on Jan. 1 under current law. Instead, the bill proposed modest increases in doctor payments for 2008 and 2009.

This is a crucial issue, both for the elderly and for all military beneficiaries, since Medicare is one of the lowest-paying plans in America and TRICARE payments are tied to Medicare's. Today's payment rates are about what they were in 2001, while doctors' costs have risen significantly over the last 6 years. If payments are cut further, it will only lead more doctors to refuse to see Medicare and TRICARE patients.

MOAA had hoped that the children's health bill would be a vehicle for quick action on Medicare/TRICARE payments. Unfortunately, that didn't pan out.

The Senate equivalent bill did not include the Medicare/TRICARE payment fix, and congressional leaders decided to drop that provision in the interest of passing a "clean" bill on children's health coverage.

House and Senate leaders say they're still committed to preventing the cuts in doctor payments from taking place, and we believe they're serious. One big challenge is that reversing the payment cuts carries a price tag of \$20 billion over ten years. Everyone in Congress wants to make the fix, but finding the money to pay for it is another issue.

Unfortunately, the decision to drop it from the children's health bill probably means this crucial action will be put off until the very end of the year - again. The most likely scenario is that it will be rolled into some kind of "must pass" omnibus legislation, so leadership can threaten that legislators won't get home for Christmas unless they agree on the funding and pass it.

New Silver Strand Chapter Members

James M. Zortman, VADM, USN (Ret)

Welcome Aboard

TAPS
Marjory McCormick, AUXILIARY



2007 USMC Birthday Ball

Saturday, 10 November 2007, 1900 – 2300
South Mesa Staff NCO Club, Camp Pendleton
Sponsored by the Pendleton Chapter, MOAA
Guest of Honor - Robert E. Haebel, MG USMC-Ret
\$40 per Person

Contact: LtCol Bill Byrne, USMC-Ret (760) 7234751

AUXILIARIES ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY AND FULLY

What do we mean by “auxiliary”? MOAA uses the term to identify the surviving spouse of a deceased member. Of these survivors, 99 percent are women. In the St. Petersburg (FL) Chapter of MOAA we refer to auxiliaries as “special members.” Regardless of what we are called, we are the surviving spouses of MOAA members and hopefully play an important role.

Now that our spouses are no longer with us, we must remember to look to MOAA for help, guidance, and support just as our spouses did. They believed in MOAA, and perhaps your loved one made it possible for you to continue a life membership or annual membership. MOAA at the national level is there to help you, and so are the officers of your local chapter. Please remember that, and call on them when you need answers.

At the chapter level, we want special members to feel as much a part of the chapter as the regular members. We would like you to actively participate. I know you all have talent and skills, so come forward and share them with us. We need you to know that we want you to be an active part of a chapter and to know that MOAA is for you as well. If you have thoughts or concerns, fee free to bring them to a local board member so that they can be addressed. You can always call national MOAA with questions; in most cases they can find an answer or solution for you. They are there for you.

Please become involved, and do come to our monthly meetings. You are a vital part of our membership.

Just a reminder to all the spouses of current members, if your spouse has not shared vital information with you regarding wills, bank accounts and the like, please urge him or her to sit down with you and go over everything. This will make it so much easier for you if or when our partner is no longer with you.

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National MOAA to meet that record!

The Silver Strand Chapter also excels in individual leadership in MOAA. We have had, from our Chapter, four national board members, one, a past MOAA President and one current Silver Strand member on the National Board is the National Chaplain and Chairman of the MOAA Scholarship Committee, General Wayne Hoffmann. General Hoffman has also been nominated to the office of Vice President of CAL-MOAA for the years 2008-2009.

The slate of Chapter officers for the coming year will be nominated in the last quarter of this year, to serve, after the election in December for 2008. If you wish to be part of the leadership of this outstanding Chapter, please contact one of the current board members for further information.

Your Chapter also supports two outstanding NJROTC units and an outstanding Naval Sea Cadet Battalion. I encourage you to make a contribution to these three units by using the reservation form on Page 7.

Jim Cahill

Silver Strand Chapter Selected for 5 Star Levels of Excellence Award for 2006

The Silver Strand Chapter has been recognized as being one of the very best chapters in the country for the second year in a row. VADM Norbert Ryan, President MOAA, notified the Chapter of the award in his August 9 Letter (below). The "Streamer" was presented to CAPT Jim Cahill by MajGen Bob Butcher at the Annual Joint Chapter Luncheon in September.

Dear Captain Cahill:

I am writing to congratulate you on your chapter's selection for the 5 Star Levels of Excellence Award for 2006. This award reflects the exceptional performance of your chapter in promoting both the Silver Strand Chapter and National MOAA goals, and your active involvement in the community. Your chapter's actions are clearly an example of the type of servant leadership so important to the future success of our chapter system.

Through separate communications now underway, we will arrange to present a special "Streamer" to you in recognition of this award, which we hope you will proudly display with your chapter flag.



Please pass on my congratulations to your members and my best wishes for continued exceptional success!

Sincerely, VADM NORBERT R. RYAN, JR. USN (RET)

The **2007 Edition** of VA's *Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents* booklet is available for download at: http://www1.va.gov/OPA/vadocs/current_benefits.asp

This booklet contains a summary of the programs & services provided by the VA. It can be ordered by calling toll free: 866.512.1800 and referencing Pamphlet 80-07-01



The 18th Annual MILITARY WOMEN'S LUNCHEON



Guest Speaker

Janis L. Karpinski, USAR, Retired

Veteran of Desert Storm/Shield, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom

Date: **Saturday, November 3, 2007**

Time: 1100-Social Hour/No host bar, 1200-Luncheon, 1300-Program

Place: Marine Corps Air Station, Miramar Officer's Club

Deadline for reservations **Friday, October 26, 2007**

For additional information contact: Toni Lopez (619) 462-6081

Name(s) _____ Branch of Service _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

No. of reservations _____ @ \$20.00 per person= Total \$ _____

Make checks payable to: Military Women's Luncheon

Mail to: Toni Lopez, 4950 Treasure Drive, La Mesa, CA 91941

Auxiliary Member Advisory Committee Project

The Aux Member Advisory Committee of MOAA has a project and needs your help! The project will consist of personal stories that will appear in the Military Officer Magazine called "Through the Years." This project will be about survivors of those KIA in WWII, the Korean Conflict, Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq (War on Terrorism). Their stories will describe how they coped after the deaths of their spouses. Did they return to school, to work, did they volunteer work? If these survivors had children, how did they cope with their loss as a family? Anything that relates to this subject in their personal stories would be welcome. We are asking the widows/widowers to submit a brief bio to us which will then be forwarded to the Magazine for consideration.

Candidates can send responses to the committee email address: <auxcom@moaa.org> or to Anne Patton: <apatton@ucsd.edu> and she will forward them.



Joint Silver Strand Chapter/Navy League Dinner Aug 20

VADM Ed Martin, USN (Ret) gave an outstanding talk on his experience as a POW for almost six years after being shot down near Hanoi by a surface to air missile while on a combat mission on July 9, 1967. He credited senior officers, especially Admiral Stockdale, for providing the leadership that helped POWs endure the harsh treatment by the North Vietnamese. He provided an interesting perspective on his recent return to the Hanoi Hilton as a museum, and statements of humane treatment of POWs made by the North Vietnamese. Seventy people attended the dinner meeting.

Annual Joint Chapter Luncheon September 15

Congresswoman Susan A. Davis, Representing the 53rd District of California, was the guest speaker at the Annual Joint Chapter luncheon at MCAS Miramar Officers' Club attended by over 135 people. She serves on the House Armed Services Committee, the Education and Labor Committee, and the House Administration Committee. She has recently been chosen as Chair of the Personnel Subcommittee of the HASC, which presides over such issues as military health care, recruitment and retention, and military education. Her Defense and National Security initiatives in Congress include increasing spending on defense and homeland security, consistently supporting military pay raises and working to restore free and reduced-cost school meals programs for military families.



Congressman Davis discussed the current major issues facing the Congress and the need for a bipartisan approach to solving those issues. She said her experience as an Air Force wife overseas gave her a valuable perspective on the demands on military personnel and their families. She made a point of noting that she was the first politician asked to speak to the Joint Chapter luncheon and considered it an honor. She was recognized and thanked for her strong support of the military.

Annual Retired Military Personnel Seminar & Resource Fair

Presented By: **Commander, Navy Region Southwest**

In Cooperation With: **Naval Base San Diego MWR & Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego**

Saturday, 27 October 2007, 0830 – 1400

Marine Corps Recruit Depot, 3800 Chosin Ave, Base Theater (McDougal Hall – Building 30)

For more information contact either the Retired Activities Office at MCRD; 619.524.5301 or NAVBASE, San Diego; 619.556.8987 or e-mail questions to nrswrao@navy.mil

If you plan to attend, please RSVP no later than October 12 to prevent shortage of handouts and other materials

MOAA Silver Strand Chapter: www.cal-moaa-silverstrand.org

Joint Silver Strand Chapter MOAA /Coronado Navy League Dinner Meeting

Date: Tuesday, October 23, 2007

Rear Admiral (Select) Garry J. Bonelli, Deputy Commander, Naval Special Warfare Command

Where: Coronado Yacht Club, 1631 Strand Way

When: 1800: Social Time

1900: Dinner

1945: Program

Slow Roasted Prime Rib w/ Peppercorn Au Jus & Creamy Horseradish, or Bacon Wrapped Fresh Salmon w/ Fresh Mango Salsa, Apple Cider Reduction Traditional Caesar Salad, rice, vegetables, desert, rolls, coffee, tea; \$30 per person

Use the coupon below for:

- October 23 Dinner Meeting Reservation
- Pay 2008 Dues
- Donate to NJROTC
- Donate to MOAA Scholarship Fund

Chapter Meeting Tuesday, October 23, 2007

Mail to: Silver Strand Chapter MOAA
P.O. Box 180043
Coronado, CA 92178-0043

Name _____
Phone _____

Reservations must reach our PO Box by **Noon, Friday, 19 October (Firm)**

Indicate your choice (s) of entrée _____

Number attending dinner ____ X \$30 = \$_____

2008 Dues (\$10 for members, \$5 for Auxiliary) \$_____

Donation to NJROTC (Coronado and Mar Vista High Schools) \$_____

Naval Sea Cadet Corps, Coronado Battalion \$_____

MOAA Scholarship Fund \$_____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$_____



Silver Strand Chapter Board of Directors

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First Vice	Bob Butcher, MajGen, USMC, (Ret)	435-6979
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Dates to Remember

2007/2008

Chapter Meetings

December 4

February 19

April 15

June 17

August 19

October 21

December 2

Board Meetings

November 20

January 15

March 18

May 20

July 15

September 16

November 18

SOUNDINGS

Silver Strand Chapter

Military Officers Association of America

P. O. Box 180043

Coronado, CA 92178-0043

Return Service Requested

TIME DATED MATERIAL