

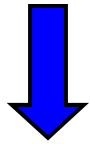


The Eagle's Eye



June-July 2011

Newsletter of the Gainesville, Florida Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)



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Happy Birthday America!!

Declaration of Independence

(Adopted by Congress on July 4, 1776)

The Unanimous Declaration of the Thirteen United States of America

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.

[Excerpt from the Declaration of Independence. Original spelling and capitalization.]

Special Summer Abbreviated Edition

President's Message

Congratulations to area high school and University of Florida graduates we had the honor to recognize by virtue of their personal accomplishments in their respective Junior ROTC and ROTC unit programs. Each newly commissioned university ROTC officer received a set of Ensign or Second Lieutenant "Gold Bars" compliments of MOAA.

Additionally, our Gainesville Chapter "recruited" fourteen (14) Air Force, Army, Marine Corps and Navy ROTC graduating class members with a free one-year free MOAA national membership under the Give Me 10 Chapter Recruiting Campaign.

Thirty (30) Gainesville Chapter MOAA members enjoyed a successful June Luncheon at Napolitanos Restaurant in partnership with twenty five (25) members of The Greater Gainesville Rotary Club.

We were honored to have Sheriff Sadie Darnell join

us as our guest speaker. She presented insightful comments about contemporary Alachua County Sheriff's Office issues and initiatives that were most informative.

It was enlightening to learn about the challenges faced by our dedicated Alachua County law enforcement team. We sincerely appreciate Sheriff Darnell taking time from her busy schedule to support our luncheon event.

Plans are underway for our next Chapter luncheon gathering on Thursday, 6 October at the Gainesville Country Club. Please note our Save the Date announcement in this edition of the ***Eagle's Eye***.

Take time to enjoy a restful summer schedule. Do not let down your guard for the customary Florida hurricane season. Be prepared with emergency supplies in the event tropical winds blow our way.

Carter

Declaration of Independence Quiz (See www.earlyamerica.com)

- **What Was The Declaration of Independence All About? The answer is: That America's 13 Colonies Were No Longer Part of The British Empire**
- **Who Was The Principal Author of The Declaration? The answer is: Thomas Jefferson**
- **Where Was The Declaration Adopted? The answer is: The Pennsylvania State House In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**
- **When Was The Declaration Adopted? The answer is: On July 4, 1776**
- **By the time the Declaration of Independence was adopted: The answer is: The Colonies & England Had Been At War for Over a Year**
- **Did The Declaration of Independence Contain Original Ideas? The answer is: The Declaration of Independence Contained No Original Ideas According To Thomas Jefferson's Own Admission In Later Years**
- **Who Was The First Person To Sign the Declaration of Independence? The answer is: John Hancock, President of The Second Continental Congress**
- **Why Didn't George Washington Sign The Declaration of Independence? The answer is: As Commander of the Army He Was Unavailable To Participate**
- **Which One of These Phrases Appears In The Declaration of Independence? The answer is: Life, Liberty And The Pursuit of Happiness**
- **Where Is The Original Declaration of Independence Located? The answer is: The National Archives In Washington DC**
- **Why Was The Declaration Read To Washington's Troops Days After It Was Adopted? The answer is: To Inspire The Troops And Encourage Enlistments**
- **In Writing The Declaration of Independence Jefferson Was Influenced By: The answer is: Emerich de Vattel's "The Law of Nations"**

SAVE THE DATE

2ND ANNUAL

ALL AMERICAN LIBERTY FEST

NOVEMBER 6, 2011

AT SANTA FE COLLEGE

A PATRIOTIC EVENT FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY



Save the Date



Luncheon at the Country Club

October 6, 2011 \$14.00

Lt General John M LeMoyne, USA Ret

Military Retirement on the Chopping Block?

[From www.moaa.org/action]

Once again, the military retirement system is coming under the scrutiny of budgeters and deficit reduction task forces. This time the assault comes from various fronts – from outgoing Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and incoming Secretary Leon Panetta to Vice President Joe Biden.

Tasked by President Obama with finding over \$400 billion dollars in savings over the next 10-12 years, Gates has become a bit more specific on where some of the savings may be achieved – specifically the military retirement system.

Gates has criticized the “one-size-fits-all” 20-year retirement structure and has directed the Defense Science Board to establish a working group to develop alternative options.

In his final hearing before the Senate Appropriations Committee last week, he noted, “70-80% of the force does not stay until retirement but leave with nothing,” endorsing an early vesting system.

Even more ominous, multiple media reports have indicated military retirement cutbacks could be in play in ongoing deficit-reduction talks between administration and congressional leaders, headed by Vice President Joe Biden.

Most current proposals are based on recommendations of the 2009 10th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation (QRMC), which included:

- Converting to a civilianized 401(k)-style system under which full retired pay wouldn't be paid until age 57-60
- Authorizing the services to make variable annual retirement contributions depending on changing retention and skill requirements
- Vesting retirement benefits after 10 years of service

The last major revision to the military retirement system was in 1986 when Congress passed the so-called REDUX system as part of an earlier budget-cutting drill.

REDUX entailed far smaller cuts than the QRMC envisions. Under that plan, post-1986 entrants were to receive 40% of high-three-year average basic pay (vs. 50%) at 20 years of service.

In contrast to the advocacy of current Defense leaders, then-Secretary Caspar Weinberger warned Congress that REDUX cuts would cause serious future readiness problems by undermining retention.

He was proven right. A little over a decade later, Congress had to repeal REDUX when the Joint Chiefs of Staff complained it was hurting career retention. And that was in peacetime.

Think what you will about the 20-year retirement system, MOAA believes it's the primary reason retention hasn't imploded over the last 10 years of unprecedented strains on career service members and their families.

The problem with proposals to cut overall military retirement costs while also implementing an expensive new 10-year vesting plan is that there's only one place for that money to come from – the pockets of those who stay for a full career.

If you tried to build a plan to slash career retention, it's hard to conceive a better way than taking lots of money from people who serve a career in order to pay more to people who separate early.

Imagine the impact if the QRMC proposals were in effect in today's wartime environment.

A 10-year soldier facing a fourth or fifth combat deployment would have a choice between (a) taking the vested military retirement and leaving to pursue a civilian career or (b) having to serve decades longer (with who knows how many more deployments) before being eligible for military retired pay at age 57-60. What do you think would happen to retention then?

Especially knowing the services let very few people serve that long – but force nearly all out of uniform between their early 40s and early 50s.

Advocates for these initiatives seek to sugar-coat them by saying they wouldn't affect anyone now serving, but would only apply to new entrants. That also was true of the REDUX system, and we know how that turned out.

The only thing grandfathering the current force does is let retirement-cutting leaders evade responsibility for their ill-advised actions – by deferring the inevitable retention disaster for a decade and dumping it on their successors.

MOAA believes it's essential to avoid repeating past mistakes that traded temporary budget relief for major national security risks.

Please use MOAA's suggested message to urge Administration, Defense, and congressional leaders against jeopardizing future retention and readiness through ill-advised military retirement cutbacks.

See page 5 for MOAA's suggested message to various Executive and Legislative Branch leaders.

MOAA's Suggested Message to Executive and Legislative Branch Leaders

Go to: <http://capwiz.com/moaa/home/>

Click on: Take Action—then follow simple instructions to send the email letter below to the President and other Administration Officials; and to Florida Senators and Representatives. You can also edit or change the letter.

Message sent to the following recipients:

Chairman Mullen
Representative Stearns
Senator Nelson
Senator Rubio
President
Vice President

Message text follows:

James C. Grady
COL, USA RET
2126 SW 1006th Circle
Gainesville, FL 32607-3272

June 29, 2011

[recipient address was inserted here]

[recipient name was inserted here],

I'm very concerned at reports that top defense, administration and congressional leaders are seriously considering major military retirement cutbacks as part of ongoing negotiations to cut the federal budget.

Proposals include shifting the military system to a civilian-style 401(k) plan and delaying eligibility for full retired pay until age 60.

I would have hoped government leaders would have learned from the experience of the REDUX military retirement cuts of 1986, which were far less severe than those now being considered, but still had to be repealed a decade later after the Joint Chiefs of Staff complained they were undermining retention and readiness.

The last decade of war demonstrates all too well there is no limit on the sacrifice the government extracts from career military families. The career incentive embodied in the current retirement system is the primary offset to induce career families to endure those arduous conditions of service for decades on end.

The hard lessons of the past demonstrate that hollowing the military retirement system to ease current budget problems will only undermine our national security over the long term.

I urge you to resist proposals to do that again.

Sincerely,

James C. Grady
COL, USA RET
352-345-8976

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2011

Chapter Social Functions and Meetings

- Thursday, 10 February— Sweetheart Dinner (Valentine's Event), at Gainesville Country Club. Social Hour: 6:00pm—Dinner: 6:30pm
- Monday, 2 May — Cinco de Mayo Dinner at Mexico Lindo Restaurant. Social Hour: 6:00pm—Dinner: 6:30pm
- Monday, 6 June — Joint Member/Spouse and Rotary Luncheon — Napolitano's. Social Hour 11:30 Lunch at Noon. Sheriff Sadie Darnell
- July/August— no events.
- Thursday, 6 October — Joint Member/Spouse Luncheon — at *Gainesville Country Club*. *Social Hour 11:30; Lunch an noon. Lt Gen John M LeMoyne*
- Friday, 11 November— Veteran's Day Picnic, at Ginnie Springs at 2:30pm
- Thursday, 15 December—Holiday Dinner, at Gainesville Country Club. Social Hour: 6:30pm— Dinner: 7pm

Military Officer's Wives (MOW) 2011

Social Hour 11:30am— Lunch 12pm

- Tuesday, 25 January— Military Officers Wives (MOW) Luncheon-Gainesville Country Club [Fisher House Presentation]
- Tuesday, 22 March — Military Officers Wives (MOW) Luncheon—Gainesville Country Club
- Tuesday, 24 May — Military Officers Wives (MOW) Luncheon—Gainesville Country Club (Cancelled)
- Tuesday, 25 October — *Military Officers Wives (MOW) Luncheon—Gainesville Country Club*

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