



One Powerful Voice.®

Middle Tennessee Chapter

Military Officers Association of America



Web Site: mtcmooa.org

October 2009

Editors: Doug & Gus

NO MOAA LUNCHEON This Month

MTC Tour of Arnold
Engineering Develop-
ment Center
Arnold AFB
Tullahoma, TN
October 27, 2009

Our plan calls for those of us who have provided Security Roster information, to assemble at Old Natchez Country Club at 6:30 AM, and depart from there no later than 7:00 AM for the drive to Tullahoma, TN. **If you are going to meet us at Arnold for the tour, we will assemble at the newly opened main gate security station at approximately 8:30 AM.** Our guided tour of Arnold Engineering Development Center is scheduled to start at 9:00 AM and conclude at approximately 11:00 AM; at which time our current plan is to proceed to the Base Club for lunch. Following lunch we will return to the Old Natchez Country Club. Transportation will be \$20.00 per person if you use our Van; plus you will be responsible for your own lunch cost. Please dress in comfortable clothes, we will be getting on and off the bus throughout the tour and there will be some limited walking required.

Officers

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CAPT Dale Lewelling
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CAPT Charles Stewart
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Tricare Inpatient Fee Hike Defeated

When the Pentagon announced last week that it would raise inpatient copays for retired TRICARE Standard beneficiaries by \$110 per day, MOAA responded, asking the Secretary of Defense, the White House, and Hill leaders to reverse that plan. **MOAA members did their part by generating almost 20,000 messages to the Hill.** These combined efforts yielded positive results, as the newly released FY2010 Defense Authorization Act includes a provision barring any inpatient copay increase.

2010 Dues

At our August Board meeting we arrived at the recommendation to increase our annual dues to \$20.00 per year for regular members in order to continue our current level of operations. Dues for Auxiliary members would be maintained at their current level of \$5.00 per year. We did not arrive at this decision easily; however, our dues have been steady at \$15.00 per year since at least the year 2000, but our costs have continued inch ever upward. This will be a point of discussion and vote at the January Organizational Meeting.

MTC Board Notes

Many, many thanks to CDR Mike Neuser and his volunteers and staff for their far-reaching explanation and discussion of the Military Scholarship Programs available to today's youth interested in a Military Career. We had a record turnout of educators, and conversations that continued far after the end of the meeting. This is an area of importance for the future of our military, and we appreciate all of the members that participated!

A changing climate means a changing national defense. In order to facilitate discussion on this topic, MOAA, the Center for Naval Analysis, and The Pew Charitable Trusts are sponsoring "National Security, Energy and Climate Forums throughout the United States and there is a high probability that one will be held in November in Nashville. More to come as the plan comes together.

This month many of you will be receiving notification of the option of being able to receive our newsletter electronically via email, rather than using USPS mail service for delivery. This is both a cost savings measure and a gain in efficiency for this organization and we are very excited about its possibilities. **This is all the more reason to ensure that we have your correct email address on record!** If your email address has changed please send your new address to info@mtcmooa.org as soon as possible.

The TN Council of MOAA Chapters will meet in Mt. Juliet on October 21st from 10:30 until 1:00 PM; members of the Chapter are welcome to attend. For driving instructions contact John Ohlinger at 615-594-7628.

Doug Minton, President, MTC

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Upcoming MTC Programs

November 24

Col Jackie Nave, TN ANG
Aeromedical Evacuation

NO DECEMBER MEETING

January 26

Annual Chapter Organizational Meeting

February 23

Personal Affairs Program

TRICARE NEWS

For the last several years, MOAA has invested considerable effort in pushing Congress to change the statutory formula that imposes ever-larger cuts in Medicare and TRICARE payments to physicians each year.

Congress has responded with a series of one-year fixes, but each annual fix simply "kicked the can" and imposed an even larger compounded payment cut the following year.

Unless current law is changed, Medicare and TRICARE payments will be cut 21% in January 2010 – which would devastate seniors' and military beneficiaries' health care access by deterring doctors from accepting them as patients. National health reform bills in both the House and Senate envisioned some form of doctor payment fix - either a permanent one or another one-year fix.

Now, Hill leaders have decided to strip the "doc fix" out of national health reform and address a permanent fix as stand-alone legislation.

Sen. Debbie Stabenow's "Medicare Physician Fairness Act" (S. 1776) is expected to come up for a vote in the Senate next week, perhaps as soon as Monday, Oct 19.

Please contact your senators a (by phone, mail or using the MOAA-suggested message of their we site) urging them to vote for this important legislation.

FY2010 Defense Authorization Act

The final version was announced this week by House and Senate Armed Services Committee leaders. At a minimum, it includes:

- Authorizes a 3.4% pay raise for active duty, Guard and Reserve members (vs. the budgeted 2.9%)
- Bars the Pentagon from implementing any TRICARE inpatient care copay increases for FY2010
- Authorizes an extra 30,000 troops for the Army (15,000 above the budget request), with an additional 30,000 in FY2011 and FY2012, provided the Pentagon budgets for the increase
- Authorizes premium-based TRICARE coverage for "gray area" reserve retirees who have yet to reach age 60.
- Requires retention of wounded Guard/ Reserve members on active duty through completion of disability determination process.
- Requires a medical examination before administrative separation of members affected by traumatic brain injury or PTSD
- Mandates a list of initiatives to protect absentee voting rights for military members and families
- Extends family medical leave rights to employees who are family members of deploying active duty members and expand the window of active-duty TRICARE eligibility for activating Guard/Reserve members/families.
- Express the sense of Congress that DoD should authorize Flexible Spending Accounts to let currently serving military members set aside pre-tax dollars to cover out-of-pocket medical and dependent care expenses
- Requires a DoD plan to improve access of beneficiaries to health care providers
- Establish a new DOD Task Force to assess progress on care, management and transition of recovering wounded, ill and injured service members.