



# Association of Army Dentistry (AAD)

## Winter 2019 Newsletter

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On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Association of Army Dentistry, I wish each of our members and their families, a joyous and happy holiday season, Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and a healthy and happy New Year.

105 years ago, the "Christmas Truce" was a series of widespread, unofficial ceasefires along the Western Front during World War I. The countries of Europe went to war in the summer of 2014 with enthusiasm and the belief that the conflict would be over by Christmas of that year. By December 1914 the reality of trench warfare had settled in and weeks of heavy rain had turned both the trenches and the No Man's Land that separated them into a cold, muddy morass. For those on the Western Front, daily life was a misery shared by enemies who were, in some places, separated by 50 yards or less. The men in the trenches had seen battle, but were, as yet, untouched by the worst horrors of the war, including chemical warfare that was to come. In early December, an attempt was made to secure an official truce for the holidays, but failed. However, an unofficial and impromptu cease-fire still occurred on the Western Front along the two-thirds of the front controlled by the British Expeditionary Force. In a few brief hours, men from both sides on the Western Front laid down their arms, emerged from their trenches, and shared food, carols, games, and comradeship. Sadly, WWI lasted an additional four years until November 11, 1918, with more than 25 million people killed or wounded.

Please keep our brave young men and women serving around the world protecting our freedoms in your thoughts and prayers during the holidays and throughout the year. I have included a poem below, which most of you have already seen, honoring the American Soldier by Lance Corporal James M. Schmidt.

Ron  
Ronald J. Lambert, COL, USA (Ret)  
President and Chairman, Board of Directors

**It was the night before Christmas, he lived all alone,  
In a one bedroom house made of plaster and stone.  
I had come down the chimney with presents to give,  
And to see just who in this home did live.  
I looked all about, a strange sight I did see,  
No tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.**

**No stocking by mantle, just boots filled with sand,  
And on the wall pictures of far distant lands,  
With medals and badges, awards of all kinds,  
A sobering thought came to mind.  
For this house was different, so dark and so dreary,  
The home of a Soldier, now I could see clearly.**

**The Soldier lay sleeping, silent, alone,  
Curled up on the floor in this one bedroom home.  
The face was so gentle, the room in such disorder,  
Not how I pictured a United States Soldier.  
Was this the hero of whom I'd just read?  
Curled up on a poncho, the floor for a bed?**

**I realized the families that I saw this night,  
Owed their lives to these Soldiers who were willing to fight.  
Soon round the world, the children would play,  
And grownups would celebrate a bright Christmas day.  
They all enjoyed freedom each month of the year,  
Because of the Soldiers, like the one lying here.**

**I couldn't help wonder how many lay alone,  
On a cold Christmas eve in a land far from home.  
The very thought brought a tear to my eye,  
I dropped to my knees and started to cry.  
The Soldier awakened and I heard a rough voice,  
"Santa don't cry, this life is my choice;**

**I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more,  
My life is my God, my country, my Corps."  
The Soldier rolled over and soon drifted to sleep,  
I couldn't control it, I continued to weep,  
I kept watch for hours, so silent and still,  
And we both shivered from the cold evening's chill.**

**I didn't want to leave on that cold, dark, night,  
This guardian of honor so willing to fight.  
Then the Soldier rolled over, with a voice soft and pure,  
whispered, "Carry on Santa, it's Christmas day, all is secure."  
One look at my watch, and I knew he was right.  
"Merry Christmas my friend, and to all a good night."**

# Membership

Congratulations Jerry Strader, BG, USA, Ret on the celebration of his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on 12 December. Best wishes for many more!

Congratulations to Board Member Sterlene Hapner on her retirement at the end of the month after 31 years of service as a GS civilian. Well done and enjoy your retirement!

The Commanding General, TRADOC, recommended approval on 3 December 2019 of the AAD's request to donate a dental sculpture at the AMEDD Museum at Joint Base San Antonio, Fort Sam Houston, Texas. Our request has been forwarded to the Department of the Army for final approval. In the last newsletter, the overall concept for the AAD's Sculpture Project was briefly described. As the concept for Phase I and Phase II of the project is further refined, the plans will be shared with AAD membership. A more intensive capital fund raising project will be unveiled in 2020.

Last year, the Association of Army Dentistry changed its renewal process to allow for on-line membership renewals. The change also involved moving to a membership based on when you renew. That is, if you renew in January, your membership year will run one calendar year from the date of your renewal. Follow the link below to the AAD website to renew your membership, either electronically or by downloading the membership form and mailing it in. The membership form is also provided in the attached pdf document below.

<https://www.associationofarmydentistry.org/memberships/>

## **Pdf membership form**

You will also receive a membership reminder in an email.

Thank you for renewing your memberships and for your donations in support of our 501(c)(3) mission. Specific items supported by your contributions in the last year include recognition of deceased AAD members by providing a memorial at the U.S. Army Medical Department (AMEDD) Museum, support for Dental Corps Birthday Balls, mentorship, and continuing education endeavors, such as the Federal Services Dental Educators Workshop, and recognition of the Dental Corps Chief's Annual Awards Program awardees. Each year, the Corp Chief's Awards recognize eight individuals for excellence in the following categories: (1) Senior Officer, (2) Junior Officer, (3) Senior Non-Commissioned Officer, (4) Junior Enlisted Soldier, (5) Dental Educator of the Year (Program Director, Mentor, etc.), (6) Senior GS Civilian, (7) Junior GS Civilian, and (8) recognition of an Army Reserve/Army National Guard Service Member.

Renewal of your membership may be made by mailing your membership renewal and payment to the address below. Donations to the AAD Sculpture Project may be made by mail at the same address. For those donations, please specify that the donation is going to the AAD Sculpture Project. Donors will receive an acknowledgement of their donation as a charitable contribution for tax purposes. You may also go to the AAD's website and renew or donate online. Checks are preferred as they do not incur a transaction fee from our vendor.

## **Association of Army Dentistry**

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## **Active Component News**

The AAD's primary conduit to the active component is through COL Dave Ferguson, the Corps Specific Branch Proponent at the Corps Chief Office, US Army Dental Corps, Joint Base San Antonio, Fort Sam Houston, Texas. MAJ Alyson Lasater, the Executive Fellow, functions as the primary liaison with the Association of Army Dentistry. The September, October, and November 2019 editions of *The Dental Corps Bulletin*, have been added to our website since the last edition of the newsletter. Each of the Bulletins is placed on our website when received from the Corps Chiefs office and can be found at the following link.

<https://www.associationofarmydentistry.org/the-dental-corps-bulletin-2/>

The 2020 budget proposal announced earlier this year, would cut up to 18,000 uniformed physicians, dentists, nurses, medics, technicians, and support personnel from throughout the Army, Navy, and Air Force. Dorothy Mills-Gregg reported on [www.military.com](http://www.military.com) that members of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Military Personnel received an update on the Military Health System transition to the Defense Health Agency on 5 December 2019. Surgeon generals from each of the services briefed Congress that they are no longer filling vacant positions, pending a billet review by the Defense Health Agency (DHA). They also broke down how many billets their own reviews last year determined were "excess." That number included about 4,000 for the Air Force, 6,935 for the Army, and 5,386 for the Navy.

Lawmakers expressed concern after hearing the details of how many military medical billets are slated for elimination next year as management of the services' hospital and clinics transition to the DHA.

MOAA reprinted the article, **Ask Your Lawmaker to Protect Military Medicine**, with the link provided below. If you go to the site, there is a form letter which you can use to provide feedback to your representatives in Congress.

<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2019-news-articles/surgeons-general-lay-out-how-many-health-care-jobs-each-service-may-lose-in-merger/>

## **Reserve Components News**

Board Member Peter Tan, COL, USA, (Ret), provides this preface for CPT Aparna Menon's contribution to this edition of the newsletter.

I have the privilege and honor of meeting and working with individuals who demonstrate incredible resilience, strength, and character. These Soldiers I have served with all seem to double and triple the expectations of them while they serve. They also demonstrate the Army Values outside of official time with their families, community responsibilities, and personal responsibilities. CPT Menon was under my command and has grown and developed professionally since my departure. Her personal perspective of her role as an Army Reservist is a reflection of the dedication and hard work that our professionals display above and beyond their time in uniform.

### **What It Means to Me to Serve**

Being a member of the US Army Reserves is my way of contributing to this great nation of the United States of America. Growing up in South India, my parents gave a lot of emphasis on education. When I moved to New Jersey, I was very fortunate to be admitted to Rutgers University School of Dentistry to further pursue my dental education. A degree from this university here in the US paved the way to a lucrative job and to take care of my family.

Although dental school was a lot of hard work and sacrifice, through the ups and downs and the journey of life including marriage, parenthood, and never-ending dental training, I felt a void to do more. I wanted to be a part of something bigger. What should I be doing to help? How can I contribute to this great country which has given me an opportunity to succeed professionally?

My career in the US Army Reserves started after graduating from my general dentistry practice residency. It was a short conversation that I had with a recruiter who introduced me to a whole other world. I realized it was a second career that can go hand in hand with the one I currently have. I realized that joining the US Army Reserves can ease the burden of my looming student debt loans and yet show me a different world where I can put on my Army uniform every month and step into different shoes where we train to be ready when our duties are called upon.

I serve with police officers, EMTs, computer specialists, social workers, nurses, and doctors. The knowledge base and expertise that they bring with each of them has opened up my eyes and mind. My time with these amazing comrades has certainly helped me grow. In no other life would I wake up early in the morning to train and to be at my physical best. Weapons qualification and physical fitness tests among many others makes me feel like GI Jane!

I'm lucky to be a part of an amazing unit. A unit where we're all family, truly my brother and sisters. We look out for each other and always have each other's back. The guidance and counseling that I have received has certainly helped me be a better Soldier. My military family has shown me what it takes to be a leader. To take charge and get things done. These are skill sets that have helped me grow in my civilian job as well.

We are Soldiers first. We are Soldiers committed every day for something bigger than ourselves. We are committed to selfless service and to support, protect and defend this great nation! I proud to be American and I'm proud to be an American Soldier.

Aparna Menon DMD  
CPT, DC  
7301<sup>st</sup> Medical Training Support Battalion  
Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey

### **MOAA Citrus County, Florida**

Recently at the MOAA Citrus County, FL, chapter, Peter Tan, COL, USA, Ret, was installed as the incoming Vice President and Mark Bodenheim, COL, USA, Ret, was congratulated on his service as outgoing President. Both previously served as DIMA Dental Corps Chiefs and now serve together again.

Citrus County has over 20,000 Veterans, with one of the highest percentages of Veterans within a county's population in the nation. Because of these numbers, there is a Veterans Week celebration rather than just a Veterans Day, including a Veterans in the Classroom (VITC) visitation program, Massing of Colors ceremony, Veterans Day Parade, and the Veterans Day Dinner-Dance.

MOAA's motto: "Never Stop Serving"



RADM (Ret) "Mac" McLeod, former Navy Dental Corps Chief and COL (Ret) Pete Tan served as Marshalls of the Veterans Day Parade. RADM McLeod served at the same time that Thomas R. Tempel, MG, USA, Ret, was Chief of the Army Dental Corps.



Former Dental Corps Officers: COL Peter Tan, USA, Ret; RADM "Mac" McLeod, USN, Ret; COL Mark Bodenheim, USA, Ret

## Healthcare Corner

By law TRICARE costs go up slightly every year. For retirees the cost bump is tied to the annual cost of living increase (COLA), while other fee increases are set ahead of time by Congress. MOAA published an article detailing how your TRICARE fees will change in 2020.

A link to the website with that article is below.

<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2019-news-articles/how-your-tricare-costs-will-change-in-2020/>

MOAA Resources: Healthcare can be found at the following link:

<https://www.moaa.org/content/topic-and-landing-pages/health-care/>

## Military History

John King, COL, USA, Ret, provided the following article about the President's health, including oral health, as a significant concern in the health and fitness of the President to meet the physical demands of the office, including as Chief Executive of the United States and commander in chief of the military. His article is available in the pdf below. Thank you John for another contribution to the history of dentistry.

**[Thomas Jefferson: Serious Oral Infection During Term as President pdf](#)**



## Social Media

Mike Hoffman, MAJ, DC, USA, has done a great job in getting the Association of Army Dentistry's Facebook Page off the ground and filled with current Army Dentistry news in the last year. Please go to the AAD's Facebook Page and the updates that have been provided. If you haven't already done so, please check the page out, and "Like" the AAD Facebook page!

<https://www.facebook.com/AssociationofArmyDentistry>

## In Memoriam

Don DeNucci, COL, USA, Ret, forwarded the obituaries of several of his colleagues for inclusion on the AAD's *In Memoriam* section of our website. They have been placed on the website and are included below. Their obituaries speak of the lives of these great officers.

- Joe L. Cheatham, BG, USA, Ret 8/15/1928 – 1/8/2008

<https://www.associationofarmydentistry.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Joe%20L.%20Cheatham%2C%20BG%2C%20USA%2C%20Ret%20Obituary%208-15-2928%20--%201-8-2008.pdf>

- Thomas W. Stafford, Jr., COL, USA, Ret 7/28/1941 – 8/18/2007

<https://www.associationofarmydentistry.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Thomas%20Stanford%2C%20COL%2C%20USA%2C%20Ret%20Obituary%207-28-1941%20--%208-18-2007.pdf>

- Jeffrey G. Foerster, COL, USA, Ret 7/31/1954 – 11/23/2015

<https://www.associationofarmydentistry.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Forrester%2C%20COL%20Jeffrey%20G.%20%207-31-1954%20--%2012-23-2015.pdf>

- Steve V. Jastrzembki, COL, USA, Ret 8/27/1939 – 1/14/2009

<https://www.associationofarmydentistry.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Jastrzembki%2C%20Steve%20V.%20COL%20%208-27-1939%20--%201-14-2009.pdf>

- Robert E. Leahy, COL, USA, Ret 7/01/1936 – 11/29/2009

<https://www.associationofarmydentistry.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Leahy%2C%20COL%20Robert%20E.%20%207-1-1936%20-%2011-29-2009.pdf>

- Peter L. DeMizio, LTC, USA, Ret

- 12/15/2017

<https://www.associationofarmydentistry.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/DeMizio%2C%20LTC%20Peter%20Louis%20%202012-15-2017.pdf>

Thank you Don for sharing these obituaries with us. It is important to remember the past and the contributions of those who preceded us and shaped Army dentistry.

We post the obituaries that are brought to our attention; if there are others that you wish to share on our website, please forward them to the AAD. The link to all of the obituaries on our website is at the following web address:

<https://www.associationofarmydentistry.org/about/in-memorial/?loggedout=true>

## **Conclusion:**

Thank you COL John King for your contributions to this and previous editions of the newsletter. Keeping our history alive is important as we highlight the heroism and contributions of those who preceded us. John has made an immeasurable contribution to Army Dental Corps history and our thanks go out to him. Our goal in the near future is to expand our history online section of the webpage and document the proud history of Army dentistry. Therefore, the AAD is seeking a volunteer who has an interest in history and would like to make a significant contribution to Army dentistry by managing the history section of the AAD's webpage. The AAD is also seeking someone with technological expertise to help guide us as we improve or completely redo our website.

The AAD would like to thank each of you for your continued membership and support of our charitable mission. If anyone has an interest in serving on our board of directors or assisting in another capacity, please contact me.

Best wishes for new adventures in the year ahead.

Ron

# **AAD Officers**

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