



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

Newsletter to Members

Vol. LV No. 5

May 2018

**NEXT MEETING SATURDAY, June 30, 2018 BRAEBURN COUNTRY CLUB**

## President's Message

“Here lies in honored glory, an American soldier known but to God.” Those are the words inscribed upon the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery.



Daniel Gutierrez

Yes, my friends, it is May and it is that time of year when we, as a nation, pause to pay homage to those who died in service to the country. It is a time-honored tradition that I hope continues evermore with all the expressions of respect, admiration and gratitude the occasion deserves. Wreaths should be laid, salutes rendered, and taps played. Yes, that is how it should be – lest we forget.

I am happy to report that our chapter will play its part in paying tribute to those who sacrificed and to those who currently serve in the “profession of arms.” For the first time since I have been a member of the chapter we will have a full table of ten at the annual Armed Forces Day Military Ball hosted by the Houston Military Affairs Committee (HMAC) in partnership with the United States Air Force on May 19. It would be wonderful to have more than one table so sign up! I am also prepared to represent the chapter during Memorial Day activities at the Houston National Cemetery.

These are worthy events but I think we can do more. In this regard, our guest speaker for June will be Mrs. Gail Joyce of the Greater Granbury MOAA chapter and a member of the national MOAA Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee. The Granbury chapter puts on a fabulous Memorial Day "field of flags" tribute that I think would be of great benefit to our chapter and community if we could do something similar. I would like for us to hear how they do it. So come on out to our June monthly members' luncheon and hear what Gail has to say.

*(Continued on p. 3)*

## 2018 Officers

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## MOAA Houston Area Board Meetings for 2018

Tuesday before Monthly Luncheon Meeting

**5/22/18 11:30**  
Rudi Lechner's  
2503 S. Gessner

2018 Board Meetings  
5/22 6/26 7/24 8/21 9/29 10/23  
11/13?  
None in Dec

*All members are welcome.*

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## MOAA Houston Area Monthly Meeting and Luncheon

# NO MEETING IN MAY

# MILITARY BALL IS MAY 19

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### 2018 MOAA-HA Monthly Meetings

6/30 7/28 8/25 9/25 10/27  
11/15 (with MOWA)  
12/?/18? Christmas Party

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## Military Officers Wives Association

### MOWA

**Thursday, May 17  
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. 5/14, 10 a.m.**

**See you there!**

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### MOAA-HA

### \$ Treasurer's Report, May 1, 2018

Receipts	\$ 265.00
Expenses	\$ 0
Balance	\$4,478.84

*Don L. Couch, Treasurer  
LTC USA Ret.*

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Don Couch's dad with a P51



Don Couch with aircraft like the one in the above picture with his dad

## Chaplain's Message

*SHALOM!  
PEACE BE WITH  
YOU!*



Kerry Magee  
CAPT USN (Ret.)

I want to share Jim Gentil's "Balls of Clay" with our readers (with permission).

### Balls of clay

A man was exploring caves by the Seashore. In one of the caves he found a canvas bag with a bunch of hardened clay balls. It was like someone had rolled clay balls and left them out in the sun to bake. They didn't look like much, but they intrigued the man, so he took the bag out of the cave with him. As he strolled along the beach, he would throw the clay balls one at a time out into the ocean as far as he could.

He thought little about it, until he dropped one of the clay balls and it cracked open on a rock. Inside was a beautiful, precious stone!

Excited, the man started breaking open the remaining clay balls. Each contained a similar treasure. He found thousands of dollars' worth of jewels in the 20 or so clay balls he had left.

Then it struck him. He had been on the beach a long time. He had thrown maybe 50 or 60 of the clay balls with their hidden treasures into the ocean waves. Instead of thousands of dollars in treasure, he could have taken home tens of thousands, but he had just thrown it away!

It's like that with people. We look at someone, maybe even

ourselves, and we see the external clay vessel. It doesn't look like much from the outside. It isn't always beautiful or sparkling, so we discount it.

We see that person as less important than someone more beautiful or stylish or well known or wealthy. But we have not taken the time to find the treasure hidden inside that person.

There is a treasure in each and every one of us. If we take the time to get to know that person, and if we ask God to show us that person the way He sees them, then the clay begins to peel away and the brilliant gem begins to shine forth.

May we not come to the end of our lives and find out that we have thrown away a fortune in friendships because the gems were hidden in bits of clay. May we see the people in our world as God sees them.

I am so blessed by the gems of friendship I have with you. Thank you for looking beyond my clay vessel.

APPRECIATE EVERY SINGLE THING YOU HAVE, ESPECIALLY YOUR FRIENDS! LIFE IS TOO SHORT AND FRIENDS ARE TOO FEW! Share this with another Clay Ball!!!

**“Lest we forget, Memorial Day, May 28.”**

MAY GOD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU!

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

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## INCOMING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*(Cont'd from p. 1)*

On 6 and 7 April, I traveled to Waco and represented the chapter in the 2nd quarterly meeting of the MOAA Texas Council of Chapters (TCC). The TCC is focusing in two major advocacy areas. At the state level its focus is on getting legislation passed that will give severely disabled veterans (80% - 90%) property tax relief equal to the level of disability. Strong support for this cause is coalescing and confidence is high for eventual success. At the national level the TCC working hard to garner support from Texas members of Congress to support an end to sequestration as it applies to the armed forces once and for all time. Sequestration has been temporarily quelled for the 2018 and 2019 budgets, but the future remains unsure.

Fellow members, one of my favorite activities as your president is showing up at JROTC events and presenting the MOAA JROTC Medal and Certificate. To see the joy, eagerness, and pride in those young eyes makes me glow and gives me hope for our nation's future. In April, I personally presented four and another this month. Several others will or have been presented by other members of your board of directors.

Finally, let me urge those of you who receive *Military Officer* magazine to please read the information in the April edition about Arlington National Cemetery and the steps that must be taken if it is going to continue to be a resting place for the nation's heroes far into the future. If steps are not taken maximum capacity will be reached by 2054. Please take time to go to page 22, read the article, complete the five-minute survey, and submit it. Also in

the April edition are “tear-out” letters to Congress concerning military pay. If you agree, please tear out the letters, sign, stamp, and mail them. These are the things that make our association strong and viable.

Let us be strong, be active, be involved.

Remember, “**never stop serving.**” God bless.

Respectfully,  
**Daniel M., Gutierrez**  
**MAJ USA (Ret.),**  
**President**

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THANK YOU TO ALL WHO RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP. IF YOU HAVE NOT PICKED UP A COPY OF THE 2018 DIRECTORY AT A MEETING, YOURS WILL BE MAILED TO YOU.

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## Endowment Fund & Houston Corps of Cadets

Time for an explanation. First, our fundraising is not going too well. At a recent luncheon it became clear that there is still a misunderstanding of what the source of funds are for the Houston Corps of Cadets at the University of Houston. As you know, the Endowment Fund is to provide money so needed by the cadets at the U of H ROTC program. They are selected by the PMS&T's at the U of H without our input. These monies come from two sources: the earnings from the Endowment Fund and your direct contributions, which are tax-deductible donations.

We have another program, and that is a Scholarship Fund that is supported by the sale of the raffle tickets at the monthly meetings. It also goes to the benefit of the cadets at the U of H. The two are not the same but they are similar. So when I appeal to you to support the Endowment Fund, I am speaking only of the former, not the latter. If you wish to support the Scholarship Fund, come to the monthly luncheons and contribute through the drawings. So continue on, please.

Thank you,  
Bill

*William Taylor*  
*Cpt. USA Ret*

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## REPORT FROM OUR APRIL MEETING

We had another great meeting and wish more of our members could have been there! President Dan Gutierrez brought the members up to date on recent happenings before the excellent meal from the BraeBurn kitchen served by “Candy” and his great crew.

We were pleased to meet **Capt. Kevin Abreu**, member of several years, who attended his first meeting. We were also pleased to meet **COL Edith Summerlin**, a MOAA Life Member, and former member of our chapter. We are hoping she will renew.

Dan reported on the JROTC medal presentations at area high schools, paid for by the generous donations from our members, since MOAA national no longer furnishes

the medals, which are so important to the recipients. In addition to **Dan**, medals have been personally presented by members **Rollins Collins, Kerry Magee, and Andy Parsons**. We are so proud that our chapter is involved in this project.

Dan also reported on his attendance at the recent meeting of the Texas Council of Chapters in Waco. The MOAA national advocacy is primarily focused on getting an end to the sequestration, while the Texas emphasis is on getting laws passed to give severely disabled veterans a break in property taxes correlating to their percentage of disability.

He reported on his recent visit to the Combined Arms Center downtown, which we have frequently covered in our newsletter, and efforts that will be made for one of our meetings to be held downtown followed by a tour of the Center.

Other items are covered in the President’s Message in this newsletter.

We were enthralled to hear our speaker, **Dr. Joe Agris**, who told of his adventures in the Middle East and Central America as he performed plastic surgery on children around the world to repair scars from burns and congenital facial deformities. This traveling philanthropist has changed the lives of many thousands, and we were privileged to hear about them. We especially enjoyed his tale of retracing the steps of Marco Polo and the dangers he encountered there.



Dr. Joe Agris being introduced by President Dan Gutierrez.

We can now learn more from his wonderful books.

He has written three books about it: *Tears on the Sand* is about his trips to Afghanistan and Pakistan, which led to the capture of Bin Laden, and he generously gave all in attendance a copy of it. He also had on hand for sale his two most recent: *Miracles in Bedlam*, about his travels in Central America during the Contra-Sandinista conflict; and *Mission Divided*, about Pakistan, often described as one of the world’s most dangerous nations.

Proceeds from sales of his books go to “Doctor Joe’s” favorite charities supporting medical missions throughout the U.S. and around the globe, but especially his own **Children’s Foundation**, which he founded in 1981 with Houston’s own Marvin Zindler to help the “forgotten children.” “*Your purchase will help pay for another child’s smile!*” You may contact “Dr. Joe” by email [DocJoeAgris@gmail.com](mailto:DocJoeAgris@gmail.com) or by sending a donation payable to THE CHILDREN’S FUND to The Children’s Foundation, PO Box 271501, Houston TX 77277-1501.

Following Dr. Joe’s excellent talk, **Capt. Kerry Magee** and **CPT Bill Taylor** officiated the annual ceremony in memory of our members who passed away the previous year.



Bill Taylor prepares to light the candles for the ceremony

**OTHER PHOTOS  
FROM APRIL MEETING**



Kerry Magee as he rang the bell as the name of each deceased member was announced

Members who passed away in 2017:

**CAPT Ervin Eggleston,**  
March 3

**Founder Col George C. McDowell,** April 22

**LTC Robert Ottis,** April 28

**Bobbye Parsons,** August 5

**MAJ Val G. Henneberg,**  
September 8

**Col Charles Siragusa,**  
November 19

**LtCol Keith "Ed" Fitz,**  
December

The ceremony was followed by the playing of TAPS.

Thank you, Kerry and Bill, for another beautiful memorial ceremony.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the families and loved ones of all who have left us.

☆☆☆

*And He will raise you up  
On eagle's wings,  
Bear you on the breath of  
dawn, make you to shine like  
the sun,  
And hold you in the palm of  
His hand.*

—Michael Joncas



Ken Abreu and David Hoyer  
(Kerry Magee in background)



Beverly Winter, who is Dr. Agris's right hand, with Ken Abreu and David Hoyer



Dr. Joe Agris receives certificate from President Dan Gutierrez



Vern Gillette and Edith Summerlin

*You manage things; you lead people.*  
—Rear Adm. Grace Murray Hopper



Janice Taylor: Winner AGAIN!  
And she donated it back again.

We are proud to have a table of 10 for the **Military Ball** on May 19. We also have an ad in the program. Well done!

Our June speaker has not yet been confirmed, but won't you plan now to attend that meeting?

What do you think about having a meeting downtown and then taking a tour of the Combined Arms Center?  
Let your officers know.

*I am not afraid of an army of lions led by a sheep; I am afraid of an army of sheep led by a lion.*

—Alexander the Great

*The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things.*

—Ronald Reagan

## SOMETHING TO PONDER

A newlywed young man was sitting on the porch on a humid day, sipping iced tea with his father.

As he talked about adult life, marriage, responsibilities, and obligations, the father thoughtfully stirred the ice cubes in his glass and cast a clear, sober look on his Son.

“Never forget your friends,” he advised, “they will become more important as you get older.”

“Regardless of how much you love your family and the children you happen to have, you will always need friends. Remember to go out with them occasionally (if possible), but keep in contact with them somehow.”

The young man thought, “What strange advice!” His thoughts continued: “I just entered the married world, I am an adult, and surely my wife and the family that we will start will be everything I need to make sense of my life.”

Yet, he obeyed his father; kept in touch with his friends, and annually increased their number. Over the years, he became aware that his father knew what he was talking about.

Inasmuch as time and nature carry out their designs and mysteries on a person, friends are the bulwarks of our life.

After 60, 70, 80 years of life, here is what he (and you) will have learned:

Time passes.

Life goes on.

The distance separates.

Children grow up.

Children cease to be children and become independent. And to the parents, it breaks their hearts, but the children are separated of the parents.

Jobs come and go.

Illusions, desires, attraction, sex . . . .weakens.

People do not do what they should do.

The heart breaks.

The parents die.

Colleagues forget the favors.

The races are over.

But, true friends are always there, no matter how long or how many miles away they are.

A friend is never more distant than the reach of a need, intervening in your favor, waiting for you with open arms or in some way blessing your life.

When we started this adventure called LIFE, we did not know of the incredible joys or sorrows that were ahead. We did not know how much we would need from each other.

Love your parents, take care of your children, but keep a group of good friends.

Dialog with them but do not impose your criteria.

Share this with your friends.

## IMPORTANT MESSAGE

### *All retirees:*

The following message is sent on behalf of Arlington National Cemetery.

As a military retiree, your input is requested to help determine the future of **Arlington National Cemetery**. Military and civilian leaders are facing difficult decisions as they work to preserve Arlington National Cemetery as the shrine to the nation’s heroes and history. With *limited space for expansion*, eligibility rules are being considered to extend the site’s role as an active military cemetery for decades to come.

**Your input is important** and can help shape the future of Arlington National Cemetery. **The eligibility survey is available now at [www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/eligibility-survey](http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/eligibility-survey).**

You can learn more about Arlington National Cemetery by visiting [www.arlingtoncemetery.mil](http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil).



President Dan Sent this pic from his recent visit to Mayde Creek for JROTC program; future officer!

**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

**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 Grade Service

Branch \_\_\_\_\_ MOAA Nat'l ID \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's first name: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. For Directory \_\_\_\_\_

Home address: \_\_\_\_\_

Civilian Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Firm \_\_\_\_\_ Business phone \_\_\_\_\_

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

Dues: Regular Membership \$30 first year; annual renewal \$30 (\$20 for each addn'l year *pd w/renewal*)

Auxiliary (spouse of deceased officer) \$15 (\$10 for each addn'l year *pd w/renewal*)

WOULD YOU SERVE ON A COMMITTEE? \_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_

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

PO Box 1082 Houston TX 77251-1082

For more information, call Rollins Collins 704.213.2334

