



Middle Tennessee Chapter

A 2016 5 Star Level of Excellence Award Chapter



Military Officers Association of America

Web Site: mtcmooa.org

May 2017

Editor: Doug Minton

MOAA Monthly Luncheon

23 May 2017; 11:30 AM

"Sea Stories; A Memoir of a Naval Officer"

Lt. Gary Slaughter, USN

*Old Natchez Country Club
115 Gardengate Drive
Franklin, TN 37069*

Gary Slaughter was commissioned into the Navy in 1961, and served a total of eleven years from his Midshipman days through the rank of Lieutenant.

When asked about his Naval Career his response was *"First, being an exceptional naval officer is a complex, difficult, and often dangerous business. This is especially true for those who took their jobs seriously and worked diligently. Second, being committed to the Navy is like being committed to your spouse. Even if your relationship falls on hard times and divorce is the result, 50 years later you may still hold warm feelings in your heart toward that former spouse."*

At the critical flashpoint of the Cuban Missile Crisis when President John F. Kennedy and Soviet President Nikita Khrushchev were deadlocked in a geopolitical military stare down young U.S. Navy Ensign Gary Slaughter manned the bridge of the USS Cony. The date was October 27, 1962, designated by Kennedy's White House as "Black Saturday," when two mistrusting superpowers teetered closest to the edge of World War III. And while the world held a collective breath as to which nation's leader would blink first, Captain Savitsky, the commander of the Soviet Foxtrot-class B-59 submarine didn't flinch. Neither did Ensign Slaughter. Convinced war might already be underway, Savitsky had armed a 15 kiloton nuclear torpedo, and was determined to launch, while Slaughter, the USN communications officer, was under orders to interrogate the hard-boiled Russian atop the submarine less than 200 feet away.

Come hear how our speaker, using only the ship's signal light to transmit Cyrillic letters, International Signals Book codes, and Morse Code resolved the situation.

Lt. Slaughter will have copies of his book, of the same title available for sale at the meeting.

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Chapter Contact Information

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We appreciate you!

Each of us is involved in a multitude of worthwhile activities in the middle TN community, and no matter the level of your involvement it has great value. We get that and while we may not say thank you often enough, we are very appreciative of the time and financial support that you bring to a myriad of organizations in this area.

At last count by MOAA National there were 6,823 MOAA members in Tennessee; and whether you are a former officer, retired, a surviving spouse, or are still serving, each of us represents MOAA's values and aspirations when we volunteer or contribute in some way in the community. The actions of each of us makes a difference; and if all of those MOAA members are as engaged at the level that our chapter membership appears to be, we are a capable of being a huge force in the state.

So on behalf of our Board, thank you for all that you do in the community and most especially **THANK YOU** for your continuing membership in the Middle TN Chapter!

President's Letter

Well, it worked! With your assistance, the concerted effort of veterans around Tennessee and a comprehensive strategy, the legislation to provide property tax relief for 100% permanently and totally service-disabled veterans passed both Tennessee houses and was approved by the governor. Please read more about it in Kent Crossley's legislative report, but again thank you!

The spring awards presentations to JROTC and ROTC cadets and midshipmen have gone well and will be complete by the middle of this month. Seven MTC members had the privilege of presenting the awards and receiving the thanks of the senior instructors for doing so. I know they appreciate the personal touch the presenters made at each ceremony and the public sees the members of our chapter "continuing to serve!"

May is full of appreciation for military members, including all month as Military Appreciation Month, 20 May as Armed Forces Day (replacing the individual service branch days) and ending with Memorial Day. **This year our chapter's pre-Memorial Day remembrance ceremony will be on Saturday, 27 May at 10:00 am at the Middle Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery on McCrory Lane. If you haven't come to one of our brief ceremonies, you have missed a truly moving event in a beautiful setting and appropriate recognition of those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of their country. We say a few words about the meaning of the Memorial Day recognition, present a wreath for each armed service and participate in memorial honors, including the playing of TAPS, as presented by the NOSC Smyrna honor guard. Please join us for this year's event!**

As if all that is not enough, we will continue our mix of past and current military and security related perspectives with a presentation of **"Sea Stories: A Memoir of a Naval Officer"** by LT Gary Slaughter, USN, about his front-line participation in the Cuban Missile Crisis, at our monthly luncheon on 23 May. Then this summer's luncheons will include **"My Enemy, My Friend"** by BG (ret.) Dan Cherry, USAF, on 27 June, and then **"The South China Sea: Flashpoint between the United States and China"** by LCDR (ret.) Patrick Ryan, USN, on 25 July. What more could you ask for?

Please put these dates on your calendars and join us!

L. S. Cotton, Jr.
CAPT, U. S. Navy (Ret.), President, MTC

MIDDLE TENNESSEE CHAPTER
Military Officers Association of America
P. O. Box 50252
Nashville, TN 37205-0252



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Upcoming Programs & Events

23 May 2017; 11:30 AM

MTC Monthly Luncheon Meeting

“Sea Stories; A Memoir of a Naval Officer”

Lt. Gary Slaughter, USN

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27 May 2017; 10:00 AM

“MTC Memorial Day Observance”

McCrary Lane State Veterans Cemetery

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27 June 2017; 11:30 AM

MTC Monthly Luncheon Meeting

“My Enemy, My Friend”

Brigadier General (Ret.) Dan Cherry, USAF

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25 July 2017; 11:30 AM

MTC Monthly Luncheon Meeting

“The South China Sea; Flashpoint between the United States and China”

Lieutenant Commander (Ret.) Patrick Ryan, USN

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18 August 2017; 7:00 AM

“7th Annual Heroes Breakfast”

(Fundraiser for Operation Stand Down TN)

Omni Hotel, Nashville, TN

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22 August 2017; 11:30 AM

MTC Monthly Luncheon Meeting

“Annual Legislative Meeting”

Senator Corker, or a Military Member of his Staff

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21-23 September 2017

“Military Retiree Appreciation Days”

Redstone Arsenal, Huntsville, AL

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30 September 2017

“Military Retiree Appreciation Day”

Ft. Campbell, KY

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2017 MTC MOAA Meeting Dates (not shown above):

26 September, 2017

24 October, 2017

28 November, 2017

No Meeting December 2017

Legislative Update

Federal.

Budget - On 1 May, House and Senate appropriations released an omnibus spending bill to fund the government for the rest of the fiscal year. This is more than a \$1 trillion effort which includes helping boost the military. The omnibus includes a \$15 billion increase in supplemental defense spending. The president wants to increase FY 2018 defense spending by \$54 billion or about 10%.

VA - Fortunately, Congress extended the funding for the Choice Program beyond its current expiration date of Aug 2017. This program allows Veterans, among other things, receiving care from the VA to use outside private providers if wait times are excessive. Sec. Shulkin maintains the VA will not be privatized during his watch, but become an integrated health care system. This will provide increased “Choice” options, care closer to veterans homes and maintain lower costs for veterans. Sec. Shulkin emphasized suicide prevention is the VA’s top clinical priority.

State. We are happy to report the effort to pass legislation restoring the property tax exemption to \$175k for 100% permanently and totally service disabled veterans was a success. Both houses passed Gov. Haslam’s IMPROVE (gas tax initiative) Act which this legislation for veterans was a part. This was a multi-year effort which included many setbacks and legislative learning opportunities. This could not have been successful without the collaborative effort of many veteran organizations in TN coming together to form the Tennessee Veteran Empowerment team (TVET). Additionally, the hiring preference legislation to identify veterans as a recognized hiring group also passed.

The end of the 2017 legislative session should be mid-May. The House appropriations subcommittee should meet 2 May and Senate appropriations subcommittee 3 May to vote on other bills delayed because of the IMPROVE act. Much applause to Ft. Campbell MOAA representative Bill Summers and Middle TN chapter MOAA members who attended many of the legislative hearing to show support. Evidence shows this is critical.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/ COL Kent Crossley, USA Retired
Board Member, Legislative Affairs Liaison