



Heart of Texas Chapter  
Military Officers Association of America  
P.O. Box 23964 Waco, TX 76702-3964



Volume MMXXIV, Issue 10

October 2024

Chapter Website: [hotmoaa.org](http://hotmoaa.org)

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Greetings, All

As all of you now know, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of 9/11, our beloved former President Ken Ratajczak quietly passed away into the glorious Hands of our Lord.

I was one of the first to receive the word from Anne approximately one hour later. As the hours and days progressed from that sad and unexpected moment, I took notice in how everybody, once again, came together and provided their love and support to Anne and her family during this trying and difficult period; moreover, I can't even begin to say just how proud and inspired I was of all of you for doing whatever you could to ease Anne's pain. I commend Anne for her poise throughout all of this. She stood like a rock. Again, I humbly ask that all of us remember Anne in our prayers.

I would be remiss if I didn't include the sudden passing of one of the most respected persons that I've ever known, specifically Mr. Stan Parker and his foundation of the same name. This was an absolute shock to all of us, especially us Veterans. If you remember, Stan was a guest speaker at one of our dinners a year ago. He did more to support the Veteran and our community than anyone else I've ever seen. I'm sure there's a special place that our Lord has planned for him in Heaven. I ask that all of us continue to remember his loving wife Valerie and his family in our prayers.

The clock continues to tick in the countdown to the 2024 Presidential election. By the time this is published in the newsletter, it will be 35 days and counting before we go to the polls (excluding early voting) to elect a new President and Vice President to lead our Nation. Please, get out and VOTE!

The annual Vets Fest will be from 1100 to 1300 on 16 October at VFW Post 6008 in Hewitt. See Norma Thronburg and article in this newsletter for more information.

Challenge Coins. We still have HOT MOAA challenge coins available (I bought one!). Pick up

one or two at the registration table. The proceeds go toward our fundraising efforts. Finally, please continue to pray for our leaders to support and defend the Constitution and to reestablish trust in our institutions and to restore civility and sanity. Thank you for your excellent work and support. I look forward to seeing you at our October 17th dinner - come out and enjoy!

Duty, Honor, Country – Always Serving

v/r

Bill Porter

## **INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHTS FROM OUR FOUNDING FATHERS**

"We may define a republic to be ... a government which derives all its powers directly or indirectly from the great body of the people and is administered by persons holding their offices during pleasure for a limited period, or during good behavior." - *James Madison, Federalist 19, 1788*

"The moment the idea is admitted into society that property is not as sacred as the laws of God, and that there is not a force of law and public justice to protect it, anarchy and tyranny commence." - *John Adams, A Defence of the Constitutions of the government of the United States of America, 1787*

"A wise and frugal government, which shall leave men free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned — this is the sum of good government." - *Thomas Jefferson, First Inaugural Address, 1801*

"One of the most essential branches of English liberty is the freedom of one's house. A man's house is his castle." James Otis, on the Writs of Assistance, 1761

"I own I am not a friend to a very energetic government. It is always oppressive." – Thomas Jefferson, Letter to James Madison, 1787

Source: <https://billofrightsinstitute.org/founders-quotes>

## **THINGS TO REMEMBER AND REFLECT ON IN OCTOBER:**

**Oct 2, 1789** - The United States Bill of Rights is sent to the States for ratification

**Oct 3, 1993** - Mogadishu: Eighteen US soldiers die in an attack of a Somali warlord Mohamed Farrah Aideed

**Oct 7, 1765** - The Stamp Act Congress convened in New York City with representatives from nine colonies meeting in protest to the British Stamp Act – the first direct tax on the American colonies.

**Oct 8, 1918** - Sgt Alvin York single-handedly took out a German machine-gun battalion, killing over a dozen and capturing 132. He was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor and the French Croix de Guerre

**Oct 10, 1845** - The U. S. Naval Academy opens with 50 students.

**Oct 13, 1775** - The United States Navy was born

**Oct 14, 1912** – Former President Theodore Roosevelt shot while campaigning in Milwaukee

**Oct 16, 1859** - John Brown and followers seized the Federal Arsenal at Harpers Ferry

**Oct 17, 1777** - The Battle of Saratoga – British General Burgoyne surrenders to General Gates

**Oct 17-25, 1944**– The Battle of Leyte Gulf, largest naval battle in history

**Oct 19, 1781** - The British surrendered to the Americans at Yorktown.

**Oct 21, 1967** - Thousands of anti-war protesters stormed the Pentagon during a rally against the Vietnam War in Washington, D.C.

**Oct 23, 1983** - Beirut, Lebanon: terrorists exploded a truck loaded with TNT in the U.S. / French headquarters killing 241 U.S. Marines and 58 French paratroopers.

**Oct 25, 1983** - Grenada invaded by the U.S. to restore "order and democracy."

**Oct 26, 2024** – National Day of the Deployed

**Oct 27, 1787** - The first of 85 Federalist Papers appeared in print arguing for the adoption of the new U.S. Constitution.

**Oct 29, 1929** - The stock market crashed as over 16 million shares were dumped amid tumbling prices. The Great Depression followed in America

**Oct 31, 1941** – The Mount Rushmore National Memorial was completed after 14 years of work

**Oct 31, 1968** - President Johnson ordered a halt of the bombing of North Vietnam.

Source:

<https://www.historyplace.com/specials/calendar/september.htm>

## **GUEST SPEAKER**

Lt Col Kenneth R. Sterling is the Commander of Air Force ROTC Detachment 810 and Professor of Aerospace Studies at Baylor University in Waco Texas. In this capacity, he is responsible to the University president and the Commander of AFROTC for recruiting, training, and educating Air Force officer candidates. He is the senior Air Force officer on campus with responsibilities including Detachment Commander, Professor of Aerospace Studies, and Department Chair of Aerospace Studies.

Lt Col Sterling entered the Air Force through the ROTC program at Texas Christian University with a degree in Business Marketing. He subsequently attained a Master of Science in International Relations degree with a National Security focus from Troy University in 2010.

Lt Col Sterling has flown missions in support of USPACOM's Continuous Bomber Presence effort, USSTRATCOM's strategic deterrence mission, and USSOUTHCOM's counter drug mission set. He has deployed to the Pacific area of responsibility five times, including duty as the Bomber Liaison Officer at the 613th Air and Space Operations Center, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii.

Additionally, Lt Col Sterling volunteered to deploy to Central America where he planned and supported counter drug, disaster relief, and humanitarian assistance operations.

Finally, during his time at USSTRATCOM, Lt Col Sterling was the Chief of Aircraft Strike responsible for all aircraft planning across USSTRATCOM's mission set, and Air Room liaison officer to NATO Air Command HQ where he coordinated exercises and support to NATO.

## **THIRD THURSDAY DINNER MEETING, OCTOBER 17, 2024 IN THE MEDIA ROOM AT MCLANE STADIUM – 5<sup>th</sup> FLOOR.**

-- Enter stadium parking lot thru gate 1, off of MLK Blvd and bear right. Continue on I-35 side and look for double door with Media Entrance located above door. This is before the Baylor Club main entrance. Go through double door and take the elevator to the fifth floor. There is normally a placard sign next to the white column. You can park in any numbered space.

## **DINNER SCHEDULE**

**\*\* 5:00 P.M. Registration Table Opens and Social Period.**

**\*\* 5:35 P.M. Call to Tables.**

**\*\* 5:40 P.M. Intro & Announcements**

**\*\* 5:50 P.M. Dinner.**

**\*\* 6:50 P.M. Multiple Drawings. Guest speaker will be Lt Col Ken Sterling, Commander, Baylor University AFROTC Detachment 810**

**MENU:** Fresh fruit salad tossed salad with balsamic and ranch dressings, Artisan Bread, Chicken Fried Steak, Chicken Piccata, Creamy Macaroni + Cheese, Garlic Green Beans, Iced Tea and Water. Coffee will be available at the beverage bar.

A bar will be available, and payment will be debit or credit card only due to Baylor Club policy.

**The dinner cost is \$40 per person, payable at registration table, cash or check made to HOT Chapter MOAA. Please call Vince Tobola, 254-709-5795 or e-mail vtobola@aol.com, NLT Thursday, 10 October, Noon for sign-ups.**

**Early RSVPs are welcome and appreciated.** After the 10th, please contact Vince Tobola as soon as possible if you are planning to attend and we will update the attendee list to accommodate you at the dinner meeting.

**NOTE:** Summer dress code will be in effect, gentlemen, casual business attire with collared shirts and optional for coat and/or tie and ladies casual business attire.

### **HOT CHAPTER BOARD MEETING DATE**

The next Board meeting will be on **Tuesday, October 22, 2024**, 5:00 p.m. at Uncle Dan's BBQ that is located at 1001 Lake Air Drive. Our thanks to Uncle Dan's for providing the corner meeting room at no charge.

### **CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP**

We are always looking for prospects to join the chapter; please contact Lew Arend, or Vince Tobola, with prospect names.

Reminder that our website, [hotmoaa.org](http://hotmoaa.org), does have the chapter membership application form plus copies of newsletters. There is also a national MOAA membership form. Newsletters are provided to members monthly, by e-mail or regular mail.

Please note the Heart of Texas Chapter of MOAA is a member of the National MOAA organization of over four hundred chapters and together we are the nation's largest and most influential association of military officers. We are an independent, nonprofit, politically nonpartisan organization.

### **OCTOBER SPECIAL DAY RECOGNITION**

**Birthdays:** Lew Arend, Bill Hearn, John Householder, Nora Householder, George Littell, Don McErlean, Scott Pitzer, Rick Sweeney, Norma Thronburg, Doug Young, and Pat Young.

**Anniversaries:** Russel and Susie Rowe, and Michael and Marsha Slavens.

### **Congratulations to All**

### **2024 CHAPTER MEETING SCHEDULE**

- **21 November 2024, Thursday dinner meeting in the Media Room at McLane Stadium.** The guest speaker will be Henry Gonzales, aide to Father Vincent Capodanno, Medal of Honor recipient from Vietnam War.
- **12 December 2024, Thursday dinner meeting in the Media Room at McLane Stadium.** Chapter election for 2025 and entertainment will be by the band, the Morticians for music and dance.
- **SAVE THE DATE** – Saturday, June 7, 2025, for the Annual Scholarship Fundraiser Golf Tournament at Waco Cottonwood Creek Golf Course.

**DONATIONS NEEDED:** Please bring a non-perishable food item to our dinner meeting and receive a free drawing ticket. The grocery collection is being made for donation to the Veteran's One Stop. We will continue collections each month in 2024.

### **MEMBER SPOTLIGHT – BOARD MEMBER – BEAU CROSBY**



Col Beau Crosby holds a 1967 B.S. in History from the United States Air Force Academy (USafa). After graduation, his first USAF assignment (combat) was with the 14th Special Operations Wing in Vietnam working on AC-47, AC-119, and AC-130 "Gunships." Next, he worked on 612th Tactical

Fighter Squadron, F-100 and F-4E fighters at Torrejon Air Base (AB), Spain and Incirlik AB, Turkey. While at Incirlik AB, he stood Nuclear "Victor" alert 18 times. In 1974 Beau received a M.S. in Logistics Management from the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT). Afterwards, he became a Controller in the Logistics Readiness Center at the Military Airlift Command headquarters at Scott AFB, Illinois. Next, he joined the cadre that formed 479th Fighter Wing, where 120 T-38s were modified into AT-"Lead in Fighters" that flew 160 sorties a day at Holloman AFB, NM.

Beau separated from active duty after a bitter divorce in 1980 and won custody of his 6 and 8 year old sons. He effectively instilled his values in both sons who later attended and graduated from Southwest Texas State (SWT) college as All American Scholar Athletes (one Road and one Mountain Biker) with 3.0+ GPAs.

As a civilian, Beau worked on stealth technology at a New Mexico site and then joined the 924th Tactical Fighter Group, Air Force Reserves (AFRES) at Bergstrom AFB, TX. In 1988, he was recalled to active duty on the Air Staff (Pentagon) as Director of Aerospace Maintenance, Office of Air Force Reserve and in 1994 transferred to the Air Force DCS Logistics staff. There he was promoted to Colonel after two Passovers with the Reserve. For his time in the Pentagon, he received a Letter of Reprimand from the Air Force Reserve but was awarded a Legion of Merit from the USAF DCS Logistics. Col Crosby holds both Command Aircraft Maintenance and Command Aircraft Supply Officer Badges.

On a Reserve Weekend Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI) at Bergstrom AFB, he met and later married the Light of his Life, Kathy Endres of Alvord, TX. At the time, he was wearing a full Chemical Warfare suit so she had no idea what he looked like when he asked her if he could call her some time. Beau and Kathy have three children and four grandchildren.

While in service, Beau graduated from Air University Squadron Officers School, Air Command and Staff College and Air War College.

Col Crosby's military decorations and awards include the Bronze Star, the Legion of Merit, three Meritorious Service Medals, and two Air Force Commendation Medals, four Air Force Presidential Unit Citations, Army Meritorious Unit Citation, Air

Force Outstanding Unit award with "V" device and three oak leaf clusters, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal – Desert Storm, Vietnam Service Medal with four Battle Stars, and the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm.

After retiring from the AF in 1997, he worked for the FAA in Washington, DC. He was the commissioning logistics engineer for the Wide Area Augmentation System (WAAS). WAAS (GPS enhancement) provides improved navigation service by enhancing the accuracy and integrity of position estimates across the National Aerospace System (NAS). Beau's efforts helped bring the program in two weeks early and \$4 million under budget.

Colonel Crosby has been a Volunteer Firefighter with the cities of Woodway, Texas and Red River, New Mexico. He earned and holds both Firefighter and Engineer shields from the Woodway Public Safety Department (Volunteer). While with Woodway, Beau responded to the West Disaster on the second outside truck in. He was awarded Woodway Fire Volunteer of the Year three times and has an advanced Fire Fighting certification from the Texas A&M Extension; and Emergency Vehicle (Ambulance) Operator certification with Red River Fire. Additionally, Beau helped start up the first Volunteer Fire Fighting Company in Kampala, Uganda in March of 2014.

Beau continues to serve as an apprentice cabinet maker with the Waco Habitat for Humanity. Beau is a member of our Heart of Texas Chapter, Military Officers Association for America (MOAA) and has served on our Board of Directors

### MOAA NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP

If needed, there is a MOAA national membership form at the chapter website: [hotmoaa.org](http://hotmoaa.org). **Basic MOAA membership is free**, and fees are shown for annual and life MOAA memberships. This is separate from the chapter membership fee.

### MEMORIAM – KEN RATAJCZAK

Kenneth James Ratajczak passed from this life on September 11, 2024, after a 7 month battle with heart failure,

Born in South Bend, Indiana, on July 25, 1946. Ken was active throughout life with baseball, tennis, bowling, water volleyball, and officiating baseball and volleyball. He loved the Chicago White Sox and

attended their Baseball Fantasy Camp 3 times. He authored a book called The Wrong Man Out about Shoeless Joe Jackson. He visited the Field of Dreams and the Baseball Hall of Fame. He also loved Indiana basketball and the movie Hoosiers.

As a young man, he sought out an appointment to West Point. His path took him first to the Prep School and then West Point, US Military Academy. His military bases included Ft Leonard Wood, Ft Bliss, Ft Sam Houston, Fitzsimons (pediatric internship), Pine Bluff (Chief Medical Officer), Fitzsimons (radiology internship), Ft Dix, to combine 12 years active duty as well as time spent as Texas Army National Guard and Army Reserves to qualify for military retirement and having been promoted to Colonel. He was always grateful to the Army for sending him to Indiana University School of Medicine.

He was active at St Mary Church of the Assumption in Waco, serving as an usher, Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, Lector and active in the Knights of Columbus organization, serving in several capacities including Grand Knight, Faithful Navigator, and District Deputy.

Ken was active in the Heart of Texas Military Officers of America Assn, serving a term as President until weeks before his passing.

Ken is survived by his loving wife of 22 years, Anne; daughter, Laura and husband, Steven Penney of Clifton; precious granddaughters, Madison and Kelsey Penney; son, Kevin Ratajczak and wife, Jennifer and their children, Kyle and Abby all of Hopewell Junction, NY.

Full obituary can be seen at:

<https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/33068288/kenneth-ratajczak>

### **ELECTION DAY IS APPROACHING**

Deadline to register to vote if needed is Monday, October 7. You can check your voting status at [votetexas.gov](http://votetexas.gov). You can also register at the site: select Register to Vote and click on SOS online voter registration application and follow the prompts.

Deadline to apply for a ballot by mail is Monday, October 21. Application must be received by October 21, not just postmarked. Voters who are 65 or older, sick or disabled are eligible to vote by mail. Go to

[votetesax.gov](http://votetesax.gov) for a full list of qualifiers for voting by mail. Deadline for receipt of ballots by mail is Tuesday, November 5, by 7 pm.

Early in-person voting is from Monday, October 21 to Friday, November 1. Any registered voter can cast a ballot at early voting sites in the county.

- McLennan County Elections Admin Office at 214 N 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 300, Waco
- Waco Multi-Purpose Community Center, 1020 Elm Ave, Waco
- Hewitt City Hall/Library, 200 Patriot Court, Hewitt
- Robinson Community Center, 106 W Lyndale, Robinson
- First Assembly of God Church, 6701 Bosque Blvd, Waco

Election day is Tuesday, November 5, 7 am – 7 pm. You will need to present one of seven acceptable forms of ID: Texas Driver's License, Texas Election Identification Certificate, Texas Personal Identification Card, Texas Handgun License, US Military Identification Card, US Citizenship Certificate or US Passport.

### **VETS FEST WED. OCT. 16 IN HEWITT**

Vets Fest will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 16, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at VFW Post 6008, 725 Sun Valley Drive, Hewitt. The meal or to go orders will cost \$12.50 (check or cash only, no debit or credit cards). The meal is brisket and sausage plate with fixings, buttered potatoes, bean, cookies and drink.

To place an order, 9 – 11 a.m., call 254-405-0649 or e-mail: [tophgonzales@gmail.com](mailto:tophgonzales@gmail.com)

### **MOAA NEWSLETTER ITEMS**

#### **Critical Veterans' Bill Remains Stalled: Ask Your Lawmakers to Back the Dole Act**

*By Rene Campos, September 25, 2024*

Critical legislation, including a package designed to improve the lives of generations of veterans, their caregivers, and their survivors, remains in limbo as members of Congress prepare to head home for the November election.

MOAA & other veterans advocacy groups continue to press Congress to pass the life-giving and life-saving Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare Improvement Act ([H.R. 8371](https://www.congress.gov/bills/118/8371)). This

bipartisan bill is central to MOAA's advocacy efforts in the 118th Congress, and despite exhaustive efforts through press conferences and numerous meetings with lawmakers and their staffs, as well as White House officials, the package has not moved forward. As lawmakers gear up to campaign, members of the wider veteran community are left wondering whether their needs will be prioritized once Congress returns after the elections.

The Dole Act represents much more than a comprehensive package of policies. It is a lifeline for veterans and their families, caregivers, and survivors who rely on VA health care and benefits – often as their only source of livelihood. The package includes VA benefits reforms, expanded long-term care services, caregiver program support services, resources for homeless veterans, and assistance for surviving family members, among other improvements.

### Impact on Caregivers

The Dole Act is particularly crucial for caregivers. Named after Sen. Elizabeth Dole, a driving force behind VA caregiver program improvements, the bill reflects her commitment to empowering, supporting, and honoring military caregivers.

In 2012, Dole established the Elizabeth Dole Foundation (EDF) to support military caregivers. EDF's 2014 RAND Corporation study, *Hidden Heroes: America's Military Caregivers* was the first comprehensive examination of this population. This week, EDF released a new RAND study, *America's Military and Veteran Caregivers: Hidden Heroes Emerging from the Shadows* during its ninth annual National Convening event in Washington, D.C.

The new study examines changes since 2014 that have affected the caregiver community, such as:

- Aging of the veteran population, and other demographic changes.
- Troop withdrawal from Afghanistan.
- Increased awareness of service member exposure to environmental toxins.
- Legal advances for sexual and gender minority veterans and service members.
- The coronavirus pandemic and associated lockdowns.

There are 105.6 million caregivers in the U.S. today, with 14.4 million caring for wounded, ill, or injured service members or veterans.

### Study Recommendations

The RAND study offers nine recommendations to better support caregivers:

1. Increase access to mental health and substance use treatment for caregivers and their children.
2. Increase opportunities for caregivers to access available financial support, and offer additional financial compensation to caregivers for the work they perform.
3. Tailor caregiver support programs to reflect caregivers' diverse preferences and needs.
4. Expand and promote home health care considering how caregivers will be affected.
5. Focus programmatic and social support within the context of local conditions in which military/veteran caregivers live.
6. Encourage health care systems to better integrate caregivers into health care teams.
7. Promote work environments that are supportive of caregivers.
8. Continue to conduct rigorous evaluations of those initiatives designed to support military and veteran caregivers.
9. Continue to conduct research that fully captures the breadth of caregiving and those who serve as caregivers.

### Help Congress Finish Its Business

Do not let Congress end this year without passing this important legislation to ensure our nation remains committed to those who selflessly served and sacrificed. Contact your legislators and ask them to pass the Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare Improvement Act.



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- **MEMBER SPOTLIGHT – BEAU CROSBY**
- **MEMORIAM – KEN RATAJCZAK**