

The South Georgia Voice



South Georgia Chapter
Military Officers Association of America
May 2011



www.sgamoaa.org

Community Blueprint

By Buddy Johnson, Lt Col, USAF, Ret

The **Community Blueprint** project will be presented to community leaders on Tuesday, May 24th, at the Holiday Inn and Conference Center. The purpose of the presentation is to help local leaders assess and improve our community's support for veterans, warriors and their families. MOAA team members are President VADM Norb Ryan, USN, Ret; Benefits Information Director Capt Bud Schneeweis, USCG Ret; TOPS Deputy Director Capt Linda Speed, USN, Ret; and Council & Chapter Deputy Director Col Barry Wright, USAF Ret.

The presentation, developed by the Veterans Innovation Center, will cover 8 mission areas: Behavioral Health, Employment, Education, Family Strength, Finance/Legal, Homelessness, Reintegration and Volunteerism. From the Blueprint regarding Education....

"Of the more than 2 million children with a parent in the military, a full 92 % now go to US public schools. Military connected children with a parent serving in the Active Duty Forces also may change schools an average of 6-9 times before

turning 18. And perhaps an even more important difference: Many military connected children grow up with one or both parents routinely absent as a result of military assignments; many also now face the prospect that a parent may return home from combat wounded or profoundly changed, sometimes requiring extensive recovery. And, tragically, of the nearly 6,000 service members killed in combat, many left children behind."

We've secured commitments from community leaders with interest in each mission area to attend the presentation and represent that mission area. Please join us at 10:00 am, Tuesday, May 24 at the Holiday Inn and Conference Center.

Smiling Faces in the Crowd



Buddy Johnson and our newest member Carolyn Abell, LTC, USA, Ret.

Membership Chair Report

By: Don McArthur, Maj. USAF, Ret. .

Shalom! As you read this newsletter, Sara and I will be in Israel with our church group touring the Holy Lands. Obviously, we will not be at the May 12 meeting. We will miss you all, but you know we will be having a wonderful time.

Ralph Brown presented the National MOAA medal and stipend at the VSU ROTC awards ceremony on April 30 held at the Moody Club. I presented both the medal and stipend at the two high schools. The JROTC unit commanders were so appreciative since budget cuts were felt at the local level. Thanks for your support in making this happen.

National MOAA provides local colleges and universities' with new gold bars for the graduating ROTC students. I was able to deliver the bars to VSU on Wednesday, April 27, along with free one year MOAA applications. In the past, 90% of these new lieutenants filled out the application and mailed it to National MOAA.

As we move into the month of May, let's keep our eyes and ears open for new prospective members. These folks may be new to your churches and social organizations. If you get a hint that they may be former or retired officers, invite them to our meetings. Their first meal will be on us. We want to make sure they are National MOAA members or are willing to join. Part of the criteria for the National MOAA Excellence Award judges a chapter on how many members are national members versus non national members.

Thank you for what you do to raise our membership. You are the best! Vacations are upon us so be safe in your travels and be sure to come to the meetings when you are in town.

News You Can Use from MOAA

From: MOAA's Legislative Update

As Congress enjoys a two-week Easter recess after finally passing a FY2011 budget mid-way through the fiscal year, the budget crisis remains the hot topic in Washington and continues to make headlines. The next hurdle for lawmakers upon their return in May will be to tackle the debt ceiling. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner reiterated that Congress will need to raise the debt limit on government borrowing by July 8 even if he employs "extraordinary measures" to avert the country from defaulting on its obligations.

The current legal debt limit is set at \$14.3 trillion and as the nation's debt inches closer to busting the ceiling; both sides of the aisle agree that they must take action to prevent an economic disaster. Following that hurdle, Congress will be getting back to work on the FY2012 budget - one that has significant implications for the Pentagon.

President Obama has made it clear that the Pentagon would not be exempt from additional efforts to trim the federal budget. White House and Pentagon officials confirmed that the Administration is calling for an additional \$400 billion in savings through FY2023...and that's on the heels of the over \$400 billion in cuts

that the Pentagon has reportedly made over the past two years.

Defense officials announced that the Pentagon will begin a "comprehensive review" to find the additional savings. Defense Secretary Robert Gates plans to provide President Barack Obama with options to include the pros and cons of each in order to make additional defense cuts. Pentagon Press Secretary Geoff Morrell said Gates "*has been clear that further significant defense cuts cannot be accomplished without reducing force structure and military capabilities*" and that the review is not "*a budget math exercise.*"

Regardless of the math, MOAA remains concerned that our military members and their families are already stretched to the limit...cutting forces without any reduction in operational tempo just won't "compute."

When the Music Stopped

By: Chaplain Jim Higgins

I recently attended a showing of 'Superman 3' here at LSA Anaconda. We have a large auditorium that we use for movies as well as memorial services and other large gatherings. As is the custom at all military bases, we stood to attention when *The National Anthem* began before the main feature. All was going well until three-quarters of the way through *The National Anthem*, the music stopped.

Now, what would happen if this occurred with 1,000 18-22 year-old's back in the States? I imagine that

there would be hoots, catcalls, laughter, a few rude comments, and everyone would sit down and yell for the movie to begin. Of course, that is, only if they had stood for *The National Anthem* in the first place.

Here in Iraq 1,000 soldiers continued to stand at attention, eyes fixed forward. The music started again, and the soldiers continued to quietly stand at attention. Again, though, at the same point, the music stopped. What would you expect 1,000 soldiers standing at attention to do?? Frankly, I expected some laughter, and everyone would eventually sit down and wait for the movie to start.

No!! . . . You could have heard a pin drop while every soldier continued to stand at attention. Suddenly, there was a lone voice from the front of the auditorium, then a dozen voices, and soon the room was filled with the voices of a thousand soldiers, finishing where the recording left off: "And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air, gave proof through the night that our flag was still there. Oh, say, does that Star Spangled Banner yet wave, o'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave."

It was the most inspiring moment I have had in Iraq and I wanted you to know what kind of U.S. Soldiers are serving you! Remember them as they fight for us! Be ever in prayer for all our soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen serving us here at home and abroad. Many have already paid the ultimate price.

Our next meeting is Thursday May 12, 6:00 PM, Valdosta – Lowndes
Conference Center on Norman Drive.

Please welcome our guests and ask them to join you for dinner.

Dinner is served at 6:30 PM.

Georgia State Senator Tim Golden will tell us about current deliberations under
the Golden Dome.

Please make your reservations through **Tim Oliver 229-599-0112 or 229-561-
5251 email timothyoliver@bellsouth.net**. We are required to provide an
accurate meal count two work days prior to the event.

Cost is \$20 per person.

Sorry, we must bill no-shows and late cancellations.

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