

# SOUNDINGS

Silver Strand Chapter of Military Officers Association of America

February 2007

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"This is deja vu all over again." YOGI BERRA

Having succeeded RADM George Worthington as President of the Silver Strand Chapter in the year 1996 and again in 1997, I am back for another term.

I am pleased to have another opportunity to lead one of the best, if not the best Chapter in California. The Chapter has shown its superiority and leadership in multiple ways. In the past year alone, your Chapter has been awarded the Communications Award for the newsletter, "Soundings" by your editor, Col James Strickland, USAF (Ret). In addition, your Chapter was awarded the 5 Star Level of Excellence Award by National MOAA. The award is graded on a set series of criteria, with the maximum score of 240, Silver Strand had a score of 230; extremely high.

Your Chapter has also been out front in leadership, with four past or current members having served on the MOAA National Board. In the recent past; ADM Bud Edney was Chairman of the Board of Directors; Kathy Bruyere, CAPT USN (Ret), chaired the committee that resulted in the name change from TROA to MOAA; MajGen. Bob Butcher, USMC (Ret) was on the Council of Chapter Affairs

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**Col Lee Lange, USMC (Ret)** will address the Chapter on February 21 at **Coronado Yacht Club**. Col Lange was commissioned a second lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps in 1971 and served a 30-year career as an artillery officer. His assignments included a wide range of operational, staff, and command billets in each of the Marine Corp's artillery regiments and four divisions. He was involved in Operation Frequent Wind, the evacuation of Vietnam, and served with the 2nd Marine Division during the first Gulf War. Col Lange also served more than eight years, over three assignments, as a manpower planner at Headquarters Marine Corps, Washington, D.C. He joined the staff of the Military Officers Association of America, Government Relations Department, in June 2001, where he became the lead on military survivor issues. In June 2006, Col Lange was named as the deputy director, Council and Chapter Affairs Department, and he became director of that department in December 2006.

**See Page 7 for more information on 21 February Chapter dinner**

# Legislative Update

**TRICARE Task Force Convenes** The congressionally-chartered DoD Task Force on the Future of Military Health Care held its first meeting this week. Mandated by the FY2007 Defense Authorization Act, the task force is composed of 14 members appointed by the Secretary of Defense - seven from the Defense Department and seven from outside.

It's tasked with examining military health care programs, structure, management, and costs. Congress required its formation mainly to examine the Pentagon's controversial proposal to triple and quadruple TRICARE fees for retirees under age 65. The law requires the task force to provide interim recommendations to the House and Senate Armed Services Committees by the end of May concerning beneficiary fees and cost-sharing.

MOAA and other military and veterans associations have already begun making our case to individual task force members, and we expect to provide testimony before the task force before it makes its interim report.

## **"Military Retirees Health Care Protection Act"**

**Introduced** Taking up this issue where they left off last year, TRICARE champions Rep. Chet Edwards (D-TX) and Walter Jones (R-NC) today reintroduced their "Military Retirees Health Care Protection Act" (H.R. 579).

The new bill is virtually identical to the one (H.R. 4949) they introduced last year, which gathered 164 cosponsors and helped prevent imposition of Pentagon-proposed TRICARE fee increases of up to \$1,000 a year for retired members, family members and survivors under age 65.

The Edwards-Jones bill would remove the Pentagon's authority to increase TRICARE fees, specifying that that authority should reside only with Congress. It would also establish certain principles in law, including:

- acknowledgement that military members pay very large premiums for their future care "up front" through decades of arduous service and

sacrifice;

- acknowledgement that the primary offset for enduring the extraordinary sacrifices inherent in a military career is a package of retirement and health benefits that must be considerably better than that afforded civilian workers; and
- the principle that the percentage increase in health fees in any year should not exceed the percentage increase in beneficiaries' military compensation.

MOAA strongly endorses this legislation and is grateful to Rep. Edwards and Rep. Jones for their strong, continuing leadership on this very important issue.

## **MOAA Testifies on "Chapter 61" Inequity**

The Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission met this week in Washington, D.C. and continued their review of veterans' benefits. The two-day hearing included testimony from a panel of military and veteran organization representatives, including the co-chairmen of The Military Coalition's Retired Affairs Committee (MOAA Deputy Director of Government Relations Col. Mike Hayden (USAF-Ret) and Fleet Reserve Association Legislative Director Mr. John Davis) and representatives from the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Hayden and Davis opened with an oral statement that drove home three severe inequities that exist in concurrent receipt law - they urged the Commission to recommend changing current legislation to include "Chapter 61" disability retirees with less than 20 years of service, extend eligibility to disabled retirees with 10-40% disability ratings, and accelerating/eliminating the 10-year phase-in schedule.

Several Commissioners, but not all, were receptive to including Chapter 61s with less than 20 years as an option in their concurrent receipt deliberations. The Commission's position on that issue is expected during the February 21-23 public hearing.

## Silver Strand Chapter MOAA Dinner December 2006

Incoming Chapter President CAPT Jim Cahill, USNR (Ret) presents outgoing Chapter President BG Wayne Hoffmann, AUS (Ret) with a MOAA certificate of appreciation. The certificate recognized his outstanding service to the Silver Strand Chapter as President for 2005 and 2006. Jim also pinned a "Past Presidents Pin" on Wayne.



The 2007 Board of Directors installed at the December meeting are (from left): MajGen Bob Butcher, USMC (Ret); Col Jim Strickland, USAF (Ret); CAPT Nancy Owen, USN (Ret); CAPT Jim Cahill, USNR (Ret) and BG Don Mayhue, ARNG (Ret). LtCol Larry Stumpf, USAF (Ret), President Cal-MOAA presided as Installation Officer.



### YOUR 2007 DUES ARE (PROBABLY) DUE

Please check the mailing label on this newsletter and if an 06 appears beside your name, your chapter membership has expired. (Chapter dues are separate from National MOAA dues.)

Your membership in our chapter is very important to us, to our community and to the legislative agenda of National MOAA. Let me explain:

- Your membership is important to the chapter because it provides resources to assist our support of two Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC) units -- one in Coronado and the other in Imperial Beach.
- Your membership is important to the community because it provides us the human resources to remain viable and continue our support of several initiatives – key among them the Memorial Day Service.
- Your membership is also critical to the legislative agenda of our national organization. All politics is local and legislators respond to the number of voters supporting a particular position. They know that we vote and that we influence the vote of family, friends and neighbors.

The legislative agenda will be particularly important over the next few years. Pressure on the budget is sure to create calls to reduce or eliminate hard earned benefits for retired military personnel (it's already happening) and the bow wave that's been caused by delaying the purchase of needed new equipment will create pressure to cap personnel costs for our active duty and reserve members. Again, numbers count – and we vote.

All in all, chapter membership is a real bargain at \$10.00 for regular membership and \$5 for auxiliary (surviving spouse) membership. You may use the form on page seven to pay your 2007 dues. We thank you!

### **TAPS**

**Charles Talmadge, CDR, USN (Ret)**

**Mrs. Nelle Moody, Wife of CDR Hal Moody, USN (Ret)**

MOAA Silver Strand Chapter: [www.cal-moaa-silverstrand.org](http://www.cal-moaa-silverstrand.org)

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Committee last 2 years as Chairman; and currently, BG Wayne Hoffmann, AUS (Ret) is the National Chaplain and Chairs the Scholarship Committee. This honor is a credit to Gen Hoffmann's leadership, in that in recent memory a chaplain has never held a Committee Chair. Gen Hoffmann is also the Chapter's immediate Past President. I don't believe any other Chapter in the country can match this record.

Our Chapter membership has significantly increased to 207 members. This is the largest membership in the Chapter's history and is directly due to the past years efforts of our Membership Chairman and 2<sup>nd</sup>. Vice President, Gen Butcher.

Our next dinner meeting, Wednesday February 21, we will observe the 36<sup>th</sup> year of our founding, February 2, 1971 when 65 members signed the Chapter's Charter. Col Lee Lange II, USMC (Ret), Director of Council and Chapter Affairs, National MOAA, will be our guest speaker. Please note that this is a change of site from the Coronado Cays Yacht Club to the **Coronado Yacht Club** on 1631 Strand Way.

## **CAPT Jim Cahill, USNR (Ret)**

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

Tim Lafleur, VADM, USN (Ret)  
Gar Wright, RADM, USNR  
Dave Bean, CAPT, USN  
Doug Waite, CAPT, USN  
Roger Crim, LCDR, USNR  
James Woolway, CAPT, USN (Ret)  
Tom Rieckens, CDR USN  
Donald Auten, CAPT, USNR (Ret)

Daniel Garcia, CDR, USN  
David Hurt Jr., CDR, USN (Ret)  
Peter Fagan, CAPT, USN (Ret)  
Michael Chow, LCDR, USNR  
Steve Alexander, Mr.  
Anthony Gaiani, CAPT USN  
Rosemarie Crowder, Auxiliary

### **Welcome Aboard**

### **Chapter Recruiting Results in All TIME HIGH MEMBERSHIP**

Hard work by chapter members, in particular your Board of Directors, has resulted in what is believed to be an all time high of 207 chapter members.

Key to this success was retaining 191 of 192 members from our 2005 roster. The Board of Directors is encouraged by this result, because it means we're doing something right and you value what we are accomplishing:

- We are a "Five Star" Chapter. That means that National MOAA has voted us to be one of the "very, very best chapters" in America.
- Thanks to the efforts of our Newsletter Editor (Jim Strickland), we were voted the second best newsletter in our category.
- We continue to sponsor and support events and projects of value to our members, our community and active, reserve and retired military members everywhere.

This is a new year and there are sure to be challenges. You can get us off on the proper course by taking the time to send your membership dues today. The form on page 7 has a line for that purpose. While you're at it, please consider donating to the NJROTC units we support and/or to the National MOAA Scholarship Program.

Thanks for your support!

## **Letters to the Troops 2006**

The Silver Strand Chapter MOAA sponsored the “Letters to the Troops” project for the eighth year in a row. Six Coronado schools participated this year and wrote over 850 letters that were sent to deployed Sailors and Marines from the local area. We have seen this program expand year after year as students from elementary to high school expressed their support and thanks to deployed uniformed service men and women. This year’s letters were particularly difficult to judge due to the quality of each one of them. As usual, board members who read and rated the letters were impressed with the ability of students at each level to express their appreciation and concern for military members who are in harm’s way. This was a rewarding and emotional experience for those who participated. The winners from each school are:

**Silver Strand Elementary School: First Place, Steven; Second Place, Angella**

**Village Elementary School: First Place, Michael; Second Place, Megan**

**Coronado Middle School: First Place, Madjlessi; Second Place, Heather**

**Sacred Heart Parish School: First Place, Samantha; Second Place, Jason**

**Christ Church Day School: First Place, Nick; Second Place, Jenny**

**Coronado High School: First Place, McKenna; Second Place, Tucker**

Each letter started with the greeting, Dear Service Member. First place letters or portions of them follow:

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I just wanted to say thanks for your help in saving our country and your support in the country. I wanted to say thanks because you help save us and that means a lot to me to know that there are people out there protecting us. I know it must be hard being over seas if you have family because last winter my dad was gone for Christmas. I hope that you are doing fine and have not been injured or sick. If you have a family I’d like to know their names and yours and maybe know where you are from. Back to what I was saying thank you from the bottom of my heart for saving us the country and the flag by fighting and being in Iraq to protect us. The entire country trusts you and knows that you are in gods hands. Steven 5<sup>th</sup> Grade, Silver Strand Elementary

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Thank you for all your service to guarding the U.S.A. If I hear that you are in a war, or fighting terrorists, I know that you’re always are going to win. Every body in my class honors all the work you do for our country, the United States of America, and every day when we get to school, we always say the Pledge of Allegiance, and when we say it, we think of you. It always warms my heart when you come back to America and be with your family and loved one. You can win this war! You are the best! Michael, Village Elementary

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I just wanted to say thank you for risking your lives to save each individual in the United States. I am very lucky that I live in the U.S. because I know that I feel protected every day, and that you are trying to make our country have full freedom for every person. I feel really bad for the troops sometimes because they are leaving loved ones behind and other important family members. You guys and girls in the military have lots of courage and bravery because you go out every day and fight your best to help us succeed in the United States. Your great service reaches all people because you guys just don’t help Americans, you help every kind of race even if they are not American. I one day maybe would like to be in the military because I want to serve my country to the best of my ability. I would also like to save people’s lives and help them succeed in life. I like how you help other people in the world, not just your teammates, but other people that serve in the military. You also help people that got hurt and have had serious injuries to the body. Once again, thanks for your service and making the United State a free country and happy holidays. Madjlessi 8<sup>th</sup> Grade, Coronado Middle School

*(Letters to the Troops 2006 Continued)*

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“The bravest are surely those who have the clearest vision of what is before the, glory and danger alike, and yet notwithstanding, going out to meet it; bravery is being the only one who knows you are afraid.” Bravery is not the absence of fear, but the judgment that something else is more important than fear, putting a life before your own and fighting for the only thing that you and that stranger have in common; what you believe in. Thank you. Thank you for serving and protecting me. Thank you for being someone who trusts enough in himself to believe that is his duty to fight for peace, for freedom for love for America ... and for me. Thank you for being my hero. Holidays are arriving and warming the hearts of the nation. Families will come together in prayer and hearts to give thanks for their lives and the things that make their life special. You will be in my prayer because you are very special to my heart. I know that you may not see your family for the holidays, or for a long time. --- When I was six years old, I watched a plane collide into buildings on the news as they spat smoke and flames. The towers collapsed, floor upon floor until all that was left was ash and rubble. I did not know. I did not understand. But now I do. Lives were lost. Hearts were broken. --- But in all that terror, some men chose to rise over that hate and war and death. Their will led them through the complete dark. They saved others and risked their own lives. Their bravery amazed me. You have an impact on America as did these heroes. --- I am more grateful for your service. I wish I can give you more, but it seems that we are worlds away, but keep in mind we heart in heart. I am appreciative that I have you and your friends to protect me. I take walks on the beach, watch the sunset, and hug my parents. I am not worried about my safety because of your service. It must be so hard to wake up and fear about whether or not you have a tomorrow, when I am living in peace and warmth. --- My life depends on your bravery. My dreams would not be dreamt, my hope would not be there, my love would not be love if you were not fighting for me. So thank you, for saving America, and thank you for saving me. God bless you --- Thank you for being ... my hero. Samantha, Sacred Heart Parish School

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Hello, my name is Nick. I want to thank you for protecting us and keeping us safe every day. You are a real live action hero. You save people and make a difference in everyone's lives every day. You inspired my cousin Nick so he went to flight school and has going to fly F-18s. I'm an 11 – year old boy who has sandy blonde hair and is one of the shortest in my class. I live and breathe all sports. I especially love baseball. I was picked out of the country district to be on a traveling all-star team. I live soft rock music and easy listening as well as AC-DC and Aerosmith. Happy holidays and best regards, Nick, Christ Church Day School

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I want to thank you for all the sacrifices you have made to protect our country! I know you are probably somewhere far away from home, and many times this may make you lonely. But no matter where you are, know that we are all here in America thinking of you and wishing you the best. We truly do appreciate all you have done for America, because it is men and women like you that continue to make the U.S. the wonderful place it is. I have always been thankful for what you do for America, but until recently, I have not fully understood why. As I grow older, it seems that I have found the answer. You s, last year in humanities, my class studied a great deal of American government. Learning of the Bill of Rights, our Constitution, and our freedoms that came along with them, I realize that America is like no other country in the world. Our freedom of expression and the right to vote (well I don't have that right yet) isn't found in every nation. The liberty I sometimes take for granted is something I must treasure. And because of you, I can still enjoy our rights we have as Americans. I owe it to you for protecting America, its citizens, and our freedom. However, I am not just appreciative for what you do for our country. I am also so grateful for the ways in which you help others around the world who are in need. Whenever there is a disaster, such and a tragic earthquake or devastating tsunami, I can be sure that there will be service members like you that are in other countries helping those who need it most. Also, you help people from other countries gain independence, changing their lives forever in a positive way. You should feel proud that you made a difference in the world, because I and many others are proud of you. Although the road ahead may be filled with obstacles, face every challenge knowing that you have the support of your fellow Americans. It would have taken me pages and pages to write all that I thank you for, but remember that you are in my prayers and thoughts. Thank You. McKenna, Coronado High School

## Silver Strand MOAA Chapter Meeting

Date: Wednesday, February 21, 2007

**Col Lee Lange II, USMC-Ret, Director of Council and Chapter Affairs, MOAA**

Discussion of Issues of Concern to Our Membership and To Military Officers in General

Where: Coronado Yacht Club, 1631 Strand Way

When: 1800: Social Time

1900: Dinner

2000: 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:
- 21 February Dinner Meeting Reservation
  - Pay 2007 Dues
  - Donate to NJROTC
  - Donate to MOAA Scholarship Fund

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### Chapter Meeting Tuesday, 21 February 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, February 16 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: Prime Rib (number) \_\_\_\_\_ Salmon (number) \_\_\_\_\_

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

**2007 Dues (\$10 for members, \$5 for Auxiliary)** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

MOAA Nametag (\$8.50) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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
Air Force Rep.	John Busbee, LtCol, USAF, (Ret)	437-8887
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, USA (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**

**Chapter Meetings**

**February 21**  
**April 17**  
**June 19**  
**August 21**  
**October 16**  
**December 4**

**Board Meetings**

**January 16**  
**March 20**  
**May 15**  
**July 17**  
**September 18**  
**November 20**

**SOUNDINGS**

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

Return Service Requested

**TIME DATED MATERIAL**