

Vol 4-19

April, 2019

Dinner Socials

The chapter enjoyed a dinner social at the Coast International Inn last month. Our speaker was Dr. Anthony M. Hassan who spent about 25 years enlisted and as an officer of the US Army and Air Force. He is the CEO and President for Cohen Veterans Network.



The Cohen Veterans Network is a \$275M not-for-profit philanthropic organization that provides high-quality, accessible and integrated mental health care clinics with the intention of providing services to those who are currently underserved.



The Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinics focus on client-centered, customized outpatient care for veterans and family members by removing barriers and creating better access to care. At present, the intent is to have a clinic (one of 25 mental health clinics nationwide) with 14 care providers

operating in Anchorage by the first part of next year.

Dr. Hassan has been diligent in meeting with and coordinating with existing governmental and non-governmental entities to ensure the smoothest integration and optimum service to veterans in the community. We were so pleased and honored he was able to fit talking to the group into his busy schedule.

Next Dinner Social

Our next event will be March 28th at the Coast International Inn where we will hear from the Deputy Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs.

Please save the date and join us!

- Speaker: Craig Christenson, Col (USA, Ret) Deputy Commissioner, Dept of Military and Veterans Affairs
- Topic: Current Operations, DMVA
- Date: April 25, 2019
- Time: 6:00 p.m.
- Location: Coast International Inn

Condolences

The Chapter extends our most heartfelt condolences to long-time member George Wuerch, LtCol (USMC, Ret) and his family as he experienced the loss of his wonderful wife, Brenda Wuerch.

Brenda was always a wonderful presence at our events and an

exceptional hostess at the Christmas Parties she and George were so gracious to host. We are so sorry George and we grieve with you.

Storming the Hill

Each year, MOAA members from across the nation gather in Washington, D.C., to meet with lawmakers of all stripes and secure their support for legislation and policies that will benefit service members past and present, and their families.

This year, Zulene Simmons ably represented the chapter at the annual Storming the Hill effort hosted by National MOAA. The meeting was held at the April 8-11, 2019 at the Sheraton Pentagon City Hotel in Arlington, VA.

New Vice-President

We were glad to welcome a new Vice-President to the Board of Officers. Ty Moore, LtCol (USMC) stepped forward and was formally voted on to unanimous approval at our recent Chapter Meeting. Congratulations and thanks, Ty!



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Alaska Legislative Initiative

Transportable Spousal Investments



At the March chapter dinner social, the chapter discussed the idea (presented in this publication last month) for working toward transportable spousal investments in the TSP (Thrift Savings Plan). After our chapter reflection, the vote was unanimous to forward to National MOAA and encourage it to be taken up as a national initiative.

Many thanks to 2DLT Andrew Brower (USAF), for bringing this suggestion forward. MOAA has acknowledged receipt of the proposal and now that Storming the Hill is over, they will review and consider for possible national level action. We of course will keep the chapter informed of progress as it occurs.

Communications Award

We are pleased to announce that the chapter received a nice award at the recent Storming the Hill event. Our regular newsletter (Tom Burton, Col, USMC (Ret)) has been augmented by a great effort on our website (Edie Grunwald, Col, USAF/ANG (Ret)) and our social media presence (Edie and Tom). With all proper humility, and on

behalf of the chapter, we are pleased and honored by this recognition from National MOAA.



Scholarship Fund

At the dinner social, we auctioned off two bottles of wine and a Pot Holder with the Alaska chapter logo on it for the scholarship fund. Thanks for the bidding and contributions!



JROTC Awards

Our Scholarship Chairman, George Tolbert, Cdr, USCG (Ret) reports that the Annual Combined Interior JROTC Awards Ceremony was conducted on 10 April 2019 and the Anchorage area JROTC Awards Ceremony was held 6 April. At these events, our chapter

contributed medal, ribbon and certificates of accomplishment sets for the following cadets at the noted high schools:

Bartlett: Cadet SGT Kaitlynn Yang
Chugiak: Cadet Ensign Colton Sinerius
Colony: Cadet 2nd LT Seth Meyer
Dimond: Cadet Command SGT Major Tucker Graves
Eagle River: Cadet 2nd LT Kimberly Allison
East: Cadet Captain David Henningsen
Service: Cadet Petty Officer 2nd Class Robert York
South: Cadet 2nd LT Victoriah Haakenson
West: Cadet 2nd LT Renee Williams
Wasilla: Cadet Capt Jessica Hackett

The three \$250 scholarships the chapter committed to are planned to be presented during graduation ceremonies at a future date.

DoD

Missile Defense Review

As we know, Alaska holds key strategic considerations in the defense planning of our country. Missile Defense is one of the key components in Alaska's importance to the nation. Recently, the 2019 Missile Defense Review (MDR) was unveiled. Below are key takeaways from the 2019 MDR:

- *The 2019 Missile Defense Review describes a comprehensive approach to prevent and defeat missile attacks through a combination of deterrence, active and passive missile defense, and attack operations.*

- *The review is aligned with the 2017 National Security Strategy, the 2018*

National Defense Strategy and the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review.

- *Threat: Adversaries such as North Korea, Russia, China and Iran are increasing the number, accuracy, and sophistication of their missiles. More than 20 countries employ ballistic and cruise missiles or are pursuing hypersonic weapons — missiles that can travel at least five times faster than the speed of sound.*

- *Policy: U.S. Homeland missile defenses will stay ahead of the North Korean and potential Iranian threat. Missile defenses will defend U.S. forces abroad, allies and partners against regional missile threats from any source. The United States will pursue new concepts and technologies to address future threats.*

- *Strategy: The nation’s missile defense strategy is built on deterrence, passive and active defense, and attack operations once a conflict begins. One key element of the strategy is the pursuit of greater integration and interoperability with U.S. allies and partners.*

- *Posture: The U.S. must maintain and enhance a layered national missile defense system, deploy flexible and adaptable regional missile defenses, and protect against the emergence of new threats.*

The entirety of the MDR may be read at the following link:

<https://media.defense.gov/2019/Jan/17/2002080666/-1/-1/1/2019-MISSILE-DEFENSE-REVIEW.PDF>

Alaska Congressional Delegation Welcomes Progress on Icebreaker Contract Awarded for New Polar Security Cutter

U.S. Senators Lisa Murkowski, Dan Sullivan, and Congressman Don Young,

all R-Alaska, today welcomed the announcement from the Department of Defense Contracting Office that VT Halter Marine Inc., Pascagoula, Mississippi, has been awarded the contract to build the nation’s first new heavy Polar Security Cutter (PSC) in more than forty years. Coast Guard Commandant Admiral Karl Schultz called the delegation to share the news and thank them for their united efforts in support of this historic acquisition.

In February, Congress passed a funding bill that was signed into law which included a total of \$675 million for the PSC program—\$655 million to fully fund the first PSC and \$20 million for long lead time materials for a second PSC.



“This is an important and significant step towards an operational Polar Security Cutter to help meet our nation’s needs in the Arctic,” said Senator Murkowski. “As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I have worked tirelessly to fully fund a polar icebreaker fleet and will continue to support the Coast Guard to make a U.S. polar capable fleet a reality. The U.S. cannot stand on the sidelines as other Arctic and non-Arctic nations continue to expand their icebreaker fleets and with it, their Arctic presence.”

“The United States cannot realize the potential of the Arctic—both for our national security and for the people who live there—without the technology necessary to protect our national interests in the far north,” said Senator Sullivan. “Today, the Coast Guard has taken another vital step toward securing our country’s place in this strategically-significant region with a contract award for a new polar security cutter. I appreciate Admiral Schultz for recognizing the importance of placing new Coast Guard assets and infrastructure in Alaska, and for working with Alaska’s congressional delegation to finally advance the planning, acquisition and build-out of America’s first new polar icebreaker in a generation.”

“As a longtime advocate for Arctic domain awareness, I am pleased to see the United States Navy and Coast Guard award this new Polar Security Cutter contract. This award is a major step toward finally recapitalizing our aging Polar Security Cutter fleet,” said Congressman Young. “Alaska plays a unique role in our national defense posture, and as interests in the Arctic continue to grow, our Polar Security Cutters will be vital assets for promoting safety and security for those in Alaska, the United States, and our allies across the globe.

The Coast Guard is the sole provider and operator of U.S. polar icebreakers. With only two operational icebreakers—the 20-year old medium icebreaker HEALY and the 43-year old heavy icebreaker POLAR STAR which only operates in the

Antarctic—our national fleet does not currently have the capability or capacity necessary to assure access in the high latitudes. Because of this, the Coast Guard is unable to proactively manage risks in the Arctic maritime domain. The Coast Guard has previously announced it's seeking a total of six new icebreakers, three heavy and three medium, to carry out its mission.

DoD Systems

M1271 Medium Flail Mine Clearing Vehicles (MCV)

The U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC) has fielded the first two M1271 Medium Flail Mine Clearing Vehicles, or MCV, with the 364th Engineer Platoon, located at Fort Smith, Arkansas.



The MCV is a manned vehicle designed to clear paths through minefields and provides area clearance using a motorized flail system to detonate mines in a safe manner. It is equipped with a rotating flail and 72 chains with fist-sized balls, or hammers, at the end of the chains. As the vehicle drives backwards over the designated area, the flail rotates and the chains dig into the ground tearing mines apart or detonating them. The driver is protected by a deflector shield of armored steel, protecting both the

driver and vehicle against blast pressure and mine fragments.

USARC continues to coordinate the field and training of the 11 remaining Army Reserve engineer platoons that will receive two MCVs per unit. The Army Reserve will field 12 out of 15 units, giving the Army Reserve 80 percent of all MCV capabilities for the entire Army for FY 2014.



This technology is not new. In World War II, many tanks and other armored vehicles were outfitted with a similar flail system.

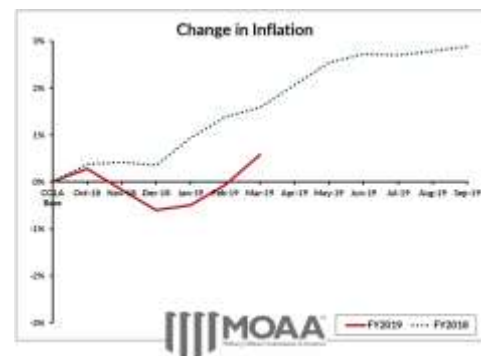


Experimental flail mounted on a Valentine tank; the Valentine Scorpion was never used operationally.

MOAA National News

COLA News: The March 2019 CPI is 247.768, 0.6 percent above the FY 2019 COLA baseline. The Consumer Price

Index for April is scheduled to be released May 10. The CPI baseline for FY 2019 is 246.352.



Defense News

Lockheed's costly F-35 to be billions costlier, Pentagon finds (Bloomberg) The increase reflects for the first time the current cost estimates for a major set of upgrades planned in coming "Block 4" modifications.

Victims of military medical mistakes to testify at congressional hearing (Military Times) House lawmakers will hear directly from the victims of military medical mistakes next week in a hearing looking at whether Congress should consider changing the rules regarding malpractice cases against the Department of Defense.

The US and India practiced hunting subs for the first time since signing a deal making it easier to keep track of China (Business Insider) The exercises, which took place near Diego Garcia, were the first ASW drills since India and the US signed the Communications,

Compatibility and Security Agreement in September.

What US intelligence believes happened with North Korea's weapons test (CNN) The U.S. does not believe North Korea successfully launched a fully operational new weapon after Pyongyang claimed it had conducted a "new tactical guided weapons firing test" on Wednesday, according to a US official directly familiar with the latest assessment.

U.S. Pacific Commander seeks more funding to counter China (Wall Street Journal) The commander in charge of U.S. military operations in the Pacific wants Congress to give the command more money for defense programs to counter China, reflecting his concerns that the Pentagon's budget isn't realigning quickly enough to address the threat from Beijing.

The U.S. Navy has nothing like Russia's 200 knot torpedo (The National Interest) Imagine the sudden revelation of a weapon that can suddenly go six times faster than its predecessors. The shock of such a breakthrough system would turn an entire field of warfare on its head, as potential adversaries scrambled to deploy countermeasures to a new weapon they are defenseless against.

New legislation would recognize nine more diseases caused by Agent Orange (Stars & Stripes) A group of lawmakers introduced legislation that would add nine more diseases to a list of conditions presumed to be caused by the chemical

herbicide Agent Orange, giving veterans who suffer from them a fast-track to Department of Veterans Affairs disability compensation and health care.

The Army has a plan for China, and it's bad news for JLTV and the Chinook (Defense News) Legacy programs built for the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq are looking less like vital capabilities and more like bill-payers for the Army, as the service transitions towards a focus on conflict with Russia and China.

Global Strike chief says it's too early to decide bomber force size (Air Force Magazine) The head of Air Force Global Strike Command believes the bomber force needs to grow, but he thinks it's too early in the development cycle of the B-21 Raider to decide by how much because the jet's final cost is not yet known.



Poland and U.S. closing in on deal to build 'Fort Trump,' sources say (Bloomberg) Poland is nearing a deal with the U.S. to establish an American military base in the former Communist bloc country, according to people familiar with the matter -- an outpost the Poles see as a deterrent to Russian aggression and that the Kremlin would likely consider a provocation.

2019/20 Calendar of Events

Membership meetings are generally on the 4th Thursday of each month.

- April 25: Dinner Social (Meeting)
- May 23: End of Season Social (Meeting)
- Jun 14: Army Birthday
- Aug 4: Coast Guard Birthday
- Sep 18: Air Force Birthday
- Sep 26: Dinner Social (Meeting)
- Oct 13: Navy Birthday
- Oct 24: Dinner Social (Meeting)
- Nov 10: Marine Corps Birthday
- Nov 21: Dinner Social (Meeting)
- Dec ##: Christmas Social
- Jan (2020): Dinner Social (Meeting)
- Feb ##: ASYMCA Salute to the Military
- Feb 27: Dinner Social (Meeting)
- Mar 26: Dinner Social (Meeting)
- April ##: Anchorage Area JROTC Awards
- April ##: Interior JROTC Awards
- April ##: MOAA Storming the Hill

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) 570-1027
- 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. Thank you for your support!
- Chapter site: www.MOAA-AK.COM

President: Catkin Kilcher Burton
Vice-Pres: Ty Moore
Secretary: Justin Mills
Treasurer: Vacant (please volunteer!)
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