



Lawton-Fort Sill Chapter

Superpower for the Soldier

www.LawtonFortSillAUSA.org

Quarterly Newsletter

AUSA Chapter 43601 - Fall 2009

AUSA National Convention-- *Awesome!!*

"Total excitement!" is how I describe the AUSA National Convention in Washington, DC, October 4-7. The Lawton-Fort Sill leadership turned out in force, and our reception was well-attended by the Army Leadership. Both present and past Fort Sill Commanding Generals attended.

The excitement continued at the regional breakfast where immediate past president, Anthony Williams, gathered up several Chapter Awards. The streamers awarded to our chapter are:

- * Greatest % Increase in Corporate Membership - 2009
- * Excellence in Corporate Member Growth - 2009,
- * Merit Chapter - 2009
- * Family Programs - 2009
- * Take The Hill Chapter - 2009
- * Institute of Land Warfare Honor Roll - 2009

All in all, it was a highly successful convention and our chapter was well represented as current chapter leaders were all present and active in convention events and activities. Our chapter's reception was awesome ... it lived up to its reputation. A great time was had by all in attendance.

During the convention, new ideas were hatched and our chapter should enjoy continued success from experiences gained at the AUSA National Convention.

The Chapter President's Dinner on the first night of the convention was excellent. General Martin E. Dempsey, Commanding General of the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), was the headliner. He shared his vision for the training of our Army in the future. He was very impressive and gave an inspirational speech. Our Soldiers are in good hands under his leadership.

Having never been to this convention, I did not know what to expect. However, it was like a family reunion, seeing so many folks visiting and reminiscing, while making new friends -- it was well-worth the trip. I encourage all AUSA members to consider attending next year.

Mike Brown
LFS Chapter, President



MG Dave Halverson, CG of Fort Sill, and LTG Dave Valcourt, Deputy CG of TRADOC and former CG of Fort Sill, renew old acquaintances and make new ones with Chapter President Mike Brown at the Chapter Cocktail Party during the October AUSA National Convention in Washington, DC.

Office Call With MG Halverson

On October 2, Nate Slate, Anthony Williams and Mike Brown briefed Major General David Halverson, Commanding General of the US Army Fires Center of Excellence and Fort Sill, about the Lawton-Fort Sill AUSA Chapter and our goals for next year.

Three major points were the thrust of the meeting.

One: The Lawton-Fort Sill AUSA Chapter is in a rebuilding stage.

Two: We have great volunteers to implement a dynamic plan as we move forward.

Three: We need MG Halverson's help to meet our goals.

Nate Slate informed MG Halverson about all our new programs, including the AUSA Soldier/Family Council and Operation Homefront Oklahoma. Anthony Williams explained how we are working to recruit new members from the Soldiers at Fort Sill.

We all emphasized our desire to help the Commanding General in any way through AUSA and our activities.

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CSM (Ret) Dennis Meyer represented the Chapter at the August 21, 3rd Quarter Awards Ceremony at the Patriot Club. Sergeant Armando Perlaza (A Btry, 2nd BN, 4th Field Artillery) received recognition as the 3rd Quarter NCO and a \$100 Savings Bond. Corporal Matthew P. Harvey (SVC Btry, 434 Field Artillery Brigade) was named Soldier of the Quarter and presented a \$100 Savings Bond. CSM Meyer captured the crowd's applause when he presented a \$500 cash award to Drill Sergeant of the Year for Fort Sill, Staff Sergeant Arron S. Barnes (F Btry, 1st BN, 19th Field Artillery). As CSM Meyer presented the award, he displayed five \$100 bills - then gave one \$100 bill to SSG Barnes and presented four \$100 bills to Sergeant Barnes wife!

Fort Sill Change of Command

On a field hallowed by the feet of countless Field Artillery Soldiers over the years, Major General David Halverson assumed command of the US Army Fires Center of Excellence and Fort Sill, on Wednesday, August 26, at the Old Post Quadrangle.

General Martin E. Dempsey, Commander, US Army Training and Doctrine Command, passed him the colors from Major General Peter Vangjel, outgoing commander, during the ceremony.

The Lawton-Fort Sill Chapter of AUSA had a strong relationship with MG Vangjel and looks forward to working with the new commander. Chapter members and citizens of local communities bid a fond farewell to MG and Mrs. Vangjel as he assumes duties as the Deputy Commanding General of Third Army/United States Army in Kuwait.

No stranger to the Lawton-Fort Sill community, MG Halverson,

with his wife, Karen, served as the Deputy Assistant Commandant, US Army Field Artillery School, starting in 2003.

Before his departure, MG Vangjel designed and installed a comprehensive "Fires Strategy 2009" plan to guide "Fires Center of Excellence" into the future. The Lawton-Fort Sill AUSA leadership is committed to assisting MG Halverson as he assumes his responsibilities.

Become a Member of the AUSA Team

1. Go to www.AUSA.org
2. Click on "Become an AUSA Member" on the menu on the left.
3. Type in "Lawton-Fort Sill" on the form as your chapter.
4. Include your email address.

AUSA Relevance: Building a Community Team

By Nate Slate, Chairman, Soldier/Family Council

Since AUSA began its quest to play a more relevant role in the Lawton-Ft. Sill community, much has changed. The AUSA Soldier/Family Council was begun back in March when the community's care providers were invited to sit down together to circumscribe their challenges. It was apparent, seven years of war had created a huge challenge for their limited resources. Soldiers and their families needed more support than ever. It was with this in mind that the AUSA Soldier/Family Council went to work to identify the issues, the role players, and the resources needed. Once identified, we were certain that the synergies (the shared capabilities and resources) would manifest themselves for the greater good of the care providers and, most importantly, those in need.

The Soldier/Family Council has enjoyed steady growth from its origin. The core of our initial group centered around the Armed Services YMCA, Marie Detty, and the Christian Family Counseling Center. Army Community Services quickly joined in with its vast array of growing services. The community's Veterans Administration representatives were also quick to add their skills and resources to the mix. The Military Officers Association of America provided a representative from the beginning. The local Veterans Council joined our group in May, and the Military Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Commerce provided a representative in July.

As our local support grew, national support grew as well. Support the Heroes Foundation, an impact organization that is designed to bridge the gap between existing programs and veterans' financial needs, now has a board member on our council. Operation Homefront, a national organization also on our Council, provides emergency assistance and morale support to our troops, their families, and wounded warriors in transition, with a chapter in Oklahoma. The President of Operation Homefront Oklahoma is Carol Herrick.

What does all this mean to local care providers and to Soldiers and families in need? Across the first six months of this effort, we have focused upon finding

and exploiting synergies. The group has been working on a standing operating procedure to help local care givers identify which organization is best suited to provide a specific type of support and what type of external resources are available. As the local care providers will quickly tell you, there is no simple "cookie cutter" solution for the myriad of complex challenges facing today's veterans and their families. The group has worked hard to determine how to assist each other and work as a cohesive community team. Identifying synergies empowers the local care providers to tap into each others' strengths. The addition of the national organizations - Operation Homefront and Support our Heroes Foundation - leverages a deep pool of resources to help our local care providers bridge every gap. When the Veterans Administration, Army Community Services, national organizations, and the local care providers attack a problem together, they can take the broad view. When a homeless veteran is taken from the streets, care givers are not just looking at immediate support. They are looking for ways to positively change the rest of that veteran's life. The synergies provided by the AUSA Soldier/Family Council empower our local care providers. Synergy adds to their confidence, and, most importantly, ensures our Soldiers and their families receive the very best care.



Mitch Meador (Lawton Constitution) attentively takes notes during our July meeting of the Soldier/Family Council as Virginia Hatcher (Armed Services YMCA) beams with approval. To Virginia's left, Lisa Jansen-Rees (ACS) listens intently, as she waits to make her presentation.

Local Job-Finding Training Available for Vets

Veteran's Workforce Investment Program--that is the ongoing local program for recently separated vets, disabled vets and those vets who have serious barriers to employment (age, lack of training, felony conviction, etc.). The eight-week program is sponsored by the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission with a new class starting in Lawton the first Monday of every month. And what's more, vets receive a modest stipend for participation, based on the amount of time they participate in the program.

The classes run from 0900 to 1600 five days a week

for eight weeks, but not all of the time is classroom work. The vet learns to write a resume, interview for a job, make cold calls on potential employers and more -- plus participate in job fairs.

Interested vets should contact Leon Davis or Kevin Haselton at Workforce Oklahoma, 1711 SW 11th Street, Lawton, Oklahoma 73502 or call 580-357-3500. A Vet must have at least 180 days of active duty service and provide a copy of his DD-214 form as proof of service to enroll.

Chapter Cocktail Party at the AUSA National Convention -- October 2009

