

Mozark Moaagram

September 2014

President's Message

Greetings to all! Karen and I hope that you are enjoying summer in spite of the recent heat. As I watch the Hummingbirds performing tremendous aerobatic feats while defending their territory in our backyard around the feeders, I am reminded that the heat will eventually be coming to an end and that they (the Hummers) will in-time be heading south to warmer climates. Football season is upon us. (Hope you have a favorite team to follow.)

This summer has had its shortcomings. By that I am thinking of the news out of the Middle East, Ukraine and EBOLA in Africa. Closer to home some of our members are experiencing serious difficulties: Col Don and Kathleen Johnston are battling cancer, Col Ted Smith is starting dialysis and Col Ron Boldman is experiencing Kidney Stones. I trust that you will all keep them in your thoughts and prayers. There may be others but these have recently come to my knowledge and I apologize for missing anyone.

At the August Board of Directors meeting the decision was made to cancel this years' "True American Hero Award" due to lack of an appropriate venue for the presentation. This was not an easy decision for the board to make and we will be looking forward to the subsequent year.

In spite of the foregoing, I am looking forward to the upcoming year of events for the chapter. I want to thank Dave Porter who has diligently worked on the schedule. I invite you to look at our website "mozarkmoaa.com" where Keith Oxby has posted the tentative schedule for all to see. We will be meeting at the Keeter Center on the School of the Ozarks on Sept 20th at 11:00. Hope to see you all there for good times and food. Please welcome back previous member Al Campbell, new member Col John Hathcock and prospective new member Bill Kennedy.

CDR Aryl Clason, USN (retired)

President, Mozark MOAA

Legislative Update by Major (retired) Don Bishop

Overall I think it has been a good summer for us. Hope you have had a good few months since the last update. Before I get into the legislative “stuff” I wanted to let everyone know where I was health wise. I had another echocardiogram done and the “fluid” around my heart was no longer detected so the heart surgery I was scheduled for was canceled. Thanks to ALL of you who said a prayer on my part I say a big thank you! Major Don’s Army had another busy summer. We are right now scheduled to end up with around 38 families this year. On a sad note, we just had a young cancer warrior pass away. Those are always tough.

The big news on the legislative/government front is in regards to the 2014 Cost of Living Adjustment. As of the latest Moaagram from National HQ we are 1.8% above where we were, though July’s CPI fell 0.1%. And if I remember correctly food is not figured into the CPI to which I just saw increases of every food category bought at the grocery store. We still have a few months to go before we will know if we get a “raise” for next year.

You may have also seen on TV where Congress and the President passed a new law called the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014. It appears that if a veteran does not get the needed care within a certain amount of time, or lives a certain number of miles from a VA facility, he/she can go to a civilian source; however you must get authorization from the VA and receive a Patient Care Contract. For most of us, this does not apply as we can use TRICARE for life or Medicare. However it is something to keep trace of in the event that they change the rules on where we must request service in the future.

Another item I found interesting was the Board of Trustees of the Social Security Administration. They reported that by 2033 the program will no longer be able to fund at current levels. I am not going to spend much more on this as there will only be a few of us (and I am not counting myself) in our group that will live that many more years based on the current actuary charts. It’s hard being on the wrong side of fifty. (Smiley face.)

Finally an issue that has been debated and an end has been requested by many but not by enough of the right people, to offset the SBP/DIC rules. This involves the Survivor Benefit Program and the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation plan. Though Congress passed laws to end this dollar for dollar offset between the two programs, as they saw where one was paid for by the retiree and the other was compensation for the death if it was determined that service was the cause. Congress

in fact did create an allowance to help fix this; however, it expires in 2017 if nothing more is done. And in these times, I wouldn't hold my breath. It is kind of a complicated issue and I didn't do very well in laying out the facts. SO I would encourage you, if your spouse is eligible for SBP, (most are I think), how the payment could be affected by the DIC with further study.

Glad to be back, not sure now how many years I have been doing this duty but thinking we have surpassed the decade mark now. But with the every now and then comment by members of MOZARK MOAA I will keep driving on. (Plus no one has stepped up stating they would like to take over the duty.(smiley face)

Treasurer's Report-LTC Alan Catron

Bank Balance as of 7/31/2014---\$1135.26

Illnesses

COL. Don Johnston is undergoing treatment for cancer

1st LT Ted Smith is having dialysis treatments

Capt Ann Lee suffered a fall and broken hip June 6, 2014

Marguerite Steffen hospitalized recently

Sheila Frederick recovering from knee surgery

Marsha Long suffered a compound fracture of right ankle August 30, 2014

All need our prayers and best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Taps

Former member LTC Lee Harrison passed away Aug. 22, 2014. Full military honors at Missouri Veterans Cemetery interment.

Honors

Hollister School Board Member LTC John Rousselet (our 2nd Vice President) achieved Master Certification in the Missouri School Boards' Association program

Future Meeting Places

Date: Saturday, September 20, 2014

Time: 1100 hours

Place: College of the Ozarks, Keeter Center

Buffet Lunch, \$20.

Program: Becky Vest, Head Womens' Basketball Coach at C. of O. and two of her players. In her first year of coaching she took her team to NAIA National Title Game and finished runnerup.

October Meeting –October 18,2014 at Keeter Center