

September Dinner Social

Welcome back from your summer activities! Sure hope you had a great time and didn't get too close to any moose!

Our next dinner social will be as noted below.

- Date: September 22, 2016
- Speaker: Kameron Perez-Verdia, CEO & President, Alaska Humanities Forum (former President and current member of ASD school board)
- Time: 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm
- Location: Coast International Inn
- Address: 3450 Aviation Ave, Anchorage, AK 99502, USA
- Phone: 907-243-2233

MOAA Annual Meeting

Should you be so inclined, MOAA National will soon have their annual meeting as noted below:

Date: Oct 24-25, 2016
Venue: Sheraton Pentagon City Hotel
Address: 900 S. Orme Street
Arlington, VA, 22204
(Reservations may be made at MOAA website)

Chapter Website

As previously noted, the chapter has a new website! Secretary Grunwald (Edie) built a website and to coordinate with MOAA to have them connected. You can visit the website at: www.MOAA-AK.COM

MOAA National Congressional Recess Campaign

In early September, most U.S. Senators and Representatives will still be on recess in their home districts to meet with constituents. This is a great opportunity for you as a MOAA member to visit your elected officials' local offices and advise them of your and MOAA's concerns on important matters.

(Ed Note: We are fortunate in that we have strong supporters of the military in our federal representatives. Senators Murkowski and Sullivan, and Congressman Young are all very receptive to this information. If you have the opportunity to discuss this with them, we have no doubt you'll be in friendly territory; from past experience "Storming the Hill", not all MOAA chapters are so fortunate!)

Specifically, we (MOAA) need your help to influence the FY17 Defense Authorization Bill. The goal is to ask legislators to make sure that bill:

- Retains the pay raise and force level improvements in the House-passed bill version.
- Drops Senate-proposed housing allowance cuts (\$10,000-\$20,000 or more annually in some cases)
- Prevents disproportional TRICARE fee increases for retired members and families

Makes real progress toward eliminating the military "widows tax"

It's imperative to let our legislators know how we feel about these important topics.

These aren't just "defending our rice bowl" issues; they're critical matters for sustaining retention and readiness - the core of our national defense - over the long term.

To assist you in preparing for these meetings, we've developed fact sheets and talking points on the key issues listed above.

You don't have to be an expert on every issue. That's why we designed the packages as we have - to include a "key points" summary to talk from, along with one-page fact sheets on each issue that you can print and leave with the legislators and/or their staffs.

If you have more than one person in the visiting group, it helps to divide up the talking points.

One of the reasons MOAA has been successful on Capitol Hill is that we have members who are willing to contact their legislators and express their views on issues that are important to them. Leaders who can say "We represent MOAA members in our state" help convey that they're speaking for a substantial group of constituents. The grassroots support of our members has never been as important as it is now.

You can use MOAA's website to find your legislators' local offices.

Use this short "elevator speech" to summarize key talking points

Use this statistical summary (PDF) to highlight the number of people affected in your state

One-Page Fact Sheets for Four Key Issues (Ed Note: Elevator speech, statistical summary, and fact sheets are provided as attachments with this newsletter):

- Troops Deserve Full Pay Raise and Force Increases
- Reject Military Housing Allowance Cuts
- Oppose Disproportional TRICARE Fee Hikes
- Reduce Military "Widows Tax," Don't Just Maintain It

Recent National Military News

USS America Air Department Prepares For F-35B Testing This Fall

Amphibious assault ship USS *America's* (LHA-6) deck crew is gearing up for F-35B Joint Strike Fighter testing this fall, with ship modifications for the new plane complete but crew training still ongoing.

USNI News (8/29)

Navy rushes to get new carrier deployed by year's end

The Navy is rushing to get its new carrier, the USS George H.W. Bush, deployed on time. The carrier came out

of the shipyard at least five months behind schedule and is due to relieve the Dwight D. Eisenhower around the first of the year.

Defense News (8/28)



Underwater drones put to test in Navy exercise

A recent exercise in the waters of Narragansett Bay in Rhode Island tested the abilities of unmanned underwater drones designed for the Navy. They included backpacked-sized units and larger drones that needed to be dropped into the water with cranes.

NationalDefenseMagazine.org (8/19)

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NationalDefenseMagazine.org (8/19)

Army wants larger role in space operations, official says

The Army -- the military's largest user of the Pentagon's space programs -- has revised its policy on space and intends to take on a greater role in program planning. Col. Joe Guzman, who leads the Army's space efforts, told the Space and Missile Defense Symposium that it's "completely within [the Army's] lane to lead space operations."

Space News International (8/16)

Army air-and-missile defense programs may be accelerated

To prepare for emerging threats, the Army may speed up its programs for air-and-missile defense, according to officials speaking at Tuesday's Space and Missile Defense Symposium. In particular, the Army is eyeing its Indirect Fire Protection Capability and the Integrated Battle Command System.

Defense News (8/16)



VA shows off innovation and entrepreneurship programs

The Department of Veterans Affairs showed off its programs for innovation and entrepreneurship at a demonstration in Washington, D.C., this week. "For us, innovation is not just important to do, it's actually essential," said David Shulkin, the VA's undersecretary of health.

Task & Purpose (8/16)

Navy invests in robot research

The Navy is backing research by a number of universities and institutes seeking to teach robots to make appropriate decisions in various situations. "You can give them high-level mission guidance, and they can work out the steps involved to carry out a task," said Marc Steinberg, manager of the Office of Naval Research.

Stars and Stripes (8/14)



Many US weapons are unaccounted-for, report says

The US military has lost track of a large number of guns issued to battlefield partners during campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, an investigation has found. More than 1.4 million weapons have been handed out to Afghan and Iraqi troops, but the Defense Department has records for less than half that amount.

The New York Times (8/24)

Warning shots fired at Iranian boats harassing Navy vessel

Coastal patrol ship the USS Squall fired three warning shots at Iranian boats in the northern Persian Gulf on

Wednesday after warning flares and attempts to make radio contact failed to stop the Iranian vessels' harassing behavior. The encounter was the third with Iranian boats in two days in what Defense Department spokesman Peter Cook called "unsafe and unprofessional" behavior by Iran.

Stars and Stripes (8/25)



Critics ask Congress to block Pentagon's Freedom of Information Act proposal

The Pentagon has requested changes to the Freedom of Information Act that would allow it to withhold many unclassified documents. Several organizations have banded together to ask lawmakers to turn down the request, saying the changes would be too broad.

The Washington Post (8/24)

Coalition planes protect US ground troops from Syrian jets

Coalition fighter jets were scrambled last week to protect US special operations ground troops in Hasaka, Syria, after Syrian government jets conducting bombings did not respond to ground forces trying to contact them. "The Syrian regime would be well-advised not to interfere with coalition forces or our partners," said Pentagon spokesman Jeff Davis.

Reuters (8/20)

N. Korea's threats don't deter US, S. Korea from exercises

The Ulchi Freedom Guardian exercises between the US and South Korea are underway despite threats of a nuclear strike by North Korea. The nearly two-week-long exercises involve about 25,000 US troops and about 50,000 South Korean troops.

Stars and Stripes (8/21)

Congressman: CR can't happen without boost to DOD budget

Congress is risking a potential government shutdown as the Oct. 1 start of the fiscal year approaches. "There are not enough votes in the House to vote for a (continuing resolution) that does not reflect the increase in funding for the Department of Defense," said Rep. Mike Turner, R-Ohio.

Dayton Daily News (Ohio) (8/22)

A look at anti-terrorism progress since 9/11

The US government has made the country safer from terrorist attacks in the 15 years since 9/11, but more needs to be done, experts say. The issue is at the forefront of the current presidential election campaign.

The Atlantic online (8/8)

GAO: Air Force doesn't know enough about A-10s to retire fleet

A Government Accountability Office report has found the Air Force doesn't know enough about what A-10 pilots do or how it will replace the planes when they are retired -- findings that call into

question the Air Force's plan to shut down the A-10 fleet. The report has re-energized efforts by critics such as Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., to block the plane's retirement.

Breaking Defense (8/24)



Marine Raiders unveil new insignia

Members of the Marine Corps Special Operations Command, or MARSOC, have a new insignia, which pays tribute to an earlier elite group, the Marine Raiders of World War II. The new insignia features an eagle holding a dagger and shield that bears the Southern Cross constellation.

The Washington Post (8/23)



More robust security planned for Army garrisons in Europe

The Army is stepping up security at its garrisons in Europe in the wake of terror attacks in France, Belgium and Germany. The effort involves increased security checks with more sensitive

explosive-detection gear at garrison entrances.

Stars and Stripes (8/24)

Islamic State reports were distorted, GOP lawmakers say

Intelligence presented in 2014 and 2015 by US Central Command regarding the assault on the Islamic State gave an inaccurate picture, an investigation has found. Reports "consistently described U.S. actions in a more positive light than other assessments from the [intelligence community] and were typically more optimistic than actual events warranted," said a report by a joint panel of House Republicans.

The Washington Post (8/11)

B-2 stealth bomber trio deploys to Guam

Three B-2 Spirit stealth bombers have been sent to Andersen Air Force Base in Guam for Pacific Command support. While there, the advanced aircraft will be used in several local and regional training exercises.

Stars and Stripes (8/10)



2016 Calendar of Events

General dates of interest are noted below. Membership meetings are generally on the 4th Thursday of each month except as noted.

- Sep 18: Air Force Birthday
- Sep 22: MOAA First Dinner of Season, Kameron Perez-Verdia (Pres/CEO AKHF)
- Oct 13: Navy Birthday
- Oct 27: Dinner Social, Commissioner Marc Luiken, Commissioner, State of Alaska Dept of Trans & FP
- Nov 10: Marine Corps Birthday
- Nov ##: Dinner Social, Speaker: U.S. Senator Dan Sullivan, US Senate (tent)
- Dec ##: Christmas Social
- Jan 26 (2017): Dinner Social TBD
- Feb: ASYMCA Salute to the Military
- April 11-14: MOAA Storming the Hill
- Apr 27: Dinner Social (Speaker TBD)
- May 25: Dinner Social (Speaker TBD)
- Jun 14: Army Birthday
- Aug 4: Coast Guard Birthday

Contact Information

Please share this newsletter with active duty, Guard, Reservist and retired Officers you know and encourage them to join. Contact information below:

- E-mail: c2burton@gci.net
- Phone: (907)644-6202
- Address: 1143 M Ct.
Anchorage, AK 99501
- Annual chapter dues: \$25; on or about January of each year, on-line payment may be made at <https://chapterdues.moaa.org/Membership.aspx> or a check payable to Captain Cook Chapter.
- Chapter site: www.MOAA-AK.COM



President: Clyde T. (Tom) Burton
Vice-President: Catkin M. Kilcher Burton
Secretary: Edith M. Grunwald
Treasurer: Open
Legislative Liaison: Bob Pawlowski



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