



## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

### Greetings

The holiday season is upon us. I hope you had a safe and sane Halloween. This month we prepare to remember all those who have served our great nation and to give thanks for the blessings of liberty. This November 11, please pause to remember those who served, were injured or died to keep our nation secure from tyranny and terror.

On November 23<sup>rd</sup>, we celebrate Thanksgiving. While often associated with the pilgrims, President George Washington proclaimed the Thanksgiving Day would be “a day of prayer and public thanksgiving in gratitude for the successful establishment of the new American republic.” President Abraham Lincoln “declared Thanksgiving a national holiday on the last Thursday in November ...urged the nation to heal its wounds and restore peace, harmony, tranquility and Union.” In 1941, Congress made the fourth Thursday in November a national holiday. Marsha and I wish each of you and your family a blessed Thanksgiving.

At last month's dinner meeting, our guest speaker, David Bonner, gave an inspiring presentation of the Japanese Americans who valiantly served our nation during WWII, in spite of our government's forced internment. His book, *Nisei Spirit* told the story of the Japanese American soldiers of the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team – the most decorated unit in American history. You can download a free copy of David's book at:

<https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/Military-Review/English-Edition-Archives/July-August-2022/nisei/>

Our Board Nominating Committee will finalize nominees at our November Board meeting. I encourage those interested serving on our Board of Directors to contact Bill Milnor as soon as possible. New Board members are needed to bring fresh and innovative ideas to keep our organization dynamic and viable.

## 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* 39, 1788

“The laws that forbid the carrying of arms are laws of such a nature. They disarm only those who are neither inclined nor determined to commit crimes.... Such laws make things worse for the assaulted and better for the assailants; they serve rather to encourage than to prevent homicides, for an unarmed man may be attacked with greater confidence than an armed man.” –Thomas Jefferson

“The Constitution shall never be construed... to prevent the people of the United States who are peaceable citizens from keeping their own arms.” –Samuel Adams

“It is much to be wished that slavery may be abolished. The honor of the States, as well as justice and humanity, in my opinion, loudly call upon them to emancipate these unhappy people. To contend for our own liberty, and to deny that blessing to others, involves an inconsistency not to be excused.” –John Jay, Letter to R. Lushington, 1786

Sources: <https://billofrightsinstitute.org/resources/founders-quotes>  
<https://thefederalistpapers.org/us/10-essential-quotes-2nd-amendment-founding-fathers>

## THINGS TO REMEMBER AND REFLECT ON IN NOVEMBER:

Nov 4, 1979 - About 500 Iranian militants stormed the U.S. Embassy in Teheran and took 90 hostages (52 Americans) that they held captive for 444 days.

Nov 7, 1811 - General William H. Harrison led 1,000 Americans in defeating the Shawnee Indians at the Battle of Tippecanoe Creek.

Nov 9, 1989 - The Berlin Wall opened up after standing as a symbol of the Cold War.

Nov 10, 1775 - The U.S. Marine Corps was established as part of the U.S. Navy.

Nov 11, 1972 - The U.S. turned over its military base at Long Binh to the South Vietnamese, symbolizing the end of direct American military participation in the Vietnam War.

Nov 13, 1942 - The five Sullivan Brothers were lost in the sinking of the cruiser *USS Juneau* off Guadalcanal causing the U.S. Navy to prohibit close relatives from serving on the same ship.

Nov 15, 1969 - The largest antiwar rally in U.S. History occurred as 250,000 persons gathered in Washington, D.C., to protest the Vietnam War.

Nov 15, 1864 - Union troops under General William T. Sherman burned Atlanta.

Nov 19, 1863 - President delivered the Gettysburg Address

Nov 19-20, 1990 - The Cold War came to an end as leaders of NATO and the Warsaw Pact signed a Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe

Nov 20, 1943 - The Battle of Tarawa – in eight days of battle U.S. forces took Tarawa and Makin Islands with over 1,000 Americans killed, 2,311 wounded. The Japanese lost 4,700 men.

Nov 22, 1963 - At 12:30 p.m., President John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

Nov 24, 1863 – Chattanooga - “Battle Above the Clouds” - General Ulysses Grant's soldiers scaled heavily fortified Lookout Mountain and defeated the Confederate army.

Nov 25, 1783 - At the end of the Revolutionary War, the last British troops left New York City.

Nov 26, 1789 - President George Washington proclaimed the first American holiday to be Thanksgiving Day

Nov 29, 1864 - Sand Creek Massacre - Colorado volunteers, led by Col John Chivington, murdered at least 100 Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians, mostly women and children. Company D and K Commanders, 1<sup>st</sup> Colorado Cavalry refused to obey.

Nov 30, 1782 - A provisional peace treaty was signed between Great Britain and the United States heralding the end of America's War of Independence. The final treaty was signed in Paris on September 3, 1783.

Source:

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

**Donations Needed:** Please bring a non-perishable food item to our dinner meeting. Collection being made for donation to the Veteran's One Stop.

**Duty/Honor/Country---Always Serving**

v/r

Michael Slavens

**THIRD THURSDAY DINNER MEETING**  
**NOVEMBER 16, 2023 AT MCLANE STADIUM**  
**– MEDIA ROOM ON 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 for double door with Media Entrance located above door. This is before the Baylor Club main entrance. Go thru door and take elevator to the fifth floor. There is normally placard sign at the white column.

As before, 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 & Ashley Millerd, Waco Solid Waste Administrator talking on recycling.**

**MENU:** Fresh fruit salad, tossed salad with balsamic and ranch dressings, artisan bread, Dr. Pepper Pork Loin, Parmesan Crusted Chicken, Creamy Macaroni + Cheese, Garlic Green Beans, Desserts with Fresh Brewed Iced Tea and Water. Coffee available at beverage bar.

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

**Dinner cost is \$35 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, 9 November Noon for sign-ups.**

Early RSVP's are welcome and appreciated. After the 9th, 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: Winter dress code will be in effect, gentlemen, slacks, collared shirts and coat, optional for tie and ladies attire as desired.**

**GUEST SPEAKER, ASHLEY MILLERD**

Ashley Millerd's current title is the Recycling Outreach Coordinator for the City of Waco Solid Waste Department. She joined the city in January of 2021. Prior to joining the City, Ashley was the Executive Director for Keep Waco Beautiful (501c3 environmental conservation nonprofit) for 8 years. She specialized in education to generate higher diversion rates and utilize educational opportunities to get a better grasp on the participation demographics. She also excelled in providing equitable solutions for materials that are recyclable but do not have an end market as glass, Styrofoam, and electronics. She is a very passionate and avid recycler herself. She promotes sustainability for all industry sectors to increase awareness of ESG standards beginning with the waste stream.

**2023 – 2024 CHAPTER MEETING SCHEDULE**

**\*14 December 2023, Thursday dinner meeting in the President's Suite at McLane Stadium.**

Election of chapter officers and directors will be held; guest speaker will be MOAA Rep. Capt. Frank J. Michael, USN (ret) followed by live entertainment by the band, the Morticians.

**\*18 January 2024, Thursday dinner meeting in the Media Room at McLane Stadium.**

Guest speaker will be Stan Parker of the Stan Parker Foundation.

**HOT CHAPTER BOARD MEETING DATE**

The next Board meeting will be on **Tuesday, November 21, 2023**, 5:00 p.m. at Uncle Dan's BBQ that is located at 1001 Lake Air Drive.

**NOVEMBER SPECIAL DAY RECOGNITION**

**Birthdays:** Joe Augeri, Jerrie Buehrig, Patricia Herbelin, Lyn Lawson, Tony Raineri, Raymond Sancton, Don Speed, Matt Urban, and Martha West.

**Anniversaries:** None.

**Congratulations to All**

**2023 CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP DUES**

Chapter member dues are still \$25 for renewing members. Member renewals can be paid at a

chapter meeting or mailed to HOT Chapter MOAA, PO Box 23964, Waco, TX 76702.

We are always looking for prospects to join the chapter; please contact Bill Porter, 254-495-5601 or Vince Tobola, 254-709-5795 with prospect names.

Reminder that our website, hotmoaa.org, does have the 2023 chapter membership application form plus copies of newsletters. Newsletters are sent to members monthly, by e-mail or regular mail.

**OCTOBER EVENTS RECAP**

Presentations to our October 19th guest Speaker David Bonner and his mother Lillian. They shared their knowledge and experiences with the Nisei Spirit – Japanese American soldiers in WWII.



*Pictured on left are: Lillian Bonner, mother of guest speaker; Michael Slavens, President HOT Chapter; and David Bonner, guest speaker and military historian and author. Photo on right is Michael Slavens presenting chapter coin to David Bonner*

This picture below shows charitable contribution presentation of \$1,000 to Waco Chapter 3 Disabled American Veterans.



*From left to right, Ken Ratajczak, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President, HOT Chapter; Zach Shook, Chapter 3 Commander; Tom Parker, Chapter 3 Treasurer, and Vince Tobola, HOT Chapter Treasurer.*



## **MEMBER SPOTLIGHT – BILL PORTER, 2<sup>ND</sup>** **VICE- PRESIDENT**



Colonel William Y. 'Bill' Porter, U.S. Army (Ret), received his commission through the Army ROTC program at Texas A&M University in 1978. Bill began his career at Fort Hood as a Platoon Leader and Company Executive Officer, 2nd Battalion/12th Cavalry (Mech), 1st Cavalry Division, and some 30 years later he finished his career as the Chief Information Officer, G-6, U.S. Army Sustainment Command, Rock Island Arsenal, Illinois. Between those assignments he served in numerous positions, mainly as an information officer, but also as a light infantry company commander, advisor to the Army Reserve component, systems analyst, chemical training battalion commander, group operations officer, and deputy inspector general. In the early 2000s he was the Director of Operations, Coalition Provisional Authority-Baghdad at the Federal Deployment Center in Kuwait, followed by duty as the Director of Logistics, J-4, Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, Djibouti, Africa.

Immediately after his retirement, Bill worked for Kellogg, Brown, & Root (KBR) as a Deputy Project Manager. Subsequently, he worked with MPRI and DynCorp as a mentor for the Afghan Border Police with additional contract duties as Information Management Officer (IMO), ABM Government Services as a Project Manager, Career Pro Global as a resume writer, Cisco Systems and Advanced Systems Design as a contract technical writer, and most recently, Monster.com as a professional resume writer.

Bill is an active member of the Heart of Texas Chapter, Military Officers Association of America.

### **FREE BAYLOR LAW VETERANS LAW CLINIC**

This is free legal advice for veterans and their spouses in Central Texas to be held from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Thursday, November 9, 2023, at the Heart of Texas Veterans One Stop at 2010 La Salle Ave., Waco. This is by appointment only; please call 254-710-4244 or e-mail [LegalClinics@baylor.edu](mailto:LegalClinics@baylor.edu) to make an appointment.

## **VA WORK FORCE IMPROVING NUMBERS**

VA health care hiring surge may help the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) rebound from the problems outlined in a recent VA inspector general report on pandemic-era staffing. Things looked bleak during the pandemic throughout U.S. health care systems, and VA was no exception to mounting pressures in providing patient care. The VHA had to alter delivery of services to the over 9 million veterans who relied on care through its 140 hospitals and outpatient centers. And as the largest integrated health care network in the country, VA also serves as the nation's support system during emergencies and national disasters.

Dr. Sheref Elnahal, VA under secretary of health, told MOAA in a recent veteran service organization meeting that he was pleased but cautiously optimistic about the turning of the tide on the staffing. The VHA on boarded well over 403,000 employees since late fiscal year 2022 – the most in history. The increase was a result of focused and proactive hiring and staffing practices. The VHA also saw a decline in employee turnover and retirement rates.

Like other health care systems, VHA still has problems hiring in some occupational areas. In fiscal year 2024, the health system is targeting its efforts at hiring mental health and primary care professionals.

The VA also is working to standardize its hiring process across the enterprise and expand its human resource workforce. Like the VHA's patient-centered or veteran-centric model, the VA hopes to create a candidate-care model that puts individuals and employees at the center of its human resource system.

## **JOINT GENERAL ELECTION IS ONGOING**

Election Day is Tuesday, November 7, 2023.

Early voting dates started on October 23 and continue thru November 3. Go to website, [www.mclennanvotes.com](http://www.mclennanvotes.com) or call 254-757-5043 for locations and daily times which vary per date.

## **MOAA NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP**

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

## **COLA RATE SET FOR 2024**

The rate of 3.2% was released in late October for the annual cost-of-living allowance (COLA) for military retirees, VA disability recipients, Social Security beneficiaries, and others receiving certain federal payments for 2024. It is well below last year's adjustment of 8.7%.

MOAA predicts the upcoming COLA will be 3.2%, down 5.5 percentage points from last year's 8.7% increase. It is just the fifth time in 20 years the adjustment has reached 3% or higher.

## **AREA EVENTS**

- The annual downtown Waco Veterans' Day Parade will be held on Saturday, November 11<sup>th</sup>. It will start at 11:00 a.m. at Austin Avenue and 12<sup>th</sup> Street and continue down Austin Avenue to Heritage Square in front of Waco City Hall. There will be a Congressional Veterans Commendation award ceremony after the parade at Heritage Square once Congressman Pete Sessions arrives from the parade. Awards to six veterans from Central Texas will then be presented by Congressman Pete Sessions. Two of the selectees are John Wells and Vince Tobola.
- Sunday, November 12, 3 p.m., 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Flag Retirement and Disposal Ceremony at Woodway Family Center, 1100 Estates Drive, Woodway. Hosts are City of Woodway, McLennan County Veterans Association and Elizabeth Gordon Bradley Chapter NSDAR.

## **MEDICARE PART B RATES FOR 2024**

After falling in 2023, the standard Medicare Part B monthly premium will increase by \$9.80 in 2024, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced Oct. 12.

Last year's decrease came after Medicare limited its coverage of a new, expensive Alzheimer's drug, CMS said. This year's increase comes primarily from "projected increases in health care spending. The annual deductible for Part B beneficiaries will be \$240 in 2024, up from \$226 this year.

The standard premium applies only to individuals with a modified adjusted gross income of \$103,000 or less, or joint filers with income of \$206,000 or less, on their 2022 tax return. Other beneficiaries

pay Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amounts (IRMAA), which vary by income level.

These rates also increased for 2024, and the rate brackets have been updated:

- Those with income from \$103,001 to \$129,000 on an individual return or from \$206,001 to \$258,000 on a joint return will pay \$244.60 per month, up from \$230.80 in this bracket in 2023.
- Those with income from \$129,001 to \$161,000 on an individual return or from \$258,001 to \$322,000 on a joint return will pay \$349.40 per month, up from \$329.70 per month in this bracket in 2023.
- Those with income from \$161,001 to \$193,000 on an individual return or from \$322,001 to \$386,000 on a joint return will pay \$454.20 per month, up from \$428.60 in this bracket in 2023.
- Those with income from \$193,001 to \$500,000 on an individual return or from \$386,001 to \$750,000 on a joint return will pay \$559 per month, up from \$527.50 in this bracket in 2023.
- Those with income above \$500,000 on an individual return or above \$750,000 on a joint return will pay **\$594 per month**, up from \$560.50 in this bracket in 2023.

Married beneficiaries who lived with their spouses during at least part of the taxable year but file separate tax returns have their own payment scale: Those with modified adjusted gross income between \$103,001 and \$397,000 pay a \$559 monthly premium, while those with income at or above \$397,000 pay \$594 per month.

Because the 2024 income-adjusted rates are based on 2022 tax records, they may not accurately reflect the financial situation of all beneficiaries. If your income level has decreased in recent years, you can file Form SSA-44 with the Social Security Administration to request an adjustment.

Applicants must identify a "Life-Changing Event" connected with the income reduction. Examples include marriage or divorce, the death of a spouse, change in work status, or a lump-sum payment or settlement from a previous year resulting in a temporary income increase.

**Heart of Texas Chapter TX07, MOAA**  
**P.O. Box 23964**  
**Waco, TX 76702-3964**

Address label

**2023 H.O.T. MOAA OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Jim Milam, COL, USAF (ret) (Laura) 817-909-3588  
Bill Hulsey, LTCDR, USN (ret) (Donna) 512-658-7173  
Arend, Lew, 1LT, USA (Liz) 713-254-1334

**Directors Emeritus**

Jimmie Hanes, COL, USAF, (ret) (Mary) 254)-848-5493  
Dr. Harold Rafuse, LtCol, USAF (ret.) (RoseMary)254)-717-8112

**ELECTED OFFICIALS**

U.S. Senator John Cornyn Chase Tower  
517 Hart Senate Office Building 221 West Sixth St, Suite 1530  
Washington, DC 20510 Austin, TX 78701  
Website: [www.Cornyn.senate.gov](http://www.Cornyn.senate.gov) 512-469-6034, FAX 512-469-6020  
202-228-2856

U.S. Senator Ted Cruz 300 E. 8<sup>th</sup>, Ste 961  
127A Russell Senate Office Building Austin, TX 78701  
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202-224-5922

U.S. Rep. Pete Sessions 400 Austin Ave,  
2204 Rayburn HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515 Suite 302  
202-225-6105. Waco, TX 76702

**USEFUL NUMBERS**

MOAA Capital switchboard hotline 1-800 272-6622  
MOAA Membership 1-800 245-8762

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