



Mississippi Coast Military Officers Association

P.O. Box 5027, Keesler Station

Biloxi, MS 39534-0027

www.MCMOA.org

April 2007

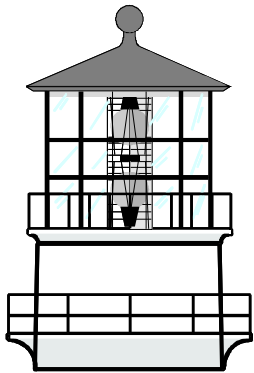
Upcoming Guest Speakers

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You can contact the Editor,
Colonel Harvey Nixon, at
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The Mississippi Coast Military Officers Association meets on the second Wednesday of each month at the Katrina Kantina located at the Keesler Marina. The Board meets at 10:00 followed by an informal luncheon and business meeting at 12:00. Any member is invited and encouraged to attend the Board meetings.

Mr. Robert Bailey March Guest Speaker

2 MOAA members who attended the March luncheon enjoyed
2 and truly benefitted from the presentation by Mr. Robert Bailey, Services
2 Director at the Biloxi VA Center. He could very easily have titled his
2 presentation, "What Can I Do for You?" He gave us an overview of the
2 functions of his position and some of his day to day activities. He stressed
3 some of the actions he has taken to insure our veterans get the care they
3 have earned through their service to our country. After giving our mem-
3 bers a very good idea of the duties he performs, he opened the floor for
questions and they flowed one after another. One of the first dealt with
the VA cemetery and what is going to happen in that area. He explained
that the VA does not actually run the cemetery but has a vested interest in
the actions being taken to insure space is available well into the outyears.
He said they are currently running six burials per day and have 3500
spaces available. However, we know that our WWII death rate for
veterans of that era is running 2600 per day and given that high attrition
rate, this is an area which requires close attention. He cited some of the
efforts our local Congressman, Mr. Gene Taylor is taking to remedy this
situation and we will be hearing more on this in the coming months. He
did point out that you can put your name on a waiting list and eventually
be guaranteed a space for burial. We also had a question on Agent
Orange and how military service in Vietnam is currently being interpreted
for possible benefits. He indicated we are back to the OLD way of
looking at service in that theater of operations. In response to another
question, he pointed out that the VA Center computers are not linked
together. If you make a change in your profile, like a change of address,
at the Jackson VA Center, it will not automatically be changed on your
records at the Biloxi Center. Next there was a series of questions on
Concurrent Receipt. If you have questions in this area, it is recom-
mended you give Mr. Bailey a call and describe your specific circum-
stances to obtain assistance. There were numerous other questions and
to his credit, Mr. Bailey repeatedly said, "give me a call and I WILL
HELP." It is comforting to know we have some willing support readily
available should the need arise. We truly appreciate the time he took out
of a very busy schedule to help us better understand our VA system.

Upcoming Guest Speakers

Members of MOAA have some real treats ahead in the coming months. Lt Bob Carson has a speakers line up that is truly second to none. We are going to learn how to have some fun, better understand some of the difficult issues facing us as homeowners and get an appreciation on where our political leadership believes our region and country should be going in the near and long term. Our April guest speaker will be Capt Mark Stevens from Cruise USA. He will be telling us about some of the things he is doing/does to help people have more fun on barefoot cruises down South and up North on the New York canals. May will feature a person who has to deal with some of the stickiest issues in Mississippi--insurance. It is George Dale, Mississippi Insurance Commissioner. We need to really turn out for these presentations and be prepared for more "heavy hitters" in June, July and August. The best way we can show our appreciation to these people is through our attendance at the luncheon meetings. We get some good food, a lot of knowledge and the opportunity to visit with some of our military friends. We look forward to seeing a lot of you at these meetings and BRING A FRIEND!

New Luncheon Procedures

We are anticipating the outstanding list of guest speakers will encourage more of you to come on down to the Katrina Kantina and enjoy lunch! In order to give you (and possibly our guest speakers) more time to enjoy your meals, the luncheon line will now open at **11:30 HOURS**. This will enable you to get through the line faster and be through or almost through when the speaker begins. We hope this lets you have a better lunch and at the same time allow our guests the opportunity to eat if they so desire. Once again--our goal is to enjoy these luncheons and get a little smarter in the process.

Membership Renewal and Growth

As you can see from the above articles your officers and board are making changes to encourage increased participation in the Mississippi Coast Military Officers Association. Your presence will show how much we appreciate the time our speakers are taking out of their busy schedules to talk with us in a very beautiful setting--the Katrina Kantina. For those of you that have not sent in your local chapter dues, please do so. You will continue to get the News Letter for the next few months but after that we will only send to current chapter members. We look forward to seeing you at the coming meetings and THANKS!

Loss of a Friend

Maj Gen Leo Jones

age 88

Died Monday -- March 5, 2007

He will be missed by all who had known him during these past many years. He was proud to have been a former officer and was an active member of the Mississippi Coast MOAA..

TRICARE for Life to Limit Explanations of Benefits

MOAA recently learned of a cost-saving measure instituted by Wisconsin Physicians Services (WPS), the claims administrator for all TRICARE for life (TFL) claims, and approval by the TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) to stop the mailing of a printed Explanation of Benefits (EOB) when a beneficiary's balance due is zero. Most beneficiaries will receive no advance notice of this change, which is effective April 1, 2007.

House and Senate Champions Introduce SBP Bills

Sen. Bill Nelson (D-Fla.) and Rep. Henry Brown (R-S.C.) reintroduced their bills to end the deduction of VA survivor benefits from the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) when the death was service-caused. Nelson's bill also would implement 30-year paid-up SBP coverage this year.

Another Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) Increase takes effect

Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuitants who currently do not receive 50 percent of their deceased spouse's SBP annuity base amount will see their annuity increase soon. The increase, which goes into effect April 1, will appear in annuitants' May 2007 deposit.

Legislative Update

Budget Resolution on TRICARE Fees, Concurrent Receipt, SBP

The news was mostly good as the House and Senate began working on their respective versions of the FY2008 Budget Resolution, which establishes budget caps that Congress will have to live by in the next fiscal year.

The best news was that both the House and Senate resolutions rejected the Administration's budget proposal to impose large fee increases on retired military beneficiaries under age 65. Both resolutions restored the \$1.86 billion that the Administration had proposed cutting from the Defense health program.

Only a small portion of the proposed budget cut was attributable to increased revenues from higher fees. Most of the proposed reduction was attributable to an assumption that the fee increases would drive hundreds of thousands of military beneficiaries away from using their earned TRICARE benefits.

Both chambers saw that as inappropriate and restored the full funding amount - which means the Armed Services Committees will again have the latitude to reject the proposed increases, just as they did last year.

That doesn't mean we're out of the woods, as the Committees may still consider any fee increase proposals recommended by the DoD-appointed Task Force on the Future of Military Health Care, which owes the Committees an interim report in May. But at least the Committees now won't be under budget pressure to adopt any such recommendations.

Free April Gourmet Meals

Our April meeting will continue to feature the **FREE Gourmet Meal**. This is a deal almost too good to be true. If you like the opportunity to win a meal just for attending a luncheon meeting, please let one of the officers or directors know how you feel! The odds of winning this prize give you a great return on the time you spend at the monthly luncheon meeting. Come out, have some fun, get a little smarter. Make sure you cut out the coupon included opposite this column and bring it to the meeting; however, **should you forget**, we will have some extras for those who forgot them or who had trouble printing out from the web site. This is a great deal and one more valid reason to attend our local MOAA meetings.

Retiree Activities Update

1. Reminder:effective 15 March 2007 registration decals will no longer be required for Privately Owned Vechiles (POVs) on ANY Air Force Base including Keesler AFB.

2 **Time is Running Out--its Tax Time!**The Tax Office is located in room 234 of Old Cody Hall. The office is short of help, so if you need assistance with your taxes,**please Call for an Appointment** since it will be very difficult to be helped on a "walk in basis." The office hours of operation are: 0800-1200 Monday through Friday; 1300-1600 Monday through Thursday and 1300-1600--"UP" Fridays. The **phone number is 377-4454**

3. The new BX is now up and operating--check it out for some great deals. It is located on M Street between the 81st Civil Engineering Squadron and the former nPecan Dining Facility. It has over 30000 square feet which is about 1/3 the size of the old BX. This will be the main store until the new BX is constructed. There will be more clothing, shoes, electronics, housewares, and sporting goods. The old Pecan Dining Facility will house Charley's Grilled Subs, Anthony's Pizza, and Seattle's Best Coffee Shop.

4. SCAMS alive and well in Mississippi

We continue to hear and read about the many scams operating along the Gulf Coast and throughout the U.S. Currently the SCAMS seem to be prevelent over the internet. One is the Internet Access Service Scam. This scam, which has changed quite a bit over the past several years, makes it onto the Federal Trade Commission's list of Top Ten 'Dot Cons.' In the early days (in the late 1990s), this scam was launched by sending victims a check through snail mail (and this still goes on). It seemed as if you were getting money for doing nothing. But this scam was that by cashing the check, you were agreeing to purchase Internet access, usually at exorbitant prices, for what may as well be the rest of your life. Avoiding the scam is reasonably easy --never sign anything ,even the back of a check, without reading everything!!!

This coupon entitles you to one chance in the drawing for a gift certificate worth **\$50.00** from **Vrazel's Fine Food Restaurant** in Gulfport. *You must attend the April MOAA luncheon meeting and present this coupon to be eligible to win.*

Signature: _____

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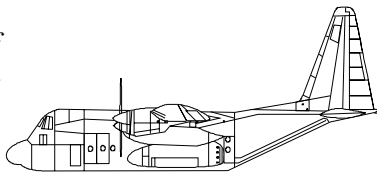
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April 2007

The Newsletter is published monthly for members and friends of the Mississippi Coast Military Officers Association. It aims to broaden their awareness and understanding of events and issues relevant to military officers in this area.

March 29



Monthly Luncheon Meeting on
 Wednesday, April 11, 2007

Chapter Officers for 2007

PresidentMaj Lucy Welch (867-0893) **2nd Vice President**Maj Jeff Neel (896-6588)
1st Vice President ..LT Bob Carson (388-7511) **Secretary/Treasurer**Lt Col Bob Snyder (388-9084)

Past Presidents

CAPT Clark Wakefield - *President Emeritus*

Col. Matthew Thompson	Lt. Col. Carl Remley	Lt. Col. Dean Todd	Maj. Gen. Leo Jones
Lt. Col. Hollie Wilkes	Lt. Gen Bryan Shotts	Lt. Col. Sid Marcus	Lt. Col. Fred Dunaway
Lt.Col. Dick Wilson			CDR Dick Hansen

Directors

Maj. Gen. James Garner - Col. Phyllis Luttman - Col. Harvey Nixon
 CDR Dick Hansen - Maj. Joseph Littlepage

Committee Chairs

CBC Council	CAPT Clark Wakefield	Medical Center	Col. Phyllis Luttman
Chaplain	Col. Joe Peck	Retiree Activities	Lt. Col. Yvonne Dougherty
Commissary & BX ...	Col. Phyllis Luttman	Membership	Lt. Col. Bob Snyder
Dinner Seating	Mrs. Gloria Skillestad	Newsletter	Col. Harvey Nixon
Club Representative	Lt. Col. Dick Wilson	Personal Affairs	Maj. Jeff Neel
Legal Council	Lt. Col. Russell Thompson	Programs	LT Bob Carson
Legislative	Lt. Col. Fred Dunaway	ROTC	Lt. Col. Tom Varble
Marina	Maj. Glenn Bremenkamp	Scholarships	CW4 Ray Skillestad
		Webmaster	CDR Ron Miller