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March
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"Following the Spirit of Truman's Leadership in ROA"

2023

President's Message

By COL Michael S. Clarke, USA (Ret)

Fellow ROA members, we are in the season of several outstanding organizational events. First was the National Council & Leaders Conference in Washington, DC, March 12-14. During the conference, "March on the Hill" visits to our congressional leg-



COL Clarke

islators took place. It is an excellent opportunity to meet and become acquainted with our senators and representatives. This year former national President Lt **Col Don Stockton** and I led the Missouri contingency to visits of our elected officials. Feel free to call me at 417-838-1655 if you are interested in participating next year.

Second is our annual convention in Independence, Missouri, on May 19-21. The didactic sessions and annual banquet will be held in the recently remodeled Harry S Truman Library and Museum. President Truman's grandson has been invited to be the dinner guest speaker.

In addition, an expert speaker on the recent major changes in the Survivor Benefit Plan will be present. This will be of importance to many of our older members. The topic of military burial benefits will be clarified. This annual meeting falls on National Armed Forces Day.

Thirdly, the CIOR (Confederation Interallied of Reserve Officers) meets in Helsinki, Finland, on June 25-30, 2023. In addition to military topics, the agenda has many enjoyable social functions and tours.

The experienced staff of our ROA headquarters in the Minuteman Memorial Building, excellently located in Washington, D.C., continues to promote and protect the rights of Reservists. Legislation pertinent to today's Reservists, both active and retired, is constantly before Congress and is monitored carefully by the ROA staff. If our MOROA members travel to D.C., a visit to our ROA headquarters should be included in their itinerary. The Henry J. Reilly Scholarship application round is The applicant portal link is https:// open. aim.applyISTS.net/ROA/ Deadline for a completed application is May 4, 2023.

ROA Leadership Conference Summarv

By Lt Col Donald Stockton, USAF (Ret)

Department President COL Michael Clarke and Past Department and Past National President Lt Col Don Stockton attended the National Council and Leader's Conference in Washington D.C., 12-14 March. Office calls were completed with 4 Missouri members of congress including Senators Josh Hawley and Eric Schmitt plus Representatives Samuel Graves, District 6 and Eric Burlison, District 7.



ROA Members attending the 2023 Leader's Conference

MOROA prepares a biennial Report to Congress that is delivered to each of our Missouri members of

congress in their Washington D.C. offices. Our report summarizes the reserve component footprint and economic impact in Missouri which is comprised of more than 18,000 members of the Reserve and Guard.

This year, we have identified eight issues and concerns of Missouri reserve component members. We also provide recommendations for DOD policy changes to be consid-



changes to be consid-(Continued on page 3)



ANNUAL DEPARTMENTS OF MISSOURI AND KANSAS CONVENTION



www.MissouriROA.org

Drury Inn and Suites Kansas City Independence ~ 20300 East 42nd Street~ Blue Springs, MO 64015~MAY 19-21, 2023

This spring we are going to the Drury Inn and Suites in Blue Springs, Missouri just east of Kansas City. For the first time we are combining the Departments of Missouri and Kansas conventions and continuing to celebrate ROA's Centennial as we move forward into the second century of service. We will remember Harry Truman's part in the founding of ROA in 1922 and his signing of the ROA congressional charter as president in 1950. We are also celebrating National Armed Forces Day on May 20 at the Truman Presidential Library and Museum, where we will hold our meetings that day.

Room rate at the Drury Inn is \$162 King, \$171 two Queens. The rate includes complimentary hot breakfasts, plus complimentary evening drinks and snacks. ROA group social time in the hotel will be 1730 to 1900 on Friday and Saturday. Primary room nights are Friday and Saturday, the rate is also available for Thursday and Sunday. To make reservations on-line, go to www.druryhotels.com, enter Reservations group #10045619. Or call 800-325-0720 Reservations group No. 10045619 GROUP RATE CUT OFF IS APRIL 28. Invited speakers are US congressmen Mark Alford, MO Dist.4, Emanuel Cleaver, MO Dist. 5, Clifton Truman Daniel, oldest grandson of Harry Truman and Dr. Kurt Graham, Director Truman Library. In addition, we are inviting area unit commanders to participate in a senior-leaders panel discussion on Saturday morning. Plus, we will have a very special guest speaker, Missouri National Guard Captain Harry Truman dressed in WWI army uniform talking about his service and 1918 war time experiences in France during the Great War.

AGENDA

Friday 1730~Hospitality and social time at the Drury Inn.

Saturday 0700~Breakfast at the Drury Inn 0830~Opening session at the Truman Museum and self-guided museum tours for families 1100~Department and Service Section Meetings 1200~Lunch in the Library's Whistle Stop Room 1300-1500~Presentations remembering and honoring Harry S. Truman 1500~Self Guided Museum Tours 1730~Reception at the Drury Inn 1830~Banquet Sunday 0900~Closing session at the Drury Inn



TRUMAN LIBRARY

MO/KSROA CONVENTION REGISTRATION May 19-21, 2023 Due by May 10, 2023

Convention Registration and Luncheon are FREE for drilling 01-03, W1 & W2 and E1-E6. Complete the following information request and mail with your check (payable to Missouri ROA) to: Col Bob Shankel, 100 Knox Drive, Overland Park, KS 66212-5338

Service Branch:	Rank/Grade	ROA I	ROA Department/Chapter #:	
Address:	205	0.57	-	-
City:		State: Z	Zip:	
Phone:		E-mail:	E-mail:	
Spouse/Guest:		de la companya de la		
Children or Other Guests:				
Registration Fee:	\$40.00	X # registering		\$
Saturday Luncheon:	\$20.00	X # attending		\$
Saturday Banquet Dinner:	\$40.00	X # attending		\$
			TOTAL	\$



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Convention meeting attire is Service Dress Uniforms or Business Casual. Banquet attire is Summer Mess Dress, Black Tie or Business Suit. Advance convention details will be posted at: www.MissouriROA.org



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MOROA Transmitter

(Continued from page 1)

ered and potential law changes we believe congress needs to address. View at www.missouriroa.org

Issues and concerns that were discussed with staff in each congressional office:

1. Reserve members (especially USAR) recruiting and retention problems and potential solutions.

2. 442FW, A-10 potential retirement negative affect on AF close air support mission for ground troops.

3. Small business employer tax credits for a portion of wages paid to Reserve Component members.

4. Need to provide government provided medical and dental care for Selected Reserve members.

5. Need to decrease travel distance for RC members to be eligible for income tax deductions.

Keynote speaker was **Maj Gen Anne Gunter**, **USAF**, Special Assistant to the Chief, Air Force Reserve for Reserve Space Personnel Policy and Integration. She presented a discussion and options being considered for reserve component potential participation in and with the new US Space Force.

Matthew Schwartzman, ROA Director, Legislation and Military Policy reviewed items of particular interest in the FY 2023 NDAA. Four items passed into law are (1) Recission of COVID vaccination mandate, (2) Enhanced health benefits for National Guard members, (3) Government-provided Selected Reserve medical and dental feasibility study and (4) the Heath Robinson PACT Act, that expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits, Agent Orange, and other toxic substances. ROA led the fight on this issue and the President has signed it into law.

Schwartzman presented the 2023 ROA Legislative Agenda for the new 118th Congress. In addition, he highlighted 10 congressional bills of interest from the past 117th Congress that we are seeking sponsors to carry them forward to this new 118th Congress. The complete legislative agenda for this new congress may be seen at <u>www.roa.org</u> by clicking on the advocacy page.

Our Legislative committee will be contacting all our members of congress in the next 30 days and subsequently through-out the year about our "Issues and Concerns". All MOROA members are encouraged to contact our team with topics that they want us to take to congress. Legislative committee chairman, Lt Col Don Stockton, (417) 827-7075, Stocktondl@aol.com

ROA Executive Director, **Jeff Phillips** updated ROA leaders on current fiscal year operations. The focus was on the five core objectives that include (1) Increase revenue and reduce expenses, (2) Influence legislation and military policy, (3) Grow membership, (4) Improve strategic communications, and (5) Provide quality products and services.

ROA Executive National Treasurer, Tom Hueg described current work of the transition from our previous accounting firm to the new firm, Councilor, Buchanan & Mitchel (CBM). Current fiscal year financials are still in process with final reports expected in about 60 days. This FY budget is still forthcoming while we are currently operating on a cash flow projection that was approved this month by the National Executive Committee. Expenses have been reduced by a significant percentage from last year and projected income is increasing and may be supplemented only as needed from accumulated dedicated program funds. Also, national is transitioning to a new fiscal year beginning on January 1 and ending on December 31 each year. Work on the new FY budget will begin in August 2023 for Ex Com approval in September.

Missouri members of Congress

	8
Senator Josh Hawley	202-224-6154
Senator Eric Schmitt	202-224-5721
Congresswoman Cori Bush	202-225-2406
Congresswoman Ann Wagner	202-225-1621
Congressman Blaine Luetkemeyer	202-225-2956
Congressman Mark Alford	202-225-2876
Congressman Emanuel Cleaver	202-225-4535
Congressman Sam Graves	202-225-7041
Congressman Eric Burlison	202-225-6536
Congressman Jason Smith	202-225-4404

Survivor Benefit Plan Open Season

Reprinted from the DFAS Newsletter

If you receive a military pension and missed this announcement to modify your plan before December 2024, read this. Congress provided for a Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) Open Season in the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). The SBP Open Season began on December 23, 2022 and ends on January 1, 2024. As part of the SBP Open Season, eligible members and former members who are currently enrolled in either SBP or RCSBP may choose to permanently discontinue their SBP coverage. Previously paid premiums will NOT be refunded. For Reserve Component Retirees: If you previously elected reserve component coverage and are already receiving retired pay, the Reserve Component Premium deductions (for the coverage already provided to you while you awaited the requisite age of entitlement to retired pay), sometimes referred to as "add-on" cost, will continue. Reserve Component Premium deductions generally continue until your retired pay has (Continued on page 4)

Page 3

March 2023

(Continued from page 3)

been reduced for a total of 360 months, or until the death of the RCSBP beneficiary. The law generally requires that any currently covered spouse, former spouse or child aged 18-22 must concur under the 2023 NDAA Open Season. The covered party's signature must either be notarized or witnessed by an SBP counselor. Discontinuance requests will not be considered valid without these signatures.

What you need to do: Before submitting a request to discontinue SBP coverage, we recommend you and your adult beneficiaries review the DFAS webpage on the advantages and disadvantages of the Plan at https:// www.dfas.mil/sbpadvantages. The SBP Open Season 2023 Discontinuance Form - Provisional is available 🔸 for download from the DFAS SBP Open Season spefocus cial webpage at https://www.dfas.mil/ sbpopenseason23. Once downloaded, fill out the form, sign and date, and ensure all adult covered beneficiaries have their signature signed, dated and notarized or witnessed by an SBP counselor. Completed and signed forms can be submitted either by uploading through our ask DFAS online upload tool, via fax or through the mail. Specific instructions are on the 2023 SBP Open Season special focus webpage.

If you have questions: Please see the information and FAQs on our special focus webpage: <u>https://www.dfas.mil/sbpopenseason23</u>. It is important to note, any valid request to discontinue coverage generally cannot be reversed - you will not be allowed to reenroll in the Plan once you submit the Discontinuation Form.

Sincerely,

DFAS Retired and Annuitant Pay

National Councilman Report

By Col Bob Shankel, USAF (Ret)

Even as we celebrate 100 years of history, ROA keeps eyes focused on the future. The National Council and Leaders Conference was 12-14 March. Attendance was available in person and on-line. I attended the on-line sessions. Our Legislative Agenda for the 118th Congress is the principal guide for efforts on your behalf. The complete list is available on the <u>ROA.org</u> website but here are a few highlights.

- Ensure the Department of Defense and Military Construction and Department of Veterans Affairs budgets are fully funded; oppose continuing resolution(s)
- Deliver 24/7/365 medical and dental care for Selected Reserve members.
- Re-elevate and advance duty status reform.
- Certify incentive pay parity for reserve component members receiving hazardous duty and avia-

tion incentive pay.

- Extend tax credit(s) to employers of reserve component service and military spouses.
- Amend the Internal Revenue Service code to allow reserve component members who travel more than 50 miles to their drilling location to deduct non-reimbursable tax expenses from their annual taxes
- Establish a Department of Veterans Affairs Reserve Component Health Care and Benefits Task Force to modernize benefit(s) eligibility criteria and eliminate disparities between components.
- Ensure PACT Act implementation meets congressional intent
- Expand TRICARE Reserve Select eligibility to members of the Selected Reserve who are enrolled or eligible to enroll in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program.
- Align eligibility for TRICARE health coverage with the age at which personnel of the Retired Reserve begin receiving retired pay

If one or more of these interest you, get involved. It doesn't happen by "letting someone else do it". And numbers matter. Ask those in your unit to join. Have a great ROA day!

Adequate National Security

With the ever-present constraints on our US government's annual budget, a reduction target is often DOD's "discretionary" spending. Under this umbrella, our military leaders look for cost effective and innovative methods to still maintain national security. The Reserves Forces are the logical part of that solution with their "full up round" readiness at a muchreduced cost. Some pundits simply see the solution as reducing the total size of DOD to control costs. But to be able to fund essential missions and defense postures, the Reserves provide the "best bang for the buck".

Increasing, not decreasing, their numbers to take on more will help keep us secure. They have proven themselves more than capable, particularly during the high operational tempo of the last 20+ years. But, if budget issues necessitate more workload for the Reserves, the nation needs to support these citizen warriors. Leaving your family and civilian job for long periods is stressful to all concerned. Without proper pay, medical, family support, and employer support, some Reserve members will elect to leave. We need to keep them more now than ever. To help our Reserves remain strong, ROA will continue to fight for them for at least another 100 years. To use a popular phrase, "We got their backs!"

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Army Affairs

By LTC Matt Eddings, USAR

I hope this newsletter finds you well. It seems the past year has flown by. From an Army Reserve standpoint, we went from COVID protocol, back to ramping up in person training. There are several after effects of the COVID environment that hindered operations. That being said, it is evident that the lingering after effects of our economy, the supply chain COULD have a major impact of the Reserve Force's ability to make large scale movement.

During the summer of 2022, as units began to exercise equipment and maintenance problems arose from equipment not being utilized during the COVID environment. There was a significant backlog in receiving parts (either no parts in stock and or no ship date due to backlog in freight). This issue has gotten better in the last 4 months but is still not as streamlined as it was prior to COVID.

As local units began to schedule annual training exercises, often conducted in California, New Jersey, Indiana, and Virginia; significant bus transportation on the arrival side caused delays, to add to this, the

price of the bus transportation in 2022 year nearly doubled from previous years. Busses are used to transport Soldiers from airport of arrival to training areas and back.



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that deliver larger equipment and shipping containers full of unit training equipment to these exercises prices also increased, hindering our budget that is also used to pay for repair parts.

Flight shortages caused 2-3 day delays on already scheduled return trips. Many airlines were cancelling every flight for a single calendar day, the morning of that day, out of a single airport, making it impossible to re-book using a different time or city. (when rebooked the following day or 2, the after effect of amending Soldiers orders, employer conflicts after the fact, caused a lot of turmoil within the ranks).

It is hard to believe, but with all that has happened over the past 2 years, there were significant issues just ramping back up to in person training.

These issues and concerns are something our elected officials need to be cognizant of when voting on our behalf to keep the force fully funded and to also avoid these unnecessary "continuing resolutions". Please join us toward the end of the month for a Chapter Meeting and some fellowship time.

Naval Services Affairs

By CDR Ellen Duvall, NC, USN (Ret)

USS Lenah Sutcliff Higbee (DDG-123), the Navy's newest Aegis Guided Missile Destroyer will be commissioned in Key West, Florida on 13 May 2023. The Key West Council of the United States Navy League has the honor of leading the Commissioning Committee which sponsors the events accompanying the commissioning of the USS Higbee.

The ship's inspirational namesake, Lenah H. Sutcliffe Higbee, was the superintendent of the Navy Nurse Corps and the first living woman to receive the Navy Cross, for service during the Great War. She led the Nurse Corps 1911-1922 and was one of the Sacred Twenty (the original Nurse Corps) founded in 1908. This is not only a celebration of Lenah Higbee, but of military nurses in general and female sailors specifically. The Higbee crew is 15% female, and the ship's command master chief petty officer is a female sailor.

In 2028, the Navy hopes to have a catamaranhulled <u>medical ship</u> that its manufacturer says will have a top speed of at least 30 knots and at 24 knots it could travel 5,500 nautical miles.

The hull number of the Enhanced Medical Transport is EPF 17 and it is not yet named. There will be room for 28 crew and 50 medical personnel, three operating rooms, six intensive care unit beds, 12 recovery beds, 20 intermediate care beds, 30 light care beds, and seating for 170. It also includes, but is not limited to, x-ray, laboratory, blood bank, pharmacy, and sterilization services.

It will have one or two V-22 landing spots as well as platforms for transferring patients from watercraft. Construction is expected to begin in December 2026, with the ship anticipated to enter service 14 months later. The expected cost for engineering and construction is about \$330 million.



March 2023

MOROA Transmitter

Air Force Affairs

By Maj Brian Rutherford, USAF (Ret)

I spent my entire career (enlisted and commissioned) in the 442 FW/303 FS working on and deploying with the A-10, and I am also concerned about the Air Force's longterm and persistent lack of interest in the close air support mission. That having been said, the messaging and cause for particular concern is the lack of any apparent planning or consideration of a "follow-on" mission or airframe for the 442d Fighter Wing. I say this, with the caveat being I have only heard information from secondhand, albeit from "trustworthy" sources. Everything from the F-15, F-16 and F-22 have been mentioned...but none appear to be serious with a timeline in place for retiring the entire A-10 fleet by "2027/2028" - as the planning and logistics - I think it would be in some form or early stages now. As a retiree, obviously, I am not involved in any higher-level discussions that may be taking place, but the very real fear is that the Wing will be shut down or the promised "continuing mission" being exponentially smaller, without an airframe and even temporary only as the Wing is shut down and the airframe retired.



So, just to summarize, without a viable replacement, yes, the Warthog is an invaluable piece of our national defense. I have seen its importance and stood on the flightline watching her "fire shots in anger" within yards of our forward base's perimeter. I've pulled the chocks as we launched alert missions to support ground troops in dire straits and other times to "take out" high-value targets with extended loiter time over battle zones and combat capabilities that other aircraft simply do not possess.

Closer to home, however, the concern is for the 1,000plus members (Reserve, ART, AGR, active duty and civilian) who, at least as it looks now, believe they are about to be left without a mission - or even a job - in "3 to 5 years." These are Citizen Airmen who have answered the call every time, they left home for harm's way when our nation needed them. And from discussions with currently serving members, I can confirm that the uncertainty is causing stress, hammering unit morale and negatively influencing personal decisions regarding retention. And I haven't even gotten into the impact on the local economy. That's a concern that needs to be part of the discussion. I suspect there is already some data out there, but I will work a couple of additional avenues to come up with additional metrics.

Historic Milestone: 5000-Hours in the A-10C

By Maj. Shelley Ecklebe 442d Fighter Wing, Whiteman AFB

An Air Force Reserve pilot assigned to the 442d Fighter Wing made history in 2023 as he reached a historic 5000hour mark in the A-10C Thunderbolt II; one of only seven

A-10 pilots to achieve such an accomplishment. Lt Col Tony "Crack" Roe reached this milestone Jan. 31, 2023 at Whiteman AFB, Missouri.

Roe is also known for receiving the Air Force's fourth-highest medal for heroism in combat – the Distinguished Flying Cross with Valor during a



ceremony at Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri on Nov. 2, 2019 for his role during a mission out of Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan on June 5, 2008 supporting an Army resupply convoy southwest of base. This was his third Distinguished Flying Cross awarded over his career.



MOROA PATRIOT AWARD

The **Patriot Award** is given to members contributing the equivalent of their first military retirement check to the Department. It recognizes the member's leadership, support and commitment to the Reserve Officers Association objective of "providing adequate national security to

the United States" as highly commendable and in the spirit of a true American Patriot. The member may direct the funds to the contingency trust, general operating fund or a specific program/event.

> LTC Richard Carpenter, USA (Ret) 2006 Lt Col Donald Stockton, USAF (Ret) COL Glenn Wilson, USA (Ret) 2007 CAPT Michael Nolan, USN (Ret) 2008 CAPT Richard Kallemeier, USN (Ret) CW4 John Travers, USA (Ret) 2009 Col Richard Nelson, USAF (Ret) 2011 CDR Ellen Duvall, USN (Ret) CAPT Robert Eade USN (Ret) 2013 Col Robert Shankel, USAF (Ret) 2017

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MOROA Transmitter

Penartment Members In Memoriam

Page 7

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LTC Ernest Eddy	COL Glenn Wilson	CAPT Robt. O'Connell	Col James Pyle	LtCol Robert Shippee		
LTC Dennis Price	SEA SERVICES	CAPT Joseph Becker	LtCol Harold Vance	Brig Gen Mark Stogsdill		
LTC Paul Mulcahy	CAPT Arnold Weintrub	LT Ray McDonald	LtCol Harry Monroe	Lt Col James Britton		
LTC Ed Rice	CAPT Carl Fiorito	Col Leontone Meyer	Col Herman Zahn, Jr.	BrigGen Samuel Mitchell		
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LTC James Bahm	CDR Donald Riggs	LtCol Walter Conrad	LtCol Floyd Pinkston			

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Department of Missouri 9225 Cascade Ave., Apt 1118 West Des Moines, IA 50266



"MOROA Transmitter" Recipient of ROA's Benjamin Franklin Journalism Award and Sword & Pen Award

March 2023

MOROA Transmitter

Page 8

Calendar of Events

2023 MO & KS Department Convention, Drury Inn Kansas City/Independence, Blue Springs, MO 19-21 May

CIOR/CIOMR Summer Congress, Helsinki, Finland, 25-30 June

UPORFA Congress, Buenos Aires, 21-23 September

National Convention, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 28 September-1 October

ROA members living in Missouri who are not assigned to the Department of Missouri are receiving the "*Transmitter*". Those interested in affiliating with the this Department are encouraged to contact the Editor/





