



Military Officers Association of America

Grand Strand Chapter

Coastal Tide

MOAA Award Winning Website
www.grandstrandmoaa.com



MOAA Award Winning Newsletter
5 Star Chapter of Excellence



Auxiliary Newsletter Summer 2015

Auxiliary on the move... As with the general membership, some members of The Grand Strand Chapter Auxiliary have been experiencing a great spring and summer, with travel, classes, volunteering, graduations, family reunions, weddings, and welcoming new grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Not to mention a few broken bones along the way.

Speaking of which, Judy Spjut broke her ankle but she is on the mend and ready to golf again. Get Well wishes from all of us.

Chapter Involvement - The Auxiliary was happy to support the Chapter at the Military Appreciation Days Parade; sponsor a hole at the Annual Golf Event in May as well as supporting the efforts of all who worked on the event and participated at the Legends Golf Course.

We continue to collect toiletries provided at hotels to be included in the "Hero Boxes" sent by the Blue Star Mothers to servicemen and women serving at distant/overseas posts and to add to the donations at the local VA clinic. We will have a donation collection basket at our monthly meetings.

Your Auxiliary at Work- There is much going on that needs to be addressed.

Our group discussed the Phishing exercises on our computers (yes, USAA has been attacked) and what to do about them.

Most recently, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) announced a Cybersecurity Incident wherein more than 21 million current and former federal employees had their personnel data exposed. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and its contractor CSID have notified the 4.2 million people whose personnel records were compromised in the first of two OPM data breaches.

CSID is offering credit monitoring and ID theft insurance to those whose personnel records were compromised in the 1st breach.

OPM is in the process of contracting with another vendor to handle notifying millions more who were victims of the 2^d breach which resulted in background investigation data being compromised. Individuals affected by the 2^d breach will receive notification in the upcoming weeks.

Some people reported receiving phone calls from CSID, and there are concerns if the calls are legit.

OPM confirmed that CSID does **NOT** call an individual unless the individual has sent CSID an email or left CSID a voice mail requesting a call back.

If you are wondering if your records were affected, you may call CSID at 844-777-2743.

Check out the Frequently Asked Questions regarding the breaches, go to <https://www.opm.gov/cybersecurity/#FAQs>.

Are you aware... that Horry County Council voted to designate county portions of International Drive in memory of LTG James Vaught - a road project he often griped about for "its slower pace of construction". It is a great recognition for a well-known member of the MOAA Grand Strand Chapter and the community.

VAVS – Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service:

A couple of MOAA Auxiliary members have signed-on to be a volunteer at the local VA clinic (Joan Perry and Peggy DeVivo). The Myrtle Beach Community-based Out-patient Clinic (CBOC) serves more than 12,000 Veteran patients. To better serve them, the Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center has approved expansion for the local clinic from the present 12,800 SF to an approximate 84,000 SF facility.

A potential site for the new clinic is needed; then an award will be made to developer in

FY-17 with activation in 2020/2021. The clinic needs **VOLUNTEERS** to assist with various activities such as: escort service; work as a receptionist or greeter; talking personally for 10-15 minutes with a veteran, etc.

If interested, talk with Joan or Peggy at the next meeting.

The Dept. of Veteran Affairs gave notice on Jan. 23, 2015 that it will be changing rules for the VA Aid & Attendance pension. Review at www.agingcare.com/articles/veteran-aid-attendance-benefit-long-term-care.

FYI – Supreme Court Decision affects Veterans: The VA says it will extend earned benefits to spouses and children of all Vets in

all same-sex marriages. The decision lifts restrictions on benefits to VA guaranteed home loans, survivor benefits and burial rights. "Pending" cases are placed on hold until new guidance is disseminated.

FINANCIAL SCAMS: Need to remember this good line: "I never make a decision without consulting my advisor." Visit the website of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to obtain a copy of "Money Smart for Older Adults".

Upcoming Projects

We are excited and looking forward to supporting the Blue Star Mothers' "Wreaths Across America" initiative. If you are not familiar with the project please go on line to www.wreathsasscrossamerica.org to understand the effort behind the placing of wreaths at the graves of our servicemen and women.

The Auxiliary will have a raffle to start collecting money to support Wreaths Across America, along with the pocket change collection jar.

Add Saturday, December 12, 2015 to your calendar to participate in laying of wreaths at the National Cemetery in Florence, SC.

Spring 2015 Storming the Hill

The Surviving Spouses Advisory Committee (formerly the Auxiliary Member Advisory Committee) stormed the Hill in April with MOAA council and chapter presidents from across the country. The MOAA teams visited the offices of all 435 congressional representatives and 100 U.S. senators in one long productive day.

The main issues were sustaining the pay and benefits of our troops, rejecting disproportional TRICARE fee hikes and plan changes, and ending sequestration. Information was left for Congress about three additional issues: eliminating the inequities facing un-remarried surviving spouses who are affected by the

Survivor Benefit Plan/Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (SBP/DIC) offset, the disability offset to retired pay for the less than 50-percent disabled military retirees, and inequities with the Guard/Reserve credit since 9/11.

The SBP/DIC offset affects spouses of deceased retirees who purchased SBP and received DIC for a VA disability or a VA presumptive condition. For more information, visit www.va.gov. These surviving spouses currently forfeit \$1 of SBP for each \$1 received in DIC. This inequity currently affects almost 62,000 surviving spouses. There are two new bills before the 114th Congress to eliminate the SBP/DIC offset for un-remarried military surviving spouses. Those bills are H.R. 1594, sponsored by Rep. Joe Wilson (R-S.C.), with 60 original cosponsors, and S. 979, sponsored by Sen. Bill Nelson (D-Fla.), with Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine) as the original cosponsor.

Use the MOAA Capitol switchboard number (866) 272-6622 to contact your representatives and ask them to cosponsor the bill.

What Would You Do?

You are driving at dusk - a severe thunderstorm with lightning and teeming rain comes at you on the highway.

You are in left lane because you need to make a left turn towards home. Almost in the turning lane, a lightning strike hits nearby and your headlights (set on automatic) go out. Does this mean your tail-lights go out also?

(Get close to the car in front of you to follow their tail-lights into left turn and then turn into the next parking lot.)

Do you know where the flasher signal in your car is located?

Tax Season will be here before you know it.

Do you know that **myPay** is the quickest way to get your 2015 IRS Form 1095? In fact, once it becomes available in **myPay** in late January, 2016, you will have the option to View, Print or Save your 1095 in PDF format.

Click the link below to log into your **myPay** account: <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>

If you have questions about logging into **myPay** and/or making changes to your electronic elections in **myPay**, contact the DFAS Customer Care Center at 1-888-DFAS411 or 1-888-332-7411 option 5.

Mark Your Calendars:

Upcoming Chapter and MOAA events:

Auxiliary luncheon meeting August 29.

Chapter meeting, Sept. 15th, Pine Lakes Country Club – annual Golf outing and dinner.

SC MOAA Council of Chapters Conference – Beaufort, SC.

The Low Country Chapter and the Columbia Chapter are celebrating their 50th anniversaries this year; and they are co-hosting the Bi-annual State Council (of Chapters) Conference, in scenic Beaufort this fall October 9th through October 11th.

MOAA Signature Events: (www.moaa.org)

New England Cruise October 3- 10
Annual Meeting: October 29-31 Orlando, Fl.

Check the MOAA website and plan to join a number of our chapter members at both or either of these events.