



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.

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September 2019

FROM THE PRESIDENT

PACMOAA EARNS 9TH CONSECUTIVE 5-STAR LEVEL OF EXCELLENCE AWARD!!!



Our Leadership Team and active members have earned my personal gratitude and BZ for all their hard work over the past year and a job well done. I hope you all enjoyed the summer months and are ready to get back into our normal schedule with dinner meetings. It was great to see 28 attendees at our June meeting and to welcome back several members that had not been able to attend in some time - Peg Cicirelli, Dan Hartwell and Bruce LaLonde. Amanda York, one of our scholarship winners, was there in her I.C. Norcom JROTC uniform along with her parents, Susan and Franklin. She was very impressive in both her speech and dress. CW2 Redwood, Senior Leader of NJROTC at I.C. Norcom also attended to support Amanda. Ethan Nelson, the other scholarship winner, was not able to

attend as he graduated the next day and had many family members from out of town visiting. The Churchland MCJROTC under the direction of Gunnery Sgt Nash, presented the colors while Hal led the group in a beautiful rendition of the Star-Spangled Banner before we said the Pledge of Allegiance. Unfortunately, the JROTC cadets could not join us for dinner - they had to go home to study for exams Friday morning!

Other guests included Mary Donovan, guest of Doug Weller, and LCDR Paul Lucas, USN (Ret) potential PACMOAA member. Our guest speaker, CAPT Lennie Reed, Professor of Naval Science (ODU, NSU, & HU), and his wife Brenda, also participated in the camaraderie of the evening.

CAPT Reed gave an excellent review of the Naval ROTC program in general and how it exists in local colleges at this time. The purpose "is to educate and train qualified young men and women for service as commissioned officers in the Navy's unrestricted line, the Navy Nurse Corps and the Marine Corps". The program started in 1926 with 1 of the first 6 units being commanded by CAPT Chester Nimitz at the University of California. There are now 80 units. The ideal size unit is 150 cadets. There are only 6 units in Virginia with 3 of them in Hampton Roads (HR).



The units are small and technical at least 85% of the awardees have to have science and technical degrees and at least 65% of commissioned officers need the same. Another stipulation is scholarships can only be used for tuitions and associated fees. Locally, several students had to drop out when they couldn't pay their room and board!!

The local HR Consortium was established in 1982 and has 150- 200 cadets. It is one of the largest in the country and one of the most successful!! The NROTC program is very intense with 10 additional required courses over the 4-year program related to Naval science, history, ethics, etc. as well as physical training 4 X/week and summer training as well as the normal curriculum.

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CHAPTER NEWS

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

02 LABOR DAY / V-J DAY (Victory over Japan)	18 AIR FORCE BIRTHDAY
11 PATRIOT DAY	18 AIR NATIONAL GUARD BIRTHDAY
12 PACMOAA DINNER MEETING	20 NAT. POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY
	28 GOLD STAR MOTHER'S DAY

SEPTEMBER DINNER

Our dinner will be held on **Thursday September 12th** at the Hilton Garden Inn (HGI) Ballroom at 5921 Harbour View Boulevard in Northern Suffolk. [MAP](#) to HGI Harbour View. Social hour begins at 5:30 PM, dinner served at 6PM.

MENU

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

Cost is **\$30.00** (includes tax and gratuity) Please make your reservation no later than **Sunday, September 8th** with Sherry Ferki at 686-4650 or by email at navmed1@cox.net. Come join us for good company, good food and a good time.

A RESERVATION MADE IS A RESERVATION PAID.

SEPTEMBER PROGRAM

GUEST SPEAKER



MAJ Gallavan joined the Virginia Army National Guard in high school and served several years as an enlisted infantryman in Virginia, Maryland, and Texas while pursuing his bachelors and masters degrees. After Operation Noble Eagle, where he was mobilization in support of homeland defense following the attacks of 9/11/2001, he attended Officer Candidate School (OCS) and commissioned as an armor officer in 2003. His assignments include a 2005 deployment to Iraq as an armor platoon leader, a 2007 mobilized as executive officer for 2-183 Cavalry, a 2010 deployment as troop commander for A/2-183 Cavalry in Iraq, and a 2016-2017 deployment to Qatar as battalion executive officer for 1-116 Infantry. He has provided leadership for numerous National Guard Civil Support and State Active Duty missions; most recently hurricane support to the US Virgin Islands. MAJ Gallavan recently completed an assignment as brigade operations officer for the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team and now serves as Commander, 2-183 Cavalry headquartered in Portsmouth, VA. MAJ Gallavan lives in Glen Allen, VA with his wife, Vivian. They have been married since 2001 and are the proud parents of three children: Brett (15), Gavin (13), and Tori (9).

(Continued from page 1) **FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK**

The summer training is on a ship, submarine or plane which helps the cadets decide which field they prefer. Currently, scholarship midshipmen go to a 3-week Navy Boot Camp before graduation and do 3-week sea trials. One new initiative includes a new student indoctrination at Navy Boot Camp in Great Lakes the summer before the freshman year for all scholarship and select college programs. This is the first standardized orientation in NROTC history!! Another new initiative is for sea trials standardized graduation exercise in Newport/Mayport with the first pilot done last summer.

Across the country including in HR area, the number of eligible competitive college students have reduced due to a significant decrease in SAT scores from 2008 to 2018. One study showed a significant correlation with income, students from lower income families having lower SAT scores. NROTC Preparatory Programs have been designed to improve students' academic and life skills to the point they are prepared to compete in the rigorous academic challenges associated with the NROTC program. These programs are achieved by building partnerships with universities, high schools and non-profit organizations. Ideally, this initiative will increase minority candidates and other students with lower SAT

score to help increase diversity and be more reflective of our country. Select students meeting most of the qualifications for a scholarship except the required SAT scores are selected to attend the 1-year NROTC Preparatory Program and then may be eligible for a 4 year scholarship. Thus, some scholarship students may have 5 years of college before graduating/being commissioned. There are still 2 or 3 year scholarships available with students paying their first year or so. Previously expanded opportunities were with the Minority Serving Institutions Scholarship Reservation (MSISR) and NJROTC dedicated scholarships

This was a very interesting presentation and most timely at our annual dinner honoring our scholarship winners. I hope many of you will be able to attend out September and/or October meetings. Please keep our troops, veterans, their families and our country in your thoughts and prayers.



CAPT Reed with Cadet Amanda York, one of this year's scholarship recipients.

CHAPTER NEWS

WELCOME ABOARD

The Salute extends a hearty welcome to LCDR Paul Lucas and his wife Sharon from Smithfield.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The Joint Chapter Recruiting Event scheduled for 8 August at Patriots Colony in Williamsburg was canceled due to poor response from prospective members. This was the 3rd year PACMOAA as participating and hopefully, after review of planning for this year, it will occur next summer with better results. Currently, PACMOAA has 73 members with one new member - Paul Lucas. Unfortunately, PACMOAA member, Mary McLain, died since the last newsletter.

PERSONAL AFFAIRS

REMEMBERING CAPT RAYMOND CICIRELLI, USCG (RET)



Ray Cicirelli was a long-time member and he and Peg attended dinner meetings regularly until last year when Ray's health declined. Ray died on 10 April and a Celebration of His Life was held at Lake Prince Woods on 17 August.

Upon reading Ray's obituary in the *Virginian Pilot* on 4 August, it was apparent that he was an amazing man! He was the grandfather to 6 and beloved husband of Peg. His military career in the United States Coast Guard (USCG) lasted over 27 years and he received many medals and commendations including the National Defense Medal with a Bronze

Star. Ray's last assignment was as Chief of Homeland Security, USCGHQ, in Washington, D.C. and he retired in 1992. Ray and Peg moved to Portsmouth shortly after his retirement and continued their love of traveling including trips to Russia and Tibet. Ray reached his goal, "bucket list", of getting to all 50 states! He and Peg also hosted many Foreign Exchange Students for 2 - 3 weeks each summer from 1995-2007 and he treated them like his own children.

Ray's service orientation continued with many volunteer hours in organizations like Oasis, PACMOAA, the Lions Club and the American Red Cross. He worked in many leadership positions and received many accolades for his efforts. Ray was also very interested in technology and joined the South Hampton Roads User Group (SHRUG), a group interested in keeping up with technology. Keeping active even after moving to Lake Prince Woods was important to Ray and as long as he was able, he drove back and forth to the YMCA on Cedar Lane to play tennis with his "Partners", one of whom was Bob Parker.

Fifteen PACMOAA member and spouses were blessed to attend "A Celebration of the Life of Raymond Victor Cicirelli (Ray)" at Lake Prince Woods on 17 August. The room was packed with over 200 family members and friends. Steven Cicirelli, the oldest child, spoke about his reflections on life with his Dad and focused on his love for his family. A beautiful rendition of "I'll Be There" was very poignant. The USCG Honor Guard presented Military Honors, they unfurled the US flag Peg had received already, folded it, and presented it to Peg as well as playing TAPS.

Peg was happy to see so many people at the service and reception, some she had not seen in many years. Please keep her in your thoughts and prayers. She asked me again to let everyone know she really appreciated all the members that called, visited, and/or sent cards during Ray's illness and after he died.

REMEMBERING MARY FRANCIS MCLAIN

Longtime PACMOAA member, Mary McLain, died on 17 June 2019. She was active in the community and was a member of the Rivershore Baptist Church, REVIMS, Scottish Rite Ladies, Ladies Auxiliary Fleet Reserve, Beasley Center, Woman's Club of Portsmouth, Ladies Shriners of North America, "Retired Officers Club" - per obituary, Red Hatters of Ole Town in Portsmouth, Red Hatters Scarlet Bell and the Portsmouth Moose.

Mary had not been able to attend in some time but called me in June to complain that we had not remembered her birthday in the May newsletter!!

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES OVER SUMMER 2019**26 June MOAA SE Regional Legislative Affairs Committee Meeting**

A “(MOAA) Southeastern Regional Legislative Committee” was formed in July 2018 to review on-going legislative issues at both the Federal and State level and to formulate initiatives, when necessary and appropriate, to support and protect the benefits and entitlements of military members (Active Duty, National Guard, and Reserve), veterans, retirees, and their families in southeastern Virginia. The Committee is officially recognized as a “non-voting” member of the (MOAA) Council of Chapters and is comprised of the “Directors of Government Relations” from the following MOAA chapters:

- The Hampton Roads Chapter (HRCMOAA)
- The Portsmouth Chapter (PACMOAA)
- The Virginia Peninsula Chapter (VIPMOAA)

On Tuesday, June 26, 2019, the Committee hosted a meeting with representatives from the District Offices of Senators Mark Warren (D) and Tim Kaine (D) and Representative Elaine Luria (D, VA-02) at the Town Point Club in Norfolk, VA. The representatives who attended included Charlotte M. Hurd, Military Liaison for Senator Warner, Diane Kaufmann, Regional Director – Eastern VA, for Senator Kaine, and Terra N. Johnson, Constituent Services Representative for Representative Luria. The overall purpose of the meeting was to discuss three objectives considered to be of major importance to the committee:

- The SBP/DIC Off-Set Penalty (“Widows Tax”)
- On-going (negative) changes to Military Health Care
- Proposed reductions to the active duty “Medical Corps”

While all three objectives were considered important, the Committee determined that discussing the need for gaining the support of Virginia’s Legislators to eliminate the hideous, long-standing “Widows Tax” issue was of primary importance. In order to reinforce its importance, the Committee invited “Surviving Spouses” of military members who have been victimized by the inequity as well as others who have prominent “Surviving Spouse” roles at MOAA National.

- Mrs. Pat Farnsworth, VIPMOAA Chapter member & member of the MOAA National “Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee”
- Ms. Barbara Smith, Hampton Roads Chapter & member of the MOAA National “Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee”
- Ms. Jackie Peters, “Surviving Spouse,” VIPMOAA Chapter
- Ms. Kristen Fenty, “Surviving Spouse,” Hampton Roads Chapter

Following the conclusion of the meeting, all attendees unanimously expressed the value the meeting had and were pleased they had the opportunity to participate. *Copied from VIPMOAA August newsletter*

Excerpt from email sent to VCOC President, COL Dan Warren, USA (Ret) on 1 July:

At week end, Diane from Senator Kaine's Virginia Beach Office called me indicating that the SPB DIC Offset Issue went to voice vote on the Senate Floor this last week for inclusion in the NDAA. Understand that it did not pass. To this update, {I would} like to further discuss with you as always, ensure we have your most recent perspective.

CDR Linc Smith, USNR (Ret)
Legislative Committee Chair
HRCMOAA

Follow Up: As of 27 August, Senator Kaine is still the only Virginia congressman to NOT support the repeal of the "Widow's Tax" or to respond to his constituents' emails on this issue!! **Please call him at his local office in Virginia Beach at 757-518-1674 or email at <https://www.kaine.senate.gov/>.** You may cut and paste or type a short message, but cannot mix both types of entries in same message box.

14 July VCOC Meeting

On Wednesday 17 July I attended the VCOC meeting in Richmond. Here are a few highlights.

1. Virginia War Memorial. The council wishes to make a \$1000 contribution to have a plaque placed there to recognize VCOC as a supporter. Expect to hear more about this.
2. MOAA Mobile. Chapters and individuals are asked to assist in purchasing a new vehicle for Amelia.
3. Congressional Luncheon. We are asked to be more exact in planning for our guests who will or will not eat the lunch.
4. JLC. It was aired that JLC is having a lesser influence in choosing objectives for the state. We should work to change this situation. Chapters need more voice. JLC was scheduled to meet on 25 July.
5. Widows Tax. The house has voted to repeal the offset but the senate is dragging its feet.
6. Legislative Committee. In recent times the committee has not met as in the past. Those meetings are to be reestablished as separate meetings.
7. MOAA NE Regional Meeting to be held 6-7 September in Hershey, PA. Four reps from each chapter may attend. Housing and meals to be covered by MOAA.
8. Surviving Spouse rep as a VCOC appointed position. Volunteers are requested. Chapters are asked to send their surviving spouse reps to the VCOC meetings.
9. SE Regional Legislative Committee. Jim Pauls of VIPMOAA reported on the meeting held with HRMOAA and PACMOAA. VCOC elected to not cover expenses for the meeting (\$436) but expressed appreciation for their efforts toward repealing the "Widows Tax" in Meeting with the local reps for Senators Warner and Kaine.
10. MOAA Storming of the Hill in Washington in April. They advocated for repealing the Widows tax, military pay raises, and stabilization of TRICARE fees.
11. Officers nominated for election at the next VCOC meeting.
 - President -Nix, VIPMOAA
 - I VP Link Smith, HRCMOAA
 - II VP Dolly Cherrington, PACMOAA
 - III VP Frank Wickersham, NVCMOAA
 - Secretary -Open
 - Treasurer Jim Stephen, PACMOAA.

12. Next VCOC Meeting 9 October, 1400 hrs. Biennial Luncheon at Patriots Colony. Williamsburg. All chapter members welcomed.

Respectfully submitted
Hal Hostetler, COL USA RET

1 Aug Chesapeake Town Hall Meeting with U.S. Representatives Bobby Scott and Donald McEachin

On 1 August CWO3 Karl Wilson and I attended a town hall meeting with U.S. Representatives Bobby Scott (D-3rd District) and Donald McEachin (D-4th District) on Access to Affordable Health Care. We thanked them for their support for voting to repeal the "Widows Tax" and attempted to explain the issue for the audience. We asked Scott to use his influence with Senator Kaine to get his support. He responded publicly that we could count on Senator Kaine's support. We also commended him for being recognized as one of the hardest working men in congress and "one of the 50 most beautiful people in Washington." We got a good laugh

Hal Hostetler
COL USA RET

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES OVER THE SUMMER

PACMOAA 2019 Scholarship Recipients

Thank you to the Scholarship Committee members this year: Co-Chair Scott Dickinson, Ben Barnard, Lynn Terry and Sherry Ferki. The online application and grading forms that Scott set up in 2017 really facilitated the review process. There were 4 applicants for the two 2019 PACMOAA scholarships; all were in JROTC and 3 had GPAs over 3.6 with one of those over 4.0!



It is amazing how the selected students could maintain such good grades while participating in many extracurricular activities such as sports, clubs, fine arts and community activities as well as providing leadership in some of these endeavors.

Both recipients selected are very competitive and well-rounded students: Ethan Nelson from Grassfield High School and Amanda York from I.C. Norcom High School. Both are outstanding students that maintained excellent grades while being active in JROTC and in JROTC leadership positions (both made all A's in their JROTC classes), school sports, school clubs and school leadership positions.

Ethan plans to attend Marion Military Institute which is a prep school similar to what CAPT Reed discussed in his presentation at the June dinner meeting. After that he will attend the Air Force Academy. His major is mechanical engineering. Ethan had a 4.24 average and was 85th out of 530 students at the end of 2018!! He took all Honors, AP and STEM (his were in engineering) courses. Per one of his reference letters: "He balances a rigorous STEM schedule with demands of being a member of the varsity cross country and track team while serving as being co-captain for the cross-country team". In addition to these activities, Ethan is the corresponding secretary for the 2018-2019 National Honor Society and had more than 200 volunteer hours with the YMCA's Leadership club as well as serving as the club's Vice President. Related to his major, he worked for an engineering firm 2 summers, the first as an intern and the second as an employee. His supervisor at that engineering firm wrote an outstanding letter of reference for Ethan. During his JROTC career, Ethan attained the rank of

Technical Sgt and was a Flight Captain. These are some of the accomplishments of Ethan during his high school career.

Amanda had a 3.6 GPA with a 4.0 her senior year. She also was involved in many school activities/clubs, leadership positions and NJROTC JROTC leadership positions included the Commanding Officer in her junior year. She was not able to participate in JROTC her senior year due to conflicts with courses she needed. Amanda planned to attend ODU and major in chemistry/pre-med. She was supposed to enroll in July and then sign up for ROTC. Unfortunately, I have not been able to reach her despite leaving 2 voice mail messages and sending 2 emails as of 27 August.

PACMOAA again offers our congratulations and best wishes for successful college experiences and military careers.

Submitted by Sherry Ferki, Scholarship Committee Co-Chair.

Joint Chapter Brunch on July 14th



The Portsmouth Chapter (PAC), the Hampton Roads Chapter (HRC), and the Virginia Peninsula Chapter (VIP) of MOAA hosted a brunch mixer at Smithfield Station in Smithfield from 0900 to 1200. About 50 members, spouses and guests from all chapters attended. PACMOAA had 27 attendees and it was wonderful to see several members/couples that had not been able to attend in some time due to health problems - Bob Alexander, Jim and Pamela Stephan, and Steve and Paula Turner!! The buffet was delicious and as usual, it was a great time for fellowship and camaraderie. Unfortunately, I was on crutches and unable to visit everyone as

I usually do and Gordon was out of town so PACMOAA did not take pictures. I received the above pictures from Bert Ortiz of the Hampton Roads Chapter. Thanks Bert!!

JROTC Hampton Roads Senior Leadership Camp August 2019



I attended the Hampton Roads Senior Leadership Camp (HR SLC) ceremony held 1100 hrs, Friday, 16 August at Camp Pendleton, Virginia Beach. This outstanding event was overseen by our own Lt Col Paul Pratt. Thirty-one cadets from five different schools, plus Navy Sea Cadets, representing Marine and Navy JROTC programs participated in this demanding “reveille to taps” mentally and physically challenging course. Trainers included JROTC support staff, college ROTC personnel, and current National Guard members. The cadets were all chosen leaders for next year. Classroom emphasis

was on leadership, bearing, etc. Extensive field work included PT, obstacle courses, group problem solving, small raft training, rappelling, rope and slide for life activities at the Virginia Aquarium’s Adventure Park, live fire training, and a trip to the Oceana Naval Air Station.

The printed program expressed thanks to PACMOAA with special thanks to Dolly Cherrington, Bob Steorts, Sherry Ferki, Margaret Cicirelli, and Hans Sachse. PACMOAA and PACMOAA members donated money to support 7 of the Churchland MCJROTC cadets!!! After “Staff Awards” were presented, I had the privilege of speaking and presenting the Honor Graduate Award to the Commander of the Cadet Company, Cadet Sergeant Miles Johnson of Churchland High School.

Col Pratt presented a dynamic report to the audience on the week’s activities. He then went through the cadet ranks with Cadet Johnson and spoke with and congratulated each of the cadets formed in two platoons. At the end he presented me with a magnificent photo of the cadets at Oceana.

I thoroughly enjoyed the entire gratifying spectacle in which I was proud to participate. I whole heartedly recommend that we continue to support the HR SLC in the future and that others of PACMOAA will seek the opportunity to give toward it and attend this celebratory event.



Hal Hostetler, COL USA RET, Secretary and Past President, PACMOAA

CHAPLAIN’S CORNER by Bob Steorts, Chaplain

This poem was written by a terminally ill young girl in a New York Hospital. It was sent by a medical doctor - she wants it shared with as many people as possible.

SLOW DANCE

Have you ever watched kids on a merry-go-round? Or listened to the rain slapping on the ground?

Ever followed a butterfly's erratic flight? Or gazed at the sun into the fading night?

You better slow down. Don't dance so fast. Time is short. The music won't last.

Do you run through each day on the fly? When you ask, "How are you?" Do you hear the reply?
When the day is done, do you lie in your bed, with the next hundred chores running through your
head?

You'd better slow down. Don't dance so fast. Time is short. The music won't last.

Ever told your child, We'll do it tomorrow? And in your haste, Not see his sorrow?

Ever lost touch, let a good friendship die. Cause you never had time To call and say, 'Hi'

You'd better slow down. Don't dance so fast. Time is short. The music won't last.

When you run so fast to get somewhere, You miss half the fun of getting there.

When you worry and hurry through your day, It is like an unopened gift.... Thrown away.

Life is not a race. Do take it slower. Hear the music. Before the song is over.

This beautiful poem should be an inspiration to all of us!! It was forwarded to PACMOAA by LT COL Herb DeGroft, USMC (Ret), a long-time member from Smithfield. THANK YOU, HERB, for this poem

IMPORTANT LEGISLATIVE ISSUES NEEDING ACTION NOW!

MOAA has been sending out frequent emails and alerts on Facebook about 2 items impacting the military community at this time. One of the topics on the 22 August MOAA Newsletter was "Join MOAA's Summer Storm to Support Widows and Prevent Cuts Before It's Too Late." There are many articles in the MOAA magazine and on line about both issues. The harm caused by the widows offset which subtracts the money received from the VA disability payment from their spouse's retirement SBP pay. Some widows lose \$12,000/year! The other significant issue is the cut in Military Medical Billets. 18,000 medical billets are due to be cut (20% of personnel) without any acknowledgement of the impact on overall readiness, recruiting and retention, graduate medical education and support of beneficiaries. Provision of care for dependents and retirees will probably be reduced as administered through the Military Health Care System.

On Wednesday 28 August 2019 the Defense Health Agency had a posting on Facebook about "Military Health care consolidation moving to the next phase" - the article is available at www.health.mil. These changes to the medical system begin on **1 October 2019!** The article focuses on the transparent rather than disruptive changes health care beneficiaries should experience. It discusses the consolidation of all the service hospitals and clinics and the ease of data sharing with one system as well as implementation of an electronic medical record. It does **not** mention the reduction of 18,000 medical billets or its impact!!! **Please write or call your legislators or go to the MOAA website (takeaction.moaa.org) and ([DHA 20% reduction of medical personnel](#)) express your concerns about both of these IMPORTANT issues.**

Senator Kaine 804-771-2221 231 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Warner 804-775-2314 703 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510

Rep. Bobby Scott 757-380-1000 1201 Longworth House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515

Submitted by Sherry Ferki, MAJ, USA (Ret.)