

# SOUNDINGS

Silver Strand Chapter of Military Officers Association of America

June 2006

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### BG Wayne W. Hoffmann, AUS, Retired

The challenges to organizations like MOAA is to serve the current membership, be extremely sensitive to and mindful of the auxiliary members, and be aware of the concerns each of us have in these days.

MOAA membership is a continuum of active component, former commissioned officers, recently retired, and "retired/retired" officers. The national organization has recognized the importance of engaging the not yet retired through an emphasis on professional development. The inquiry is "what can MOAA do to serve the younger professional member of the officer corps?"

The local chapter has a multiple challenge. To serve the retiree, to serve the auxiliary (widows/widowers), and to serve the officer not or not yet retired. The Silver Strand Chapter has taken this challenge seriously. Our first thrust will be to

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### Keith Gilbert. CAPT USNR, Ret

Keith Gilbert recently authored "A Leader Born, The Life of Admiral John Sidney McCain, Pacific Carrier Commander" He will discuss his book at the 22 June joint dinner. See a review of his book on this Word War II military leader on Page 6.

A native Californian, he attended the University of Mississippi in the Naval ROTC "Holloway" program. He graduated in 1951 with a civil engineering degree and a regular commission in the Navy. After three years of active duty, Gilbert continued his service in Naval Reserve amphibious and intelligence groups, eventually retiring as a Captain, USNR. After active duty, he embarked on a civilian career using his engineering background to plan highway and public transportation systems in a variety of urban areas. Public and private jobs took him to San Diego, Seattle, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Dallas, Washington D.C. and Los Angeles. He is now retired and living in San Diego.

**See Page 7 for more information on 22 June Chapter dinner**

# Legislative Update

House Passes Defense Authorization Bill The full House passed the FY2007 Defense Authorization bill (H.R. 5122) on May 11.

The bill recommended by the Armed Services Committee authorizes \$512.9 billion dollars for national security and weapon programs, \$50 billion for the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, and a 2.7% pay raise for Active Duty troops.

With strict limits on amendments and debate, the House adopted only a few modifications to the Armed Services Committee-passed bill. Here's a partial listing of key Amendments:

\*SBP Transfer Date. Changes the effective date for surviving spouses to elect optional transfer of their Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuity payments to their child(ren) to the start of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Previously, SBP transfers were limited to deaths after November 23, 2003. Surviving spouses who elect to transfer SBP preserve full entitlement to VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation payments.

\*Garnishment of Overpayments. Limits the garnishment of a service member's paycheck to no more than 20% in a single pay period for overpayments not the fault of the member; establishes a 90-day grace period before overpay recovery can be initiated for wounded/ill service members.

\*Study of Army Tour Length. Requires the Army to study the potential benefits of converting from 12 to 6-month deployments in connection with service in Iraq and Afghanistan.

\*Reserve Assignment Pay. Requires the Army to submit a report examining possible pay inequity in its Assignment Incentive Pay system for Guardsman and Reservists.

House Panel Nixes Edwards' Defense Health Funding Amendment With passage of the FY2007 Military Quality of Life Appropriations bill this week,

the House Appropriations Committee (HAC) dug a \$735 million hole for the Defense Health Program (DHP) by rejecting Rep. Chet Edwards' (D-TX) Amendment. MOAA strongly backed it to overcome lost revenue from proposed TRICARE fee increases. The issue could be resolved in conference if the Senate takes up the DHP funding gap. But the HAC did vote to restore \$800 million for the VA health care account to make up for cancelled VA health system enrollment fees for lowest priority veterans.

MOAA Presses Key Funding Issues Testifying before the Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee on May 24 on behalf of The Military Coalition, MOAA Government Relations Director COL Steve Strobridge (USAF-Ret) emphasized the urgent need for the subcommittee to correct a whopping \$735 million shortfall in the defense health budget.

"Both the House and Senate Armed Services Committees have categorically rejected Pentagon plans to double or triple military retiree health fees for FY2007," he said. "However, the President's budget already reduced defense health funding by \$735M for the coming year in the expectation that these fees would be imposed and would dramatically reduce demand. That's not going to happen this year, and the \$735M needs to be restored, or military medicine will run out of money next summer."

He further noted that the counterpart House subcommittee already completed its work on the defense health budget and didn't restore the money. So now the Senate must act to avoid a significant funding shortfall for this vital program.

Strobridge's testimony also highlighted the need to fully fund initiatives already approved by the Senate Armed Services Committee, including increased military manpower levels and upgraded pay raises.

He urged funding levels to ensure that housing, school, child care and other family support requirements are met for the thousands of military families who will be relocating as a result of base reduction and closure actions or other global rebasing plans. Support programs for Guard and Reserve families who don't have access to military installation services must be a continuing priority.

## Cadet/LCDR Shanan Arwood Addresses Silver Strand Chapter and Navy League at Joint Dinner



Good evening. I am the Commanding Officer of the Navy Junior ROTC unit at Coronado High School. This is our program's third year and we have been doing really well. We have competed at several drill meets this year and finally qualified for the Area 11 Drill Meet Super Bowl, the area's biggest competition, to see if we could make it to Florida with our drill routines. We just qualified with the points we earned at our year's final drill meet up at Santa Ana High School.

The cadets enrolled in the program are very active on the different teams and also are very involved in the community. There are numerous Color Guard events on and off the island, drill team performances, and many cadets assisting with local events and activities. There are different associations and organizations that ask us to provide some help or entertainment, and also the cadets volunteer to provide service throughout the community. We have presented the American flag for our high school football games, our very own San Diego Chargers Blood

Drive, and even the recent Coronado Flower Show. At the Area 11 meets and after taking postal exam, members of the Academic team showed that we are not only tough, but we've got the brains to boot.

Our Marksmanship team, though, is the one still proving to be the most successful. The cadets have been competing all over San Diego and have done well to bring home many top awards. Many of the cadets on the team have even earned multiple medals from the SECNAV Air Rifle Competition, the Tiger Challenge Rifle Postal, and some shoulder to shoulder high school competitions.

With our active teams and a close community, we have recruited many new cadets to fill in the void left by the graduating seniors. We ended the last school year with 86 cadets and with current enrollment steadied in the 90s; we are well on our way to achieving our main goal of totaling 100 cadets for the next year. We came very close to that amount this year, and with such a wonderful program at CHS and our unit in such great standing, I have no doubt of achieving that. We have been over to the elementary school to show them the basics of rifle and some military drill. We also have done plenty of recruiting at the middle school. There was also our NJROTC Open House, where we invited all potential future cadets and parents over to our classrooms to see what our program is all about.

Well, it was this past weekend that inspired great excitement from the accomplishment of perhaps our biggest goal. Saturday night was the setting of Islander Company's first ever "Military Ball" and it would not have been possible without your financial support. It was truly an event the cadets will remember for the rest of their lives and they are actually already preparing to make next year's Ball bigger and better. That itself says how much they enjoyed it. It was a great location on the base at North Island and we were able to get beautiful decorations thanks to the many contributions we received from boosters and parents. The dinner was delicious and there was plenty of entertainment, military tradition, lessons in etiquette, wise words from our seniors, and much excitement. It certainly was the highlight of my year.

Let me take this opportunity to thank you once again. We hope to have your continued support in the future and are grateful for your past help and your belief in the unit. We really appreciate it and look forward to many more years of Islander Company!

CHS NJROTC CO, Cadet/LCDR Shanan Arwood

**TAPS**  
**William R. Leonard, CDR, USN (Ret)**

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identify members of the auxiliary and insure they are fully aware of the benefits due to them and are being served. On the other end of the spectrum, we will build bridges to the active community and encourage them to take advantage of the power of MOAA on the national level.

We are fortunate as a Chapter to have in our area the genesis of the military family spectrum mentioned above. We have two outstanding NJROTC units that we have had the pleasure of working with as they develop the officers of the future: Coronado High School and Mar Vista High School in Imperial Beach. I had the opportunity to represent your Chapter at the Mar Vista HS NJROTC awards day recently. The young cadets in uniform are truly impressive. I presented the unit with a cash contribution from our members, and presented the MOAA Outstanding Cadet Medal to Cadet ENS Jose Avina. CAPT Jim Cahill will present an identical medal to Cadet LTJG David Foy, CHS NJROTC on 2 June. Your contributions make this support possible. For the first time we have deficit in this account and I ask you increase the amount you give to these two most important NJROTC programs. Thank you in advance.

Your participation in these initiatives is welcomed.

Wayne W. Hoffmann

### **Mayor Smisek Addresses Joint Meeting of Navy League and Silver Strand Chapter MOAA**



Mayor Tom Smisek gave a thorough “State of Coronado” update to members and guests at the Coronado Cays Yacht Club on April 27. His address included capital improvement projects recently completed, future projects, current issues and the financial health of the City. The Coronado Library expansion and renovation and the Glorietta Bay Project including a new City Hall, Community Center and pool were all completed in 2005. He discussed planning for new city marina office and new docks, a new lifeguard tower, north beach restrooms and a public safety facility at central beach. Construction of these projects will start soon. He discussed the relocation of the animal shelter and options the Council is considering, the construction of senior housing at the old police station site and the plan to locate the “Stockdale Memorial” on the library grounds. The financial state of Coronado is exceptionally strong with funding for future capital improvements secure, and the city employee pension fund in good shape. The Mayor recognized the City Manager and staff for their hard work and good management.



The Coronado High School NJROTC Color Guard presented the colors. From the left are Cadets Jessica Junk, Darreck Snyder, Melissa Siverthorn, and Brandi Bible.

Silver Strand Chapter MOAA First Vice President, CAPT Jim Cahill, USNR (Ret) presents Mayor Tom Smisek the book “Open Doors, Vietnam POWs Thirty Years Later”



## **VA Notification on Security**

On May 22, the Department of Veterans Affairs announced that an employee took home VA information to work on via computer, and the records were stolen in a burglary. Data containing 26.5 million veterans' records were stolen. There is no current indication of compromise of these records (that contain name, date of birth, and social security numbers). While there appear to be no immediate problems, MOAA members should be vigilant about any unusual activities in their banking and charge card records so they can consult the proper authorities if needed. You may call the VA's toll-free hotline at 1-800-FED-INFO (333-4636). Listed below are three important questions and answers from the VA website at: <http://www.firstgov.gov/veteransinfo.shtml>

### **I have never applied for benefits from VA. Do I need to be concerned?**

The electronic data stolen includes information from many veterans who have never filed for VA benefits or contacted VA. Since the 1970s, VA has received information from the Department of Defense on all who served. You are encouraged to take steps to protect yourself against identity theft.

### **I am the spouse, widow, or child of a veteran. Was my information included?**

The Department of Veterans Affairs recommends extra vigilance when monitoring bank statements, credit card statements and any statements relating to recent financial transactions. If you notice unusual or suspicious activity, you should report it immediately to the financial institution involved and contact the Federal Trade Commission for further guidance.

### **What should I do if I detect a problem with any of my accounts?**

The Federal Trade Commission recommends the following **four** steps if you detect suspicious activity:

#### **Step 1 – Contact the fraud department of one of the three major credit bureaus:**

- Equifax: 1-800-525-6285; [www.equifax.com](http://www.equifax.com); P.O. Box 740241, Atlanta, GA 30374-0241
- Experian: 1-888-EXPERIAN (397-3742); [www.experian.com](http://www.experian.com); P.O. Box 9532, Allen, Texas 75013
- TransUnion: 1-800-680-7289; [www.transunion.com](http://www.transunion.com); Fraud Victim Assistance Division, P.O. Box 6790, Fullerton, CA 92834-6790

#### **Step 2 – Close any accounts that have been tampered with or opened fraudulently.**

**Step 3 – File a police report with your local police or the police in the community where the identity theft took place.**

#### **Step 4 – File a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission by using the FTC's Identity Theft Hotline:**

- By telephone: 1-877-438-4338
- Online at [www.consumer.gov/idtheft](http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft)
- By mail at Identity Theft Clearinghouse, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington DC 20580.

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Silver Strand Chapter has 50 members who are **delinquent on 2006 dues**. Check the upper right hand corner of your address label and if it lists **05**, please pay your dues. Thank You.

## **“A Leader Born, The Life of Admiral John Sidney McCain, Pacific Carrier Commander”**

John S. ‘Slew’ McCain was an old-school sailor. Wiry, profane, a curser and a gambler, he reminded more than one observer of ‘Popeye.’ He was also a pioneer in the hard-hitting naval tactics that brought Imperial Japan to its knees.

McCain graduated from Annapolis in 1906 and served aboard an armored cruiser in World War I. Espying the future of naval warfare, he earned his aviation wings in 1936 and by 1939 was commander of the aircraft carrier, USS Ranger. He was thus well placed to provide a leading role in America’s cut and thrust war with the Japanese across the broad expanses of the Pacific. In 1942 he was made commander of all land-based aircraft during the campaign for Guadalcanal. Though he took his share of blame for the disaster at Savo Island, he counterattacked with every means at his disposal, to the point of commandeering the planes of the crippled carriers Enterprise and Saratoga to reinforce U.S. strength on Henderson Field.

Throughout the war, McCain prioritized fighters and single-seat dive-bombers as the best weapons to directly attack the enemy. By the time the U.S. returned to the Philippines, McCain was leading a fast carrier task force under William ‘Bull’ Halsey. When asked what he thought about his carrier commander, Halsey replied, “Not much more than my right arm.”

At the Philippines, Okinawa, and finally up to the very coastline of Japan, McCain’s carrier group destroyed thousands of enemy planes and hundreds of ships with aggressive, swarming tactics. When the Empire formally surrendered on the battleship Missouri, McCain was in the first row of U.S. officers looking on.

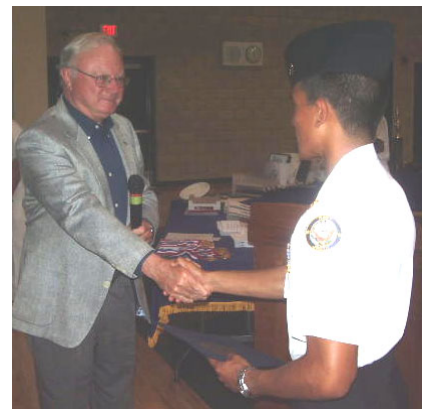
After Japan surrendered on September 2, 1945, McCain flew back to his home in the U.S., and died in his bed the next day—perhaps from heart failure but more probably from exhaustion. His name has lived on, however, through his son, John S. McCain II, who became commander of U.S. naval forces in the Pacific, 1968–72 (one of only two father and son four-star admirals in U.S. history), and his grandson, John S. McCain III, a carrier pilot who became the longest held U.S. POW during the Vietnam War and currently serves as a U.S. Senator from Arizona.

Drawing upon a wealth of primary sources, including information provided by the McCain family, as well as an expert grasp of the titanic battles waged by the U.S. Navy in the Pacific, Alton Keith Gilbert has provided the fullest account of the first Admiral John McCain’s life yet written. An unconventional leader, Slew McCain’s career was marked by courage and innovation, as he emerged from World War II as one of America’s greatest combat leaders.

*Product Information by Publisher Casemate*



Silver Strand Chapter President BG Wayne Hoffmann presents Mar Vista High School NJROTC Senior Naval Science Instructor, CDR Doug Hatfield a check for \$500. This money was contributed by Chapter members and will be used to send three cadets to a leadership academy and four cadets to a sailing academy. Hoffmann presents the MOAA Outstanding Cadet Medal to Cadet ENS Jose Avina.



## Joint Silver Strand Chapter MOAA / Navy League Meeting

Date: Thursday, June 22, 2006

Author Keith Gilbert, CAPT USNR (Ret), Will Discuss His Soon To Be Released Book

“A Leader Born, The Life of Admiral John Sidney McCain, Pacific Carrier  
Commander” (see a review of “A Leader Born” on Page 6)

Where: Coronado Cays Yacht Club

When: 1800: Social Time

1900: Dinner

1945: Program

Entrées: Fish (Ahi) or Chicken  
\$30 per person

Use the coupon below for:

- 22 June Dinner Meeting Reservation
- Pay 2006 Dues
- Donate to NJROTC
- Donate to MOAA Scholarship Fund

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### Chapter Meeting Thursday, 22 June 2006

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Reservations must reach our PO Box by Noon, Monday, 19 June OR you may contact, Joan Sadorf at:  
[jrs\\_krs0585@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jrs_krs0585@sbcglobal.net) or call 522-0885.

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

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

**2006 Dues (\$10 for members, \$5 for Auxiliary)** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donation to NJROTC \$ \_\_\_\_\_

MOAA Scholarship Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Only If you have not done so**, please include E-mail address for Chapter records: \_\_\_\_\_



**Silver Strand Chapter Board of Directors**

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**Dates to Remember  
2006**

**Chapter Meetings**

**June 20  
August 15  
October 17  
December 5**

**Board Meetings**

**July 18  
September 19  
November 21**

**SOUNDINGS**

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

Return Service Requested

**TIME DATED MATERIAL**