

**Mozark Moaagram  
December 2013**

**President's Message**

**Holiday greetings from Kathleen and I. We wish you a wonderful Christmas and a safe journey if you are traveling. We will be visiting with family in Northern Virginia.**

**We hope to see many of you at the Christmas Party. As usual, please bring gifts (\$10 to \$15) that will be exchanged after our dinner. And speaking of gifts, our Chapter has selected Don Bishop's charity as the recipient of our Chapter's gift this year. If you wish to claim this gift as a tax deduction, your check should be made out to Major Don's Army, Inc. Don does a great job as he gives young cancer patients and their families a wonderful Branson vacation.**

**I am looking forward to the New Year and continued fellowship with our friends in MOAA.**

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**Garry A. Scharberg, COL. (Ret.)  
President, MOZARK MOAA**

**Legislative Update by Don Bishop**

First I would like to use this platform to say THANK YOU to the chapter, as well as the Board, for selecting Major Don's Army as this year's charity to help for the Christmas special giving. ALL of your money goes to the families whose child has cancer, for them to come to our beautiful place in the Ozarks for a much needed three night/four day vacation. All administrative costs the Mrs. and I along with the Board of Major Don's Army have been able to meet thus far. To date we have sponsored 112 families, with a record number this year of 41 families. Each vacation costs approximately 700 dollars so your help is so greatly appreciated. Kind people who I have met along the way along with local businesses are what allow us to conduct our memorable times for these families.

What has our Congress been up to? Hmm. I know they continue to hold hearings both in the Senate and House regarding the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. Besides the website rollout we have all seen in the news, I continue to hear from my friends who are in the medical delivery systems, there is so many other things the new law is going to cause change in how we receive our medical care.

Our cost of living adjustment we are getting starting with our checks next month we will see a 1.7 increase which isn't too much but better than our zero we received last year. I guess prices all stayed the same in life. (That was tongue in cheek)

Once again the Defense Authorization Act is hung up due to the many amendments that have been added. But it is also what many of our top leaders are saying is the cause for concern are personnel costs. Over and over they point to the cost of military pay, medical costs, bonuses, allowances, and of course retired pay. But think these couple paragraphs from a recent article shared in a recent National MOAA email sums it up pretty good in respect to our recent decade of spending for defense -

“It's pay, it's housing allowances, it's bonuses, it's retirement pay, it's health care. ... There's going to have to be some changes,” Mullen told the midshipmen in September 2011.

But at that time in 2011, the part of the defense budget labeled “military personnel” was smaller as a share of Pentagon spending than it was a decade before in 2001, according to data from the White House's Office of Management and Budget.

The bottom line: There is no question that personnel costs have grown — but so has the cost of everything else, including costs related to operations, maintenance and new weapon systems.

So the bottom line – I am not aware of anything concrete that our Congress has finished of late. Not even sure if there is something brewing that needs your attention with an email or phone call to our elected leaders. For now I am going to keep with the Affordable Care Act has the elephant in the room in how it will affect all of our health care and the money we keep in our checking accounts.

With that, a MERRY CHRISTMAS to all and a Happy New Year!!

**Treasurer's Report  
Bank Balance \$705.01**

**Dues for 2014 are now payable at \$20. Auxiliary members do not pay dues.**

#### **Christmas Party**

**Because of the third Saturday being so close to Christmas holiday the Board decided to move our annual December meeting up one week to December 14<sup>th</sup>. Everyone is asked to bring a \$10. To \$15. Gender appropriate gift for our gift exchange at the meeting/party, ladies for ladies and men for men.**

Charity gift (money) is requested for Major Don's Army. The amount given is up to each individual. Checks should be made out to "Major Don's Army." As we all know Major (ret.) Don is one of our members. He and his wife Elise for several years have hosted children with cancer, and their family, to a few days vacation on Tablerock Lake and Branson at no cost to the family. Major Don himself has battled through major cancer surgeries and treatments.

We commend them for their zeal, compassion and work on behalf of these unfortunate children. Please visit their web site at [majordonsarmy.org](http://majordonsarmy.org)

#### **Name Tags**

Several have asked about name tags for our meetings. Don Johnston orders these and they cost \$6. each. If you want one please ask Don to order one for you.

#### **Veterans Day Parade**

The parade this year was well attended. Thanks to Lou Doden and Mary Chase for decorating and driving the late CAPT John Koutrakos' "staff" car in the parade. That was an annual event for John and Lou in prior years. Lou now owns the car. CDR Mike Jones submitted a good picture of it which is to be included in this Moaagram.

#### **Future Events**

**Date:** Saturday, December 14, 2013

**Time:** Social---1700 (please note ,this is 30 minutes earlier than previous times)

1800 Buffet Dinner

**Place:** Ledgestone Country Club at Stonegate

**Program:** Christmas Background Music by a friend of Dave and Barb Porter  
Christmas gift exchanges

**Hosts:** Dennis and Susan Oldacres and Aryl and Karen Clason

**Cost:** \$20.

*January 18, 2014 (noon) at Keeter, Center College of the Ozarks*

*The program will be "Blind Man's Bluff" by CDR Aryl Clason, about Cold War Submarine Operations. Aryl was a submarine commander.*