



# 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.

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LEARN MORE AT [PACMOAA.ORG](http://PACMOAA.ORG)

JANUARY 2020

## FROM THE PRESIDENT



I hope you all had a good Christmas/holiday season and Happy New Year and that you were able to enjoy spending time with family and friends. The beautiful Christmas lights and holiday decorations are gone and now it is time to get back into our normal routine.

The annual Christmas social was a huge success with 42 members, spouses and guests attending. We welcomed several guests: CWO3 Randolph Mann, new MCJROTC instructor at Churchland High School; Martha Paulette, dear friend of Betty Lambdin and guest of Bob and Gladys Steorts; and Darlene Washington, the Portsmouth Volunteers for the Homeless Executive Director. It was great to see several new members attending with their spouses: Jim and Nancy Jones, Bill and Karen Smith, and Van and Elle White! As always, it was wonderful to see so many of our regular attendees, including Ruth Skelton (Brenda Hostetler's Mom and regular attendee at our Christmas Gala) and some members that had not been able to attend in a while like Conrad Strickland and Bob Brewer who was accompanied by his wife Cindy! The facility was beautifully decorated and the service was very good! Delicious food, wonderful music provided by the Tidewater Concert Band, and gift exchange all contributed to a relaxing and enjoyable evening. Hal read the "Night Before Christmas" with his usual flair and sang several songs, including Mexican and Hawaiian Christmas songs. The Grinch made an appearance as Hal sang "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch". Hal's facial expressions during the song were priceless and the Grinch lifted items from several band members but all were returned! Santa also made an appearance with his VMI bag and helped distribute pollyanna gifts! PACMOAA members contributed to a box of gifts for Toys for Tots. Lt Col Pratt (the Senior Instructor for the Marine Corps JROTC) had two of his US Marine Corps JROTC cadets (from Churchland High School) in uniform to collect the gifts. It was a pleasure to meet and talk with Lt Col Pratt, Cadet Bryson Bailey and Cadet Miles Johnson while they were collecting the toys and as they joined us for dinner. Members also donated many supplies for the Portsmouth Volunteers for the Homeless - Darlene Washington was amazed at how much was contributed and very thankful for our generosity. In addition to these 2 donation boxes, members donated to the Baby Pantry for the USCG base in Portsmouth. Thanks to all of you for these most needed and appreciated donations. We will continue to collect monthly donations to be used for the homeless in Portsmouth - laundry detergent, toothbrushes, and small personal size toiletries are greatly needed- and for the young enlisted personnel for baby items.

There are many challenges facing PACMOAA, MOAA and the military community in the coming year.

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[CLICK HERE FOR LEADERSHIP](#)



## CHAPTER NEWS

### JANUARY CALENDAR

01 NEW YEARS DAY	20 MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY
07 ORTHODOX CHRISTMAS	25 CHINESE NEW YEAR
09 PACMOAA DINNER MEETING	27 INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST
14 VCOC MEETING	REMEMBRANCE DAY

### JANUARY DINNER

Our dinner will be held on **Thursday January 9<sup>th</sup>** at the Hilton Garden Inn (HGI) Ballroom at 5921 Harbour View Boulevard in Northern Suffolk.

**Social hour begins at 5:30 PM, dinner served at 6:30PM.**

#### MENU

Iceberg Tossed Salad with Ranch or Italian Dressing

Pork Tenderloin with Apples

Jasmine Rice

Green Beans Almandine and Rolls

Chef's Choice Dessert

Coffee and Hot Water for Tea Station Water and Ice Tea

Cost is **\$30.00** (includes tax and gratuity). Please make your reservation no later than **Sunday, January 5<sup>th</sup>** with Sherry Ferki at 686-4650 or by email at [navmed1@cox.net](mailto:navmed1@cox.net). Come join us for good company, good food and a good time.

**A RESERVATION MADE IS A RESERVATION PAID.**

### JANUARY PROGRAM

#### GUEST SPEAKER



Col Boyd Nix USAF (Ret) graduated from Old Dominion University in 1968 with a BS degree in Chemistry and Biology. He received his commission from Officer Training School Lackland AFB, Texas August 1968. He entered Undergraduate Pilot Training (UPT) Class 70-B at Randolph AFB, Texas in September 1968. His first operational assignment was to an Air Defense Squadron in North Dakota. He volunteered for

Vietnam shortly after arriving and 10 months later he was assigned to the 7ACCS EC-130 Airborne Command and Control Center at Udorn RTAFB, Thailand. From March 1971 to March 1972 he flew 100 night combat missions in LAOS in support of the air and ground campaign in Laos. Other flying assignments were the SAC EC-135 Airborne Launch Control (ALCS), and the NORAD E-3 Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS). During his 31 years in the USAF he served as Crew Commander, Flight Commander, and Squadron Commander. His non-flying duties included serving as Tactical Operations Officer on the Joint Staff and Executive Officer and Deputy Division Chief on the Air Staff at the Pentagon. After promotion to a Colonel, he was assigned Director, Sector Operations (SOC) at the Northeast Air Defense Sector (NEADS) at Griffiss AFB, New York. His final assignment was

as Chief, Armaments Cooperation Division and National Armaments Director Representative (NADREP) at the US Mission to NATO Headquarters Brussels, Belgium. His military education includes graduate of the Squadron Officer School, Armed Forces Staff College and Air War College. He earned his Masters Degree in Public Administration from the University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colorado. He retired in 1999 but was immediately recalled to serve another year in the job and finally retired a second time in 2000. Col Nix's Awards include: The Defense Superior Service Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Meritorious Service Medal with 3 Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Medal 2 Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal, Combat Readiness Medal with 5 Oak Leaf Clusters, National Defense Service Medal with Star, Vietnam Service Medal with 3 Stars, Armed Forces Service Medal and Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal. After retirement he worked for 8 years as a contractor on the Air Force Joint Stars, Air Force Predator and Global Hawk (UAV) programs. Col Nix is married to the former Sharon Marie Chauret. They have three daughters, Michelle Marie Lyons, Laura Elizabeth Nix-Berg and Melissa Kathleen Nix.

COL Nix is the Immediate Past President of the Virginia Peninsula Chapter of MOAA (VIPMOAA) and was elected as the Virginia Council of Chapters (VCOC) President in October 2019. He will discuss VCOC after swearing in the new Leadership Team members.

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



CWO3 Karl Wilson, USA (Ret.) has been very diligent about getting info out about legislation pending in Congress and for Virginia with the assistance of COL Hal Hostetler, USA (Ret) and myself. Please read the MOAA updates and emails Karl, Hal, and/or I send out and respond to them if you can. We all know the challenges facing our country but the solution should not be primarily taken from the military community. We need to let our elected representatives know what our positions are and contact them regularly. See more detailed information later in the newsletter.

The VCOC 1st Quarter meeting will still take place on 14 January. Please contact Karl or Dolly if interested in attending.

I want to thank the Leadership Team members whose terms have expired. CDR Ken App, USN (Ret) has been the 1st VP for several terms and will move to positions as a member of the Leadership Team and Website Manager. CDR Scott Dickinson, USN (Ret) and CWO3 Karl Wilson, USA (Ret) ended their terms as Board of Directors members. The time and participation of these members were greatly appreciated.

COL Gordon Nelson, USA (Ret.) has done a wonderful job as newsletter editor and webmaster for many years but is unable to continue with either at this time. He really made our newsletter and website look very professional and both are full of important and relevant information. These resources are especially important for many of our members that are unable to attend meetings. CDR Ken App, USN (Ret) will be taking over both jobs but I am currently acting as Interim Newsletter Editor. I am looking forward to another productive year for our chapter. Please let me or any of our Leadership Team members know if you have any suggestions to improve PACMOAA. We may be the Elected Leadership Team but our mission is to represent



the membership. That is difficult to do without input so please let us know your ideas! Thank you all for your support and membership in PACMOAA. Please continue to keep our troops, their families and wounded warriors in your prayers.

Donations for Baby Pantry below and PVH below. Thank you all again for your generous contributions!!



### UPCOMING EVENTS FOR THIS QUARTER 2020

13 FEB: PACMOAA DINNER MEETING -Wisteria Perry discussing the Mariners Museum

20 FEB: PACMOAA BOARD MEETING

12 MAR: PACMOAA DINNER MEETING - Susan Lawver discussing Suicide Prevention

### MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The PACMOAA dues follow:

Regular members pay \$25.00/year

Auxiliary members pay \$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 money enables PACMOAA to pay for things like the newsletter; speaker expenses; VCOC dues and expenses; admin expenses like name tags, printing, postage and entertainment like the Tidewater Concert band that performed at our Christmas Gala.

**Remember that your membership is important.** Some members feel like they should not belong to an organization if they cannot be an active member, attending meetings and/or participating in PACMOAA activities. We would love to have all of you attend each meeting but that is not possible for many members. During our military careers and later in our lives, the time we can commit to any organization varies. As was noted in the 35th Anniversary presentation in April 2018, PACMOAA's missions include: 1. Member-ship, 2. Legislative Advocacy, and 3. Community Involvement. Without increased membership and engagement of the current membership, we will not be able to continue being effective in legislative advocacy and involvement with community advocacy.

Again, an important part of PACMOAA and MOAA membership is legislative involvement. Whether you are able to attend meetings or not, you can contact your Congressman and State Legislators about issues relevant to veterans. Your membership helps keep you updated on those issues. **Please help us protect the benefits of our veterans, retirees, reservists, National Guard and active duty military.**

PACMOAA ended 2019 with 7 new members and 4 deaths; thus ending the year with 71 members, continuing the decreasing yearly membership cycle with the exception of 2010 and 2017 when we had increases from the previous years.

***Please pay your dues as soon as possible*** so PACMOAA can continue to provide all these services. Please include the renewal form in this newsletter to help us update our records. Remember the effectiveness VCOC has in the state legislature is related to chapter membership! **Adding extra money to your dues check for the PACMOAA scholarship would be very helpful.** Thank you.

### Some members enjoying Christmas Gala below

Alice Fticsar and Donna App to the far left. Karl Wilson & Margaret Wilshusen to the right.  
Bob & Cindy Brewer center.



## PERSONAL AFFAIRS

PACMOAA and most organizations are always looking for new members and younger members. Many of our current members are getting 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.

*Bob Parker* (longtime member of PACMOAA, now living in an assisted living facility in Northern VA) and his wife, Eleanor, are both having more medical issues and every time I talk with Bob,

he asks to be remembered to all of his PACMOAA friends. He would love to hear from friends at PACMOAA.

*Gordon Nelson*, our longtime newsletter editor and website manager, is having more mobility and medical issues and cannot attend meeting at this time but is still assisting as much as possible at this time. You probably have noticed a difference in the pictures and format since May when I took over as Interim Newsletter Editor. Ken App and Hal Hostetler have been great taking pictures at events and sending them to me but none of us are as skilled as Gordon!!

*Dick Yesensky and his wife, Dianna*, both have been having medical issues over the last year or so and ask to be kept in our thoughts and prayers. Please let me know of any members having illness or being hospitalized.

Many of us are having mobility issues and needing to use assistive devices so please bear with us if we move a little slower. I will try to keep you updated when I find out of any issues so that we may be a more supportive community. As I've mentioned before, many PACMOAA members stepped up and helped me visit my Mom after she broke her hip and I was recuperating from foot surgery. If I can assist anyone else, I would be happy to as would many of our members.

SOME OF OUR MEMBERS DO NOT FEEL COMFORTABLE DRIVING AT NIGHT OR DURING THE DAY. SEVERAL PACMOAA MEMBERS HAVE VOLUNTEERED TO BRING MEMBERS TO MEETINGS OR OTHER APPOINTMENTS AS NEEDED. CONTACT SHERRY IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE AND WE WILL TRY TO HELP.

Thank you.

Sherry Ferki, Personal Affairs Officer

Home number: 686-4650 Cell: 630-5608

## LEGISLATIVE

The Virginia General Assembly convened on 8 January 2020 for a 60 day session. The official website is [viriniageneralassembly.gov](http://viriniageneralassembly.gov) to find out what is happening during the legislative session. Many issues being addressed may impact all of us so be sure to keep up with the issues and bills addressing them. VCOC will be working to ensure the JLC initiatives listed in the December newsletter are presented to our legislators. *Contacting legislators to let them know your thoughts/concerns on issues is very important during the session.*

### From MOAA Newsletter 2 January 2020 - Council and Chapter News

#### **President Signs NDAA: What the Law Includes, and What's Next**

By: Dan Merry

President Donald Trump signed the FY 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) on Dec. 20 in a ceremony at Joint Base Andrews, Md. Here's what's included in the NDAA:

**Pay Raise:** A 3.1% raise effective Jan. 1; the largest pay increase for troops in 10 years.

**TRICARE:** Congress approved no new fees or pharmacy increases in 2020. Previously agreed upon increases for medical and pharmacy copays will take effect in January 2020.

**Medical Billets:** A provision that addresses concerns regarding both medical readiness and beneficiary access to high quality care.

**Survivor Benefits:** After nearly 50 years, MOAA's efforts and the efforts of others finally paid off with the elimination of a financial penalty more than 65,000 military survivors face, known as the "widows tax."

**Guard and Reserve:** For those National Guard and Reserve servicemembers who served on 12304B orders, such service will now count toward their active duty time to lower the age when they receive their retirement pay.

**Medical Malpractice:** To address non-combat related military medical malpractice, the NDAA directs DoD to develop a regulation for negligent malpractice to be addressed through the military legal system. This provides a framework of redress for servicemembers who have suffered from medical malpractice.

**Spouse and Family:** After identifying significant health and safety concerns in military housing, MOAA elevated these issues to DoD and Congress, culminating with congressional hearing that built the foundation of legislation to direct improvements. This bill underwrites the most comprehensive military housing reform since 1996.

## Your 2020 Military and Benefits Forecast from MOAA Newsletter

**2 January 2020 (Modified by Interim Newsletter Editor)** December 24, 2019

*(A version of this article by [Gina Harkins](#) originally appeared in the January 2020 issue of Military Officer, a magazine available to all MOAA Premium and Life members.)*

MOAA members can expect a host of changes to their benefits in 2020, along with lots of shifts in how the military is preparing for a new kind of fight.

This year, elections could shake up congressional committees, new TRICARE pharmacy fees and commissary benefits go into effect, and service leaders continue grappling with threats from China, Iran, North Korea, and Russia.

That all points to big changes for troops, veterans, retirees, and their families. Here's a look at what to expect in 2020.

### Your 2020 Benefits Forecast

**New dental and vision premiums.** TRICARE beneficiaries enrolled in the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Benefits Program — or FEDVIP — will likely see a bump in premium costs this year. (Note: discussed in November PACMOAA newsletter)

**Blue-water Navy claims.** After years of fighting for benefits, veterans who served near Vietnam and have serious illnesses believed to be caused by Agent Orange can now file disability claims with the VA.

The Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019 went into effect Jan. 1. Veterans who served on vessels operating within 12 nautical miles of Vietnam and Cambodia who are now suffering from one of 14 illnesses believed to be tied to a dangerous herbicide used between Jan. 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975, could qualify for benefits.

“VA is dedicated to ensuring that all veterans receive the benefits they have earned,” VA Secretary Robert Wilkie said after President Donald Trump signed the bill into law.

**New TRICARE pharmacy rates.** TRICARE beneficiaries who don’t get their prescriptions from DoD military treatment facilities could face prescription fees as high as \$60 per medication starting Jan. 1.

TRICARE retail and mail-in prescription drug costs will continue rising for the next seven years. This year, users could see as much as 18% cost jumps in medications they get from retail pharmacies and a 42% spike in mail-order options. **More details on MOAA website**

Generic drug options for both retail and mail-in prescriptions will see the biggest cost percentage increases since 2019. Expect to pay \$13 for 30 days’ worth of a generic drug purchased at a retail pharmacy and \$10 for a 60-day mail-in supply.

MOAA continues to urge DoD officials to be transparent about the revenue generated by the cost increases and where funds are being directed.

**Commissary benefits expand.** Your local commissary could get a bit more crowded in 2020 as about 3 million more people get access to the stores starting Jan. 1.

All service-connected disabled veterans, Purple Heart recipients, caregivers, and former POWs are now allowed to shop at military exchanges and commissaries. Officials have called the change, which was included in the 2019 Defense Authorization Act, the biggest patron expansion in more than six decades.

The Coast Guard Exchange System also recently opened to all civil-service employees with any Department of Homeland Security agency. Capt. Bruce Brown, the Coast Guard Community Services’ commanding officer, called that move a “historic expansion.” **More details on MOAA website**

**Your 2020 Military Forecast detailed on MOAA website**

**Military housing concerns.** See MOAA website: [MOAA Addresses Military Housing Issues at Readiness Summit](#)

MOAA provided a briefing on privatized military housing legislative issues during the 2019 Congressional Military Family Summit in the fall and will continue advocating that lawmakers help address any shortfalls in upcoming legislation.

**New promotion rules for Air Force officers.** See MOAA website.

**A stronger Pacific presence.** As tensions with China heat up, more troops will spend time in the Asia-Pacific region.

The Marine Corps is preparing for more naval operations in the Pacific. And the Army will test its ability to rapidly deploy up to 10,000 soldiers from the U.S. to locations throughout Asia-Pacific region — including areas near the South China Sea, where it's likely to send a big signal to China.

## SURVIVING SPOUSE CORNER

**From MOAA Newsletter 2 January 2020 2019 — A Year in Review**

*The Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee looks back at its accomplishments from the past year and highlights its goals for 2020.*

By Anne Hartline, Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee

**New Surviving Spouse Liaison Training** — A highlight of the year was the development of Surviving Spouse Liaison Training at MOAA's regional leadership conferences. Reactions and evaluations have been very positive, with appreciation for information and opportunities to share ideas on how to help surviving spouses continue to feel included in the military and MOAA family.

**Virtual Chapter Growth** — The membership of Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter continues to grow, with 126 surviving spouses from 28 different states. The next meeting will be Jan. 21 at 1 p.m., Eastern. For more information, email [mssvco2@gmail.com](mailto:mssvco2@gmail.com) or go to [the surviving spouse section of MOAA.org](#).

**Advocacy Efforts** — SSAC members stormed the Hill with MOAA in April with television station WUSA09 in Washington, D.C., recording our visit with Sen. Doug Jones and others.

**Newsletter Content** — Members of the committee wrote a monthly "Surviving Spouse Corner," which can be found on [MOAA.org](#).

**Surviving Spouse Liaison Excellence Award** — We selected Jayne Henley-Davis, surviving spouse liaison for the Hawaii Aloha Chapter, as the 2019 recipient of Surviving Spouse Liaison Excellence Award. [Read more about her work and service to her chapter on MOAA website.](#)

In 2020, we will face new challenges and opportunities, including selecting three new committee members. Our goals for 2020 include increasing the number of surviving spouse members at the chapter and national levels; growing the Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter; increasing the number of state council surviving spouse liaisons; and developing and conducting activities at national MOAA meetings for both spouses and surviving spouses.

## CLOSING THOUGHTS

**IT SUDDENLY HIT ME LIKE A TON OF BRICKS!!!**



I Just Realized Something :  
 My dog sleeps about 20 hours a day.  
 He has his food prepared for him.  
 His meals are provided at no cost to him.  
 He visits the Dr. once a year for his checkup and again during the year, if any medical needs arise.  
 For this he pays nothing, and nothing is required of him.  
 He lives in a nice neighborhood in a house that is much larger than he needs, but he is not required to do any upkeep.  
 If he makes a mess, someone else cleans it up.  
 He has his choice of luxurious places to sleep.  
 He receives these accommodations absolutely free.  
 He is living like a king and has absolutely no expenses whatsoever.  
 All of his costs are picked up by others who earn a living.  
 I was just thinking about all this, suddenly it hit me like a ton of bricks  
**MY dog is a CONGRESSMAN!!!**

### BELATED JANUARY BIRTHDAY WISHES TO :

Ben Barnard  
 Bob Brewer  
 Alice Fticsar  
 Dan Hartwell  
 Rick Titi  
 Jeff Westling  
 Van B. White Jr.

# THAT'S A WRAP FOR JANUARY 2020