

## **Open Letter to All Texas MOAA Members:**

There are almost 22,000 Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) members in Texas - a force to be reckoned with on the National and state level scene. What many MOAA members in TX may not know is that we also have a very active Texas Council of Chapters with 27 chapters and more than 4,000 chapter members – the third largest council in MOAA's chapter system. The TCC is active in support of MOAA national objectives and in state level veteran's issues. Many of our chapters are also doing great things in their local communities, providing support to JROTC and ROTC programs, veteran's homes and VA hospitals and helping wounded warriors.

Those of us here in the TCC have a full plate the next two years in order to build off the substantial National and state level progress achieved by previous council leaders . MOAA is about folks like us and we need to do all we can to enhance the lives of those uniformed personnel across the seven uniformed services and all currently serving Regular/Reserve/National Guard members and surviving spouses and children. We can do this through the one thing we do best - advocacy on military "people" issues.

If you are a member of a chapter already, thank you. If not, we hope that you will stop by your local chapter and see what they are doing. You'll see people like you working shoulder to shoulder to make a difference. Find a chapter near you by going to our website at [texas-moaa.org](http://texas-moaa.org). Then join the chapter and have a say in what happens to your military benefits and be in a position to give back to your community. Many critical issues related to our military benefits are now being debated in Washington – with health care in forefront. We can influence the action, but we need your help.

The TCC leadership team from 2008 – 2009 remains virtually intact for 2010 – 2011. We plan to build on the good works of this experienced leadership team. I'd like to introduce you to some of the key players at the council level. LTC Jim Snow USA Ret, is taking on Membership as his prime area of concern. COL Dave Briggs USA Ret, will focus on National legislative issues while MAJ Jim Cunningham USA Ret, will concentrate on state level issues. Last year Jim organized a state level version of MOAA's very successful Storming the Hill initiative at the TX state capitol in Austin. Many in the state benefited from Jim's stewardship and advocacy in the 81<sup>st</sup> Session of the Texas Legislature in 2009. Progress was made on the Interstate Educational Compact for children of active duty members, disabled veterans property tax exemption implementation, Veterans Cash scratch-off lottery to fund revenues, Hazelwood educational benefits for veteran's legislation clean up, and more. Col David Patrick USAF Ret, our Secretary, will also act as facilitator in the development of ideas and plans emerging from the floor of our meetings. Our Treasurer Louraine Robertson and yours truly will be working on plans to develop sources of revenue for TCC.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Qtr 2010 council meeting in Tyler, TX, February 12 – 13, hosted by the Rose Capital Chapter, will include a new meeting format - a quick two hour business meeting Friday afternoon to unveil the brand new TCC Operational Plan, January 2010. This is a new way of doing business for the council – you can see a copy of the plan on the web at [texas-moaa.org](http://texas-moaa.org). On Saturday morning, there will be a working session to develop thoughts coming up from the grass roots level to help strengthen chapters in membership recruiting and fund raising. Generating non-dues income for our council and chapters to offset the expenses incurred in running effective chapters is a major issue requiring some new ideas.

MOAA's President, Vice Admiral Norb Ryan USN Ret, will be our Friday night dinner speaker. He will also be joining us in discussions on Saturday.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr TCC meeting will be telephonic and seek to follow up on the first and lay the ground work for 3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr's on site meeting which will focus on providing organization for our 2011 state level legislative advocacy effort. The 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr 2010 meeting will be a tele-conference to bridge state legislative planning and actual advocacy.

We need your support. Please, join a chapter and urge your chapter affiliate with TCC if it has not already done so. If you are interested in forming a new chapter, we'll come to you to help, so just let us know. For

what it's worth, having fun and working hard to advance military people issues are not mutually exclusive - we can do both at the same time.

We are always open to your ideas and suggestions. Contact us through the TCC website at [texas-moaa.org](http://texas-moaa.org).

MAJ Ed Stone USA Ret  
President, Texas Council of Chapters