



**HOUSTON AREA**  
 PO BOX 1082  
 HOUSTON TX 77251-1082  
[www.moaahoustonarea.com](http://www.moaahoustonarea.com)

Newsletter to Members

Vol. LVII No.6

June 2020

**Next Meeting Saturday, June 27, 11:30 Central Texas Barbecue, Pearland**

## President's Message

Dear MOAA HA Members,

I understand it's been a rough couple of months for all of us in dealing with the pandemic. It will probably be weeks before we know for sure whether the worst is behind us, but the data is increasingly encouraging. I applaud each of you for persevering through these difficult times. Many of you have experienced hardships, family separations, anxiety, depression, and yet you found a way to keep moving forward and to keep sight of your goals.



Joe Willoughby

As our communities continue to open up, please remember that the coronavirus is still among us. I encourage everyone to continue practicing the guidelines that have been put out by state, local, and federal health professionals—maintain a safe distance, wash your hands often, and wear a mask when in public.

Your Board of Directors has met twice since the beginning of the pandemic. We met in April remotely via Zoom and most recently at the end of May in person. Keeping social distancing and CDC guidelines in play, we are seeking ideas on ways to responsibly meet in person. Please feel free to share with us your ideas. We are a social lot, and we need the personal interaction, fellowship, and camaraderie this chapter is known for.

Moving into the summer, your BOD has decided to resume our Saturday luncheons beginning in June. We believe we've scheduled some wonderful speakers for our upcoming June, July, and August luncheons. As you read about our upcoming chapter luncheons below, you'll notice that each event is scheduled to take place at a different venue in the Houston area. Two primary

*(Continued on p.3)*

## 2020 Officers

### President

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## MOAA Houston Area Board Meetings

Board Meetings are being held  
As Noticed by the President

All members are welcome.  
Please let President Joe Willoughby know if you would like to participate.

## MOAA Houston Area MEETING

**June 27, 2020**

Central Texas Syle  
Barbecue  
4110 West  
Broadway Pearland,  
TX 77581

281.485.9626  
centralbbq.com

**1 meat, sides, dessert,  
drink: \$12.95**  
**2 meats, sides,  
dessert, drink: \$15.95**

You may BYOB  
beer and wine

Reservations: Carol  
Wilson, 281-642-4050

## Future 2020 Monthly Meetings

July 25  
Kelly's Country Cooking  
Meadows Place  
(Sugar Land Area)

August 29  
Lone Star Flight Museum  
Ellington Field

**Military Ball**  
**RESCHEDULED to 9/19**

## Military Officers Wives Association

## MOWA

**NO MEETINGS  
UNTIL  
FURTHER  
NOTICE**

**Phyllis Ottis, 713.774.2282**

## MOAA-HA

### \$ Treasurer's Report, May 31, 2020

Receipts \$ 0.00  
Expenses \$ 450.00

Award Fund Reserve \$ 1,967.71  
Operating Balance \$ 1,494.58

*Frank Tricomi, 2020 Treasurer  
COL USA (Ret.)*

*Life is not measured by the  
number of breaths we take but by  
the moments that take our breath  
away.*

—Author unknown

## ATTENTION:

CONTACT YOUR STATE AND  
NATIONAL LEGISLATORS TO  
ENCOURAGE THEM TO SUPPORT  
VETERANS' ISSUES AND  
ACTIONS

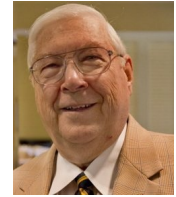
### MOAA Website assistance:

<https://www.moaa.org/content/take-action/storming-the-hill/storming-the-hill-2020/>

Find your state legislators at  
<https://wrm.capitol.texas.gov/home>

## Chaplain's Message

**SHALOM!  
PEACE BE  
WITH YOU!**



Happy Summer  
Everyone!

Kerry Magee  
CAPT USN (Ret.)

Let us continue to pray to  
Almighty God to give us  
some relief from this deadly  
virus.

“Ask and you shall receive.”

I have heard that we live in  
uncertain times, and it is true!  
But we also live in certain  
time that a protective and  
loving God stands with us.

This month of June holds  
some momentous events that  
have occurred and recur:

**June 2-4, 1942: The Battle  
of Midway.** This battle was  
fought 78 years ago and was  
the turning point of the  
Pacific Theater of World War  
II, pushing the IJN back 3,000  
miles across the wide Pacific.  
It was a carrier battle using  
planes to bomb other Carriers.  
The IJN lost four of its prime  
carriers, while the USN only  
lost two.

**June 6, 1944: D-Day!**  
This event, 76 years ago, was  
the Allied Invasion of  
Nazi-dominated Europe.  
7,000 ships carried 160,000  
troops to the beaches of  
Normandie, France. It was the  
largest seaborne invasion in  
history! The 1950s movie  
“The Longest Day” and the  
recent movie, “Saving Private  
Ryan” show the complete  
horror of this event. We lost  
many troops that day on the  
beaches, but our guys  
persevered and, by day's end,  
the Allies controlled the  
beaches.

Yet, with the passage of time, public awareness of WWII and its almost unfathomable consequences has faded, becoming dim as a sepia tone of an old photograph! This is really sad, because this generation has not learned from the old adage, "Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it."

#### **June 14: Flag Day**

I pray that all of us, family and friends, will fly our beloved banner, the Stars and Stripes. It is the day our nation sets apart from others to honor our 13 stripes and 50 stars. Let us not forget it. (Also my Ann's birthday.)

#### **June 20: Summer begins**

A time period we all have enjoyed until this year when we cannot, but Texas Governor Abbott has lifted restrictions, and all our beaches and parks are now opened. However, current news clips show folks swarming all over the East Coast beaches. I fear, and let us pray, that this just might just result in peaks of the virus. Let us pray that these folks will be screened from the virus. Let us wear our masks and keep social distances.

#### **June 21: Father's Day**

Please do not forget "Dear old Dad." Sometimes dads seem to be forgotten by their children, especially when they leave home and start their lives in the "new world." Let us show the same joy expressed to our moms on Mother's Day. If your dad is still living, call him and say, "Hi, Dad, I love you, and thanks for all the things you have done for me." It's a small thing, but it has great significance.

I'll conclude with a few quotations:

*"Empathy is part of seeing the world through God's eyes and not just ours."* –Lauren Casper

*"Making mistakes is not a disgrace. Mistakes are ways to gratefully keep us humble."* –Jacqueline Schiff

*"Happiness happens when we give it away."* –Max Lucado

**God bless you all!**

***CAPT Kerry B. Magee USNR-RET  
Chaplain/Past President***

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### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

*(Cont'd from p. 1)*

reasons we decided to give this a try: (1) we are making the effort to locate the luncheons in areas where our chapter members live; and (2) we hope to provide different dining options at more affordable prices to our members.

Our June 27th luncheon will take place in Pearland at Central Texas Style Barbecue. Our guest speaker will be **Colonel E. A. "Buddy" Grantham** from the Army Component of the Texas State Guard. COL Grantham will talk to us about the roles and missions of Texas State Guard. After a long break, we look forward to reconnecting with each other, enjoying some camaraderie, and dining on some delicious hickory smoked BBQ!

In July, we will meet at Kelley's Country Cookin' located in the city of Meadows Place (Stafford, Sugarland, and Missouri City area). Our guest speaker for July is **Lt Colonel Tom Duncavage**, USMC (Ret.). Colonel Duncavage is a former USMC pilot and currently serves as a governor-appointed commissioner with the Texas Military Preparedness Commission.

Colonel Duncavage will update us on the commission's efforts to lure new military missions and units to Texas, specifically discussing efforts to attract the newly created United States Space Force to Houston. This should be a very insightful and interesting discussion.

We will conclude our summer luncheon series with an August meeting at the Lone Star Flight Museum located at Ellington Field. In addition to having the chance to explore the museum and get an up-close view of the museum's collection of vintage aircraft, we will have the opportunity to listen to **Lt Gen Douglas H. Owens**, USAF (Ret.), the President and CEO of the Lone Star Flight Museum, and former command pilot with 3,100 plus hours in various USAF aircraft. We plan to cater this event.

We look forward to seeing each of you at one or more of these upcoming luncheons. Your participation is essential to maintain the life and energy of the Houston Area Chapter. Never stop serving!

Regards,

**Joseph C. Willoughby  
Lt Col, USAF (Ret.)  
MOAA-HA President**

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### **Endowment Fund & Houston Corps of Cadets**

We appreciate whatever you can spare for this worthy, tax-deductible cause. Form is in the back of this newsletter.

Bill  
**William Taylor**  
Cpt. USA Ret

## Speaker for June 27

**E. A.  
“Buddy”  
Grantham**  
COL, USA



We are especially proud to announce that our June speaker will be our own member COL “Buddy” Grantham!

EDWIN A. “BUDDY” GRANTHAM, MBA UNITED STATES ARMY (RET), COL, TXSGR; Executive Director, Helping a Hero, Website [helpingahero.org](http://helpingahero.org), which provides support for military personnel severely injured in the war on terror. Provides specially adapted homes for qualifying service members through partnerships made with the builders, developers, communities, and the veteran. Helping a Hero strives to engage the community in providing services and resources for our wounded heroes and their families. Additionally, Helping a Hero provides additional support programs such as marriage retreats, caregiver retreats, recreational activities, emotional support, and financial support.

COL Grantham has been involved with Helping a Hero since its inception and has hit the ground running leading the home program and refining the veteran support programs. COL Grantham is a native Houstonian, a graduate of Texas A&M's Corps of Cadets, a retired U. S. Army combat officer, and is

currently serving as a member of the Texas State Guard, where he is the Deputy Commander of the Army Component.

COL Grantham began a 20+-year career in the U.S. Army as a Cavalry Officer and then transitioned to the sphere of logistics as a Quartermaster Officer while supporting worldwide missions and projects concerning operations, housing, transportation, fleet management, overall logistics, and contracts for military units. In his last position in the Army he was responsible for supporting the Global War on Terrorism by assisting in the planning and coordination of theater level logistical support for the Middle East Theater consisting of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Kuwait.

Buddy's 40 years' experience in managing programs, leading projects, developing training, and providing consulting services to improve organizational performance was the perfect background when he was called to serve the City of Houston as Assistant Director of Fleet Management and Advocate for Assistance for Veterans of U. S. Armed Forces. He created the City's Office of Veterans Affairs, and USAA and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce named Houston the Best City in America for Veterans to live in 2013. In 2013 the City of Houston presented him a proclamation for E. A. “Buddy” Grantham Day.

He is exceptionally experienced in building highly productive teams, effectively organizing projects, managing tasks, and building coalitions and has done so the world over. He is also Senior VP of Sunland Group's project management and business development. We got to meet his partner Kirk Lane at our February meeting. Buddy is also Managing Member of GML Solutions, LLC.

COL Grantham has been awarded the Bronze Star Medal and the Army Valorous Unit Award for combat

operations in Desert Storm, as well as numerous others including The Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal (five awards), the Army Commendation Medal (six awards), the Texas Outstanding Service Medal and the Texas Humanitarian Service award.

**Buddy and Julie** have been married for nearly 40 years. They have three children, including an Army officer with a tour to Afghanistan, seven grandchildren, and two rescue dogs. COL Grantham was our speaker at a meeting when we were at the Junior League, and we look forward with great pleasure and excitement to hearing him again! Make sure you come to our March 28 meeting to hear our member and MOAA-National Lifetime Member COL “Buddy” Grantham!

Plan to be at Central Texas Barbecue in Pearland on June 27! We need you, and you'll be glad you did!

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## REPORT ON TCC MEETING

On May 16, the MOAA **Texas Council of Chapters** held its second quarterly meeting of 2020. Normally the quarterly meetings are held in conference at a Texas location. Restrictions imposed by the COVID -19 pandemic mandated that this meeting be held by teleconference. As our chapter's representative to the TCC and therefore a member of the board of directors, I attended the “Zoom” conference.



**Jim Cunningham** from the San Antonio chapter took the reins as the new president of the TCC. The meeting agenda focused on advocacy issues at the national and state level. In particular, discussions focused on such MOAA National objectives as protection of health care benefits, keeping military pay and benefits strong, strengthen and support of all uniformed services, support of military families, enhancement of DOD/VA services, and support for the total force structure.

At the state level, advocacy will be for more and better veterans' courts, enhancement of veterans' mental health programs, establish access to culturally competent behavioral health services, push for ways to reduce veteran suicide rate in Texas make it mandatory for all law enforcement officers to receive Trauma Affected Veterans training, continue defense of the Hazelwood Act, and advocate for greater support of Veteran Service Officers in the counties of Texas. All these advocacy positions would be coordinated with the Texas Coalition of Veterans Organizations and all veterans groups represented in the state.

President Cunningham urged all members to establish and enhance relationships with federal and state legislators and insure MOAA advocacy goals were known. He reminded us of the importance and impact of sending form letters appearing in *Military Officer* magazine and other veterans' publications. "They matter!" Take every opportunity to insure who we represent

when we have the opportunity to talk with members of congress or the state legislature. The president urged chapters to put local members of congress and the state legislature on mailing lists for chapter newsletters and other relevant communications. Let us all get to know our state and national representatives and show the MOAA colors as much as possible.

**Daniel M. Gutierrez,  
Major, USA (Ret.)**

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### A Great True Story

*Perhaps you have heard this famous story. If so, it's beautiful enough for a re-telling. If not, prepare to be held in awe. –Ed.*

A pilot glanced outside his cockpit and froze. He hoped it was a mirage, but his co-pilot stared at the same horrible vision. "My God," the co-pilot said. "He's going to destroy us," and the pilot agreed.

They were looking at a gray German Messerschmitt fighter about three feet off their wingtip. It was five days before Christmas 1943, and the fighter had closed in on their crippled American B-17 bomber for the kill.

The B-17 Pilot, Charles Brown, was a 21-year-old West Virginia farm boy who describes himself as a "rookie beyond belief." His bomber was headed with others toward an aircraft factory in Bremen, Germany. It had now been shot to pieces by enemy fighters, with its nose blown away and two engines and most of the communications gone as it struggled alone to stay in the skies above Germany. Half his crew was wounded, and the tail gunner was dead. Brown's crew had gotten their bombs off but weren't able to stay in formation. Brown remembers being inverted and pulling up over trees.

When Brown looked again at the enemy fighter pilot, something odd happened. The German didn't pull the trigger. He stared back at the

bomber. Instead of pressing the attack, he nodded at Brown and saluted. What happened next was one of the most remarkable acts ever recorded from World War II.

Franz Stigler pressed his hand over the rosary he kept in his flight jacket and eased his finger off the trigger. He couldn't shoot, although he had already shot down two that day. He had landed to refuel, spotted the crippled B-17 above, and took off again.

A German pilot who spared the enemy risked death in Nazi Germany. If reported, he would be executed. Yet, now alone with the crippled bomber, Stigler changed his mission. He nodded at the American pilot and began flying in formation so German anti-aircraft gunners on the ground wouldn't shoot down the slow-moving bomber. (The Luftwaffe had B-17s of its own that had been shot down and rebuilt for secret missions and training.) Stigler escorted the bomber over the North Sea and took one last look. Then he saluted the B-17 pilot, peeled his fighter away, and returned to Germany.

"Good luck," Stigler said to himself. "You're in God's hands now." Franz Stigler didn't think the big B-17 could make it to England and wondered for years what happened to that American pilot and crew.

As he watched the German fighter peel away that December day, 2nd Lt. Charles Brown was thinking of survival. He flew his crippled plane, filled with wounded, to England and landed with barely any fuel

left. After his bomber came to a stop, he leaned back, put a hand over a pocket Bible in his flight jacket, and sat in silence.

Brown flew more missions before the war ended. Life moved on. He got married, and he and wife Jackie had two daughters and eventually retired to Florida.

Late in life, though, the encounter with the German Pilot began to gnaw at him. He had nightmares, but in his dream there was no act of mercy, and he'd awaken just before his bomber crashed.

Brown decided he had to find that German pilot who had saved his life. After scouring Military Archives in the U.S. and England, he attended a Pilots' Reunion and shared his story. He then placed an ad in a German newsletter for former Luftwaffe pilots, retelling the story and asking if anyone knew that pilot.

On January 18, 1990, Brown received a letter. He opened it and read: "Dear Charles, All these years I wondered what happened to that B-17. Did she make it home? Did her crew survive their wounds? To hear of your survival has filled me with indescribable joy." It was from Stigler.

Stigler had left Germany after the war and moved to Vancouver in 1953, where he became a prosperous businessman. Now retired, Stigler told Brown that he would be in Florida that summer, and "it sure would be nice to meet." Brown was so excited, though, that he couldn't wait. He called Directory Assistance and

found a number in Vancouver for a Franz Stigler. He dialed it, and Stigler picked up. "My God, it's you!" Brown shouted as tears ran down his cheeks.

Brown wrote Stigler and said: "To say THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU on behalf of my surviving crew members and their families appears totally inadequate."

So the two pilots did meet again, in person, in the lobby of a Florida hotel. They fell into each other's arms and wept and laughed. They talked about their encounter in a light, jovial tone.

Someone asked Stigler what he thought about Brown. Stigler sighed and his square jaw tightened. He began to fight back tears before he said in heavily accented English, "I love you, Charlie."

Stigler had lost his brother, his friends, and his country. He was virtually exiled by his countrymen after the war. About 28,000 pilots had fought for the German Air Force, and only 1,200 survived. The war cost him everything. Charlie Brown was the only good thing that came out of World War II for Franz. It was the one thing he could be proud of.

Brown and Stigler became pals, taking fishing trips, flying cross-country to each other's homes, and on road trips to share their story at schools and veterans' reunions. Their wives, **Jackie Brown** and **Hiya Stigler**, became friends. Brown worried about Stigler's health and regularly checked on him. "They really did feel for each other. They talked about once a week." As his friendship with Stigler deepened, and the nightmares went away.

Brown organized a reunion of his surviving crew members along with their extended families and invited Stigler as a Guest of Honor. During the reunion, a video was played showing the faces of all the people who now lived—from children to

grandchildren, and other relatives—because of Stigler's act of mercy. Stigler watched the film from his Seat of Honor. Everybody cried.

Stigler and Brown had started off as enemies, became friends, and then something more. After he died, Brown's daughter was searching through his library and came across a book on German fighter jets. Stigler had given the book to Brown. She opened the book and saw an inscription by Stigler:

*"In 1940, I lost my only brother as a night fighter. On the 20th of December, 4 days before Christmas, I had the chance to save a B-17 from her destruction, a plane so badly damaged, it was a wonder that she was still flying. The pilot, Charlie Brown, is for me as precious as my brother was.*

*Thanks Charlie.  
Your brother, Franz"*

Stigler and Brown both died of heart attacks in 2008, six months apart. Stigler was 92; Brown, 87. In the obituaries, each was listed to the other as "special brother."

Among several other videos available, you may want to look at this 11-minute YouTube video about these two amazing heroes: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lp9-cN\\_Oog](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lp9-cN_Oog).

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JOIN US ON **JUNE 27**  
AT CENTRAL TEXAS  
BBQ STYLE IN  
PEARLAND!

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## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM

### Military Officers Association of America, Houston Area

Membership is available to Officers who have held a Federal Warrant or Commission in any of the seven uniformed services of the United States or to the surviving spouse of such a person. Please use this form for application for membership, renewal, or changes to the current directory of members.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print) Last \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_ Rank \_\_\_\_\_  
Branch \_\_\_\_\_ Status \_\_\_\_\_ MOAA Nat'l ID \_\_\_\_\_ \*  
Spouse's First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. For Directory \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Dues:** Regular Membership \$30 first year; annual renewal \$30

(Discount for multiple years if paid with renewal: \$20 for each add'n'l year *pd w/renewal*)

Surviving Spouse \$15 first year; annual renewal \$10 (same discount for multiple years)

Make check payable to MOAA,HA and send to MOAA,HA

PO Box 1082 Houston TX 77251-1082

For more information, call COL Joe Willoughby, 713.569.6700

*\*If not a MOAA national member, another benefit of chapter membership is the opportunity to become a national MOAA member at the BASIC LEVEL for free! If you would like to do so, please indicate here:*  YES  No

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



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# MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Houston Military Affairs Committee  
presents the  
2020 Armed Forces Military Ball

**Saturday, September 19**

Houston Marriott Westchase Hotel (2900 Briar Park, 77042 )

*Contact President Joe Willoughby* if you can attend and reserve your space at our table(s)  
(details at [www.houstonmilitaryaffairscommittee.com](http://www.houstonmilitaryaffairscommittee.com))

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**MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, HOUSTON AREA**  
**Houston Corps of Cadets ROTC Endowment Fund–The University of Houston**  
(Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force)

Please Print Donor name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Day \_\_\_\_\_ Evening \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

My pledge of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ should be designed to support MOAA, HA Houston Corps of Cadets  
My gift will be made with installments of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to be paid \_\_\_\_\_ monthly \_\_\_\_\_ quarterly \_\_\_\_\_ annually \_\_\_\_\_.  
Beginning date: \_\_\_\_\_ The Office of Stewardship will send reminders.)  
\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is a check (made payable to University of Houston) for the first pledge payable.

Please charge my credit card for the amount of my gift, as scheduled above:

\_\_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_\_ Mastercard \_\_\_\_ American Express \_\_\_\_ Discover

Account Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name as it appears on card: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I would like to be contacted about fulfilling my pledge with a gift of appreciated securities.

My pledge payment will be matched by: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please specify company for our records)

Donor signature: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Donor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for your support of the MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, HOUSTON AREA, HOUSTON CORPS OF CADETS ROTC ENDOWMENT FUND, THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON*

Send completed form : Univ. of Houston; Advancement Svcs; P.O. Box 867; Houston TX 77001-0867

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**We hope to see you at our next monthly membership meeting, at Central Texas  
Barbecue in Pearland on June 27, 2020.**