



The Eagle's Eye

April 2009



The Newsletter of the Gainesville Chapter, Military Officer's Association of America (MOAA)

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President's Message

We had a wonderful joint buffet luncheon on Monday, 13 April, at Oak Hammock. It was attended by 34 people who listened to Jim Lynch, Director of the Veteran Services Office for Alachua County. He gave us an in depth view of what is being offered to veterans in the Gainesville area. Jim was followed by our very own Col (USAF, Ret) Mayer Littman, Legislative Affairs Officer for our Chapter. Mayer pointed out what we should be watching out for in the coming months, particularly in healthcare matters like Tricare for Life. All who attended seemed to enjoy the camaraderie. Our thanks to Jerry and Gaye Kirkpatrick for making all the arrangements.

Moving along, we have Cinco de Mayo coming up on 4 May (Reservation Form on page 3), and a great joint Luncheon planned for 23 June.

On 30 April, a new University of Florida Veteran's Memorial will be dedicated. Details on this very significant event are on page 6. Go Gators (literally)!!

If any one has any ideas for our newsletter or our chapter please feel free to send them to me by email: gleason6@cox.net or call me at 352-333-8974.

Candy

Membership Dues "Overdue". We have 35 members "overdue". Chapter dues are \$15, payable by January 1st. If you have overlooked paying them, please send a check payable to **MOAA** to the following address: **Gainesville Chapter, MOAA, PO Box 142423, Gainesville, FL 32614- 2423**. If you are unsure as to whether or not your dues have been paid, please contact Candy Gleason ,(352) 333-8974, or Roger Pierce, (352)378-7063.

Chapter Social Functions

- **Monday, 4 May** — Cinco de Mayo Dinner at Mexico Lindo Restaurant, Tower Road Shopping Center at 6pm. (See reservation form on p. 3).
- **Tuesday, 23 June** — Joint MOAA/MOW and Service Academy Club Luncheon, GGCC at 12pm.

Special Speakers:

Joe Cirulli, President, Chamber of Commerce/Owner, Gainesville Health and Fitness Club.

Vianne Marchese (Homeless Veterans).

Military Officer's Wives (MOW)

- **Tuesday, 19 May** — Military Officer's Wives — Luncheon and **Coldwater Creek Fashion Show**, Gainesville Golf and Country Club. **[NOTE the changed date].**

Gainesville Chapter, Military Officers Association of America

P.O. Box 142423
Gainesville, FL 32614-2423

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<i>Membership Secretary:</i>	Roger Pierce, Maj, USAF	378-7063	roger@piercepapes.com

Note: See the corrections below from our March issue:

Col (USAF, Ret) Littman's new e-mail address is listed under Directors above.
MOW May Luncheon Date is 19 May — see Calendar of Events on page 4.
Christmas Dinner is Thursday, 10 December— see Calendar of Events on page 4.

Do you know?

[The following is from Wikipedia, the free online encyclopedia]

Cinco de Mayo

Cinco de Mayo (Spanish for "Fifth of May") is a regional holiday in Mexico, primarily celebrated in the state of Puebla, with some limited recognition in other parts of Mexico. The holiday commemorates the Mexican army's unlikely defeat of French forces at the Battle of Puebla on May 5, 1862, under the leadership of Mexican General Ignacio Zaragoza Seguín. The Battle was significant for at least two reasons. First, while outnumbered almost two-to-one, the Mexicans defeated a much better-equipped French army that had known no defeat for almost 50 years. Second, this battle was important because it would be "the last time that an army from another continent invaded the Americas." Cinco de Mayo is not an obligatory federal holiday in Mexico.

While Cinco de Mayo has limited or no significance nationwide in Mexico, the date is observed in the United States and other locations around the world as a celebration of Mexican heritage and pride. However, a common misconception in the United States is that Cinco de Mayo is Mexico's Independence Day. Mexico's Independence Day is actually September 16 (*dieciséis de septiembre* in Spanish), which is the most important national patriotic holiday in Mexico.

CINCO de MAYO Reservation and Menu

Monday, May 4th at 6 pm, Mexico Lindo Restaurant, Tower Road Shopping Center



Name (s) _____

Amount enclosed _____ (Cost: \$14.00 per person. Cash Bar).

Questions? Call Candy Gleason (352) 333-8974 (return this form with your check, payable to MOAA) We must have a count by April 30th

Due to the economy and space we can not have a buffet. You must choose a dinner. We have the following choices:

Indicate your choice of dinner(s)

_____ (#1) One taco, two enchiladas, Mexican rice or refried beans (Chicken).

_____ (#5) One beef enchilada, one cheese enchilada, Mexican rice and refried beans.

_____ (#8) Three tacos, Mexican rice, and refried beans (Beef).

_____ (#9) One burrito, one taco, Mexican rice and refried beans (Chicken).

_____ (G) One cheese quesadilla stuffed with spinach, tomatoes and onions, Mexican rice **OR** refried beans **AND** guacamole salad. Indicate rice or beans.

_____ Steak Fajitas (onions green peppers & tomatoes) with Mexican Rice, refried beans, lettuce, fresh guacamole, sour cream, pico de gallo and flour tortillas

_____ Chicken Fajitas (onions green peppers & tomatoes) with Mexican Rice, refried beans, lettuce, fresh guacamole, sour cream, pico de gallo and flour tortillas

All dinners include a choice of beverage (coffee, tea, lemonade, or soda).

(Clip)

Gainesville Chapter, MOAA

P.O. Box 142423

Gainesville, FL 32614-2423

Cinco de Mayo!!!

Volunteers

Can you help us? Call Candy (333-8974)

Our Gainesville Chapter was one of the first MOAA Chapters established in Florida.

We are trying to reach out to all officers (former, current, or retired) and spouses in our Chapter area (Alachua, Levy, and Bradford Counties). We need your help in joining with us to have some fun while doing a little work.

Needed:

- **Newsletter Editor (we're using Microsoft Publisher, and it's not difficult to use)**
- **Web site Manager/Designer**
- **Two Vice Presidents**

Ward & Ward

Attorneys and
Counsellors at Law

Westside Location:

4001 Newberry Road
Suite C-1, Gainesville
(352) 377-4761

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Administration

Living Trusts	Wills
Estate Planning	Elder Law
Real Property	Powers of Atty

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2009

Chapter Social Functions

Past Events

- Friday, 13 February — Sweetheart Dinner (Valentine's Day), at Gainesville Golf and Country Club
- Monday, 13 April — Joint Luncheon MOAA/MOW (Officers and Spouses) at Oak Hammock. 12 Noon, Main Building.

Coming Events

- Monday, 4 May — Cinco de Mayo Dinner, Mexico Lindo Restaurant, Tower Road Shopping Center, at 6pm.
- Tuesday, 23 June — Joint MOAA/MOW and Service Academy Club Luncheon, GGCC at 12pm. **Special Speakers:** Joe Cirulli, President, Chamber of Commerce/Owner, Gainesville Health and Fitness Club. Vianne Marchese (Homeless Veterans).
- July/August -Vacation Time
- September — Date pending. Chinese Dinner-Location TBA
- Wednesday, 14 October — Oktoberfest, Oak Hammock
- Wednesday, 11 November — Veterans Day Picnic, Ginnie Springs
- Thursday, 10 December — Christmas Dinner. Gainesville Golf and Country Club (1800 Social Hour, 1900 Dinner)

Military Officer's Wives (MOW)

- Tuesday, 27 January — Military Officers Wives (MOW) Luncheon-Gainesville Golf and Country Club
- Tuesday, 24 March — Military Officers Wives (MOW) Luncheon-Gainesville Golf and Country Club
- Tuesday, 19 May — Military Officers Wives (MOW) Luncheon and Coldwater Creek Fashion Show - Gainesville Golf and Country Club
- Tuesday, 27 October — Military Officers Wives (MOW) Luncheon-Gainesville Golf and Country Club

[The following article is reprinted from the MOAA Legislative Update of 3 April 2009]

House Leaders Expect DoD TRICARE Fee Hikes

2009/04/03 00:00:00

Leaders of the House Armed Services Committee say they expect the Pentagon will once again propose big TRICARE fee hikes for military retirees.

Their March 15 letter to the Chairman of the House Budget Committee was very specific on the latter point, and asked for extra budget authority to reject the expected increases.

“The committee believes that the [end of April] budget request will again assume over \$1 billion in savings within the Defense health budget, based on recommendations from a previous Defense Department Task Force,” said the letter signed by Chairman Ike Skelton (D-MO) and Ranking Minority Member John McHugh (R-NY). “The committee will need additional [budget headroom] to prohibit the fee increases that we expect will be proposed by the Department of Defense.”

If you agree with MOAA that that’s the last thing the Defense Department should do, you still have time to weigh in with the President and the Secretary of Defense, but you need to act quickly.

E-mail President Obama: [Use MOAA’s special alert](#).

(Web site: <http://capwiz.com/moaa/issues/alert/?alertid=13015596&type=PR>)

E-mail Secretary of Defense Gates: The Secretary has no public e-mail address, so you have to go to the [DoD Web site](#), click on the “Ask a Question/Make a Comment” tab at the top, fill out the required information, and include this recommended comment:

For Secretary Gates: As you prepare the FY2010 budget, please don't resume past failed efforts to impose unfair TRICARE fee increases on retired military families. Career military people were told that their decades of arduous service and sacrifice constituted a steep, pre-paid premium that earned lifetime health coverage. Large proposed TRICARE fee hikes have been upsetting because they devalue those decades of sacrifice -- in wartime, no less. Please seize this opportunity to suspend these divisive efforts and work with military associations to develop positive incentives and 'win-win' solutions for all concerned.

Staying in Touch

We encourage all Members, Spouses, and Auxiliary Members to contact any board member with any information relating to the illness or death of those associated with our Chapter.

- We wish a speedy recovery for Col (USAF, Ret) Mayer Littman, and Maryla Cole.
- We extend our sympathy to the family of Sharon Wagner upon her recent death.
- We also extend our sympathy to the family of Captain (USN, Ret) John F. Bowman upon his recent death.

President Announces DoD/VA Electronic Record Initiative

With Defense Secretary Robert Gates and VA Secretary Eric Shinseki at his side, President Obama held a press conference on Thursday to announce his leadership team's personal commitment to building a joint electronic medical record to meet beneficiary health needs for both the military and the VA.

Before the press conference, the President invited MOAA President VADM Norb Ryan (USN-Ret) and other selected military and veterans' association leaders to the White House to discuss the initiative privately.

President Obama said his goal is to prevent someone leaving the military from "having to walk paper from their [military] location to a local VA treatment center. Their electronic records will transition along with them and remain with them forever."

Additionally, the president and Secretary Shinseki expressed their support for "advance funding" for veterans' medical care to prevent interruption of funding if Congress doesn't approve the annual VA appropriations bill by the start of the new fiscal year.

"The president with his vision of a '21st century VA' and superb teamwork by Secretaries Gates and Shinseki are really 'walking the walk' in trying to care for our veterans and their families the right way," VADM Ryan said. "I am impressed by their aggressive actions to get this project started and shape the FY2010 budget with a solid foundation to do so."

"Once implemented, this initiative will make a huge, positive difference in providing continuity of first-class medical care and benefits for our military and veteran populations."

Veteran's Events

University of Florida Veteran's Memorial Dedication

(The memorial commemorates fallen gator veterans and honors UF troops who have served the country.)

- **30 April at 3pm — Amphitheatre**

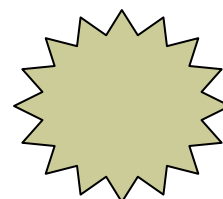
Memorial Day Ceremony

- **25 May at 10am — Forest Meadows East**

Dumb Jokes: Lawyers and Baseball

- What do you call parachuting lawyers?
Skeet.
- Why does it take longer to run from second base to third base than it takes to run from first to second?

Because you have a short stop between second and third.



Important Military ID Card and Car Decal Information!

[Camp Blanding]

- **Check your ID Card for the expiration date.**
- **If you are Under AGE 75, and need a new card:**

Go to Camp Blanding, Building #2300 (Mon-Fri, Hours: 7:30 AM – 5:00 PM, closed 12PM – 1PM for Lunch). **Phone 1- (904) 682-3379.** No appointment necessary.

If you are in DEERS, you will need 2 forms of ID (old ID card and one other form)

If you are NOT in DEERS, you will need to have your Sponsor with you, or have a Power of Attorney.

Car Decals

- **Phone: (904) 682-3566**
- **Office Hours: 7am—4pm (Open thru Lunch)**

You need a valid car registration, proof of insurance, valid driver's license, and valid Military ID Card.

JOIN MOAA

Important Military ID Card Information!

[Jacksonville NAS]

- **Check your ID Card for the expiration date.**
- **If you are Under AGE 75, and need a new card:**

Go to the Jacksonville Naval Air Station, Building #789 (Mon-Fri, Hours: 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM). **Phone 1- (904) 542-4217, Ext 191/192/193.**

If you go with your Sponsor, you will need 2 forms of ID. If you do not go with your Sponsor, you will need a Power of Attorney, or a Form DD1172, and 2 forms of ID.

- **If you are Over AGE 75, you qualify for an indefinite ID Card.**

If you can't drive to Jacksonville, you will need a Doctor's note stating that you can't get to Jacksonville. This note, your old ID Card, and a 5x7 picture should be mailed to:

Personnel Support Detachment
Box 72 Naval Air Station
Jacksonville, FL 32212
ATTN : ID Cards

[If you can't drive to Jacksonville or Camp Blanding, call Candy. She will arrange for someone to take you, or otherwise assist you in getting your ID Card]

Chapter Membership Application

Full Name: _____

Grade: _____

Service: _____

Retired Reserve

Active Duty Widow(er)*

Former Officer National Guard

Regular

Mailing Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

Birth date: _____

Spouse's Name: _____

Spouse's Birth date: _____

I am a member of MOAA

I am NOT a member of MOAA

MOAA # (if known): _____

Signature: _____

* Fill in your own name, address, etc. and show deceased spouse's rank and service.

Annual Membership (1 Jan through 31 Dec) is \$15.

Mail completed form with check for \$15 (payable to MOAA) to: **Gainesville Chapter, MOAA, PO Box 142423, Gainesville, FL 32614-2423**

Did You Know? Important Tax Information

[Article from the MOAA Legislative Newsletter]

More on the "Economic Stimulus" Tax

The recent stimulus plan reduces federal income taxes up to \$400 for working individuals and \$800 for couples via smaller tax withholding from their paychecks. Non-working military retirees or survivors are not eligible for the tax reduction, but will see the reduced withholding in their retired pay or survivor annuities.

That's because DFAS is required to use the new tax withholding tables published by the IRS for retired paychecks or annuities arriving in bank accounts on May 1.

To add to the confusion, the stimulus bill also provides a \$250 payment to those drawing Social Security or VA disability compensation. So if a retiree or survivor draws VA disability or Social Security, he/she will get the \$250 payment on top of the reduced income tax withholding.

A working retiree who also draws Social Security or VA disability compensation will get the \$250 payment and will also have the additional \$400 (\$800 married filing jointly) withheld from BOTH military retired pay AND employer pay.

There will be some rude awakenings next year when retirees or survivors discover they've been "under-withheld" and owe an unexpectedly large tax bill on their 2009 taxes.

[Check out some examples and how you can protect yourself.](#) (See **Eagle's Eye**, page 9)

MOAA has written congressional leaders and Treasury Secretary Geithner urging exemption of taxable retired pay, pensions and annuities from the lower withholding. If this effort is unsuccessful, retirees can ask DFAS to restore their original withholding on their retired pay or annuity to avoid a bigger 2009 tax bill.

(Continued from page 8)

Did You Know? Important Tax Information

More on the "Economic Stimulus" Tax

2009/04/03 00:00:00

We told you about a glitch in the IRS rules regarding the federal income tax break in February's economic stimulus that could leave retirees with an unexpectedly large tax bill in 2010. Find out how to protect yourself.

- **Non-working military retiree with Social Security or VA disability compensation**

- o Will get a \$250 check from Social Security or the VA soon, and will end up having \$400/\$800 (single/married) less withheld from their retirement checks this year, but will still owe that money when they file taxes next year.

- o **SOLUTION:** DFAS executed the new withholding on April 1, therefore, retirees in this category can ask DFAS to restore the previous, higher withholding amount (note: the reduction in withholding will not appear in checks until May 1.)

- o **Working military retirees who DON'T receive Social Security or VA disability compensation**

- o Will have \$400/\$800 less withheld from BOTH their military retired pay AND from their employer's pay – a total of \$800/\$1,600 less withheld, which means they'll have to pay \$400/\$800 of that back when they file their 2009 taxes next year (you can only get the tax credit once).

- o **SOLUTION:** People who don't want that to happen can ask EITHER DFAS or their employer to restore the original higher withholding now.

- o **Working military retirees who DO receive Social Security or VA disability compensation**

- o Will get the \$250 payment soon and will ALSO have \$400/\$800 less withheld from BOTH their military retired pay AND from their employer's pay -- a total of \$800/\$1,600 less withheld. BUT the total tax credit they can qualify for will be \$400/\$800, and the \$250 counts against that. That means they'll end up having to pay back \$650 (single) or \$1,050 (joint filer) of that money when they file their 2009 taxes next year.

SOLUTION: If they don't want that to happen, they should ask DFAS and/or their employer to increase their withholding an extra \$100-\$180/month for the rest of the year so they come out even.




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[Article from the American Legion Web Site]

Supreme Court Concurs with The American Legion's Stand on Public Monuments

A ruling announced this week by the U.S. Supreme Court gives weight to an argument by The American Legion against the placing of public monuments that could threaten the sanctity of veterans memorials. Justices ruled unanimously that an obscure religious group cannot use a "free speech" argument to force a small Utah city to erect a granite marker in a local park that is home to a long-standing monument to the Ten Commandments.

"At first glance, this ruling may seem unrelated to us, but it actually sets a precedent that is very important to veterans groups," said David K. Rehbein, National Commander of The American Legion. "The Justices have said, in effect, that a local government can choose what donated public displays it cares to exhibit on public land - and what displays it can reject. This reduces the chance that a monument to an enemy or dissenting group, for instance, could be erected in the same space as a monument to our fallen warriors."

The ruling stems from a case precipitated by a small Salt Lake City, Utah-based religious group called Summum. Summum went to federal court after its effort to erect a marker in Pleasant Grove City, Utah was rejected by the city. Summum maintained that the city violated its right to free speech by refusing the donated monument. The Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver agreed with the religious group, but the Supreme Court ruling reverses that decision.

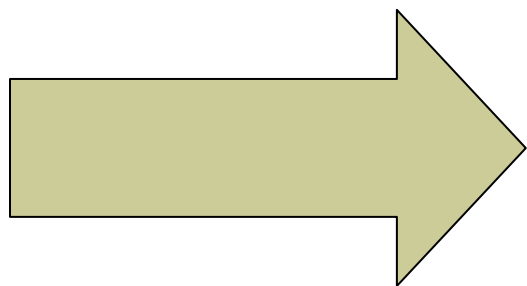
The American Legion played an active role in the oral argument phase of the case. Last year, Liberty Legal Institute in Plano, Texas filed an amicus brief on behalf of The Legion and several colleague veterans and military service organizations. The brief's argument summary stated:

"The precedent established by the Tenth Circuit lays the foundation for the destruction of all donated veterans memorials nationwide and chills the erection of any future memorials. From the United States Marine Corps War Memorial in Arlington, VA, to the Viet-

nam Veterans War Memorial on The Mall in Washington, DC, to the myriad Spirit of the American Doughboy WWI memorials like that in Ft. Smith, AR, this precedent will require all governments, from the smallest municipality to the Congress itself, to make an impossible decision: either fail to honor our veterans by any donated monument whatsoever, tear down those that currently exist, or allow a monument honoring our veterans and then, upon donation, erect on the same hallowed ground one that dishonors them."

In his favorable Supreme Court opinion, Justice Samuel Alito said that while efforts to suppress actual speech in public parks would ordinarily violate the First Amendment, erection of donated physical entities such as markers and monuments is a different matter. Justice Alito said "the display of a permanent monument in a public park" defines, in part, a community's identity and, so, "cities and other jurisdictions take some care in accepting donated monuments."

Commander Rehbein notes that the Supreme Court has also agreed to hear a case later this year involving the suppression of a war memorial in the Mojave Desert. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco has ruled that the memorial to World War I veterans is unconstitutional because it is the shape of a cross, which might connote religious symbolism. A proposal to transfer the land upon which the now-cloaked monument rests to the VFW, which erected the cross in 1934, was also ruled unconstitutional by the court. "Obviously, we favor the full and free display of that monument," said the Commander. "The Supreme Court ruling gives us hope for a good outcome in that matter, too."



Medical Corner

This section is reprinted from EverydayHealth.com. This website rivals WebMD (webmd.com) as a medical information website.

Should I See My Doctor About Heartburn?

By Allison Ryan

Most people will experience heartburn from time to time. For some, heartburn may be nothing more than a nuisance, best managed by adjusting their diet and making a few lifestyle changes. For others, however, the painful symptoms of acid reflux can signal something more serious. Severe or persistent heartburn can indicate gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), a disorder that requires the attention of a medical professional for evaluation and treatment.

While it may feel at times as if little can be done to quell the burning inside your chest, both heartburn and GERD can be effectively treated. If left untreated, GERD may damage your esophagus, resulting in more serious conditions and putting you at increased risk of esophageal cancer. **If you experience heartburn, and any of the following describes your symptoms, it's time to make an appointment with your physician to discuss treatment options and rule out any associated complications.**

Your heartburn symptoms have become more frequent or severe.

Your heartburn persists even though you've made several lifestyle changes, such as avoiding foods that trigger acid production, sleeping at an incline, and avoiding nighttime snacks.

You are having difficulty swallowing or pain when swallowing, especially with solid food or pills.

You often feel as if you have something stuck in your throat.

You experience repeated episodes of belching or regurgitation.

You've had a significant weight loss accompanied by heartburn.

You have been using over-the-counter antacids for more than two weeks.

Your heartburn doesn't respond to over-the-counter or prescription antacids.

Your voice has become hoarse, you wheeze, or your asthma has worsened.

Your heartburn is brought on by exercise.

Contact your doctor immediately if you experience any of the following symptoms:

Extreme stomach pain or vomiting blood.

Bloody, black or tarry bowel movements. This can signify bleeding in the digestive tract, from the esophagus, stomach, or the intestines.

Abdominal or chest pain, especially if accompanied by pain in the jaw or neck, shortness of breath, or irregular pulse.

These symptoms can indicate heart attack or heart disease and require urgent attention.





MOAA

Military Officers Association of America

Ward & Ward
Attorneys and Counselors at Law

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Suite C-1, Gainesville
(352) 377-4761

Peter Ward, Peter Hamilton Ward, Peter Hay Ward

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