

# SOUNDINGS

Silver Strand Chapter of Military Officers Association of America

June 2010

## Presidents Message MajGen Bob Butcher, USMC (Ret)

Sharon Landon and Galen Seal presented a wonderfully informative program regarding the soon to be opened National Cemetery at Miramar. As you may know, in ground burials in San Diego haven't been possible since 1966. That will all soon change!

The Navy League is in charge of our Monday, June 21<sup>st</sup> meeting and they have arranged for a great speaker. Captain Edward Cedrun is the Chief of Staff for Expeditionary Strike Group Three, but just as importantly for our meeting, he was the Commanding Officer of the USS Boxer in April 2009. His command participated in the daring rescue of Captain Richard Martin (the MV Maersk Alabama commanding officer) from Somalia pirates. His description of that rescue is sure to be captivating. Come out and hear this great speaker and share the evening and good food with officers and spouses that speak your language!

The MOAA Scholarship Fund continues to be a great investment in the future of our county and we proudly contribute to that fund every year. Captain (USN, Ret) Shelley Marshall's letter, thanking us for our generous contribution, included a phrase that bears repeating: *our students understand that prompt repayment enables more students to have demonstrated fiscal responsibility and a commitment to this*

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**Captain Edward Cedrun, USN, Chief of Staff for Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group THREE** graduated from the US Naval Academy in 1983. Prior to his current position he Commanded USS BOXER (LHD 4) which served as the flagship for Commander, Task Force 151 and participated in the rescue of CAPT Richard Phillips from the M/V MAERSK ALABAMA in April 2009. He began his career in Surface Warfare aboard the carrier USS RANGER (CV 61), billeted as a Deck Division Officer and then Main Propulsion Division Officer. Subsequent sea assignments include Chief Staff Officer on the staff of Commander, Amphibious Squadron SEVEN; and as Executive Officer aboard USS BOXER (LHD 4). He commanded the dock landing ship USS ANCHORAGE (LSD 36), deploying to the Arabian Gulf in early 2003 as part of Amphibious Task Force WEST with elements of the FIRST Marine Expeditionary Brigade in support of Operations ENDURING and IRAQI FREEDOM.

**See Page 7 for more information on Chapter dinner Monday, 21 June**

# Legislative Update

**Medicare/TRICARE Threat Is Back** Once again, we face an imminent threat of a 21% cut in Medicare and TRICARE payments to doctors - this time as of June 1 - that would cause large numbers of doctors to stop seeing seniors and military beneficiaries.

Do we believe Hill leaders will actually let the cut take place? It's not likely, but the threat is too serious to ignore.

Facing a similar situation on April 1, Congress took a two-week vacation and then fixed the cut retroactively. They could do that because Medicare has authority to delay processing payments for up to two weeks.

In 2006, Congress delayed action even beyond that two-week deadline so the Medicare did, in fact, have to implement lower rates. They subsequently passed a fix that allowed Medicare to reprocess lump-sum payments to doctors for the interim treatments.

But that involved only a payment cut of about 4%, not 21%. And the threats back then only came once a year, rather than once every one or two months as they have in 2010.

This is serious stuff, and the ever-shortening threat cycle leaves beneficiaries understandably afraid that their access to health care will be disrupted. And that's not an idle worry, as doctors are getting more and more upset as well. When Congress delays action and Medicare delays payments, it's the doctors who effectively have to float the government a loan in the interim.

On May 26, MOAA Deputy Government Relations Director CAPT Kathy Beasley (USN-Ret) joined representatives of AARP and several medical associations at a Capitol Hill press conference urging prompt action for a longer-term fix. "When our troops are deployed in harm's way," said Beasley, "the last thing they should have to worry about is whether a sick spouse or child will be able to find a doctor to treat them."

As this report is being prepared, House leaders are

hoping to get a vote, perhaps as soon as May 28 on a fix that would put off any payment cut until January 1, 2012. But even if that happens, the Senate is unlikely to take it up until after the recess, with only a few days' latitude left.

That legislative package (H.R. 4213) also would authorize concurrent receipt for severely disabled military members forced into early medical retirement.

Please send your legislators a [MOAA-suggested message](#) urging them to approve this important legislation promptly.

**House, Senate Defense Bills Advance** The full House of Representatives began consideration of the FY2011 Defense Authorization Bill (H.R. 5136) which included a variety of [personnel and compensation improvements](#) the last week in May. In the Senate, the Armed Services Committee has completed its initial draft of the defense bill.

The big news in both chambers was the adoption of compromise language worked out by Hill and Administration leaders that lay out a road to repeal of statutory provisions behind the "don't ask, don't tell" policy concerning gays in the military.

The provision approved by the Senate Armed Services Committee and adopted in the House by a vote of 234-to-194 would repeal the statutory provision, subject to completion of the ongoing Defense Department Study of the issue and provided that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Secretary of Defense, and the President all certify that repeal is "consistent with military readiness, military effectiveness, unit cohesion and recruiting" and also certify that the Defense Department has prepared the necessary policies and regulations to implement repeal. The repeal would take effect 60 days after such certification.

**MOAA Speaks Out Against Funeral Protesters** At a May 28 Capitol Hill press conference, MOAA joined Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and others speaking out in support of military families' right to be protected against the presence of protesters at the funerals of their loved ones who died in service to their country.

## Joint Dinner April 19 Coronado Yacht Club

Sharon Landon, Assistant Director Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery & Miramar National Cemetery and Galen Seal, Chair-Commemorative Works & Memorial Monuments Committee, Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery At Miramar spoke to Silver Strand Chapter MOAA and The Coronado Council of the Navy League members on April 19. Sharon discussed the mission of the National Cemetery Administration: *To honor veterans with final resting places in national shrines and with lasting tributes that commemorate their service to our Nation.* She said the Miramar site will satisfy the long standing need for in-ground casket burials in the San Diego area for many years.



*Bob Butcher, Sharon Landon and Galen Seal*

The Fort Rosecrans site has been closed to interment casketed burials since 1966, although interments of cremated remains are expected to continue up to five or more years. She said veterans can not prearrange burial plans. The process starts after the death of a veteran by next of kin or a funeral home by contacting the National Cemetery Scheduling Office. She covered burial benefits including burial plot, opening and closing of the gravesite, a government liner, headstone or marker with inscription, interment flag, and a Presidential Memorial Certificate. Galen discussed the activity his committee does to assist organizations that wish to enhance and beautify the new national cemetery at Miramar with their donation of a commemorative work or a memorial monument. Several are in progress and all will honor and acknowledge the sacrifices of our veterans and their families. The walk along which they will be placed is called the “Garden of Heroes.” There were many questions for the two speakers from a very interested audience.

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## MOAA Scholarship Fund

The Military Officers Association of America thanked members of the Silver Strand Chapter for their donations to the MOAA Scholarship fund in their letter of March 25, 2010. Portions of their letter follow:

*Dear Silver Strand Chapter,*

*You have made a difference! Thank you for your generous contribution to the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) Scholarship Fund. Every penny will help provide a \$5,500 interest-free loan to 1,650 children from military families to attend college this fall – Kyle Morgan who told us the “Without this loan my college career would not have been possible. Each semester it helped me pay for tuition and books, costs that I could not afford by myself. MOAA is quite possibly the single reason why my college career has been so successful.”*

*Because MOAA administers this program without deduction any operating expenses whatsoever from donations, your gift will be used to maximum advantage. Interest-free loans ensure that our students receive much needed assistance with their college education, and our students understand that prompt repayment enables more students to have demonstrated fiscal responsibility and a commitment to this program by repaying their loans – we enjoy a default rate of less than .1 percent. ....*

*Sincerely, Shelley Marshall, CAPT USN (Ret), Development Director*

*Continued from page 1*

*program by repaying their loans – we enjoy a default rate of less than .1 percent. Folks – That is one tenth of one percent (fewer than one out of every thousand borrowers) and that is remarkable!*

As the school year ends, it's appropriate that we hear from the two NJROTC programs that we support. These truly superbly led units from Coronado and Imperial Beach high schools are featured on pages four and five. As significant as their academic and athletic achievements are, the most important and longest lasting value of these programs is clearly the fact that they are producing good citizens.

We are starting to see pressure build to do something about our country's unsustainable budget deficit. I don't know where those pressures will lead, but I'm more than ever convinced that the number one target for many legislators will be the defense budget. These pressures make your membership in our chapter and National MOAA more important than ever! As I've often said, numbers of members we represent are the primary factor that lets our voice be heard.

Legislators know that we vote and that we influence the vote of our family members and neighbors. If you haven't renewed your membership, I'd urge you to do it right now. We can best counter the pressure that's sure to come by demonstrating that our membership numbers make us a force to be considered when they are getting ready to vote on an issue that we support.

Jim Strickland has again put together a very informative issue. Read it and after you've done so, pass it on to a friend or neighbor for their information.

**Warm regards, Bob Butcher**

## **Islander Company Plays an Active Role in Their Community**

*Cadet Rowena Benedictos*

Recently, Coronado High School's Navy Junior ROTC unit "Islander Company," has participated in a number of events, such as the used book sale hosted by the Friends of the Library Association, the Coronado Flower Show, Coronado Coffee, and the Silver Strand Luau, adding to the program's already accumulated over 1000 hours of community service.

In addition, they earned the Distinguished Unit award, given to the top 25% of Navy Junior ROTC programs nationwide. They have also received tremendous praise from their community and other organizations they have assisted, accumulating nearly 2,000 hours of community service. There are also more community service events that they will be participating in the upcoming weeks, including the upcoming CIF Swimming Championships at Coronado's Brian Bent Memorial Aquatics Complex, a celebration at the Coronado Historical Society, and the Memorial Day Services at Star Park.

Prospective Cadet Staff for the upcoming school year has also been announced. Coronado High School juniors Griffin Nosenzo and Rowena Benedictos have been assigned as the new Commanding Officer and Executive Officer, respectively.

"This past year has been tremendously challenging," commented CAPT Ken Ireland, Islander Company's Senior Naval Science Instructor, "the senior leadership has done a terrific job despite having the transition of Naval Science Instructors. To earn a Distinguished Unit Award in this tumultuous period is a testament to the leadership of our high school seniors."

Captain Ireland specifically mentioned this year's Cadet Commanding Officer, Kimberly Kitchener, and fellow senior leaders Lance Lowenberg and Phil Lozier, for their commitment to Islander Company. "The legacy of excellence continues," CAPT Ireland commented, "and the Coronado community should be proud of their continued excellence and the service they perform to help make Coronado a special place to live."

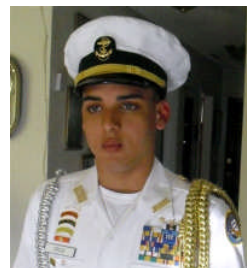
## **Mar Vista High School NJROTC 2009-2010 School Year**

*Cadet Kenneth Barlahan*

This year our NJROTC unit has been very productive. As a whole, we have completed many community service hours, gone on a variety of educational day trips, and competed in various drill meets. We have grown stronger academically by infusing our orientation trips with hands on experiences corresponding with our curriculum. All the academic team's hard work paid off when they placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the La Habra Field Meet.

As well as having our academic team, our unit also has an Armed Drill team, an Unarmed Drill team, and a Physical Fitness team. These teams are made up of our motivated cadets that we take into NJROTC sanctioned Field and Drill meets. The Drill teams at these competitions do both a basic marching routine that is graded by Marine Corps Drill Instructors and an exhibition routine that the cadets perform not only basic marching but a more unique and flashy style with intricate movements as well as formations. Our Physical Fitness team is well known throughout Area 11. This team usually places first in team push ups and sit ups with at least 4-5 cadets of each gender receiving a medal for doing an outstanding amount of sit ups or push ups. And overall we generally place 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> against 15 other schools at a meet.

Our unit also took part in many Leadership activities such as Leadership Academy, Sail Academy and for the first time in many years we hosted Basic Leadership Training which provided our cadets with essential skills needed to prosper in the unit and in life. The tier of leadership in NJROTC is the senior class and our seniors are going places. We have five cadets attending four year universities and two cadets attending a two year university. We are very proud and honored that two of our cadets, Brenda Dube and Kenneth Barlahan, have received the coveted Naval Reserve Officers Training Corp (NROTC) Scholarship. Also, another one of our outstanding seniors, Jason Groce, will be attending the Naval Academy Preparatory School(NAPS) where he will be for ten months then will be attending the U.S Naval Academy upon completion.



*Cadet Jason Groce*

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## **New Administrator of the Chula Vista Veterans Home**

Neal Asper, 61, of Yakima, Washington, has been appointed administrator of the Chula Vista Veterans Home. He served as executive director of the Toppenish Nursing and Rehab Center since 2008. Previously, Asper was executive director of Willow Springs Care from 2006-2008, commandant at North Dakota Veterans Home from 2003 to 2006 and administrator at Rosholt Care Center from 1991-2003.

He was a registered representative with Waddell and Reed Financial Services from 1987 to 1990. Asper was an Inspector for the Division of Aviation Construction in Alaska from 1982 to 1986 and a heavy equipment operator for John Vander Wal Construction from 1976 to 1982.

He was a medical specialist in the U.S. Army from 1970-1972 and served in the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division and the 196<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade in Vietnam. Asper received the Army Commendation Medal and Combat Medical Badge. This position does not require Senate confirmation and the compensation is \$85,000.



## Silver Strand Chapter 2010 Dues Report

We currently have 42 out of 209 total Chapter members who are **delinquent on their 2010 dues**. If your **mailing label has the year 09 beside your name and is highlighted in red**, you have not paid your 2010 dues. Please use the form on Page 7 to correct that oversight and mail them in today. If you elected to receive your newsletter electronically and have received a “Delinquent Dues” e-mail, please mail your check to the PO address in the e-mail today. Thank You!

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### **New Silver Strand Chapter Members**

**CDR Ed Weisbrod, USN  
Teresa Blakely, Auxiliary  
LCDR Alex Quartley, USN (Ret)**

### Welcome Aboard

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### **USNS Mercy Deploys**

USNS Mercy deployed on May 1, 2010 on a humanitarian mission. She stopped in Guam to pick up 300 more people from non governmental organizations to join them. They will then begin their mission in Vietnam and move on to Cambodia, Indonesia, and Timor-Leste. This is an annual deployment for the Pacific Partnership 2010 program used to strengthen regional relationships with different host and partner nations within the areas they are visiting.



### Web Sites You Can Use

Military Officers Association	<a href="http://www.moaa.org/">http://www.moaa.org/</a>
Defense Accounting and Finance Service	<a href="http://www.dfas.mil/">http://www.dfas.mil/</a>
United States Senate	<a href="http://www.senate.gov/">http://www.senate.gov/</a>
United States House of Representatives	<a href="http://www.house.gov/">http://www.house.gov/</a>
California State Legislature	<a href="http://www.legislature.ca.gov/">http://www.legislature.ca.gov/</a>
City of Coronado	<a href="http://coronado.ca.us/">http://coronado.ca.us/</a>
Navy Medical Center San Diego	<a href="http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcسد/">http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcسد/</a>
Express Scripts, TRICARE Pharmacy	<a href="http://www.express-scripts.com/">http://www.express-scripts.com/</a>
TRICARE Online Options Wizard	<a href="http://www.tricare.mil/mybenefit/">http://www.tricare.mil/mybenefit/</a>
Medline Plus, U.S. National Library of Medicine	<a href="http://medlineplus.gov/">http://medlineplus.gov/</a>
US Department of Veterans Affairs	<a href="http://www.va.gov">http://www.va.gov</a>
California Department of Veterans Affairs	<a href="http://www.cdva.ca.gov">www.cdva.ca.gov</a>
Online Resources for Veterans	<a href="http://www.nationalresourcedirectory.gov">www.nationalresourcedirectory.gov</a>
The United Veterans Council of San Diego	<a href="http://www.sduvc.org">www.sduvc.org</a>
Space A Travel, Air Mobility Command	<a href="http://www.amc.af.mil.amctravel">http://www.amc.af.mil.amctravel</a>
The Flying Leatherneck Historical Foundation	<a href="http://www.flyingleathernecks.org">www.flyingleathernecks.org</a>

**Joint Silver Strand Chapter MOAA /Coronado Navy League Dinner Meeting**

Date: Monday, June 21, 2010

**CAPT Edward Cedrun, USN, Chief of Staff for Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group THREE**

Where: Coronado Yacht Club, 1631 Strand Way

When: 1800: Social Time

1845: Dinner

1930: Program

*Prime Rib w/ Creamy Horseradish Au Jus & Twice Baked Potatoes, or  
Grilled Salmon w/ Creamy Lemon Dill Sauce & Wild Rice, or  
Vegetarian Plate - Portobello Mushroom w/ Chardonnay Sauce  
Pear & Cranberry Spring Salad Mix, grilled vegetables, desert, rolls, coffee, tea; \$30 per person*

Use the coupon below for:

- June 21 Dinner Meeting Reservation
- Pay 2010 Dues
- Donate to NJROTC & Naval Sea Cadets
- Donate to MOAA Scholarship Fund

**Chapter Meeting Monday, June 21, 2010**

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, 18 June (Firm)**

Indicate your choice (s) of entrée \_\_\_\_\_

Number attending dinner \_\_\_\_ X \$30 = \$\_\_\_\_\_

**2010 Dues (\$10 for members) (\$5 for Auxiliary)** \$\_\_\_\_\_  
**(\$40 for 5 years) (\$20for 5 years)**

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	Bob Butcher, MajGen, USMC, (Ret)	298-7888
First Vice	Nancy Owen, CAPT, USN (Ret)	437-0542
Second Vice	Kathy Bruyere, CAPT, USN (Ret)	409-9505
Secretary	Jim Strickland, Col, USAF (Ret)	435-6608
Treasurer	Tom Bernitt, CAPT, USN (Ret)	424-6365
Air Force Rep.	John Stihl, Maj Gen, USAF, (Ret)	435-4155
Army Rep.	Don Mayhue, BG, ARNG (Ret)	435-7400
Marine Rep.	Fred Allega, Col, USMC (Ret)	429-4282
Navy Rep.	Jim Cahill, CAPT, USNR (Ret)	435-8077
Legislative Chair	Jim Cahill, CAPT, USNR (Ret)	435-8077
Newsletter Editor	Jim Strickland, Col, USAF (Ret)	435-6608
Personal Affairs	Joan Thomas, CDR, USN (Ret)	435-3812
Chaplain	Tom Johnson, CAPT, USN (Ret)	435-3408
TOPS	Tom Bauer, CAPT, USN (Ret)	437-6689
Auxiliary Liaison	Kathleen Prout, Auxiliary	435-6623
Past President	Jim Cahill, CAPT, USNR (Ret)	435-8077

## **Dates to Remember 2010**

### **Chapter Meetings**

**June 21  
August 16  
October 20  
December 7**

### **Board Meetings**

**July 20  
September 21  
November 16**

### **SOUNDINGS**

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

Return Service Requested

**TIME DATED MATERIAL**