

# ***Military Officers Association of America***

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***\*\*\*\*\****

## ***Heartland of America Chapter***

***\*\*\*\*\* January 2014 \*\*\*\*\****



***"Remember that warm, soft mud last summer?"***

***- Thanks to Bill Mauldin -Stars & Stripes***

***Come Hear the OWH's "Breaking Brad" Writer***

***-See inside of back cover for details-***



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# The Bulletin Board

Is the Newsletter of the Heartland of America Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America. Content is from members, MOAA internet mail, MOAA's Affiliate, and other military-oriented sources. Material used is public domain or attributed as to source and copyright.

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Lt Colonel Patrick Jones, USAF (Ret) Editor & Webmaster

Colonel Quinn Smith, AUS (Ret), Editor Emeritus

Volume XXVIII      Number 1      January 2014

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT



**We had a wonderful turnout for our December meeting. Thanks to our newsletter publisher and webmaster, Pat Jones, our evening began at 6:30 pm with a special choral presentation by the Sarpy Serenaders. Pat is an active member of this "barbershop" group and also served as the narrator in introducing the thirty minute medley of patriotic and Christmas songs. I had heard four members of the Serenaders sing the Star Spangled Banner a couple of**



**years ago at a Creighton Basketball game, but this was the first time I got to hear 18 members perform**

**together. When they did the medley of songs saluting the various Services, we were asked to stand as our service song was sung. The last half of their performance was holiday songs and we were all encouraged to sing along. (I have trouble carrying a tune so I lip-synched.) If one was not in the holiday mood when arriving for the meeting, I believe everyone was in the spirit when the Serenaders concluded. After thanking the members of the Serenaders, we began our meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.**

**We then asked Pat Jones to introduce his guests, Steve and Keiko Liewer. Steve is the Omaha World-Herald Military Reporter and had written the December 4<sup>th</sup> article, "Big Battle is brewing over move to rein in military pay, benefits." Steve's background includes stints as a reporter for both the Pacific and European version of the Stars and Stripes, an instructor at the Army Command & Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, and as a reporter for the San Diego Union.**



After dinner, we proceeded with our installation of officers. A former member of MOAA's National Board, Gen Paul Cohen performed the ceremony. The installation of Col Bill Fitzpatrick as First Vice President was done in absentia as Bill was out of town. Former Chapter President, Col Joe DeCarlo, stood in for Bill. We next installed three officers to serve from 2014 through 2016 on our Board. Major Larry Bradley and LtCol Dick Dolittle have agreed to serve an additional three years and a relative newcomer, Lt. Commander Brook Stafford has agreed to join the Board. We welcome Brook to the Board and to having "new blood" ideas.



As mentioned in last month's newsletter, a few of us attended the MOAA Annual Meeting in Colorado Springs November 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. I had the honor of accepting our chapter's 5-Star Level of Excellence Award from the MOAA Chairman of the Board, General John Tilelli. Last month, I had written that this was our 7<sup>th</sup> consecutive 5-Star Sward. But, I was wrong! Before this month's meeting I counted and checked the dates of the streamers on our MOAA flag. This was, in fact, our 8<sup>th</sup> consecutive 5-Star Award, going back to 2006 when Col Joe DeCarlo was our President.



Therefore, I asked Joe, Gen Cohen, and LtCol Rene Dreiling, my three predecessors, to assist me in affixing the 2014 streamer to our MOAA flag. Our chapter has done well in serving our veterans, our military, their families, and in informing them about the situation in Congress.

In the holiday spirit of giving, the three newly elected board members assisted me in distributing MOAA pens and small notebooks to everyone present. They were provided by MOAA National to promote recruiting and retention and I could not think of a more appropriate use in promoting chapter retention. We discussed a few current issues including the news that retired Colonel Tommy Garret, a Life MOAA Member, was selected by Governor Heinemann to be the State Senator representing the District 3 Bellevue area. Gen Cohen then briefly discussed the current National and State legislative activities. We then asked reporter Steve Liewer to describe some projects he is working on. He stated that he is completing a story of military commissaries (that appeared in the 12/15/2013 Sunday World-Herald) and is also planning a story on the conflict in Panama. He then answered several questions.

This is our final newsletter of 2013 and I want to personally thank our editor Pat Jones for the wonderful job he has done on this newsletter for many years. I also want to take this opportunity to wish all our members and families the very best for the holidays. -- Col Dan Donovan d.donovan1@cox.net 402-339-7888

**Defense Bill Reaches Finish Line**  
(from MOAA Legislative Update - 20 Dec)

The Senate cleared a final procedural hurdle on Wednesday, the 18<sup>th</sup>, to limit debate and ensure no amendments were brought forward for consideration so the Senate could make it home for the holidays. The Senate passed the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 (BBA) by a vote of 64-36.

The final bill includes:

**Military Pay Raise:** The bill omits a critical provision that would have guaranteed service members a 1.8 percent pay raise in accordance with private sector wage growth. Without that protection, the President's executive authority, transmitted to Congress in September, will set the 2014 military pay raise at 1 percent.

**End Strength:** The bill authorizes just over 1.36 million active duty personnel, a reduction of over 40,000 from FY 2013 levels.

**Executive Compensation Reform:** Caps private sector compensation on DoD contracts at \$625,000 and allows for the cap to be adjusted based on the Employment Cost Index (*why would congress allow defense contractors to see an increase of 1.8 percent, but cap military pay at 1.0 percent? It's baffling*).

**TRICARE:** The bill flatly rejected all administration proposals to establish or increase TRICARE fees. It also included a grandfather clause for TRICARE beneficiaries affected by the reduction in Prime Service Areas. Those who were removed from of TRICARE Prime coverage will now have a one-time option to remain in the program.

**Military Sexual Assault:** The bill includes over 30 provisions that strengthen measures to combat military sexual assault within the chain of command.

**Special and Incentive Pays:** Provides one year extensions to several special and incentive pays.

**BRAC:** Prohibits the Pentagon from initiating another round of BRAC.

**Disability Evaluations:** Requires the Secretary of Defense to review the backlog of pending Integrated Disability Evaluation System cases and outline steps to eliminate the backlog.

The defense bill fell short on many MOAA-supported issues. The bill **did not** include provisions to:

- End the SBP-DIC offset
- Expand concurrent receipt
- Expand Applied Behavioral Analysis TRICARE benefit
- Establish that career reservists with no active duty service are deemed veterans of the armed forces

- **Allow a special needs trust for survivor benefit annuities**

**These provisions, along with restoring full COLAs for military retirees under 62 will be among MOAA's legislative priorities in 2014.**

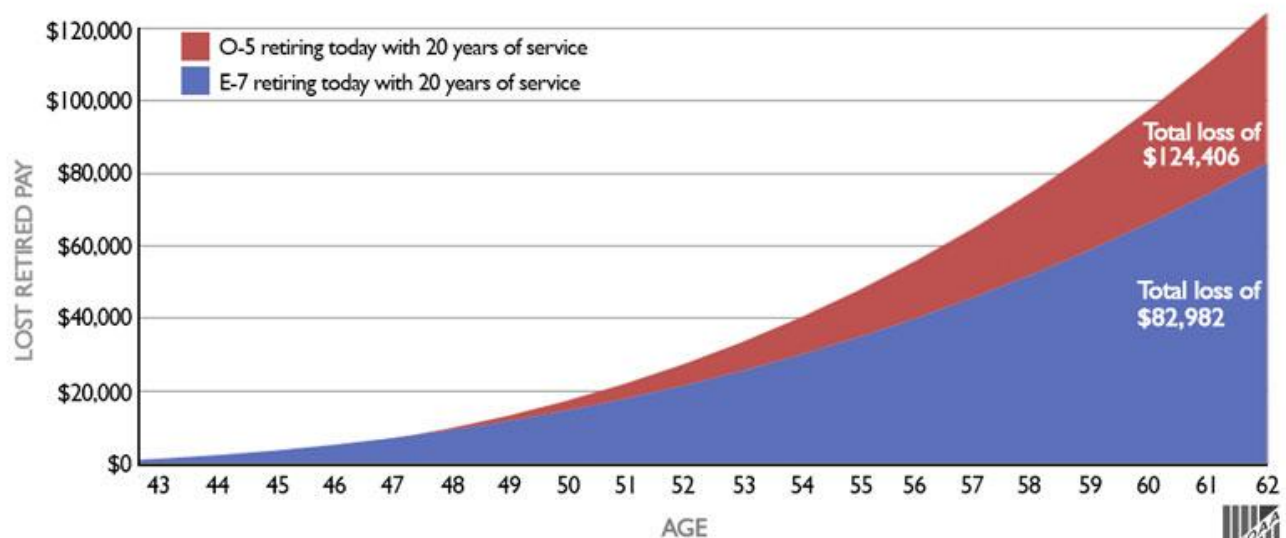
**The two year budget deal includes a provision that reduces working age retirees' annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) by one percentage point until they reach the age of 62 – and fails to grandfather existing retirees and currently serving members who plan to serve a 20-plus year career.**

**Because of the fast-track nature of the bill, many members of Congress were caught off-guard by the overall financial impact retirees would face.**

**Service members who retire at the 20 year point will feel the full negative financial impact of the provision by experiencing a near 20 percent reduction in their retired pay by the time they reach age 62.**

**For example, an E-7 retiring this year with 20 years of service would see an average loss of over \$3,700 per year by the time he/she reaches age 62 – overall impact: \$83,000 loss by age 62.**

**Retirement Pay Lost Under the Bipartisan Budget Act\***



\*Assumes 3% annual rate of inflation

Source: Military Officers Association of America

**Even though the bill includes a COLA "catch-up" clause at age 62 that recalculates the follow-on retiree's annual pay base at that time, the financial loss of the years between retirement and age 62 are permanently lost.**

**From the outset, the architects of the BBA insisted that the COLA adjustment would exempt disability retirees. After MOAA's review of the language, we discovered that *it contains no exemption for Chapter 61 retired pay or for certain survivors' benefits.***

**MOAA Hill stormers visited every senate office on Monday urging them to strip the harmful provision. On Tuesday, Admiral Ryan spoke at a press conference**

with Sens. Ayotte, Graham and Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) to explain the disastrous consequences of the retirement provision. Ryan stressed that MOAA did not want to prevent a bipartisan budget agreement, but implored the senate to find alternative funding to avoid disproportional cuts on the backs of military retirees.

The BBA passed on Wednesday with no amendments allowed to be voted on.

The agreement also includes a provision altering retirement contribution amounts for federal civilian retirees. However the provisions apply only to new civilian hires, grandfathering current civilian employees into their retirement system. *Military retirees were not afforded this protection.*

MOAA members launched over 188,000 messages sent to Capitol Hill in less than a week. Admiral Ryan stated, "We may have lost this round, but we have not lost the fight. The Senate Armed Services Committee leadership has vowed to take a look at this provision in January when the House and Senate return and we will hold them to it."

If not repealed, the provision goes into effect in December 2015.

### **TRICARE For Life Mandatory Mail Order Rx Coming**

(MOAA Legislative Update – 20 Dec)

Beginning February 14, 2014, TRICARE For Life (TFL) beneficiaries will be required to fill maintenance medication prescription refills through the TRICARE Home Delivery (mail-order) pharmacy system. Beneficiaries may opt out after using the mail-order refill system for a one year trial period.

The mail-order pharmacy system lowers costs for both beneficiaries and DoD. A 90-day refill of generic medication is free through the mail-order pharmacy, but costs \$5 per 30 day refill at a retail drug store. For brand name medications the cost is \$13 for a 90 day refill through mail-order versus \$17 for a 30 day refill at a retail store.

The mandate applies to maintenance medications only. Initial prescription can be filled at a retail store, and beneficiaries can fill up to two 30-day refills at a retail store during the transition.

Beneficiaries living near a military hospital or clinic can continue to fill their prescriptions there and do not need to enroll in the mail order program. Additionally, nursing home patients and those with other prescription coverage are also exempt.

TRICARE will begin reaching out to affected beneficiaries over the next month. You can enroll online or over the phone at 1-877-363-1303.

Individual waivers to opt out of the requirement may be granted on a case-by-case basis due to personal need or hardship, emergency, or other special circumstance.

## **Programs for January through August 2014**

(from Larry Bradley Maj USA (Ret))

First on the calendar, for January 15<sup>th</sup>, will be Brad Dickson, better known as the writer of the "Breaking Brad" column in the Omaha World Herald. Dickson used to write as a member of Jay Leno's staff and I know you'll be laughing at his witty presentation.



On February 19<sup>th</sup>, we will have the vivacious Sandy Sullivan. Sandi has a book entitled "Green Bay Love Stories" describing her unique experiences and memories as a friend and confidant of the Green Bay Packers during the Lombardi years. Sandi will also tell us about her experiences running to be the Wisconsin Secretary of State. Paul Cohen and I have both heard her talk and know you'll be charmed by her.

March 19<sup>th</sup> is open right now, but we might have a MOAA VIP coming then.

April 26<sup>th</sup>, we will be going to the Omaha Community Playhouse. This is one of two programs we have on a night other than Wednesday night. We will be seeing the really funny *Boeing, Boeing*. See the description at <http://www.omahaplayhouse.com/Post/sections/4/Files/web%20brochure.pdf>. As usual, we will have a backstage tour and catered meal beforehand.

May 21<sup>st</sup>, we will hear about the experiences of a man who joined the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne at age 15, parachuted into Normandy on DDay, fought across Europe, earned a battlefield commission from General George S. Patton, liberated a concentration camp, crash landed in a B29 in Korea, captured by North Koreans, escaped, recaptured, put into a Chinese POW camp in Manchuria, escaped, recaptured, repatriated, hospitalized for a year in recovery, was on the first C141 to Hanoi to get Vietnam POWs.

June 18<sup>th</sup> is not finalized yet and July 16<sup>th</sup> is open. Suggestions are welcomed.

Mark down August 28<sup>th</sup> next year for attending an Omaha Storm Chasers game.

This year will be the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day. We are helping one of the local high school ROTC units go to Normandy for the commemoration and we will have them report to us on their experiences there. If anyone has any particular memorabilia or special expertise about D-Day or other battles (Operation Market Garden, Battle of the Bulge, Battle of Saipan, for example) to share, please contact me. It doesn't have to be a complete program to be of interest.

The majority of the programs for 2013 came from your excellent suggestions. Please keep them coming for 2014. Call or email Larry Bradley at 402.321.4851 or email Bradlar1@aol.com.

## **Nebraska Legislative Report**

(by Gen Paul Cohen, USAF(Ret))

On December 11, thirtysix Nebraska State Senators gathered at Offutt Air Force Base for a seminar about the base and its various missions. The idea of Senator Bob Krist, the day-and-a-half session included briefings from a variety of senior leaders from the 55<sup>th</sup> Wing, USSTRATCOM, Air Force Weather Agency and others. The senators toured the base and saw the current construction of STRATCOM's new command and control center. Community leaders sponsored the event, including members of the STRATCOM Consultation Committee, Offutt Advisory Council and the Nebraska Military Support Coalition.



Presentations were made to the assembly that focused on community involvement, the importance of the base and its missions to the State and the challenges associated with keeping the base viable in the future. Mr. Ken Stinson, Chairman Emeritus of Peter Kiewit and Sons and a member of both the Consultation Committee and the Nebraska Military Support Coalition hosted an early evening reception, discussion and dinner. The group heard from Mr. Stinson, Lt. Gen. (Ret) Bob Hinson and Mr. John Hansen, president of the Offutt Advisory Council. A question and answer session featured input from the Mayor of Bellevue, Rita Sanders, Jim Ristow, president of the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce, and David Brown, president of the Omaha Chamber of Commerce. Senators remarked that the meeting was valuable in gaining a better understanding of the role of Offutt in the state's economy, and the importance of finding ways for the State to participate in efforts to maintain and enhance the presence of the installation. "I had no idea," was a phrase heard often following the sessions. "This was extremely important at a pivotal time," remarked one legislator. "We are all glad we came and will remember what we learned as we go forward."

Meanwhile, preparations for the upcoming Legislative Session are well underway. Senator Sue Crawford is sponsoring bills aimed at enticing non-resident veterans to use their GI Bill benefits in Nebraska, and modifying current statutes regarding parenting time while custodial parents are deployed. Licensing issues remain under study with the assistance of the Department of Defense Liaison Office and will be addressed as needed and time allows in a "short session."

### **MOAA's New Membership Model**

Effective Jan. 1, 2013, MOAA launched a new three-tier model of membership. The new membership model provides a new connection with currently serving officers; a better bundled package of services for those nearing military retirement and those in their second careers; and a renewed emphasis to be all we can be to LIFE members.

#### **BASIC Membership**

*This model expands MOAA's reach to younger officers currently in uniform by offering a relevant and compelling electronic experience (at no fee), and emphasizes that no one advocates more strongly for them than MOAA.*



### ***Features include:***

- **Promoting a strong national defense. MOAA will continue to advocate for a strong, top quality career force with compensation and benefits for military members, retirees, veterans, and their families and survivors that is commensurate with the extraordinary demands and sacrifices imposed upon them.**
- **BASIC members will receive tailored communications about the legislative issues that impact them and their families.**
- **BASIC members will have access to limited product, transition, and financial information services. MOAA will offer BASIC members additional value to move them to PREMIUM Memberships.**
- **Includes information on the importance of chapter membership and how to locate the nearest chapter.**
- **Anyone can join as a BASIC member, but members over age 35 are limited to three years. BASIC members either lapse to a Prospect or upgrade to a PREMIUM or LIFE membership.**

### **PREMIUM Membership**

***As BASIC members decide to remain in the career force or think about transition, our message to them will be to upgrade their membership to PREMIUM We will offer a better package of transition and other services to help these members navigate a significant decision point in their lives by:***

- **Providing life coaching with their second career search.**
- **Providing valuable advice on financial and insurance needs.**
- **Becoming their new unit of assignment in retirement. We wore their same uniforms and now work to protect what they've earned through a career of service and sacrifice.**
- **Building trust and confidence for further advice on life's transitions.**
- **Building on the idea of chapter membership as part of their MOAA membership experience. Premium members joining after Feb. 1, 2013, receive a voucher good for a one-year membership in their local chapter.**
- **Note: PREMIUM members must choose a one-, two-, or three-year membership term. Starting January 2013, one year is \$37, two years is \$72, and three years is \$95. The only other PREMIUM category is for Auxiliary members. One year is \$34, two years is \$65, and three years is \$85. Any age member can be a PREMIUM member as long as their dues are paid. Lapsed PREMIUM members downgrade to a BASIC Membership, which has age/time limitations.**

### **LIFE Membership**

***LIFE members are the regular commissioned component of the MOA. MOAA will capitalize on the activism of LIFE members by encouraging them to continue to serve in their communities by:***

- **Further connecting them to our council and chapter network by offering them opportunities to make a difference. LIFE members joining after Feb. 1, 2013, receive a voucher for a two-year local membership.**
- **Offers LIFE Membership benefits & privileges transferable to spouse.**
- **Note: Anyone can be a Life member at any time. You can access the LIFE rate schedule through MOAA's Member Service Center by calling (800) 234-6622. LIFE Membership has a separate Dual Military Spouse rate.**



Add your own voice to the fight!

**BASIC MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT**

Yes, Sign me up as a FREE BASIC MOAA Member

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Branch of Service \_\_\_\_\_ Rank \_\_\_\_\_

Retired  Active  Former

Reserve  National Guard  Auxiliary\*

Graduation Year (Cadet/Midshipmen) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

*To ensure deliverability of MOAA communications, please provide a personal email without a ".mil" domain if available.*

*We value your privacy. MOAA does not rent or sell its members' emails to third parties. If you include your email address, you will receive e-communications from MOAA as a member benefit Visit [www.moaa.org/email](http://www.moaa.org/email) for details.*

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse Name \_\_\_\_\_

Your spouse has access to *all of your MOAA member*

benefits. \*Surviving spouse of eligible officer

"Email address required for BASIC Membership Chapter Name

**PREMIUM MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT**

YES! Sign me up as a PREMIUM MOAA Member

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Branch of Service \_\_\_\_\_ Rank \_\_\_\_\_

Retired  Active  Former

Reserve  National Guard  Auxiliary\*

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City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse Name \_\_\_\_\_

Your spouse has access to *all of your MOAA member benefits.*

One-Year Premium Membership \$37 (Auxiliary\* - \$34)

Two-Year Premium Membership \$72 (Auxiliary\* - \$65)

Three-Year Premium Membership \$95 (Auxiliary\* - \$85)

"Surviving spouse of eligible officer

Chapter Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Rank \_\_\_\_\_ Service \_\_\_\_\_ Retired\_\_\_ NOAA\_\_\_ USPHS\_\_\_

\_\_\_Active Duty \_\_\_Regular \_\_\_Reserve \_\_\_Nat'l Guard \_\_\_Former Officer

Spouse's Name\_\_\_\_\_

MOAA Membership # \_\_\_\_\_ Life Member? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No

Brief Bio: (entered service: branch: assignment summary: Interesting career anecdotes:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_

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### May they not be forgotten:

The men and women who have answered the call and paid the ultimate price so that we and future generations could have the freedoms so cherished by human beings. We must ever be vigilant and prepared to defend our way of life against those who would deny it. Callous politicians, power hungry egoists, corrupt individuals, adversarial religions, and even our latest self-oriented generations pose grave threat to the preservation of what many take for granted. Every citizen should take a few moments from time to time and reflect on the benefits we have in our country. They should give thanks to those who have served and preserved our way of life.



Hopefully, they will also pledge to do their part to keep it so. -- pj

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**Heartland of America Chapter  
Military Officers Association of America, MOAA  
Dinner Meeting – 1800 Hours (6 pm for those retired a long time)**

**Wednesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

**Anthony's Restaurant (72nd and F Streets)**

**Registration and Social Hour Begins at 6:pm - Dinner at 7 pm**

Reservations are for meal selections only, and should be e-mailed to our central e-mail address or phoned to Ron and Sharon Russell. Please specify names of attendees, meal choices and include a phone number in case we need to contact you. **Reservations should be in by Monday night before the dinner! If you must cancel your reservation, please call Ron or Sharon at 402-297-4244 prior to 4:00 pm on the day of the event, otherwise you may be responsible for the cost of your dinner.**

**E-mail: [heartlandmoaa@hotmail.com](mailto:heartlandmoaa@hotmail.com)**

**Phone: 402-297-4244**

**Meal selections are as follows:**

**8oz. Top Sirloin w/ Baked Potato and California Mixed - \$22.50**

**Baked Salmon w/ Rice Pilaf and California Mixed \_ \$ 26.50**

**Cashew Chicken Salad in a Pineapple Boat \$ 17.25**

Payment will be collected in the party room. **A pre-made-out check to Anthony's is preferred.** Cash will be accepted but it slows down entry and causes lines. Thank you for your support of this procedure. Note: Prices include tax and gratuity.

**Program**

**Brad Dickson writes the "Breaking Brad" column in the Omaha World Herald. The column seems almost serious but is actually a humorous assessment of several recent news items. Dickson used to write as a member of Jay Leno's staff. You'll be laughing at his witty presentation.**

**Remember the expression, "The more the merrier?" We encourage you to help make our monthly meetings even merrier throughout the coming year with your presence. We strive to provide three things with our meetings: camaraderie, a good meal and a stimulating program. We'll do our best to provide the last two, but only you can increase the camaraderie we share. Please attend... we need each other! -- Bradlar1@aol.com.**

**Nonprofit Org  
Heartland of America Chapter, MOAA  
P.O. Box 1756  
Bellevue NE 68005**

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