

SOUNDINGS

Silver Strand Chapter of Military Officers Association of America

December 2007

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

CAPT Jim Cahill, USNR, Retired

Congratulations to Chapter member LT Caroline E. Rochfort, USN, for her selection as one of six ADM Edwin T. Layton awards.

The Layton award recognizes outstanding leadership, mentorship and exceptional dedication to the professional development and personal well-being of naval personnel. The outstanding performance of those selected makes them role models for the Navy Intelligence community.

Historically this award has gone to senior officers and it is very rare for a junior officer to be one of the selections.

LT Rochfort is with Naval Central Command, Commander, 5th Fleet, in Bahrain.

She grew up in Coronado and attended the local schools. She

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BG Wayne Hoffmann, AUS (Ret), serves on the MOAA Board of Directors and holds positions as National Chaplain and Chair, Educational Assistance Committee/MOAA Scholarship Fund Board. He earned an A.B. degree in history from Wheaton College, a B.D. degree from Columbia Theological Seminary, a master's in philosophy from the University of Mississippi, and a doctorate in education from Indiana University. Commissioned in 1959, he was ordained in 1962 and served on active duty in Arkansas, Korea, and California. He served in a variety of Reserve chaplain billets, and was recalled to active duty during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. He retired in 1997 as the assistant chief of chaplains (IMA) for Mobilization and Reserve Affairs. He was a college administrator for universities in Mississippi, Indiana, Florida, Missouri, and California and for eight years led the Independent Colleges of Northern California, a non-profit service organization. He is the past president of the Silver Strand Chapter. He will install the Silver Strand Chapter MOAA 2008 Board of Directors.

See Page 7 for more information on Chapter dinner Tuesday, 4 December

Legislative Update

Vet COLA and Suicide Prevention Measures Signed

The President has signed into law (P.L. 110-111) the annual COLA adjustment for certain veterans benefits. The 2.3% hike is the same as the annual Social Security rate and military retired pay. The COLA applies to VA disability compensation payments, survivors' dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC), and a clothing allowance for certain veterans'.

The change becomes effective on December 1 and will be reflected in checks mailed in early January 2008. One example, the new basic monthly DIC rate for survivors of veterans who died of service-related causes after January 1, 1993 will increase to approximately \$1,091 from \$1,067.

The President also signed into law a veteran suicide prevention measure (P.L. 110-110) that addresses training, screening and tracking of veterans at risk for suicide and other mental health illnesses. A large new study by Army researchers in the Journal of the American Medical Association (November 14, 2007) found significant levels of PTSD and other mental health concerns among combat veterans. The study concluded that "the large clinical burden recently reported among veterans presenting to VA facilities seems to exist within months of returning home, highlighting the need to enhance military mental health care during this period."

Glass Half Full It's important to distinguish between the Defense Appropriations Bill and the Defense Authorization Bill. Congress considers both bills at about the same time, and that's a source of confusion every year. Even more so this year, since Congress has completed the Defense Appropriation, but not the Defense Authorization.

The authorization bill includes the law changes needed to authorize troop levels, weapons procurement, new programs, and changes in pay and benefits (including pay raises, health coverage, concurrent receipt and survivor benefits). Final provisions of the authorization bill are currently being negotiated by leaders of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, but the final bill won't be ready for congressional passage until

some time after Thanksgiving.

Hill sources say that the bill is ready to go except for contentious debate over a hate crimes provision. The appropriations bill, on the other hand, provides the funding to pay for the things that are approved in the authorization bill. It was signed into law this week P.L. 110-116. Key items include:

\$459 billion for the Department of Defense, \$39.7 billion above 2007, a 9.5% increase.

Defense Health Programs. \$23.5 billion, \$918 million above the President's budget request. Cancels proposed increases in TRICARE co-pays by fully funding the \$1.9 billion TRICARE shortfall without cost to our troops.

Adds \$70 million to fund programs authorized under the Dignified Treatment of Wounded Warrior Act.

Military Pay and End strength: Fully funds a 3.5 percent pay increase for all service members, 0.5 percent above the President's request. Adds funds to increase the Army by 7000 troops, the USMC by 5,000 and the Army National Guard by 1,300.

National Guard: Adds \$980 million to help National Guard and Reserve forces better equip themselves in light of the severe shortages these components faced as a result of overseas deployments.

Military Families: Includes \$2.6 billion for military family counselors, teachers, and child care providers.

Body Armor: increases funding for body armor and other protective equipment for Special Operations Command.

DoD-VA Single Separation Physical Responding to a major recommendation of the Dole-Shalala Commission on Wounded Warrior care and transition support, DoD and the VA have reached an agreement to pilot a single separation physical for military men and women completing their service. The pilot single physical examination will be used by DoD to determine the medical fitness of injured personnel to remain in uniform and by VA for awarding disability compensation

Who Says Veterans Can't Salute?

US Senator Jim Inhofe introduced a bill to amend title 4, United States Code, to prescribe that members of the Armed Forces and veterans out of uniform may render the military salute during hosting, lowering, or passing of the flag. On July 25, 2007 Bill # S.1877 passed without amendment by unanimous consent. The Bill was referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary and on August 8, 2007 was referred to the Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties.

Silver Strand Chapter 2008 Dues Are Due January 2008

You can use the dinner reservation form on page 7 of this newsletter to pay 2008 dues.

Chapter dues are separate from National MOAA dues.

Your Chapter supports two NJROTC programs and a Naval Sea Cadet Corps with your donations:
Coronado High School, Mar Vista High School and the Coronado Battalion.

Please consider increasing your NJROTC contribution to these programs in 2008.

The Chapter also supports the National MOAA Scholarship Fund.

Thanks!

Influenza Vaccinations Now Available

The NMCS D immunization information hotline has been activated for flu vaccinations; please call (619) 532-5FLU for information regarding the best time and location to immunize yourself and your family. People more than 50 years old or who have other significant medical concerns are encouraged to get their vaccinations as soon as possible.

People who have been exposed to respiratory illnesses and influenza can and do infect other patients. If visitors have an illness that may be contagious, NMCS D asks that they refrain from visiting hospital patients.

National Flu Immunization Week is Nov. 26-30 and NMCS D will be offering flu vaccinations at multiple military installations during that time. Those locations will be posted on the NMCS D website at www.nmcsd.med.navy.mil

Recent Center for Disease Control (CDC) data show that more than 36,000 people in the United States die each year from influenza. Five to 20 percent of the U.S. population gets the flu each year; the result is more than 200,000 people hospitalized from flu complications. More information is available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/nivw07.htm>.

We are committed to our patients' health. Please get your vaccination soon to contribute to a healthy and flu-free NMCS D and San Diego.

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holds a degree from UC in Political Science and Russian and attended the University of Moscow before joining the Navy. She also recently received an MS in Management from the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey.

She is the daughter of CAPT Robert E. Rochfort, USNR and Adrienne Dente, both of Coronado (*And she is my Granddaughter!*). CAPT Rochfort is also a Silver Strand Chapter member.

As we prepare to enter a new year, I would ask each of you to consider pledging to increase your contributions to the two outstanding NJROTC units and the outstanding Naval Sea Cadet Battalion your Chapter supports. You can use the reservation form on Page 7 to contribute to these three units as well as pay your 2008 dues.

Jim Cahill

New Silver Strand Chapter Members

Frank Wuerfel, LCDR, USN (Ret)

Jeanne Daugherty, LtJG, USN

John C. Kennedy, Col USMC

Welcome Aboard

TAPS

Edward Thomas Stanley, Maj, USA (Ret)

Robert Callahan, CDR, USN (Ret)

Health Care Consumer Council

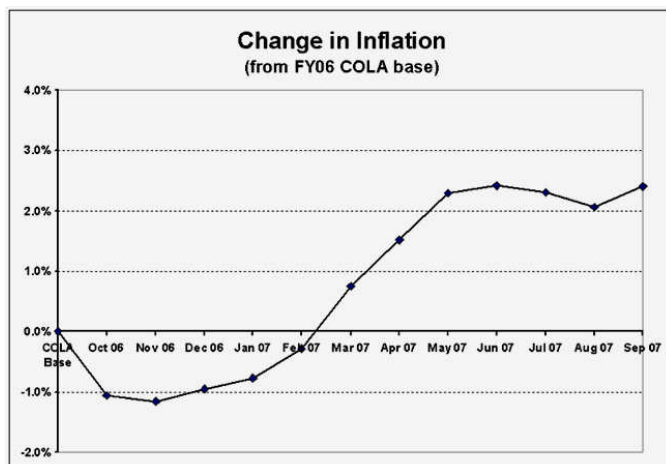
Rear Adm. Christine S. Hunter, Naval Medical Center San Diego Commanding Officer, is scheduled to facilitate a question-and-answer session during a Health Care Consumer Council Wednesday, Nov. 28 at 4:00 p.m. The council is scheduled to be held in the Building 5 Auditorium and will be open to San Diego area military personnel, ombudsmen and Tricare beneficiaries. Questions about the event can be directed to Andrea L. Graves, Patient Relations Dept. Head, at (619) 532-6418.

Shingles Vaccine Available to TRICARE Beneficiaries Age 60 and Older

Following a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendation on October 19, 2007, TRICARE now covers Zostavax, the vaccine designed to prevent shingles for beneficiaries 60 and older. Shingles is a painful viral disease that affects more than one million Americans every year. More than half of those cases happen in people age 60 or older. The CDC recommends a single dose of shingles vaccine for everyone age 60 and older. Beneficiaries who receive the shingles vaccine after October 19, 2007, must have vaccinations administered in a provider's office. Zostavax is covered under the TRICARE medical benefit and is not reimbursable under the pharmacy benefit. Beneficiaries with coverage or claims questions should contact the TRICARE regional claims processor found on their beneficiary explanation of benefits (EOB) notice.

2008 Cost Of Living Adjustment

The vast majority of military retirees will see a 2.3% COLA, effective December 1, 2007. It will first appear in the January pay checks.



Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) sustain the value of retired pay, survivor annuities, and Social Security payments by adjusting these payments to track inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI-W - Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers).

All members who retired from service during 2007 will receive full-year COLAs in future years.

REPORT OF THE SILVER STRAND CHAPTER NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee, chaired by BG Wayne Hoffmann, AUS (Ret), proposes the following slate of officers for the 2008 Board of Directors of the Silver Strand Chapter:

President: Jim Cahill, CAPT, USNR (Ret)
First Vice President: Bob Butcher, MajGen, USMC (Ret)
Second Vice President:
Secretary: Jim Strickland, Col, USAF (Ret)
Treasurer: Tom Bernitt, CAPT, USN (Ret)
Air Force Representative: John Busbee, Lt Col, USAF (Ret)
Army Representative: Don Mayhue, BG, ARNG (Ret)
Marine Corps Representative: Dave Martell, Maj, USMC (Ret)
Navy Representative: Lee Pontes, CAPT, USN (Ret)

In accordance with our Chapter Bylaws, this slate will be placed in nomination by the Chairman of the Nominating Committee at our Annual Membership Meeting on December 4, 2007. Additional nominations will be solicited from the floor, the nominations will be closed and the election will be held. Installation will take place immediately. Officers will assume their respective offices at the January 2008 Board Meeting.

Letters to the Troops

Your Chapter is again, for the eighth year, conducting "Letters to the Troops" letter writing contest for Coronado school children. Each school submits letters written by the students, starting with the line: "I just want to thank you for...." and complete the letter in their own words. The letters are judged by a Chapter committee where first and second place for each school are selected. All letters are then sent to the fleet and overseas stations and distributed to servicemen and women, just in time for Christmas. A book certificate from a local book store is presented to each first and second place student, and a donation is made to the school of the student whose letter is judged best of all. "Letters to the Troops" has been very popular with the school children, with over 700 letters written each year. Your Chapter has reports back from troops who received these letters stating their gratitude and thanks, and some with descriptions of trading letters with their shipmates, much like trading baseball cards.

NJROTC Islander Company Opens Year as Big Winner!

It did not take long for this year's group of Coronado High School NJROTC cadets to establish themselves as a force to be reckoned within their local NJROTC area. In the year's first competition, 14 sturdy Islander Company cadets easily out-swam, -sailed, -kayaked and -paddled their counterparts from other Southern California NJROTC units at the annual "Neptune Olympics." A competition designed to test one's savvy in and on the water, nothing could be more suitable to the skills of our cadets. Consequently it was no surprise when we had the top two teams of the 16 that competed at Fiddler's Cove on Saturday, Sep 15. The top team was led by Cadet/LTJG Brandi Bible. Through her sound physical conditioning and demanding leadership style, Cadet Bible led her team of Philip and Chloe Lozier (yes, siblings), Charlie Eyerly, Hector Heredia, Jessica McRae, and Ian McRae (sorry, not siblings) to a narrow victory over the other Islander Company entry. In all, we took home first place in sailing and rubber boat paddle while placing high in the kayak and Titanic swim events.



The following weekend, Sep 28-30, saw 19 brave Islander Company first year cadets pack their "sea-bags" and head off for a weekend of fun and learning at Santa Ana High School to attend the annual "NJROTC



Mini-Boot Camp." The event goes pretty much like it sounds – an abbreviated version of a real boot camp. We left CHS at 3:00 Friday and spend the next 45 hours doing intense military and fitness training under the guidance of senior cadets. Rising Saturday and Sunday mornings at 5:30 AM is not a normal routine for a high school student, and then staying on the go for two straight days is certainly a more hectic weekend than most teenagers plan for themselves. But this weekend earned the new cadets their first NJROTC "ribbons" and an "I survived Mini-Boot Camp" tee-shirt which they now proudly wear around

campus and on our fitness day. The training was intense but Islander Company cadets earned a reputation for their toughness and solid work ethic. If you see an "I survived MBC" tee shirt around campus or in town, please be sure to ask the wearer about their experience.

CAPT Lee Pontes, USN (Ret)

Senior Naval Science Instructor, Coronado High School NJROTC

Joint Silver Strand Chapter MOAA /Coronado Navy League Dinner Meeting

Date: Tuesday, December 4, 2007

**BG Wayne Hoffmann, AUS (Ret), MOAA Board of Directors
MOAA Scholarship Program: "What's In It For You"**

Where: Coronado Yacht Club, 1631 Strand Way

When: 1800: Social Time

1900: Dinner

1945: Program

*Slow Roasted Prime Rib w/ Peppercorn Au Jus & Creamy Horseradish, or
Bacon Wrapped Fresh Salmon w/ Fresh Mango Salsa, Apple Cider Reduction
Traditional Caesar Salad, rice, vegetables, desert, rolls, coffee, tea; \$30 per person*

Use the coupon below for:
December 4 Dinner Meeting Reservation
- Pay 2008 Dues
- Donate to NJROTC & Naval Sea Cadets
- Donate to MOAA Scholarship Fund

Chapter Meeting Tuesday, December 4, 2007

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

Name _____
Phone _____

Reservations must reach our PO Box by **Noon, Friday, 30 November (Firm)**

Indicate your choice (s) of entrée _____

Number attending dinner ____ X \$30 = \$_____

2008 Dues (\$10 for members, \$5 for Auxiliary) \$_____

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

Naval Sea Cadet Corps, Coronado Battalion \$_____

MOAA Scholarship Fund \$_____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$_____



Silver Strand Chapter Board of Directors

President	Jim Cahill, CAPT, USNR (Ret)	435-8077
First Vice	Bob Butcher, MajGen, USMC, (Ret)	435-6979
Second Vice	Nancy Owen, CAPT, USN (Ret)	437-0542
Secretary	Jim Strickland, Col, USAF (Ret)	435-6608
Treasurer	Tom Bernitt, CAPT, USN, (Ret)	424-6365
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Army Rep.	Don Mayhue, BG, ARNG, (Ret)	435-7400
Marine Rep.	Dave Martell, Maj, USMC (Ret)	435-9459
Navy Rep.	Lee Pontes, CAPT, USN (Ret)	435-2658
Legislative Chair	Tom Bernitt, CAPT, USN (Ret)	424-6365
Newsletter Editor	Jim Strickland, Col, USAF (Ret)	435-6608
Personal Affairs	Carl Jennings, COL, AUS (Ret)	435-1015
Chaplain	Tom Johnson, CAPT, USN (Ret)	435-3408
TOPS	Tom Bauer, CAPT, USN (Ret)	437-6689
Past President	Wayne Hoffmann, BG, AUS (Ret)	522-0031

Dates to Remember

2007/2008

Chapter Meetings

December 4

February 19

April 15

June 17

August 19

October 21

December 2

Board Meetings

January 15

March 18

May 20

July 15

September 16

November 18

SOUNDINGS

Silver Strand Chapter
 Military Officers Association of America
 P. O. Box 180043
 Coronado, CA 92178-0043

Return Service Requested

TIME DATED MATERIAL