



# KEYSTONER

## **Keystone Capital Chapter**

**"One Powerful Voice"**

# NOVEMBER 2014

The November Lunch meeting will be held on Thursday, November 20th, 2014 at the Park Inn Hotel on the Carlisle Pike. Our special guest speaker will be Rev. David Biser, the Dauphin County Historical Society's colonial re-enactor of John Harris, Jr founder of Harrisburg. He will provide historical items of the period as well as give us a glimpse of the life of Harrisburg's founder and early supporter of the Declaration of Independence. Lunch will be served at 12 noon in the meeting room and the social will begin at 11 AM in the bar area. Bring your friends and neighbors for an enlightening presentation of our local history. The lunch invite is at the last page of the newsletter.



Rev. David Biser has been portraying John Harris Jr. for the Harrisburg Historical Society for over six years.  
Photo by WHTM

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Lunch Invite

John Harris, Sr. was the first European immigrant to this area. He was an associate of the Penn family and he received a land grant as an inducement to come here. The Penns wanted Harris Sr. to establish good relations with the local Indians and to facilitate the settlement of the central and western portions of the Penn's colony. Upon his arrival, Harris built a house and trading post on the bank of the river in the area where the large, arched railroad bridge is today. He was successful in establishing good relations with the local tribe. In a few years, as more settlers began to arrive, Harris started to operate a ferry service to aid travelers during times of high water levels in the river. This was the origin of the Harrisburg area as the crossroads of the state. John Harris, Sr. continued to operate his businesses successfully until his death in 1748. He is buried across the street in the small, cast iron fenced area. Upon his father's death, John Harris, Jr. inherited his businesses and continued to operate them with success.

About 1766, after the end of the French and Indian War, John, Jr. decided that it was about time for his family to have a more substantial house than the one that his father had built. The old home's location by the river had meant that the family had to leave during the periodic flooding. From this experience, John, Jr. knew that the river had never reached the top of a certain rise of ground even during the worst floods. So he chose the current site and had the front section of the house built with locally quarried limestone. (Source: Historical Society of Dauphin County [www.dauphincountyhistory.org/mansion/mansionhistory](http://www.dauphincountyhistory.org/mansion/mansionhistory) )

## **Christmas Dinner – Park Inn Hotel**

**Wednesday December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7 PM**

**Patio Ballroom, main floor, Carlisle Pike**

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

#### **Point of Contact (POC)**

For information or if you need help for the Survivor Benefits Program (SBP) please call 1-800-321-1080

If anyone knows of an ill or recuperating chapter member please contact D'Arcy Wagonhurst at 717-766-7351. She will send a card from the Chapter.

# SEPTEMBER DINNER MEETING

The September dinner meeting was held on Thursday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at the Park Inn Hotel on the Carlisle Pike in the Patio Ballroom on the main floor. Our special guest speaker was Captain Jeffery T. Rathbun, Commanding Officer of the Mechanicsburg Naval Support Activity, Philadelphia Navy Yard and Navy Annex.



Thank you to First Vice President Keith Beebe for coordinating the speaker and hosting a great dinner. Seventeen members attended including two new members and their wives.

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

### State Veterans Legislation

Veteran's legislation passed by the state legislature:

SB 403 (physician recruiting and retention incentive program for the National Guard)

SB 923 (Military Family Relief Asst. for active PA military families – extension of law)

## **Part of Education Package**

**HB 1164 (Veterans Priority College Registration)**

**HB 1460 (protects money paid for semester when mobilized and to change W-withdraw on transcript to M-mobilized)**

**SB 1224 (Allows veterans living in a personal care home or assisted living residence to order medications from the VA mail order pharmacy and have them broken down into a daily dose.)**

**SB 1129 (Amputee and Paralyzed Veterans Pension amendment to define specific disability criteria, as defined by the VA disability rating system, to provide the pension only to those severely disabled and unable to work.)**

There were three other veterans' bills we supported but were not passed. One bill would require state agencies to consider military training and experience when considering qualifications for civilian certifications and meeting job qualifications. Another area where there is a need is working with veterans that do not want to go to college. Many veterans that start college can not take the pressure of attending classes, tests and being around lots of people. As a result they are dropping out college. The GI Bill pays for vocational training and many veterans may be better suited for that type of education where they can demonstrate learned skills and abilities and feel they accomplished something.

## **Federal Legislation**

### **Personnel, Pay and TRICARE Still in Danger**

Congress is on break for the elections but will have to deal with the Defense Authorization Act and funding the government when they return to Washington. It is expected that they will agree to pass a continuing resolution to continue funding the government at 2014 levels until January. A joint conference committee will need to be convened to reconcile the House and Senate versions of the Defense Authorization Act. The Senate bill is where the danger lies.

# KEYSTONE CAPITAL CHAPTER

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

**\*Fill in your own name, address, etc. and show deceased spouse's rank and service.**

Mail to: Fred Lovelace, 216 Maple Lane, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

# Drawdown: Cut with Dignity

By Col. Mike Hayden, USAF (Ret), MOAA Government Relations Director

Just over a year ago, I wrote a column insisting the services use all the tools in their drawdown toolkit before forcing people out of the force.

However, recent headlines have shed light on the Army providing pink slips to nearly 1,200 captains and 550 majors — several while serving in combat zones.

The Army is caught between a rock and a hard place. It is in the midst of drawing down over 120,000 active duty troops from the peak of 570,000 members to 450,000 by 2019. This drawdown is far from over — if you escaped round one, don't think you're necessarily safe in round two or even three.

And that number could shrink even further, to as small as 420,000, if sequestration is not “de-triggered.”

There is little dignity with providing pink slips to those who are in harm's way. Most of these troops and their families have only known service during wartime.

Following the build-ups needed for previous conflicts, Congress has provided the Pentagon with the necessary tools to reduce end strength — both voluntarily and involuntarily.

So why not use voluntary tools like Temporary Early Retirement Authority and Voluntary Separation Pay and drawdown the troops with dignity?

The Army is squeezing every dollar and reverting to the most cost-effective drawdown tools — reductions in force and selective early retirement boards and others involuntary means — vice those that would incentivize troops to volunteer to leave.

Our nation should not forget that many of these servicemembers have deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan multiple times.

These same servicemembers who have been told their performance has been nothing short of exemplary now will be sent packing as part of the drawdown efforts.

Personnel planners should focus on what's right versus what's cost-effective.

As a former recruiter, I can tell you the best influencer for a young recruit is knowing a veteran was treated with dignity on his or her way out of the service. On the flipside, a recruiter's worst nightmare is dealing with a potential recruit who knows a veteran who was involuntarily let go.

Voluntary measures and tools provide servicemembers with a choice, recognize their service and sacrifice, and allow them to leave on their terms and with dignity.

**The bottom line:** Treat the troops with dignity, and use the tools.

## **Troops Not Buying Compensation Reforms**

October 9, 2014

By Col. Mike Hayden, USAF (Ret), Director of MAA Government Relations

It may come as a big surprise to the Pentagon, but the troops are not buying its proposed compensation reforms. For years the Pentagon and think tanks have called for compensation reform to "slow the growth" of personnel costs.

This year is no exception. The Pentagon proposed capping pay for a second consecutive year (with four more planned) below the rate of private sector pay growth, significantly slashing the commissary benefit, reducing the housing allowance, and revamping TRICARE so that retirees and active duty family members pay more for their health care.

A recent [study by Blue Star Families](#) and Syracuse University's Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF) showed that an overwhelming majority of military members, spouses, and veterans were very concerned over changes to military pay, benefits, and retirement.

Key findings in the 2014 [Navy Retention Study](#) revealed that sailors are increasing concerned over declining pay and compensation. The survey showed that 80.4 percent rank the current retirement system and 73.9 percent rank pay and compensation as the top two reasons to stay in the Navy.

The survey found that sailors are more likely to leave the Navy “because of a perception of increasingly high operational tempo, poor work/life balance, low service-wide morale, declining pay and compensation, waning desire to hold senior leadership positions, and a widespread distrust of senior leadership, all of which erodes loyalty to the institution.”

These results should send an alarming message to Pentagon leadership, especially since the nation is still at war in Afghanistan and is increasing operations to stem the Ebola outbreak and to combat the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq.

Even so, top DoD and service leaders continue to obsess over cutting personnel costs to fund weapons...and invariably leave it to their successors to clean up the mess they made of the long-term force. Drawdowns of the past cut too deep and the current drawdown may be masking the true retention of those in uniform. Retention will be put at further risk by increasing the operational tempo while at the same time calling for cuts to pay and benefits.

Upon return from the elections, Congress needs to work seriously at eliminating sequestration. Arbitrary cuts to the defense budget have pushed the Pentagon into a corner where budgeteers choose hardware over people and readiness over pay and benefits. You can't have readiness without both weapon systems and those that operate them; funding is needed for both.

Between 2000 and 2010, Congress worked diligently to return the compensation package of the all-volunteer force back to an adequate level – now's not the time to reverse course.



**Can you ID our 1<sup>st</sup> VP?**



## PA Council of Chapters State Convention – Washington PA



State Council president Bob Gray gave a presentation on contacting state and federal legislators and how members can make a difference on veterans issues. Responding to MOAA national's legislative alerts by email and post cards in the magazine have a tremendous impact. VDM Norb Ryan Jr., MOAA President, stressed how important chapter members are to MOAA's Capitol Hill efforts. ADM Rayan said it is our members that make it possible to get in the door.





**MOAA KEYSTONE CAPITAL CHAPTER  
THURSDAY NOVEMBER 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Park Inn Hotel – Meeting Room  
Carlisle Pike, Mechanicsburg**

**SOCIAL - 11 AM (Legends Bar) LUNCH – 12:00 Noon**

**Speaker**

**Rev. David Biser as Colonial re-enactor John Harris Jr.**

**Menu:**

1. Blackened Chicken Salad with blue cheese crumble, candied walnuts, dried cranberries served with balsamic dressing **\$20.00**
2. Turkey Club Sandwich with chips and pickle **\$18.00**
3. Bacon Cheddar Burger of ground Angus steak with chips and pickle **\$18.00**

Includes coffee, ice tea and water (you may end up taking some home)

**-- CASH BAR --**

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**Event Invitation**

**MARCH 20<sup>th</sup> Park Inn Hotel 11 AM Social Lunch 12:00 Noon**

Enter menu number & price per person: #: \_\_ \$\_\_\_\_ # \_\_ \$\_\_\_\_

**Make check out to: Keystone Capital Chapter**

**Names of Members and Guests attending:**

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**\*\*Please Reply NLT Monday, November 17th to Host:**

**Robert Gray  
221 Fineview Road  
Camp Hill, PA 17011**

**Call if you have questions: 717-774-0707 / cell 623-8715**