

MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTER



UPCOMING MEETINGS/SPEAKERS

January 2025: Bell County Sheriff, Bill Cooke

February: Julie Mendez, Ft. Cavazos USO Center Operations Manager

March: TBA

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 5, 2025: CenTex MOAA Social @ Johnny's Steaks and BBQ, Salado, TX. 18:30 start time.

September 12, 2025: Colonel Jack Oliver Memorial Golf Tournament. Stonetree Golf Club, Killeen, Tx.

President's Postings—David Sage

Happy New Year! 2024 was a great year for CenTex MOAA and I look forward to more success in 2025. In 2024, CenTex MOAA was able to accomplish the following:

1. Jack Oliver Golf Tournament raised over \$27K.
2. Assisted UMHB in the establishment of the Staff Sergeant Felix M. Conde-Falcon and Lydia Conde Medal of Honor Endowed Scholarship. Our members coordinated with other community veteran groups, donated \$2500 of CenTex MOAA funds to the endowment, and assisted in raising other funds for establishment of a UMHB Presidential Endowed Scholarship. This scholarship honors fallen soldier and Medal of Honor awardee Staff Sergeant Felix M. Conde-Falcon. To date the endowment has raised over \$120,000. Beginning in the spring of 2025, a scholarship will be awarded to an eligible freshman or sophomore UMHB student enrolled in the ROTC program each year,
3. High School Scholarship competition saw CenTex MOAA awarding 3 scholarships for \$2500 each.
4. CenTex MOAA presents each newly commissioned officers at University of Mary Hardin Baylor and Texas A & M University-Central Texas a set of 2LT bars and ACU patch.
5. CenTex MOAA supported local High School and College ROTC programs by presenting 10 cadets a medal, framed certificate, and \$100 cash for demonstrating outstanding leadership.
6. Donated \$500 to the Panhandle Wildfire Relief fund.
7. Sponsored and hosted the 1st Annual Community Veterans Picnic.
8. Participated in the Bell County Memorial Day Ceremony at the Central Texas Cemetery.
9. Participated in the Belton Memorial Day and Veterans Day Ceremonies. Acquired bricks for the City of Belton's Patriot Way for: LTC Bill Siever, Maj Robert Kirkpatrick, and Capt John Biggerstaff
10. Participated in the Fort Cavazos Retiree Appreciation Day (RAD) Health Fair.

2025 is looking like another busy year. This year's goals and activities include the following:

1. Improve membership and increased active participation.
 - a. CenTex MOAA will focus on increasing our membership. For those that have not paid this year's dues please do so. Additionally, invite someone who you think would be interesting in joining to attend a luncheon and provide them information to sign up, i.e. dues. (See below)
 - b. We also need to increase our volunteers and activity participation. If you can and want to, please contact me at hooksage@yahoo.com and I'll get you involved.
 - c. CenTex MOAA Dues: Reminder that we need your dues. You can pay your dues on the MOAA National system, please make sure you identify that you want to pay your dues for the CenTex MOAA chapter. <https://www.moaa.org/content/chapters-and-councils/chapter-recruitingx/recruiting-materials/online-chapter-membership-dues-join-and-renewal/>

FROM MOAA.ORG "ASK OUR EXPERTS":

Covering a variety of topics, MOAA's experts provide a wealth of information to help you navigate life during and after service. Explore our top areas to find the answers you're looking for. MOAA PREMIUM and LIFE member have access to all our experts' content. Sample topics:

CAREER TRANSITION

TRICARE

FINANCIAL EDUCATION

EARNED BENEFITS

VA BENEFITS

WWW.MOAA.ORG



OCTOBER MEETING

Many thanks to CenTex Chapter member Donna Fore for her recounting of the events at the Pentagon on 9/11, 2001. She was serving at the Pentagon that day, and we're grateful for her remembrances and reminder of tragedy, heroism and bravery on that day.



President's Postings (continued):

2. CenTex MOAA Social. We are planning to host a social on 5 April 2025 @ 1830, at Johnny's Steaks & BBQ in Salado. Invitations will be sent to each member via email with more details. The purposes of the social will be:
 - a. Allow those that have problems attending monthly luncheon to attend,
 - b. Kick off of the golf tournament fund raising, recognizing last year's sponsors and showing potential sponsors what their sponsorship supports.
3. CenTex MOAA Jack Oliver Golf Tournament. Our 2025 annual golf tournament is scheduled for 12 Sep 25 at Killeen's Stonetree Golf Course. If you're interesting is assisting or sponsoring next year's golf tournament, please contact me (hooksage@yahoo.com).
4. CenTex MOAA Community Veterans Picnic. We are currently planning to host the 2d Annual Veterans Picnic 17 May 25. Jeff Davison is leading the effort. If you want to assist or for more information contact Jeff Davison (harleyds2@yahoo.com)
- 5 Continue to assist UMHB by raising additional funds for the Staff Sergeant Felix M. Conde-Falcon and Lydia Conde Medal of Honor Endowed Scholarship.
- 6 Present each newly commissioned officer at University of Mary Hardin Baylor and Texas A & M University-Central Texas a set of 2LT bars and a ACU patch.
- 7 Support local High School and College ROTC programs by presenting medals to Cadets for demonstrating outstanding leadership.
- 8 Monthly luncheons on the 3rd Friday of each month. from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM at the Lions Den, [5100 Trimmier Road, Killeen, TX](http://centexmoaa.org). Please RSVP at [http://centexmoaa.org/](http://centexmoaa.org)



SSG FELIX CONDE-FALCON MEDAL OF HONOR ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP DEDICATION CEREMONY NOVEMBER 16, 2024 UNIVERSITY OF MARY HARDIN BAYLOR



SSG Conde's children, Richard and Jeannie (Holland) stand in front of their father's Medal of Honor Memorial Wall at UMHB



CenTex MOAA check presentation at halftime of UMHB football game. We donated \$7500.00 to the SSG Felix Conde Endowed Scholarship fund.



Dick Archer, CenTex MOAA President Emeritus, with SSG Felix Conde's children and UMHB Student Foundation director.



UMHB Cadets and SSG Conde-Falcon's children, Jeannie Holland and Richard "Rico" Conde in front of Medial of Honor Memorial display.



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE—PAT CHRIST

A new session of the Texas Legislature begins on 14 January 2025. Incoming lawmakers took advantage of the pre-filing period to submit over 2500 bills. Of those, 61 are related to military and Veteran issues. You can find a list of the 61 bills at this link

- <https://www.capitol.state.tx.us/Reports/Report.aspx?ID=subject&LegSess=89R&code=I0535>

Our Chapter, along with others from the MOAA Texas Council of Chapters will bring our voices to Austin on Monday, March 31, 2025, for our annual state advocacy event. In preparation for the event, the TCC has agreed on 3 policy focus areas and will support all bills that fall into those areas.

Support efforts to Improve the quality of life of vulnerable Veterans and surviving spouses in Texas

- ❖ Support affordable housing initiatives
- ❖ Support expansion of reasonably priced child-care for active-duty, reserve, and Veteran families
- ❖ Support apprenticeship and intern programs for transitioning servicemembers and Veterans
- ❖ Provide relief to cities law disproportionately affected by the granting of ad valorem tax relief to disabled veterans.

Improve access to care in areas with mental health workforce shortages

- ❖ Purposefully build cohorts of trained and effective certified peer specialists who can anchor community resource and wellness centers
- ❖ Promote upstream suicide prevention activities to reduce numbers of Veterans in crisis – build resiliency through connectedness
- ❖ Support continued increase of professional compacts for clinical social workers
- ❖ Support ONLY evidenced-based alternative therapies for Veteran mental health conditions

Maintain the viability of DOD installations and ranges

Military Spouse Employment and Economic Opportunities

- ❖ Improving Childcare options for military families
- ❖ Defining Armed Forces in State Policy
- ❖ Maintain municipal support for Veteran Property Tax Exemptions by ending unfunded mandates

On 22 Mar 2025 the TCC will conduct a Zoom meeting to Finalize teams and actions for the trip to Austin. There will also be a meeting on 30 March in Austin to prepare for the visit to the Legislature at the State Capital.

Anyone interested in participating in this Advocacy effort please contact: Pat Christ, Legislative Chair for our Chapter, phone 254-681-5235, email pchrist1010@gmail.com. This effort normally takes a one-night hotel stay in Austin, however, since we are close to Austin, you can do it without staying in Austin. It will require driving to Austin twice.



AWARDS, SCHOLARSHIPS & COMMISSIONINGS NEWS

CenTex MOAA 2025 Scholarship and ROTC/JROTC Leadership Medal Announcement

A letter announcing our 2025 ROTC Scholarship Competition will be sent to a number of school district points of contact the week of 13 January 2025. Since our scholarship competition is open to ANY graduating senior in our “local” area whether they are graduating from a public, private, or home-school program, it is impossible for me to cover ALL of the bases. Our local area is roughly defined as Georgetown on the south, Temple on the north, and Lampasas on the west. The eastern boundary would include those communities just to the east of I-35. I will be sending announcement letters to the following districts/schools: Temple ISD, Belton ISD, Salado ISD, Georgetown ISD, Florence ISD, Killeen ISD, Copperas Cove ISD, Lampasas ISD, Gatesville ISD, Holy Trinity High School and Central Texas Christian School.

If you know of any interested schools or students that are not listed, please share the application information below. All application packages must be received by me in electronic format NL 10PM, 21 April 2025 at wnance@hot.rr.com. I prefer that it be an email with four attachments:

1,2,3 are the first three below and 4 included with the essay which will be attachment 4.

1. Transcript of all grades through Fall Semester senior year (need not be official)
2. Listing of all extracurricular activities including leadership and any employment
3. Letter of recommendation from teacher, counselor, or JROTC instructor
4. Contact information (phone, mailing, and email)
5. 750-1500 word essay on the topic “Why I want to serve as an officer in the US Military”

In addition to our scholarships, we will be awarding ROTC/JROTC Leadership Medals accompanied by a stipend of \$100 cash for each recipient. These will be presented at ROTC/JROTC Award ceremonies at each school (11 schools) in April and May. If ANY of you would like to present on behalf of the Chapter, I should start getting dates for each of the schools in March. Please let me know if you are interested in presenting at a particular school or are open to any. Each school is a bit different in how they present, but at most it is stating that you are presenting the medal on behalf of CenTex MOAA for outstanding leadership to Cadet Whomever. This is also a great opportunity to network with the representatives of other local Veterans groups.

Our final events will be the commissioning ceremonies for TAMU-CT and UMHB. These will be in mid-May, exact date TBD. This is a great opportunity to see the new officers begin their career as well as let you remember your own commissioning. Our chapter presents a set of 2LT bars to every commissionee at these two schools. If you want to attend, I should have information by our April meeting.

Bill Nance
CenTex MOAA Scholarship and Awards Chair