

**Attending**

CDR Erin Giles  
CDR Robert Chelberg  
CDR Cameron Scott  
LCDR Kelly Dalton  
CDR Greg Smith  
CAPT Dawn Clary  
CDR Barb Cohn  
CDR Kathleen Wooten  
LT Laura DeWitt

**Absent**

LCDR Craig Rennard  
CDR Robert Kesead

**Liaison Reports**

**-AMSUS:** CDR Greg Smith/CDR Barbara Cohn:

No report

**-Chief Clinical Consultant:** CAPT Dawn Clary:

**FULLERTON MEETING**

-Schedule is a little late getting out due the Marshall Ketchum University staffing changes, but the agenda should be out by next week

-Some Fullerton hotels have expressed interest in hosting attendees; we may have 2-3 options (Chase Hotel and Hotel Fullerton have expressed interest)

-Tentative schedule June 6-8 (3 days) 29-30 total hours of CE, it will be a dense schedule

-Resident talks will be at the end of meeting day (3-4 each day/ 25 min presentations with 5 min Q&A)

-Several outside MD's and OD's, have expressed interest in speaking at the meeting, so this year should be a high quality program with some new speakers

-If you have any concerns, suggestions, comments regarding the schedule please contact Dr. Clary.

-registration will be online

**-AFOS:** CDR Greg Smith:

SECO meeting is coming up; last minute registration for combination AFOS/SECO is available

AFOS is planning to do a combined AFOS/Academy registration again this year

**-FDA:** CAPT Kim Lewandowski-Walker:

No report

**-PHS Recruitment/Applicant Placement:** CAPT David Bellware:

No report

**-HSPAC Career Development:** CDR Sarah Stienbarger:

HSAAP. All people who request help with finding new jobs or promotions get matched with mentors. The liaisons are all within the HSO group and we are matched to people of different specialties most of the time. I have been matched with a psychologist and she successfully found her next new position. It took us about a year to do it. I am now matched with a dental hygienist and we are just starting to work together. If you are interested in getting help finding a new position you can apply at hsaap [hsaap@usphs-hso.org](mailto:hsaap@usphs-hso.org). all the HSAAP liaisons are trained to help officers through the system and how to be successful in your career. We are trained via webinars and conference calls. It is challenging to work with someone in a completely different career to know what they need and want in a position. It is tough for me to think outside the I.H.S. box. We have to remember there are a lot of other places we can work. This is a practice in thinking outside the box and using all resources available. If anyone is interested in becoming a trained liaison apply at the same email listed above

PHS Recruitment and mentoring. All optometrist should sign up for this program. It is a benchmark so you are all being graded on it. You can be a mentor to a younger officer. You can be mentored by a more advanced officer. All types of levels are needed. Please apply at <http://www.usphs-hso.org/?q=pac/sub/mentoring/program>. I am currently mentored by Shannon Farr and she has helped me with so many things. She has gone through my CV line by line and helped me with awkward wording. She is a wordsmith. She has gone through my CV, OS, ROS, COER, Officer summary, and career goals. It is nice to have a fresh eye on your papers. I have been a mentor to Isaac Bell. We worked together unofficially for years before this. After a few years of official mentoring he actually decided to get out of the Corps and open a private practice in a town he loved. Maybe I should not be a mentor because I may talk you into leaving early. Warning given. In this program you will most likely be matched with an optometrist so it will be easy to understand the same language and work together.

**-APHA Vision Care:** need new liaison still

**-JOAG:** LCDR Kelly Dalton

-new APFT standards, will include a link in report

-there was a recent email about changes to uniform policy/ link is to a lengthy document, but the beginning summarizes main changes .

**-HSPAC:** CDR Barbara Cohn/CDR Erin Giles will be taking over

No report at this time

**-COA-LT** Laura DeWitt

-Transferability of GI Bill for PHS officers: House and Senate Armed Services Committees had recommended in a version of the National Defense Authorization Act for 2016 contained language encouraging each Secretary to be selective in encouraging transferability of the GI Bill. This language was later removed, but the COA points out that benefits such as this are used as recruitment and retention tools, and are subject to change as personnel needs change. COA encourages officers to use the GI Bill transferability as soon as possible and not “save” it (for example, spread it among several children). Full article is in the 12/2015 Frontline [http://coausphs.org/media/1204/december-fl15-final-color\\_web.pdf](http://coausphs.org/media/1204/december-fl15-final-color_web.pdf)

CAPT Clary and others had some specific questions regarding at what point the transferability could be revoked and has agreed to compile any questions from other officers to submit. CAPT Clary also pointed out that schools can decline to accept GI Bill benefits, or limit the number of GI Bill benefits they accept per year.

## **New Business Agenda**

### **1. New call in number for the rest of the year**

**1(888)950-7567 pw 46439**

### **2. Voting on OPAG awards: CDR Cameron Scott**

-Deadline is May 1 for Student Award, there has been one nominee so far

-CDR Scott received a request for an extension of the deadline for an OPAG award, nomination. He recommended that the award be submitted for next year and the nominator was amenable. OPAG voted to not extend the deadline for nominations.

-Richard Hatch Award

One nominee / CDR Greg Smith. OPAG members unanimous approved, CDR Greg Smith is the awardee Edward Hamilton

One nominee /CDR Barbara Cohn. OPAG members unanimous approved, CDR. Barbara Cohn is the awardee

2. Call for feedback from OPAG members, what are your immediate needs and concerns from the "trenches". How can OPAG help optometrists working in IHS or elsewhere?

CDR. Wooten: Unable to order ODU pants. Has been trying for over 8 months, but has received little information about when the pants will be available and no direction about what to do about it. Other OPAG members stated that it took about year to get their ODU pants. CDR Giles will look into this

3. Promotion Seminar: Let's get it booked for April Meeting

Will reach out to people who were promoted last year to see if they are willing to present

Will set up conference call for April 2016 OPAG meeting and invite all USPHS optometrists to attend

4. Public Health Athletics/New APFT

-any OPAG members with experience with new format ? none mentioned

-public health athletics? Anyone with involvement? CDR Giles has done one event and anticipates that the USPHS symposium will have an event

5. Suggest GS Liaison, Michael Shumaker

Not discussed

6. More Symposium discussion.

There will be opportunities to be a mentor/mentee, support CDR Barbara Cohn by attending her round-table discussion, run in PHS athletics 5k and attend the OPAG breakout session on Category Day.

7. There is an updated version of the CMS guidelines for instructors, CAPT Clary will email it

### **OTHER (not discussed)**

#### **Disney Agrees to Honor PHS, NOAA Officers with Military Discount Tickets**

After much to-and-fro between officials of the Disney Corporation and COA Executive Director Jim Currie, Disney has agreed to give PHS and NOAA officers the same theme park admission prices it has long provided to members of the five military services, effective 3 January 2016.

The official Disney website, found at <https://disneyworld.disney.go.com/special-offers/military-multi-day-tickets/>, reflected the following as of 12 January 2016:

**“Effective as of January 3, 2016, Disney Military Promotional Tickets may be purchased by active or retired members of the Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service (PHS) and the Commissioned Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Spouses of PHS and NOAA Members also qualify if they are able to present valid and active U.S. Military IDs in the absence of active PHS or NOAA Personnel.”**

Here is what a Disney employee told Jim during a live on-line chat on 13 January:

“If you would like to check availability and pricing with the offer, it will be necessary for you to call the Disney Reservation Center at 407-560-CHAT (2428) as it is not available for booking online.”

Tickets can be obtained at any Defense Department or Military Service Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) ticket office on a military installation. It is advisable to print out the Disney webpage and take it with you, as it may take a while for MWR ticket sellers and Disney ticket takers to become aware of the

new Disney policy.

Upcoming OPAG meetings

**April 6<sup>th</sup>**

**June 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Aug 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**Oct 5<sup>th</sup>**

**Dec 7<sup>th</sup>**

8:00 AM Alaska

9:00 AM Pacific

10:00 AM Mountain

11:00 AM Central

12:00 PM Eastern

**Again...**

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