

EAST TENNESSEE MILITARY AFFAIRS COUNCIL

October 6, 2016 MEETING SUMMARY

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

OCT 28	ETVMA's Sporting Clays Shootout Competition (Chilhowie Sportsman's Club)
NOV 2	Free Legal Advice Clinic for Veterans (Knox Co. Public Defender's Office)
NOV 5	5K Sharp's Ridge Veterans Heritage Run/Walk (Sharp's Ridge Park)
NOV 10	241st Marine Corps Birthday Lunch (Rothchild Catering)
NOV 11	ETMAC's Annual Veteran's Day Luncheon (Holiday Inn World's Fair Park)
NOV 22	Gold Star Families Memorial Monument Dedication (Cemetery, John Sevier)

STAY CURRENT: WWW.ETMAC.ORG

ETMAC BUSINESS SESSION

- **Welcome and Call to Order:** The meeting of the East Tennessee Military Affairs Council was held on Thursday, October 6, 2016, at the Knoxville Chamber. President Owen Ragland presided over the meeting. 59 members and guests were present.
- **Pledge of Allegiance:** Led by President Owen Ragland
- **Introduction of New Attendees:**
 - Alex Morgan, TNVETS United
 - Thomas Smith, American Legion Post 2
 - Brandon Pendergrass, UT Knoxville's VOLFighters (student organization)
- **Minutes of Previous Meeting:** The September 2016 meeting minutes have been approved as written. ETMAC monthly meeting minutes and flyers for upcoming events are posted to the website at <http://etmac.org/>.
- **Treasurer's Report (Steve Dillenburg):** Last month's ending balance was \$12,332. ETMAC wrote checks for \$2,590 (Knoxville's Chamber of Commerce). Made deposits of \$1,086. Membership dues paid in 2015 set a new record high of \$5,000. ETMAC's ending month balance is \$10,828. Annual membership is \$25 per individual, and \$100 for corporations/units/organizations. Annual dues can be given to Steve or Patrice at the monthly meetings, or can be paid online at the ETMAC website for a \$2 convenience fee.
- **Webmaster's Report (Barry Allen):** 71 users. 80 different sessions, from visitors who originate from the U.S. to Bangladesh and Croatia. 76% of users are between the ages of 18-44. 45% were female and 55% were male. 28.8% of users are viewing from mobile devices. Please send any info to be added to the ETMAC calendar to webmaster Barry Allen at barry.allen@yourvaadvocate.com

- **ETVMA Sporting Clays Shootout Competition (Tim Eichhorn):** Fri., Oct. 28th is ETVMA's Sporting Clays Shootout Competition at the Chilhowie Sportsman's Club. Three flights: 9 a.m., 12 noon, and 3 p.m. \$125/per shooter or \$500 for a team of 4. Sponsorships available. Lunch will be provided and awards will be given. 120 participants thus far. The Marines won the competition last year. Contact Tim at (865) 218-8408 or at teichhorn@rkcapital.com for more information.
- **TNVETS United (Alex Morgan):** Starting a pilot program for veteran's health insurance that would help fill the coverage gap for veterans who are not eligible to receive health insurance through the VA, and do not have access to healthcare based on their residential locations. TN House Speaker Beth Harwell created a health task force that would develop an alternative to traditional Medicaid expansion, and to TN Governor Bill Haslam's Insure Tennessee. Currently, almost half of uninsured veterans have income below the federal poverty level, and one-third have chronic health conditions. This program is targeted to veterans with behavioral health or a substance abuse diagnosis.
- **Announcements (Patrice Collins):**
 - [EVENTS]:
 - Nov. 2nd: A *Free Legal Advice Clinic for Veterans* will be available from 12 noon to 2 p.m. at the Knox Co. Public Defender's Community Law Office, 1101 Liberty Street, Knoxville. Attorneys will be available to provide assistance on issues such as veteran's benefits, consumer protection, contract disputes, estate planning, child support, personal injury, criminal defense, bankruptcy, landlord/tenant issues, and general legal issues. Call the Knoxville Bar Association's Office at (865) 522-6522 for more info.
 - Nov. 11th: The *Annual ETMAC Veteran's Day Luncheon* is Fri., Nov. 11th at the Knoxville Holiday Inn World's Fair Park. All 400 available seats are now sold out. Patrice said those with pre-reserved tickets can email her and she can send a link for you to pay online with a credit card. You will not be able to pay online at the ETAMC website. She also said if any reserved tables are going to have empty seats, please let her know as she has many people that would still like to attend. Patrice also thanked all the unit commanders for sending their unit nominee information. This year's luncheon will feature a guest speaker from the U.S. Marine Corps. Contact Patrice for any questions.
- **President's Statement (Owen Ragland):** Handouts are on the back table during the meetings. Please pick them up upon exiting. Owen also recognized Joleen Dewald at the meeting, telling her that ETMAC was glad to have her back. Owen also thanked everyone for paying their dues, as individual and corporate support continue to grow in the organization. Upcoming ETMAC elections are in December. ETMAC will be electing the president, vice president, treasurer, and Board members positions. ETMAC will also be replacing the secretary appointed position. They have appointed a 3 person nominating committee (chaired by Jim Mungenast) to bring forward nominees. If you're interested in becoming an officer or board member, please contact one of the nominating committee or let Owen know. New officers will start their positions in January 2017.

MILITARY UNITS UPDATES

- **3rd Regiment of the Tennessee State Guard (MAJ Karen Oland):** Awaiting communication on their personnel reorganization. Have drill on Oct. 22nd which involves an 8 mile hike. For more information on TNSG, visit <http://www.jointnsg.org/>.
- **119th Command and Control Squadron (Maj Chris Morin):** 5 days ago they had their new manning document take effect--138 personnel; they are recruiting cyber officers and enlisted positions.
- **134th Air Refueling Wing (Captain Stephanie McKeen):** Their hanger is undergoing renovation. The recent hurricanes diverted aircraft into the base.
- **278th Armored Cavalry Regiment (LTC John Bowlin):** The National Guard Association of the United States had their national convention last month in Baltimore, 4,000 National Guard officers attended. TN Adjutant General Max Haston was elected as Vice Chair of the NGAUS. Presidential nominee Donald Trump also stopped by and spoke at the convention. Their tank crew just finished an international competition in Canada, where they placed 3rd. Sergeant Major Lee wanted to send a shoutout to Honor Air, and said it was a wonderful event and a privilege to participate in it.
- **844th Engineering Battalion (SGM Josh Richardson):** 100 engineers returned from Germany. Currently planning support exercises both overseas and in the U.S.
- **Air Force Recruiting Command (MSgt Chris Robson):** Major General Garrett Harencak, who is the AF Recruiting Service Commander, reported recently that they brought in 30% more airmen than last year, and 33,000 new enlistees to basic training. They expect to increase these numbers even more next year. Also something new, is this is the first time they'll be offering \$2,500 mechanic bonuses. They're looking for aircraft mechanics and continue to look for prior service candidates, linguists and battlefield positions. They will have a mobile AF simulator ride at Clinton High School. They're having annual training in Chattanooga, and currently collecting door prizes. Please let Chris know if any organization is interested in donating a door prize.
- **Co D, 4th Combat Engineer Battalion (CPT Kevin Druffel-Rodriguez):** Thanked the Marine Corps League for their assistance in the Marine Mud Run. The Oct. 29th Navy Ball is sold out. They'll also be participating in the Veteran's Day Parade. Currently looking for a building they can rent to house their Toys for Tots sorting and distributing.
- **I.G. Brown Training and Education Center (Col Kevin Donovan):** Hosted 39 international students in Knoxville for their international program. Next week they'll host 100 new students. Projecting a 50% increase in Airman Leadership School next fiscal yr.
- **Military Entrance Processing Station (1SG Yveline Symonette):** Thanked Honor Air. It was a great showing from all the military services. 132 veterans participated.
- **Navy Operational Support Center (YN1 Noah Jaques):** Thanked everyone for their support in the Navy Ball this year.
- **Tennessee Wing Civil Air Patrol (Lt Col Dent Young):** Are ready to deploy to the coastal states to support with hurricane rescue efforts.
- **UT Air Force ROTC (Capt Mark Farley):** On Fall Break. Currently have 85 cadets. Are in the middle of high school recruiting, and have scholarships opened. Scholarship window closes on Dec. 1st. In the next week, their seniors will find out what their jobs will be. 15 cadets will be graduating this year. In November they will be having Career Day at UT-Knoxville and are looking for several officers to speak with their cadets about their career field. Contact Capt Farley if you're interested in participating.

VETERAN ORGANIZATIONS UPDATES

- **Air Force Association (Steve Dillenburg):** Steve 's 4 months of training for the Atomic Man Triathlon is over. He dedicated his training to Luke Caldwell, who had brain tumor surgery. Steve announced good news that they recently took Luke's feeding tube out and the recovery is going well. He has a hat he trained in which he'll be giving to Luke, and anyone is welcomed to sign it. Steve also introduced his replacement, Col Paula Penson, she is the local AFA chapter's new president. The AFA's Annual Brig. Gen. Walter J. "Bud" Bacon Memorial Golf Tournament, which is their annual fundraiser, is on Columbus Day, Oct. 11th. All of their sponsors have returned, but they need more golfers to participate. The event will take place at Royal Oaks Golf Course in Maryville, TN. To learn more about the AFA, visit their website at <http://www.afa.org/home>.
- **American Legion (Bill Frasier):** Organizations can register online at <http://legionknox.com/> to participate in the upcoming Veteran's Day Parade on Fri., Nov. 11th. Visit the UT Army ROTC Alumni site at <http://alumni.utk.edu/s/1341/utk/index.aspx?sid=1341&gid=2&pgid=7331> where they will post on Veteran's Day their first annual dinner. They have chosen 13 ROTC alumni to honor at the dinner. Tickets will be available.
- **American Red Cross (Jess Hernandez):** Install the Red Cross app if you have not already. Contact Jess with any questions regarding it or how to find it. If any units or veteran organizations have service projects and want to help the Red Cross, please let them know. They're focusing on inner cities and communities and will be installing smoke alarms. They have a list of scheduled dates you can view. Jess says every 10 years you should change your smoke alarm. They have scheduled pre-deployments due to the hurricanes. Deployment is from 1-3 weeks. Red Cross provides training and is in need of shelter workers if interested.
- **Ben Atchley State Veteran's Home (Doug Ottinger):** Thanked Larry Sharp with the Veterans Appreciation Program for offering to donate 10% of their new membership fees to Ben Atchley State Veterans Home.
- **East Tennessee Veterans Memorial Association (Joleen Dewald):** The dedication for the Gold Star Families Memorial Monument is scheduled for Tues., Nov. 22nd, 10 a.m., at the East Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery on E. Governor John Sevier Hwy. Tennessee Department of Veterans Affairs Commissioner Many-Bears Grinder will be attending. The next annual Medal of Honor fundraiser dinner is May 1, 2017. They are currently looking for table sponsors. Next year's dinner will honor WWI MOH recipient J.E. "Buck" Karnes, U.S. Army. April 22, 2017 is the 10th Anniversary of the Mountain Man Memorial March. 1500 participants is their goal this year. Visit ETVMA's website at <https://etvma.org/> for more information.
- **Knoxville Regional Veterans Mental Health Council (Freddie Owens):** On Oct. 13th will have a Vietnam Veterans Commemorative lapel pinning event at the East Tennessee Veterans Memorial in World's Fair Park, in which Knox Co. Mayor Tim Burchett also provided a proclamation. They will be on the Haller Hill Radio show on Monday to advertise the event, and on Tuesday, they'll be on WBIR-TV. Justice for Vets just returned from Nashville. They currently have 41 individuals in the court system. They had 17 individuals whose records were expunged this year. The Council is currently partnering with Covenant Health on hospice care for veterans. They handed out 50+

Vietnam Veteran Commemorative pins at the Tellico Biker Rally recently. Thanked Concord United Methodist Church, as they now have a rural outreach post at that location, in which 2 peer support groups are currently meeting. To learn more about the Knoxville Regional Veterans Mental Health Council, visit <http://tnvhc.org/>.

- **Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (Jack D' Araujo):** There are currently 27,000 guardsmen and reservists mobilized on federal active duty. They were advised that in FY2017 that number is expected to increase. On Sept. 16th, they had a successful flight for employers who rode on a refueling flight demonstration with the 134th ARW. ESGR will also be sponsoring 3 tables at ETMAC's Veteran's Day Luncheon.
- **Honor Air (Joe Sutter):** Flight #22 was October 5th with 132 veterans on board. Joe thanked MEPS, the Honor Guard, and the volunteers for their support. Flight #23 will be April 5, 2017. Visit Honor Air's website at <http://www.honairknoxville.com/> for info.
- **Knox County Veterans Services Office (Tom Humphries):** Oct. 10th is the day the 30-day comment period ends for the proposed presumptive disabilities for Camp LeJeune water contamination. Effective December 1, 2016, Tricare's Express Scripts will change its pharmacy contract from CVS to Walgreens. For veterans' services and benefits assistance, contact Tom at the Knox County Veterans Service Office at (865) 215-5645.
- **Marine Corps League (Eric Nash):** The Mud Run turned out great. There were almost 1,500 runners. Pistol Shoot is scheduled for Oct. 8th. The 241st Marine Corps Birthday lunch is Nov. 10th at 12 noon at Rothchild Catering on Kingston Pike, and is open to all. Reservations are \$10/person online. Also, the Marine Corps Reserve Association, which Eric is a part of, is holding an essay contest for grades 7-12 and the theme is "What Memorial Day Means to Me." 350 words or less. The national prize is \$5,000. Contact Eric for any questions at (865) 591-9088. To learn more about the MCL and for more event information, visit <http://mclknnox.org/>.
- **Military Order of the World Wars (Owen Haddock):** MOWW meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the Rothchild Catering and Conference Center. 11 a.m. for lunch and social hour. 12-1 p.m. for regular meeting. Membership is open to all uniformed services to include the Coast Guard, the National Health and Human Services, and the National Meteorological departments. Their last speaker was Capt Andrew Beal with US Army Recruiting Command. Their next speaker will be LTC Larry Sadler, U.S. Army, Retired. He is a former Green Beret. Owen wrote a recent article in the *Mountain Escapes Magazine* which featured the 58th Anniversary of the Order of the Purple Heart.
- **Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing (Steve Thompson):** Next year's Smoky Mountain Grand Slam Challenge Fundraising Banquet is planned for October 6, 2017. Steve just returned from New York from the Healing on the Fly event, which is another fundraising event. Project Healing Waters has a new CEO. Nov. 9th is their next fishing outing. They have completed 6 of the scholarships from the School of Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts. They're looking for a new program lead in Maryville, TN. Scripps Network built an art studio for Jessica Callihan. Steve gave Captain Stephanie McKeen a plaque and Project Healing Waters' hat for all she has done to support the PHW group. For more information on Project Healing Waters, visit <http://www.projecthealingwaters.org/>.
- **Veterans Appreciation Program (Larry Sharp):** A resource program for individuals and businesses who are committed to providing discounts, products, or services to veterans and military members. Go to <http://www.veteransappreciationprogram.com/> to post your business or to learn which businesses are offering discounts to veterans and

military members. The program also provides participating businesses with a decal to post on their door/window to identify the business as a member of the Veterans Appreciation Program. Larry will be attending the Paychecks for Patriots veterans' hiring event on Oct. 18th at Wallace Memorial Baptist Church in Knoxville, TN. He's also looking for 2-3 people who may be interested in helping with his program in the East TN area. Contact Larry for any questions about the program at (865) 603-1974 or by email at VeteransAppreciationProgram@gmail.com.

- **Veterans Heritage Site Foundation (Jessica King):** Had a recent Cleanup Day at Sharp's Ridge Veterans Memorial Park. Both UT and Pellissippi State students helped and they were able to get the park cleaned in 1 day. WBIR-TV was there. The concept of the entire park is complete. It's a \$15 million plan which will be presented to the City of Knoxville at the end of this month. It will have a memorial wall, a dog park, a children's wilderness park, a picnic area, and a \$10 million monument named Mt. Volunteer on the side of Sharp's Ridge, which will depict Tennessee military heroes. Sat., Nov. 5th they'll be having their first Veterans Heritage Ridge Run, a 5K Trail Run on Sharp's Ridge Trails, starting at 9 a.m. Register now. Recruiters can come free if they bring a team. They're also still looking for sponsors. This will also be their first year to participate in the Veteran's Day Parade. Go to <http://veteransheritagesite.org/> to learn more about the Veteran Heritage Site Foundation, or to join or donate.
- **Vietnam Veterans of America (Don Smith):** Present, nothing to report. VVA monthly meetings are held at the Red Cross Office on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 6 p.m. For more info on the Capt. Bill Robinson VVA Chapter 1078, visit www.vva1078.org.
- **Women Marines Association (Pearl Rich):** Pearl thanked everyone who donated to their yard sale. They made \$600 in fundraising efforts. Oct. 24th is the Marine Social in Etowah, TN, where they will ride a train together.
- **Joe Eddlemon:** Told a brief story about former President Harry Truman.

- ❖ To become an ETMAC member, go to <https://www.etmac.org/>. Annual membership dues can be paid online or at the monthly meetings. You do not have to be military/veteran to join, need only a desire to support ETMAC's mission.
- ❖ Parking validations are available for those who park in Market Square Garage during the monthly meetings. See Patrice for a parking validation.

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 3, 2016 at the Knoxville Chamber – 8:30 a.m.