

# MOAA REPORTER

## MOAA Greater Dallas & North Texas Chapter

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### Holiday Virtual Happy Hour



Join us for the Greater Dallas and North Texas Chapter Holiday Happy Hour on **Thursday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>** from **5 to 6PM**. The OVID-19 pandemic is still with us making it difficult for us safely to get together in person. But let's not let the pandemic dampen our holiday spirit. Make your favorite hors d'oeuvre, open your favorite beverage and join us to celebrate the holiday season. We are planning on having a singer perform some of our favorite Christmas songs (maybe sing some carols ourselves), play some Christmas movie trivia, and share some of our favorite holiday memories. We will open the Zoom call at 4:30PM for registration and start the meeting at 5PM. You can easily join the Zoom call using your computer, tablet or phone. Watch for an email in the coming weeks with details for the Zoom call. Contact Dave Schafer, 214-577-4107 if you have any questions.

### Helping Our Surviving Spouses



The Chapter has 43 Surviving Spouse members, all of whom are women. The Chapter recognizes that Surviving Spouses may have special needs. They may need help navigating the myriad of DoD regulations to obtain their earned benefits. They may need help applying for TRICARE or BENEFEDS health care. They may need help renewing their ID card or getting to the store for groceries. They might need help financially due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Or, they might simply need to talk with others facing similar life challenges. The Chapter has several programs designed to help our Surviving Spouses. Our Surviving Spouse Liaisons, Bev Thompson (972-672-5293) and Paula Parrott (214-783-6186) can help connect members connect with others. Our Personal Affairs Officer, Ron McLeroy (214-415-5737) can help members renew ID cards and apply for some benefits. Finally, the Chapter has partnered with the Veterans Center of North Texas to help our Surviving Spouses, obtain financial, legal, benefits, and transportation assistance. Contact them directly at 214-600-2966 if you need help. All inquiries will be held in strict confidence.

### MOAA Provides Advice for Life Maintenance Activities

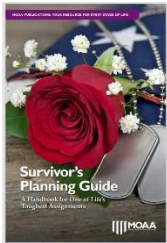


This is the time of year when everyone should take time to review their personal, health and financial portfolios and make changes, if needed, to prepare for 2021. It is beyond the expertise of the Chapter to provide specific guidance on these matters to our members. However, MOAA National has done an excellent job to provide advice and answer questions in the November *Officer Magazine* and on their website. You can use the following link to go directly to the [MOAA 2021 TRICARE Guide](#) on the MOAA National website. The Guide provide advice and answers questions about TRICARE and a number of health benefits. Take action now, before it is too late:

- Medicare and TRICARE at 65 and Beyond
- What Happens When I Retire?
- Are You Ready for FEDVIP Open Season? (Dental and Vision insurance)

- Why Is Protecting Health Care Benefits a Challenge?
- MOAA's Top TRICARE Advocacy Priorities
- What's Covered, What's Not
- Telehealth: Is It Here to Stay?
- The History of Your Health Care Benefit
- Travel Reimbursement for Specialty Care

### **Survivor Planning**



In addition to planning for life events for 2021, members should take this time to plan for end-of-life events. This conversation is uncomfortable, but necessary. Take the time now to sit down with your spouse and next of kin to plan for the inevitable. MOAA has several excellent guides to help members collect and document the necessary information when a member or spouse passes. The Survivor Planning Guide is pictured to the left. Another useful guide is MOAA's Family Matters pamphlet. Regular and Life members can download the documents for free from the MOAA website; log into the MOAA National website, search for "MOAA Publications" and download the ones you need. If you answer any for the questions below "No", you probably need to have this conversation. Does your family know:

- Where to find your medical power of attorney?
- Where to find your DD 214?
- If you want to be buried or cremated?
- Where you want to be interred or inurned?
- How to request military honors?
- Where to find your will?
- Where to find your insurance policy information?
- The names and account numbers of all your financial accounts?
- How to contact your financial advisor?
- How to access to your safety deposit box?
- How to notify the Social Security Administration, VA, DFAS, and other government organizations?
- How to apply for SBP and other benefits?

### **Proposed Arlington Cemetery Changes**



The Army has proposed changes to the eligibility criteria at Arlington National Cemetery that would reduce those eligible for below-ground burials. If the proposed changes shown below impact your end-of-life plans, you should act now to comment on the Army's proposed changes. [Click this link](#) to go to the Federal Register website to add your comment (before the Nov. 16 deadline). You can also use [this link](#) to ask your lawmakers to act – they can intervene to stop changes that would exclude many 20-year military retirees from in-ground burial at Arlington and de-emphasize expansion efforts that would allow future generations to receive this final honor. MOAA President Lt. Gen. Atkins has said "The Army's decision to restrict retirees from in-ground interment may be a concern for those whose end-of-life plans included this traditional burial at Arlington. While the changes do accommodate above-ground inurnment, we will need to assess the impact to all previously eligible service members and take advantage of the public comment period under the Federal Registry to share the results of that assessment."

The Army's proposed eligibility criteria are:

For below-ground interment:

- Killed in Action, to include repatriated remains of service members
- Award recipients of the Silver Star and above who also served in combat
- Recipients of the Purple Heart
- Combat-related service deaths while conducting uniquely military activities
- Former Prisoners of War
- Presidents and Vice Presidents of the United States
- Veterans with combat service who also served out of uniform as a government official and made significant contributions to the nation's security at the highest levels of public service.

For above-ground interment:

- World War II-era veterans, to include legislated active duty designees
- Retirees from the armed forces who are eligible to receive retired pay but are not otherwise eligible for interment
- Veterans who have served a minimum of two years on active duty and who have served in combat
- Veterans without combat service who also served out of uniform as a government official and made significant contributions to the nation's security at the highest levels of public service

#### **Chapter Membership Renewal Campaign**



The Chapter sent 2021 membership renewal notices to all members in early September asking members to renew their Chapter membership by October 31<sup>st</sup>. As of today about 60% of our members have renewed. We have sent 2<sup>nd</sup> notices in early November to about 130 members who have not yet renewed their membership. If you have not yet renewed your membership, please do so as soon as possible. Dues have remained unchanged for the past 15 years (\$20 for Regular members and \$10 for Surviving Spouse and Associate members); they enable the Chapter to publish the monthly newsletter, publish the annual Membership Directory, maintain the Chapter website and pay for Chapter expenses such as JROTC medals and Chapter insurance, and support the Veterans Center of North Texas.

#### **Veterans Center of North Texas Needs Volunteers**



Support for the Veterans Center of North Texas (VCONT) is the Chapter's primary Community Outreach Program. Six of VCONT's 24 volunteers are Chapter members. VCONT needs a minimum of 30 volunteers to fully staff all of its work shifts. If you can spare 4 hours per week and want to help Veterans in need, consider volunteering. Hearing "Thank You" when handing a family of four a week's supply of food or "I just got hired" from a Veteran who lost their job due to COVID-19 will bring a big smile to your heart. Let's get 6 Chapter members to volunteer to help VCONT reach its goal of 30 volunteers. If you are ready to help, contact VCONT directly by phone at 214-600-2966 or email at [veterans@vcont.org](mailto:veterans@vcont.org). For more information on how they can help, visit the VCONT website [www.vcont.org](http://www.vcont.org). If you have questions, contact Dave Schafer at 214-577-4107 or Paul Hendricks at 469-667-7750.