



The Salute online



Monthly newsletter of the Portsmouth Area Chapter, an affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America, serving Portsmouth, Chesapeake, Suffolk, Smithfield and Franklin, Virginia, since 1983. Dinner meetings are held the Second Thursday of each month except July and August. Although [MOAA](#) and [PACMOAA](#) actively lobby legislatures for all US uniformed services members, we are nonpartisan do not participate in political activities.

VOLUME XXXVIII ISSUE III

Learn more at pacmoaa.org

March 2019



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

It's amazing to see so many beautiful flowers and bushes as your drive around the area even though they are blooming rather early. I hope they don't all die with the several days of freezing weather forecast this week. Since we will be changing to daylight savings time soon, hopefully, more of our members will be able to join us for meetings.

Even though there was a rather small group at the February dinner meeting, it was a pleasure to see Bob Brewer and his wife Cindy again. We also had 2 guests/potential PACMOAA members - Rod Hallum and Michael Hal-

ley as well as our 2 guest speakers - Paula Moran and Chelsea Lynch. As usual, the dinner was excellent as was the fellowship. It was great to talk with Paula and Chelsea at dinner and see their obvious passion for what they are doing then and during their presentations!

Paula Moran joined the USO in 2009 and has been President and CEO since 2012. Chelsea Lynch is the Director of Resource Development as well as the USO representative at the monthly Mayor's Military Committee of Portsmouth meetings. Paula gave an overview of the USO and Chelsea discussed in more detail the programs they support. One very interesting fact that few PACMOAA members were aware of was that donations to the national USO does not trickle down to the Hampton Roads and Central VA (HRCV) USO. Only donations made directly to the HRCV USO support programs in our community. Donations made to the national group support missions all over the USA and the world.

The presentation began with the expression - "Not Your Grandfather's USO". Comfort centers at airports and USO concert tours overseas are what we traditionally think of as USO mission and our local USO covers the largest number of comfort centers in the world! There are 14 locations covered by the HRCV USO including Norfolk and Richmond International Airports, Ft Lee, and Naval Station Norfolk.



LtoR Chelsea Lynch, President Ferki and Paula Moran at February dinner meeting.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY
William F Duncan
Gordan E. Van Hook

Some of the many programs described by Chelsea include: Warrior and Family support - Outdoor Adventure Team and Warrior Week in VA Beach, Gold Star Family support, special programs

(Continued on page 3)

Chapter Happenings February

[Click Here for
DIRECTORY](#)

03 Navy Reserve Birthday (1915)	17 St. Patrick's Day
05 Fat Tuesday Mardi Gras	20 Vernal equinox
14 PACMOAA Dinner	25 Medal of Honor Day
10 Daylight Saving Time Begins	29 National Vietnam War Veterans Day
13 K 9 Veterans Day	
15 American Legion Birthday (1919)	

MARCH DINNER

Our March dinner meeting will be held on Thursday the 14th at Hilton Garden Inn Harbour View ([MAP](#)). Social hour begins at 1730 with dinner at 1800. The cost of the meal is \$30.00 including tax and gratuity.

DINNER MENU

Caesar Salad with Parmesan Cheese and Croutons
Chicken Marsala with Red Roasted Potatoes and Broccoli
Dinner Rolls and Butter
Chef's choice for Desserts
Ice Tea, Water, Coffee and Hot Tea Station

Please make your reservation **no later than Sunday 10 March** with Sherry by phone or by email. PLEASE REMEMBER THAT A RESERVATION MADE IS A RESERVATION PAID!

GUEST SPEAKER



Mark Whiting, is the Program Manager of Virginia Department of Veterans Services, Military Medics and Corpsmen (MMAC) program.

With a career spanning the public, private and non-profit sectors, Mark brings a unique perspective to his role as Program Manager for the Virginia Department of Veteran Services (DVS), Military Medics and Corpsmen Program. Prior to serving at DVS Mark was Healthcare Industry Sector Coordinator for the Virginia Employment Commission. At VEC Mark facilitated the hiring of veterans, Transitioning

Service Members and their spouses at healthcare employers statewide.

Mark first entered state government as a paid intern with the Virginia Department of Health, Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) during his senior year at Virginia Commonwealth University's School of Mass Communications. There he wrote the nation's first book on media and public relations for first responder organizations. That internship led to a 10-year career as Public Information Officer for the OEMS.

Mark left OEMS to form River's Edge Productions, Inc., a video and television production firm serving clients nationwide. His creative work has been recognized by awards from the International Television Associa-



tion, the National Association of Government Communicators, International Association of Business Communicators, Public Relations Society of America and Crime Solvers International. He is the recipient of four TELLY © Awards.

Mark's work in the non-profit field included serving 9 years with the American Red Cross as Director of the Red Cross Center for Community and Corporate Education, as Regional Director of Communications and then with the National Office of the Red Cross as Senior Program Manager. In that role he managed Certified Nurse Assistant and Allied Health Training Programs in 5 Mid-Atlantic states.

The son of a World War II Army Combat Medic, Mark started in public safety and healthcare as a Paramedic and Firefighter for the City of Lynchburg, Virginia.

An innovative and award-winning program, the Military Medics and Corpsmen Program (MMAC) at the Virginia Department of Veterans Services is changing the way healthcare hires veterans in Virginia. MMAC facilitates veteran hiring in clinical, non-clinical and leadership positions by recruiting, reviewing and referring candidates to healthcare employers statewide. As the first and only program of its type in the nation, the MMAC-Qualified Pathway serves recently discharged veterans who were Army Medics, Navy/Coast Guard Corpsmen or Air Force Medical Technicians. MMAC has Memos of Agreement with 10 major healthcare systems across the Commonwealth (including Sentara, Bon Secours, Riverside and Chesapeake Regional) to allow MMAC-Qualified employees to apply their extensive clinical skills and experience under supervision while they obtain required civilian clinical credentials.

As many of you may remember, Jaime Areizaga-Soto, Deputy Secretary of Virginia Veterans Affairs, was our speaker at the January 2016 meeting and mentioned this program. Passing legislation for establishing a pilot program for MMAC was one of the JLC 2016 Initiatives. The program passed the Virginia

Legislative Session and Governor McAuliffe signed the bill for the pilot program at Sentara Norfolk General Hospital on 27 June 2016. Sherry Ferki, Karl Wilson and Steve Turner attended this historic event.

(Continued from page 1) **THE PRESIDENT'S DESK** for Exceptional Family Members (designation to include children with chronic and/or terminal illnesses), Canine Comfort Crew (therapy dogs visiting comfort centers), as well as many more programs. In the past, the major objective was only to support the troops but now the whole family is supported. There is always a need for volunteers as well as for donations. There are 17 staff and about 1500 volunteers currently for the many ongoing activities supported by the HRCV USO. You can access more information about the HRCV USO and their programs at <https://hrcv.uso.org> or by calling Chelsea at 757-572-5870.

As a pediatric nurse, one of the programs caught my eye - Little Patriots Trunk Hop on Saturday 13 April in Virginia Beach. Different organizations give out candy and candy filled Easter eggs from the trunk of a vehicle. The event is only open to active duty military, reserve/national guard and eligible dependents. Valid Military ID required for entry. We have PACMOAA signs with magnetic backing for the sides of the vehicle. Anyone interested, please contact me. PACMOAA would not need to pay a fee to participate. My deadline for letting Chelsea know if we want to participate is Friday 5 April.

The importance of membership is one of the 6 major areas in the MOAA strategic plan as well as PACMOAA's top objective. Decreasing membership is an issue for most organizations and PACMOAA is no exception. Many of us have friends or neighbors that are eligible to be MOAA and PACMOAA members and the PACMOAA Board of Directors voted to continue to only charge potential new members 1/2 of the usual cost of dinner for their first meeting. We hope this will encourage the

(Continued from page 3) **PRESIDENT'S DESK**
 membership to bring a friend to a dinner meeting. The Board voted to continue this practice until the end of 2019 and then re-evaluate to see how it impacts us financially.

Please keep our troops in your thoughts and prayers and "Never Stop Serving".

Sherry Ferki, President

CHAPTER NEWS

WELCOME ABOARD

The Salute extends a hardy welcome to CDR Michael D. Halley, USN (Ret) and his wife Carmen from Suffolk.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE VERY SLOW

Only 40% of current membership have paid 2019 dues. As of 28 February, 30 members have paid including one new member.

PACMOAA dues are as follows:

Regular members \$25.00/year

Surviving Spouse members \$20.00/year

You can pay your dues at the next PACMOAA meeting or mail it to:

PACMOAA, P.O. Box 5353, Portsmouth, VA 23703.

Your dues enable PACMOAA to pay for the newsletter, website, VCOC dues, name-tags, printing, postage, guest speakers and the Tidewater Concert band performing at our Christmas gala. Many members take the opportunity to send a little extra money with their dues to help with scholarships.

Please pay your dues as soon as possible so we can continue to provide all these services. If any changes have occurred in your personal profile (address, phone, email, etc.), please include a renewal form

to help keep our records up to date. If you are not sure if you have paid yet this year, check with Dolly Cherrington or Hans Sachse. Remember the effectiveness of VCOC with the state legislature relates to membership strength! Thank you for your continued support of MOAA and PACMOAA.

PACMOAA SCHOLARSHIP FUND UPDATE

Since I took the chair, now co-chair, of the Scholarship committee in 2001, PACMOAA has awarded 32 scholarships, 28 of which were paid. One student failed his school ROTC physical, two students dropped out of school shortly after the first semester started, and one of the awardees had family issues and was not able to attend college.

One to three scholarships have been awarded each year, ranging from \$1000 to \$2000. The scholarship is awarded over the first two semesters in school and is contingent upon continued enrollment in ROTC. The money may be used for tuition purposes, room and board, and other school related expenses. *Unlike the MOAA scholarships, the students do not have to come from a military family.*

Information pertaining to this scholarship will be going out to local high schools in Portsmouth, Suffolk, Franklin, Chesapeake, Southampton and Isle of Wight this month. That includes over 30 local high schools in addition to 13 JROTC units. CDR Scott Dickinson, the Co-Chair of the Scholarship Committee revised the application so that it can be filled out electronically including an electronic scoring sheet for the PACMOAA Scholarship Committee members to facilitate a better review of applications. Scott also emailed the scholar-

ship information to the local high schools and his assistance is greatly appreciated!

The number of scholarships to be awarded for the year is voted on by the Leadership Team and is based on donations from PACMOAA members. We would like to award at least 2 scholarships if members donate enough.

College expenses are increasing as are all other expenses. Please consider a donation to help these students in their quest for a career in the military. It was brought to my attention that I neglected to remind everyone about contributing to the scholarship fund when discussing sending in your dues - thank you Jack Lyons! That is usually when we receive most of the money contributed to the scholarships. You could also add \$5 or \$10 to your dinner check. All donations are greatly appreciated and most helpful! Thank you for your generous support over the years which has made our program so successful!

The scholarship winners and their parents will attend the June PACMOAA dinner meeting and be recognized there. It is always a pleasure to meet them and hear of their accomplishments in school as well as their goals.

Sherry Ferki

PACMOAA PROGRAMS AND EVENTS FOR 2019

MAR 14: PACMOAA Dinner with Mark Whiting Manager of the Virginia DVS, Military Medics and Corpsman Program

APR 2: Q2 VCOC MEETING

APR 11: PACMOAA Dinner with speaker Bruce Gamble, USN (Ret) - Author Black Sheep Squadron

APR/MAY, date TBD: Annual Congressional Luncheon

MAY 9: PACMOAA dinner with speaker Jack

Keane, LCDR, USN (Ret) Topic - Maritime Patrol in Vietnam

MAY 27: 135th Annual Memorial Day Parade

MAY 30: PACMOAA BOARD MEETING

JUN 13: Annual Meeting recognizing PACMOAA Scholarship winners with ROTC Color Guard and CAPT Lennie Reed, Professor of Naval Science, ODU, Hampton U, NSU

JUL, date TBD: Quarterly VCOC Meeting

JUL, date TBD - Annual Brunch with Hampton Roads and Virginia Peninsula Chapters

AUG 22: PACMOAA BOARD MEETING

SEP 12: PACMOAA Dinner

OCT 10: PACMOAA Dinner

OCT: date, TBD: Quarterly VCOC meeting

NOV 14: PACMOAA Annual Business Meeting

NOV, date TBD: PACMOAA BOARD MEETING

DEC 12: Annual Christmas celebration with Tidewater Concert Band

IN MEMORIAM

It is with sadness we announce the passing of LCDR Anna Mae Duffy, USN (Ret). Duffy was a Charter Member and the 3rd President of PACTROA.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

by Bob Steorts, Chaplain

LOVE, THE GREATEST COMPLIMENT

My small unit was one of the very first to arrive in Sarajevo after the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords. A day or two after our arrival, I began making the rounds, visiting other units in and around the city.

One of the American communications outfits I went to see had set up in an old Ottoman fort high on the mountaintop overlooking the city. The road to the fort was a long a mountain

path, barely passable in our humvee. At one point, the road squeezed between a sheer vertical drop on the left and a small village on the right. Absolutely pressed against the road, the tiny community was wedged into the minuscule space between the path and the wall of the mountain.

I was riding in the front side passenger seat of the humvee with my arm out of the window. In the arcane reasoning of the military, because we were part of an international force, the national emblem was affixed on the right shoulder of our BDUs (not on the left as was normally the case). Thus, the American flag was showing on the sleeve that was nearer to the open window.

In the United States, there were - and still are - many mixed emotions about the mission in Bosnia. Some were shared by the troops who were sent there. But whatever our feelings, it became immediately clear that the people who appreciated us most were the very old and the very young. Our presence allowed the old people to live their lives in dignity and the young to play in the sunshine, and both groups were always grateful.

As our vehicle inched through the village, two elderly Muslim gentlemen were drinking tea at a small table set right next to the road. We were so close that as we inched by, one of them reached out and touched the flag on my arm and said something to me in very passable English.

I smiled at him and for the rest of the drive wondered at his words. When I returned to my quarters, I asked about the significance of the expression the old gentlemen had spoken. It turned out he had used an ancient phrase - words with meaning so deep they were reserved for use in his culture only to express the most profound appreciation.

What the old man said when he touched the American flag was, "We will love you for a thousand years."

From Chicken Soup for Veterans

This story reminds us of what the Bible tells us about love - "Love thy neighbor as much as yourself."

We love our spouses, our country, and our families. Let us always love what our flag represents for us and others.

REMINDER CONCERNING ONGOING PACMOAA COMMUNITY SERVICE

PACMOAA has collected items for the Portsmouth Volunteers for the Homeless (PVH) since 2011. Ideally, and in addition to our Christmas collection drive, members are given the opportunity to donate items at each dinner meeting for delivery to PVH. PVH is always in need of individual toiletry items including razors, laundry detergent, bleach, toilet paper, etc. Picking up one small item when you go shopping would be very helpful.

Last month, I asked members to start donating to the baby pantry at the Coast Guard base in Portsmouth. I became aware of this need during the recent government shutdown when Coast Guard members were not paid for two pay periods. As it turns out, adequate support of young parents in E-5 and below families is an ongoing issue. The baby pantry was established to address shortfalls in these families. Picking up some diaper rash cream or donating a few dollars that we can pool to buy more expensive items, would be very helpful. When you donate any small item or a few dollars that does not squeeze your budget can make a huge difference to these young military families. Thank you all for your service, whether as a military member or spouse.

Sherry

PERSONAL AFFAIRS CORNER

PACMOAA and most organizations are always looking for new members and younger members but many of our members are get-

ting older and having more medical issues. Being a caregiver is a also very stressful situation. One of the things I've always loved about the military community is the camaraderie and that everyone helps each other out. Most of us had assistance from other/senior officers early in our careers and we turned around to help the newer officers. I have seen that same ongoing assistance/support since I've been a member of PACMOAA. Please keep our members/families that are having problems in your thoughts and prayers and reach out to them if you can. If possible, please let me know if you, a member of your family, or another PACMOAA member is ill and would like visitors or for us to remember them in the newsletter. We cannot support members when they need us unless someone notifies us.

CAPT Bob Parker, USNR (Ret), an active member of PACMOAA for 34 years is no longer living in the area but is still very interested in PACMOAA and asked me to tell everyone hello for him. He looks forward to hearing from you all. Bob and his wife Eleanor are in assisted living at:

1

2

Ray Cicirelli is having more medical issues and so he and Peg will not be able to attend meetings as often as in the past. Ray is in hospice and is now living in the Memory Care Unit Room 516 at Lake Prince Woods. Peg said they would love company.

Betty Lambdin just returned home from rehab. She would like to see or hear from her PACMOAA friends. Please call before going to visit as she is still receiving therapy at home.

Thank you.

Sherry Ferki, Personal Affairs Officer

Home number: Cell:

NEWS FROM MOAA

This year MOAA celebrates 90 years of advocacy for members of the uniformed services and their families. If you take a quick look at your MOAA email newsletter or your copy of *The Military Officer*, you will see that the game is afoot. Senator Doug Jones introduced MOAA backed legislation on February 28 (S. 622), **the Military Widows Tax Elimination Act**. Representative Joe Wilson introduced similar legislation (HR 553) **the Military Surviving spouses Equity Act** in January.

It is incumbent on us to support these efforts by mailing letters enclosed in the March issue of *The Military Officer* magazine or going to MOAA'S TAKE ACTION for online members. If we are indifferent, why should anyone else make an effort? [WALK THE WALK](#) click here to take action.

Current federal law requires survivors of deceased military members to forfeit part or all of their **purchased** Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuity when they are awarded the VA's Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC). For approximately 67,000 military survivors, the widows tax makes SBP the only insurance that you pay into but are legally prohibited from collecting.

"The SBP-DIC offset remains grossly unfair to the members of the military community who deserve our support the most," said Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins, USAF (Ret), President and CEO of MOAA. "We thank Sen. Jones for his leadership on this issue, and we encourage their fellow legislators to join the fight.

"The need to solve this inequity is uniformly agreed-upon throughout Congress, but they haven't found the political will to resolve it," Atkins said. "The 116th Congress has an opportunity to be known for getting this done." Help them develop the will with your input!

THAT'S A WRAP FOR MARCH

PACMOAA 2019 MEMBERSHIP FORM**FULL NAME:** _____ **NICKNAME:** _____**GRADE/RANK:** _____ **SERVICE:** _____ **BIRTH DATE:** _____**STATUS:** Active Retired Former Surviving Spouse**MAILING ADDRESS** _____
_____**EMAIL ADDRESS:** _____**HOME PHONE:** _____ **CELL PHONE:** _____**Civilian Occupation:** _____**MOAA Membership No.:** _____ (From MOAA card or Military Off. Mailing Label)**Spouse's Name:** _____ **Spouse's Nickname:** _____

Are you willing to serve as board member or on a committee? () Yes () No

PLEASE CIRCLE CORRECT AMOUNT: ANNUAL DUES ENCLOSED IS \$25.00 FOR REGULAR MEMBER OR \$20.00 FOR AUXILIARY MEMBER.**Make checks payable to PACMOAA and send mail to:****PACMOAA, PO Box 5353 , Portsmouth, VA 23703****DATE:** _____ **SIGNATURE:** _____**NOTE: For members joining after 1 July and before 1 January, \$12.50 for regular members and \$10.00 for auxiliary members**