



HOUSTON AREA
 PO BOX 1082
 HOUSTON TX 77251-1082
www.moaahoustonarea.com

Newsletter to Members

Vol. LVII No. 2

February 2020

NEXT MEETING SATURDAY, February 29, 2020 BRAEBURN COUNTRY CLUB

President's Message

Dear HOAA-HA Members:

Perhaps I am premature in announcing Happy Valentine's Day! But it is February, and that is the time of year when we remind others how much we appreciate having them in our lives. Whether we are reminding our spouse, children, grandchildren, family members, significant other, neighbor, coworker, or anyone else in our lives, sharing the positive emotions of love, friendship, and understanding are the cornerstones of "Serving Others." Since MOAA's mission of "Continuing to Serve" dictates that we assume the mantle of serving others, we can start by letting them know of their importance within our lives. As was emphasized during January's meeting, the Houston Area Chapter of MOAA will continue to focus on specific steps that we can take to engage with the Greater Houston-area military community.



Joe Willoughby

We started the year off right with a great January chapter luncheon. Our guest speaker, **Captain Chris Fishell**, Alpha Company Commander, 1/158th Assault Helicopter Battalion, was very well received. For those who attended the luncheon, I am sure you can agree that Chris's presentation was professional, truly engaging, and informative! Just another example of the valuable military personnel working right here in our backyard, contributing to our national security as well as working to improve our local communities.

Following up on Chris's invitation, please let me know if there is chapter interest in visiting the aviation unit's facility located at the Conroe Airport. Perhaps instead of a monthly luncheon at BraeBurn, we could travel to Conroe for a tour of the facility and observe some aviation operations during a drill weekend. Let us know if you would like to do that.

(Continued on p. 3)

2020 Officers

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joe.willoughby@gmail.com

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Editor Carol Ann Wilson

Reservations

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MOAA Houston Area Board Meetings

February 25, Lunch at Noon
Meeting at Rudi Lechner's

Future Board Meetings
3/24 4/21 5/? 6/23 7/21 8/25
9/22 10/27 11/?

All members are welcome.

MOAA Houston Area MEETING

Saturday
February 29, 2020

11:30 Fellowship
12 Noon Luncheon

BraeBurn Country Club
8101 Bissonnet
713.774.2586

MENU

House Salad

Braised Beef Short Ribs
OR
Basil Marinated Chicken
Breast

Scalloped Potatoes
Seasoned Green Beans

Warmed Rolls, Butter
Coffee or Tea

Apple Pie

\$30

Complimentary Valet Parking

Reservations by Wed.
Feb. 26 to Carol Wilson,
281.642.4050

(Note: We need 18
attendees to break
even)

Future 2020 Monthly Meetings

3/28 4/25 May Is Military Ball
6/27 7/25 8/29 9/26 10/31
11/19 (w/MOWA)

Military Officers Wives Association

MOWA

Thursday, Feb. 20
11:30 Fellowship
Luncheon at Noon

Rudi Lechner's
2503 S. Gessner

Order off the Menu
and Pay Individually

RSVP to Phyllis Ottis,
713.774.2282,
by Mon. 2/10, 10 a.m.

See you there!

MOAA-HA

\$ Treasurer's Report, January 31, 2020

Receipts \$ 800.00
Expenses \$ 513.20
Balance \$ *3,077.11
*Award Fund Reserve
\$2,232.78
Operational Balance \$844.33

Frank Tricomi, 2020 Treasurer
COL USA Ret.

REMINDER: ANNUAL DUES WERE DUE ON JANUARY 1

Please check your "Paid Through"
Date in the Directory and see if your
dues are due. We thank our members
who took advantage of the multi-year

discount, and we urge others
to do so. If you pay for more
than one year at the time of
renewal, two years is \$50,
instead of \$60.

And just in case you have
moved or changed your phone
number or email address or
other information, the form
for renewal is the same as the
one for a new member, and
you may find it at the back of
this newsletter.

We appreciate your
support!

Chaplain's Message

SHALOM!
PEACE BE
WITH YOU!



Hello to my
Esteemed
Fellow
Members,

Kerry Magee
CAPT USN (Ret.)

It was a blessing for me to
attend the January 25, 2020,
luncheon with many of you. I
had a great day and want to
take this opportunity to thank
you for your thoughts and
prayers during my incapacitated
status in the last few
months. I deeply appreciate
your consideration,
graciousness, and prayers that
pulled me through! I also
want to thank Carol Ann for
using some of my columns
from previous months—or
years even!

In keeping with the theme of
"Friendliness," I would like to
share with you a short story
that I found in the
Reader's Digest issue of
February 2020 in an article
called, "Kindness, pass it on."
Here is the story:

“I was flying from Montgomery, AL, to Columbus, OH, with my year-old baby. It was Christmas, and my then-husband was deployed in the Middle East. I was tired and depressed—just a mess. The flight got delayed due to snow, then canceled. Sitting around the gate and waiting for an update, I got to chatting with a guy who was in the Army and headed home to see his little girl. Then came the announcement. A bunch of people got seats for the next flight, but not me. My tired daughter was crying, and I was barely keeping it together when the Airline Rep called my name and gave me a ticket. That Army guy gave up his seat for me! I insisted he take the ticket and see his family. He refused, saying, “Any military husband would do the same for my wife.” I shed a tear or two in honor of this thoughtful military guy. Maybe you did too”

In my reading during these last few months, I have found many quotations that I want to share with you, such as this one:

“There is a calmness to a life lived in gratitude, harmony, and quiet joy.”

God bless you all!

Humbly submitted by

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

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

(Cont’d from p. 1)

We were all so glad to have our Chaplain, **Capt. Kerry Magee**, back with us. He has been battling tremendous health problems and is experiencing rehab at an assisted living facility, but he and Ann came to our meeting, he delivered the invocation, and we all got to celebrate his 85th birthday!

We were also happy to welcome **Col. Ritchie’s** guest, **Capt Rick Miller** USN (Ret.), Rep., 26th Dist. He took a membership application, so we’re hoping to see more of Rep. Miller! In addition, we got to meet one of our newest members: **Col Janice Nickie-Green** USA (Ret.), who was a member of the San Antonio chapter.

For February’s guest speaker, we have scheduled **Brigadier General Darren L. Werner**, commander of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), headquartered at Fort Hood, Texas. The 13th ESC, or the “Lucky 13th,” is a U.S. Army modular sustainment command that serves as a forward presence for expeditionary operations for a theater, or in support of a regional combatant commander. We look forward to **BG Werner** sharing his insight and perspective on today’s Army, and the challenges and opportunities of providing logistical support to the world’s premier land force!

I look forward to seeing you Saturday, February 29th!

Sincerely,

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

MILITARY WIDOWS TAX REPEALED!

*This Is So Important, We
Want to Re-run this story.
—Ed.*

With the President's Signature on the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act on December 20, 2019, the Survivor Benefit Plan - Dependency & Indemnity Compensation Offset (the Military Widows Tax) has been repealed!

Starting in 2021, more than 65,000 Military Surviving Spouses will receive one-third of the formerly denied SBP compensation, another third in 2022, and the Offset will be fully rescinded in 2023. As an example, if the Offset was \$1,000 monthly, \$333.33 will be restored in 2021, \$666.66 in 2022, and the full amount in 2023. DFAS will have more information in summer 2020.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,

Judith Thomas
Surviving Spouse
One of the 65,000

FEBRUARY SPEAKER



**BRIG. GENERAL
DARREN L. WERNER
13th Expeditionary
Sustainment Command
Commanding General**

We are fortunate to be able to hear **BG Darren L. Werner** from Fort Hood, “Home of America’s Hammer,” at our February 29 meeting. We hope to have one of our biggest turnouts for this meeting, so make your LeapYear Day plans NOW to join us at BraeBurn Country Club.

Brigadier General Werner entered the active U.S. Army in June 1989 as a Second Lieutenant from the ROTC program at Central Michigan University. He is a graduate of the Army Command and General Staff College, the Naval War College, and Webster University.

General Werner’s initial tours took him to the 194th Separate Armored Brigade, Fort Knox, Kentucky, the 8th Military Police Brigade, U.S. Forces Korea, and the 4th Infantry Division, Fort Hood, Texas, where he served as a Brigade Support Operations Officer and a Battalion Executive Officer during Operation Iraqi Freedom. He also was assigned to the U.S. Army Human Resource Command where he served as the Logistics Majors Assignment Officer.

General Werner returned to Fort Hood and the 4th Support Battalion in March 2007 as Battalion Commander. The 4th Support Battalion deployed to the South West Rashid District of Baghdad for sustainment and counter-insurgency operations and returned in March 2009. General Werner served as the Aide-de-Camp to the Commanding General of Army Materiel Command and Commanded the 16th Sustainment Brigade

supporting operations in USAREUR and serving as the Brigade Headquarters Supporting the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan lead for Afghan National Security Force Logistics training, materiel acquisition, and distribution. He served as the U.S. Army Sustainment Command Chief of Staff and in a joint assignment as the Director of Sustainment for CENTCOM Forward- Jordan and the Combined Joint Inter-Agency Task Force-Syria. He currently serves as the Commanding General for 13th Expeditionary Sustainment Command.

Plan to be at BraeBurn Country Club on 2/29! We need you!

Endowment Fund & Houston Corps of Cadets

Can you believe it is 2020? That means you now have a chance to start all over and to donate a gift of any size to The Houston Corps of Cadets at The University of Houston. This is your chance to help a worthy Cadet at the U of H. Any amount is helpful plus it is tax deductible. The form is in this Newsletter.

Bill
William Taylor
Cpt. USA Ret

REPORT: JANUARY SPEAKER, CAPT CHRIS FISHELL

Wow! We were extremely fortunate to get to hear this fantastic speaker, and for those of you who missed it, we are sorry. He told us all about his work as Commander of Alpha company, 1-158th Assault Helicopter Battalion, which is located just north of Houston at a huge base at the Conroe Airfield. The 500-member battalion is a 100% self-sustaining unit, and they can be ordered anywhere, anytime. “If they call, we haul,” said Capt. Fishell. Most of their personnel do other things, such

as services as Houston firefighters of HPD. “We are a United States Army Reserve Unit, not National Guard,” Capt. Fishell added. They even made their UH60L Blackhawk Sikorsky helicopters available for the many Hurricane Harvey victims who needed help. They have 30 helicopters and 108 full-time people, and their Ground Force Assistance doesn’t even need to land to get help to those in need.

His unit’s special ability is in its flexibility. “We can do anything,” he told us, with their quick mobility and ease of deployment. They don’t “attack,” but they take things to others for attack. “External support is what makes us special,” Capt. Fishell told us.

He told us that the Army’s program to train pilots is one of the best-kept secrets in America, where a recruit can go from “high school to flight school in 14 months” and on to a 25-year career. And he told us “we’re way short of warrant officers.” (Maybe some of us have grandchildren who might be interested?)

Not only was Capt. Fishell knowledgeable, but he was so personable and friendly, that we could stay a lot longer just to listen! A great big Thank You to Capt. Fishell for flying in especially to talk to us!



Pres. Willoughby presents certificate to Capt. Fishell

**OTHER PHOTOS
FROM JANUARY 25**

Many thanks again to COL **Andy Parsons**, Past-President of MOAA-HA who is our ace photographer!



VP Rob Ritchie, Immediate Past-Pres Dan Gutierrez, SS Liaison Judith Thomas, and President Joe Willoughby



Capt. Kerry & Ann Magee



Special Birthday Dessert prepared by BraeBurn CC for Capt. Magee



VP COL Rob Ritchie, Past-Pres LTC Eugene Vecera, COL Janice Nickie-Green, and MOWA President Phyllis Ottis

What a great time we have at our meetings, ALWAYS with great meals and service, and the best speakers anywhere!

Won't you plan now to be with us at BraeBurn Country Club on Feb. 29 at noon?



Chaplain Kerry Magee, the Birthday Boy—85 on 1/29/20!



COL Janice Nickie-Green

Military Discounts Available To Those Who Served Our Country

We found an interesting Website, www.veteranssavings.com, and they have a current article by Aaron Michaels that contains many discounts for military veterans (and even those currently in service), and some may be relatively unknown. We thought we'd share some of the highlights with you and we give you the link to the article at the end.



Carol Wilson with Winner Rep. Rick Miller—who donated it back!



MAJ Dan Gutierrez and Stancie Chamberlain

Common examples are the VA and the GI Bill; however, there are smaller yet equally useful available options.



Pres. Willoughby presents Certificate of Appreciation to Past-President Dan Gutierrez
WELL DONE!



Carol Wilson and Judith Thomas

1. Cut Your Mortgage

Unknown to many veterans are government mortgage programs that could lower your payments! Banks can't be thrilled and might secretly hope homeowners don't find out before time runs out.

These programs could expire at any time in 2020, but the good news is that once you're in, you're in. One program is **FMERR**, and it's for recent home buyers with FreddieMac loans.

2. Free Admission to National Parks

Those on active duty and their families have an opportunity to travel to any of these breathtaking landmarks for the rest of their lives, free of charge. Discounts are also available for veterans.

All **active duty** military members and their families are eligible to receive the free annual pass with proper identification. You must apply for the free pass in person at the National Park or Federal Recreation Land with your ID in hand. Passes cover entrance to Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park Service sites that charge Entrance Fees, and Standard Amenity Fees at Forest Service, BLM, and Bureau of Reclamation sites. The pass covers admission for the annual pass owner and passengers (up to 3 adults per vehicle, age 16 and over; no charge for children under 16).

Unfortunately, unless you are a veteran without a disability rating, this offer only extends to those on active duty. If you haven't been rated, you might want to see if you qualify for this deal. Info on how to obtain a rating decisions can be found at benefits.va.gov.

3. Military Specials from Mobile and Tech Companies

These companies offer great discounts to our servicemen and women, both past and present.

T-Mobile: All U.S. military and veterans receive 50 percent off family lines.

AT&T: Qualified active-duty military and National Guard service members, reservists, veterans, and spouses of active-duty or deceased service members can receive 15 percent off their monthly service charge under qualified plans.

Apple: For eligible military members and their families, discounts and promotions are available. You can purchase or sponsor up to three system bundles or displays, three iPads, three iPhones, three watches, and up to 10 iPods each full calendar year from January 1 to December 31.

Boost Mobile: Temporarily suspend service and service charges under the Deployed Military Program.

Samsung: Military Discount Program members can save 20 percent on a Galaxy S10, S10+ or Note10 smartphone.

Microsoft: Enjoy a 10 percent discount on various Surface devices as an active, former, or retired military member. Former service members who are business owners are eligible to receive discounts on Microsoft products they need for their business.

4. Theme Parks/Entertainment

Entertainment venues of all kinds offer discounts for active military men and women, as well as former and retired veterans.

Disneyland Resort: Eligible service members and their spouses enjoy discounted rates for select rooms valid on most nights from now until Dec. 19, 2020

Knott's Berry Farm: Get into one of California's favorite theme parks for just \$52 with a military ID. The offer excludes junior tickets, senior tickets, and Knott's Scary Farm or any other special or private events.

Showcase Cinemas: All active-duty military members and dependents can receive discounts on movie prices. Get a general admission ticket for \$7.50 and bargain matinee, children, and senior tickets for under \$6.

Cinemark: Go see a movie for less with a government-issued military ID. Contact your nearest Cinemark theater to find out exact discount days, rates and times.

Massage Envy: At participating locations, all active-duty military personnel can join Massage Envy at a savings of \$60 annually.

Universal Studios

Hollywood: Excluding blackout days, discounted ticket prices are available for all active-duty and retired military personnel all year with a valid military or U.S. government I.D. at time of purchase.

Busch Gardens: Eligible military personnel and up to three dependents receive one free admission per year to **SeaWorld, Busch Gardens or Sesame Place.**

LINK to the Website and other discounts:

www.veteranssavings.com/vets22.php?site=XYryOTCq5YTrrgkr5Bx4pAAAAAk&subid=&utm_source=&clickid=&source=&pname=

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 addn'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: _____



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

University of Houston; Advancement Services; P.O. Box 867; Houston TX 77001-0867

Attn: Nancy V. Clark E-mail: uh.edu/giving