



Soundings, June 2014

President's Message

Greetings ALL Silver Strand Chapter MOAA Members!!!

Our last joint SS MOAA hosted April 14th dinner meeting at the Coronado Yacht Club with RADM Garry Bonelli, USN (Ret.) as our Guest of Honor/Speaker was a GREAT event, where we also honored high school seniors (and their parents) living in the Coronado area who have received an appointment to a service academy, or who have been selected to attend an ROTC program. Honored at our meeting were:

Tabitha Clement (MVHS) – USAF Academy Prep School

Jonathan Kostenko (CHS) – NROTC USC

Cole Summers (CHS) – NROTC Embry Riddle (Daytona Beach)

Elena Wang (CHS) – USAF and Naval Academies

We also honored those who have received MOAA scholarships to attend college:

Brittany and Victoria Henderson

Brooke and Tim Hendricks

Cody Kitchener

Sadie Gimber

We wanted to honor and congratulate them all for their accomplishments and selection, and “Connect the Generations” of military leadership in Coronado – the future military leadership with those currently serving and those who did it “just a little while” ago. MANY

THANKS to ALL who attended!!!

Information on our upcoming joint CCNL hosted June 16th dinner meeting appears on pages 3 & 4 of this newsletter, with a reservation (RSVP) form that can be printed out and sent in with a check to make a reservation for the meeting. Please note that this dinner/meeting will be held on a Monday evening at the Coronado Yacht Club. Our Guest of Honor/Speaker will be Retired Navy Seal Chris Sajnog, author of the newly released book “How to Shoot Like a Navy SEAL”. RSVPs are due NLT Friday, June 13th. PLEASE come out and join us for dinner and a GOOD time!!!

FYI, we are planning a couple of less formal chapter events for this summer, most probably in conjunction with the Concerts in the Park like we did last year. Our first will be on July 20th, so mark your calendars – details forthcoming. We’ll also be participating in both the Coronado 4th of July Parade, and the Veterans Parade later in the year.

As a bit of a “heads-up”, in a few months we will begin in earnest the search for those members who might be inclined to serve as a chapter officer or on our Board of Directors next year. We will form a nominating committee, chaired by our Immediate Past President CAPT Kathy Bruyere, USN (Ret.), to identify those who would be willing to give a little time to the betterment of our chapter. It is both a

fun and rewarding experience! The list of officer and board positions and those currently filling them appears near the end of this newsletter.

MAXIMUM THANKS ALL - hope to see you on June 16th!!!

V/r,

Tom

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IG: 1700 Phoenix-Area Vets Omitted from Wait Lists

More than 1,700 veterans were left off the official wait list for a primary care appointment at the Veterans Affairs Phoenix medical center, a purposeful omission that allowed hospital administrators to receive performance bonuses, the VA's inspector general has found.

In an interim report into allegations of secret wait lists and subsequent patient deaths at the Phoenix VA facility, the department's top investigator

found “serious conditions at the Phoenix Health Care System,” including 1,400 veterans who did not have appointments but were on the facility's electronic waiting list, as well as the 1,700 who have yet to be entered into the system.

“Since multiple lists we found were something other than the official electronic wait list, these additional lists may be the basis for allegations of creating ‘secret’ wait lists,” acting VA Inspector General Robert Griffin wrote.

Griffin's report did not include information on his office's investigation into whether the scheduling issues delayed diagnosis or care, or led to deaths.

He said the review needed to include a variety of records, such as VA and non-VA medical records, death certificates and autopsy results and his office has issued subpoenas where needed for the information.

For the initial investigation, the VA IG office reviewed a statistical sample of 226 appointments at Phoenix and found that the veterans waited an average of 115 days for their first primary care appointment, with 84 percent waiting more than 14 days. VA national data showed these veterans waited on average 24 days for their first primary care appointment and only 43 percent waited more than 14 days. Griffin added that the IG will hand over the 1,700 names so VA can expedite their appointments.

Legislative News

Legislation	Summary	Status
HR-32 & S-734	<p>“Military Surviving Spouses Equity Act,” HR-32 to address the SBP offset to DIC payments. This effort began over 12 years ago, and is called the “widow’s tax.” Rep Susan Davis (D, 53rd, San Diego), Rep Juan Vargas (D, 51st, Chula Vista), Rep Scott Peters (D, 51st, San Diego) and Rep Duncan Hunter (R, 50th, El Cajon) are among the 196 co-sponsors for this HR-32 legislation. The HASC’s Subcommittee On Military Personnel now has HR-32 for action. This legislation affects over 55,000 military widows, and would finally repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan to offset the receipt of survivors’ Dependency and Indemnity Compensation. S-734 was introduced as a companion bill to HR-32 on 4/16/13. Sen Barbara Boxer and Sen Feinstein from CA are among the 32 co-sponsors on S-734.</p>	In Committee (SASC for S-734)
HR-303	<p>Same number as last Congress, now called the “Retired Pay Restoration Act” and again this new bill for the 113th Congress authorizes the full concurrent receipt of retired military pay and veterans’ disability compensation for retirees regardless of disability rating. Laws have been changed over the years to give concurrent receipt to military retirees with VA disability ratings of over 50%, but not for the majority of veterans with less disability ratings. Rep Gus Bilirakis (R, FL) introduced the new HR-303 on 1/15/13</p>	In Committee (HASC 7 HVAC)
HR-333	<p>Disabled Veterans Tax Elimination Act. This legislation is almost identical to HR-303, as this bipartisan bill would permit retired members of the armed forces with a service-connected disability rating of less than 50% to receive both retirement pay and VA disability compensation, known as “concurrent receipt.”</p>	In Committee (HVAC)
HR-357	<p>GI Bill Tuition Fairness Act of 2013. This bipartisan bill would allow veterans using the Post 9/11 GI Bill to pay in-state tuition rates at public colleges and universities even if they don’t meet a state’s residency requirements.</p>	Passed House (2/03/14) Senate VA Committee
HR-813	<p>To expand advance appropriations for certain VA discretionary accounts, to include Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) and the National Cemetery Administration (NCA). The effective date of this legislation would be fiscal year 2016, if enacted. Companion bill in the U.S. Senate is S-932, with only 7 co-sponsors, none of whom are from CA. The VFW and other VSO’s are urging Congress to enact HR-813 to cover the VA’s entire discretionary budget one year ahead of schedule, to protect veterans’ benefits in case of a government shutdown.</p>	Committee Sponsored Legislation
HR-2189	<p>Would establish a commission or task force charged with examining the root causes of the Department of Veterans Affairs disability claims backlog and providing solutions for ending it by 2015.</p>	Pending in Senate (House passed 10/28/2013)
HR-2481	<p>Establish an Economic Opportunity Administration within VA, enabling the department to better focus on veterans’ transition to civilian life.</p>	Pending in Senate (House passed 10/28/2013)
HR-3507	<p>Bipartisan bill that would expand coverage of telehealth services to active duty military, their dependents, military retirees and all veterans. This would expand reimbursement policies covering telehealth services including mental health monitoring under both Tricare and the VA. This bill now has 4 co-sponsors, none from CA.</p>	In Committee (HASC & HVAC)
HR-3521	<p>Would authorize 27 Department of Veterans Affairs major medical facility leases requested by VA in its fiscal year 2013 and 2014 budget submissions.</p>	Pending in Senate (House passed 12/10/2013)
S-234	<p>Retired Pay Restoration Act of 2013. This Senate bill is very similar to both H.R. 303 and H.R. 333, addressing the concurrent receipt issue.</p>	In Committee (SASC)

Auxiliary Liaison News	Guest Speaker: June 16th Dinner Meeting
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If anybody has questions regarding survivor benefits or needs information pertaining to what important documents and information a person needs in case of their demise, please call Kathy Prout for assistance: 619-435-6623.



Chris Sajnog

Retired Navy SEAL and author of “How to Shoot Like a Navy SEAL”

Retired Navy SEAL Chris Sajnog is the author of the recently released book “How to Shoot Like a Navy SEAL” and founder of Center Mass Group, an elite firearms and tactics training company based in San Diego. He was hand selected to create the entire curriculum for the US Navy SEAL Sniper Training Program. Sajnog served for 20 years in the Navy with 16 of those years as a SEAL, which provided the background for his book. As a Navy SEAL he was the senior sniper instructor, a certified Master Training Specialist and advanced training marksmanship instructor.

He is currently a Department of Defense (DOD) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) certified Counter-Terrorism and Advanced Marksmanship Instructor and has trained DOD, DHS, FBI, CIA, local law enforcement and multiple foreign allies in all aspects of combat weapons handling, marksmanship and tactics. Originally from Wisconsin, Sajnog has a bachelor’s degree in liberal studies from Excelsior College in New York. He is married and has two sons.

Special points of interest:

- RSVPs for the June combined meeting are due NLT Friday, June 13th.
- Special membership rates in effect! See page 3 for more information.

CA Legislative News

Legislation	Summary	Status
AB1589	Eliminates the requirement that military and overseas voters renew their request to receive an email ballot every two years. This proposal removes the “email expiration” language from state law, allowing a request for ballot delivery to stand for as long as the military or overseas voter is eligible for email delivery and has not failed to vote in four consecutive regularly scheduled statewide elections.	Ordered to 3rd reading
AB2098	AB2098 requires judges to consider military status and mental health problems outlined in 1170.9 as factor in favor of granting probation and requires courts to consider military status and service induced mental health problems as a mitigating factor for offenses with determinate sentencing.	In Committee
AB2261	AB 2261 would create a Veterans Services and Workforce Development Division within the Department of Veterans Affairs to develop a Transitional Assistance Program and to oversee the Local Veterans Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans Outreach Program. This bill would require specified staff to be transferred from various departments and agencies to the Veterans Services and Workforce Division.	In Committee
AB2275	AB 2275 would provide local agencies with the option to provide constituents with access to their vital records via an electronic identification process. AB 2275 would additionally authorize the request and the notarized statement for a certified copy of a birth, death, marriage, or military service record to be a submitted in electronic form.	In Committee
AB2329	This bill would exempt Concurrent Retirement and Disability Pay (CRDP) for eligible veterans from state tax liability.	In Committee
SB1113	Provides for the exemption from property taxation of specified amounts of the assessed value of the home of a disabled veteran or a veteran's spouse under certain qualifying conditions. Provides that -- for refund claims filed on or after January 1, 2015 - the refund application window is extended to eight years after making the relevant tax payment.	In Committee
SB1227	Under existing law, prosecution of an offense filed as a misdemeanor may be postponed, either temporarily or permanently, at any point in the judicial process from the point at which the accused is charged until adjudication, for the person charged to participate in a diversion program for the treatment of problem drinking or alcoholism. Additionally, prosecution may be postponed in other instances, including first-time, nonviolent felony drug offenses and for defendants with cognitive developmental disabilities.	In Committee

Dinner Meeting Reservation/ Donation/Dues Form

Where: Coronado Yacht Club,
1631 Strand Way

When: June 16, 2014
1800: Social Time
1845: Dinner – **BUFFET @ \$30.00**
1930: Program

Gourmet Buffet

**Penne Pasta with Italian Sausage and Marinara
Sauce, Pot Roast of Beef, Garden Salad,
Dessert, Coffee & Tea**

Make checks payable and mail to:

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

Name _____

Phone _____

Number attending dinner _____ **x \$30 =** _____

Donations to:

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

Naval Sea Cadet Corps, Coronado Battalion \$ _____

MOAA Scholarship Fund \$ _____

Dues:

\$10/year for Regular members, \$40 for 5 years \$ _____

\$5/year for Auxiliary members, \$20 for 5 years \$ _____

\$50 for "Renewal 2020" (dues paid through 2020) \$ _____ (\$25.00 for Auxiliaries)

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

Check here if you need an official Silver Strand Chapter MOAA name tag: _____

**Reservations must reach
our PO Box by NOON,
Friday, 13 June (Firm)**

If you are unable to RSVP by Friday, 13 June and would still like to attend the dinner meeting, please call Tom Bauer at (619) 313-2228 (days) or (619) 437-6689 (evenings), or e-mail bauertg@yahoo.com.

SS MOAA 2014 Officers/Board of Directors

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