



Military Officers Association of America

SOUTHERN MARYLAND CHAPTER

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*The*  
**SOUTHERN MARYLAND**  
**NEWSLETTER**



**2007-2009-2010-2012-2013-2014**

**June 2015**

**President's Corner**

Ladies and gentlemen,

As the summer begins, remember that MOAA national offers some great deals on travel. Better yet, when you travel, your chapter gets a check! In our chapter, we're putting that money toward the Charlotte Hall fund, so your travel is helping Charlotte Hall veterans here in Maryland.

For June's meeting on June 13, we're meeting at the Blue Crabs game. For those of you who haven't been, it's a great time for not much money. Better yet, it's in the shade! Evening games always have fireworks after the end, so bring out the kids or grandkids to enjoy the night. I'm bringing my family - we always enjoy the Blue Crabs!

A couple of members have asked if I could arrange something at the Naval Academy for the chapter, since I work there. If you're interested in a tour or lunch, shoot me an email so I can gauge interest (somdmooa@gmail.com).

See you at the ball game!

Very respectfully,  
CDR Phil Campbell, USN.

**Legislative Affairs**

The end of April, the governor signed the bill increasing the income tax exemption for military retired pay from \$5,000 to \$10,000 for retirees age 65 and older which will be effective

for the 2015 tax year. This increase does nothing to encourage younger retirees to settle in Maryland and become productive members of our communities. Maryland MOAA and the Maryland Retired Veterans Task Force will continue to encourage our legislators to expand the income tax exemption to the younger retirees as an incentive for them to select Maryland as their retirement home. The bill to provide in-state tuition for military dependents passed the Senate, but failed to get out of the House Appropriations Committee. Although there were a number of oriented bills passed during the 2015 legislative session, they were essentially "feel good" bills since they had little, if any, cost associated with them. The legislature wants to give the impression of supporting the veteran community; however, they have not demonstrated support for initiatives that have an associated cost.

**May Chapter Meeting**

Our May meeting at Adam's Ribs was really great. We had 17 attendees all together as Delegate O'Donnell gave us a very forthright run down of the veterans' issues in the last legislative session. Best of all, there were more "unfamiliar faces" plus some repeats who WEREN'T board members. Overall a good event. Many thanks to CDR Warren Prince for setting it up. We will continue to seek out broadly appealing speakers and we are always open to suggestions from membership.

CDR Phil Campbell

**2015 SoMD MOAA Chapter Calendar**

(Details subject to change)

13 Jun 1730 - Chapter Mtg – Blue Crabs Baseball @ Stadium \*\*\* See page 3 \*\*\*18 Jul 1200 – Board Mtg – Planning @ Maison des FringersTBD Aug – Chapter Mtg – Program TBD @ TBD19 Sep TBD – Chapter Mtg - Benefits Info Program @ Pax Naval Test Museum17 Oct TBD – Board Mtg – Holiday Planning @ Pax Naval Test Museum14 Nov 1300 – Chapter Mtg – Holiday Celebration @ Café Des Artistes, Leonardtown08 Dec TBD – Board Mtg – 2016 Planning Session @ location TBD**Coming Soon – Member Spotlight**

This new feature of your newsletter, starting in July, will give members a chance to tell us about their service to our country. Participation is completely voluntary. The spotlight will be a short military biography (250-500 words). What I need is your input/biography/C.V./brag sheet with optional pictures (one or two at most). I will edit as needed to meet newsletter requirements publishing one a month. Send your submissions via email (preferred-any format) at [tonyblank@aol.com](mailto:tonyblank@aol.com) or via mail to SMD-MOAA, PO Box 84, Patuxent River, MD

20670. I will do my best to get hardcopy originals back to you.

**JROTC Recognition**

The MOAA JROTC Award, recognizing a strong potential for military leadership, was presented to a cadet at each of the six high school JROTC programs in Calvert and St. Mary's counties in May. I want to offer a special "Thank You" to the chapter members who volunteered to present the award at each Award Ceremony.

LTC Jack Fringer



Cadet Ens. Gabriel Ozbaltaci receives the MOAA JROTC Award during a ceremony at Huntingtown H.S.

**Auxiliaries' Corner: "Storming the Hill 2015"**

By Kathy Prout, chair, Auxiliary Member Advisory Committee

The Surviving Spouses Advisory Committee stormed the Hill with MOAA council and chapter presidents from across the country. MOAA teams visited the offices of all 535 members of Congress and 100 senators in one long productive day.

The main issues were sustaining the pay and benefits of our troops, rejecting disproportional TRICARE fee hikes and plan changes, and ending sequestration. We left information for Congress about three additional issues: eliminating the inequities facing un-remarried surviving spouses who are affected by the Survivor Benefit Plan/Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (SBP/DIC) offset, the disability offset to retired pay for the less than 50-percent disabled military retirees, and inequities with the Guard/Reserve credit.

DoD's FY 2016 proposals called to "slow the growth" by cutting military people programs. This includes capping active duty pay COLAs at 1.3 percent, 1 percent under the COLA baseline. Proposals recommend a reduction to the housing allowance (BAH) for active duty personnel, including those who reside in military housing, that would result in a 5 percent out-of-pocket cost. Also suggested was a \$1 billion subsidy cut to the commissaries that would result in a 66-percent loss of savings to commissary shoppers. Additionally, the proposals include drastic changes to health care, such as higher means-tested TRICARE fees for working-age retirees and consolidation of TRICARE Prime, Extra, and Standard into one program. Under this

proposal, servicemembers and their families would pay the Prime enrollment fees plus the Standard deductible, with no assurance of access or quality. Emergency Rooms in military treatment facilities would charge patients, including active duty personnel, a means-tested fee for non-life-threatening visits.

Congress rejected the active duty pay cap, the commissary cuts, and the TRICARE fee hikes. However, it did approve a new military retirement system that would overhaul the current 20-year cliff vesting benefit and create a blended pension and 401(k)-like Thrift Savings Plan with government matching. This system would provide servicemembers who leave before the 20-year mark with a transportable career device, but it would do so at the cost of reducing 20-year pensions by 20 percent

The SBP/DIC offset affects spouses of deceased retirees who purchased SBP and received DIC for a VA disability or a VA presumptive condition. These surviving spouses currently forfeit \$1 of SBP for each \$1 received in DIC. This inequity presently affects almost 62,000 surviving spouses.

There are two new bills for the 114th Congress to eliminate the SBP/DIC Offset for un-remarried military surviving spouses. Those bills are: H.R. 1594, sponsored by Rep. Joe Wilson (R-S.C.), with 60 original co-sponsors and S. 979, sponsored by Sen. Bill Nelson (D-Fla.), with Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine) as the original co-sponsor.

Use the MOAA Capitol switchboard number (866) 272-6622 to contact your representatives and ask them to co-sponsor the bill.

**13 JUNE 2015 CHAPTER MEETING – RSVP & PAYMENT BY 6 JUNE**

Our June gathering will be held at Regency Furniture Stadium in Waldorf on Saturday, 13 June. The Southern Maryland Blue Crabs will be playing the York Revolution. Join us in the Picnic Pavilion for the ballgame and picnic. The picnic begins at 1730 and the game at 1805. The cost for military/dependents, seniors, and children (that should include all of us) is \$25.

<b>PICNIC PAVILION MENU</b> 2 Hour "All-You-Can-Eat" Buffet	
<p><b>Blue Crabs BBQ Ribs</b> Memphis style ribs brushed with delicious barbeque sauce and grilled so they fall off the bone</p>	<p><b>Baked Herb Chicken</b> Tender pieces of chicken infused with a blend of herbs, butter and lemon baked slowly to deliciousness</p>
<p><b>Grilled Hamburgers</b> Ground beef grilled to perfection served right off the grill with all the trimmings</p>	<p><b>Hot Dogs</b> A ballpark favorite, hot dogs are served grilled to order with all the fixings</p>
<p><b>Macaroni and Cheese</b> This classic side dish is baked with a blend of cheeses with a crispy breadcrumb cheese topping</p>	<p><b>Potato Chips</b></p>
<p><b>Ice Cream Sandwich</b></p>	<p><b>Beverages</b> Refresh your thirst with a variety of Pepsi products</p>

**Please submit your reservations by 6 June 2015.** Please submit payment with your reservation (\$25 per person except children 5 and under are free). Make checks payable and mail to SMD-MOAA, PO Box 84, Patuxent River, MD 20670. **In addition, please call or email one of the contacts if you are coming:** Jack Fringer at [jackfringer@comcast.net](mailto:jackfringer@comcast.net) or (410) 326-0486 or Tony Blankenship at [tonyblank@aol.com](mailto:tonyblank@aol.com) or 410-414-8211.

Requester's Name			
# of Adult Tickets (\$25 / each)	# of Youth (6-12) / Senior Tickets (\$25 / each)	# of Child (0-5) Tickets (Admitted Free)	Total \$ submitted