



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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MAY 2020

FROM THE PRESIDENT



I hope all of you and your families are doing okay as we continue to shelter in place. Even though Virginia started Phase 1 of reopening on 15 May, we don't know how long that will last before we can move on to the next phase. With the uncertainty about the evolving COVID 19 status in Virginia and locally, it seems prudent to cancel the June dinner meeting. As a nurse and a "high risk" person, I just want to remind you that wearing a mask is helping those around you but generally doesn't give significant protection to you, unless those you encounter are also wearing masks. I have spoken to management at Kroger and at my Dr's office about the lack of appropriate infection control practices to protect myself and others! Most of us have been in management positions and know you cannot correct inappropriate behavior unless you are aware it exists.

Continuing to stay in touch with family and friends via phone calls, emails, text messages and social media are important for all of us. I have participated in several virtual meetings via ZOOM over the past month and it was great to see friends again!

In addition to our concerns about the COVID 19 pandemic, remember 1 June is the beginning of hurricane season and we all need to review our evacuation routes and supplies, including food and water. See more detailed information from the American Red Cross later in the newsletter.

Unfortunately, many of our members are not able to get out and provide assistance to other members as we have in the past but there are many groups in neighborhoods and communities that are reaching out to assist. It has been truly inspiring to see the camaraderie in our area and throughout the nation with people pulling together and helping when and where they can. As a nurse, I can't tell you how wonderful it is to see the recognition first responders and health care provider have received over the past few months. I realize how much I've taken other workers for granted when I go to the grocery store or pharmacy and see how hard they are working to help us. A smile and or/thank you can make someone's day especially if it's been difficult.

Please remember to keep our service members deployed around the country protecting the civilian population, those stationed through the U.S. and the world as well as their families and all our veterans in your thoughts and prayers. "Never Stop Serving".



CHAPTER NEWS

MAY CALENDAR – NAT.MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH

08 V-E DAY	13 NAVY NURSE CORPS (1908)
08 MIL.SPOUSE APPRECIATION DAY	15 WOMEN'S ARMY AUX. CORP (1942)
09-17 ARMED FORCES WEEK	16 ARMED FORCES DAY
10 MOTHERS DAY	25 MEMORIAL DAY

TENTATIVE UPCOMING EVENTS FOR SPRING/SUMMER

All May and June events canceled.

25 MAY: 136th Annual Portsmouth Memorial Day Parade canceled

25 MAY: Virtual Commonwealth's Memorial Day ceremony virtual broadcast via www.dvs.virginia.gov

28 MAY: Virtual PACMOAA Board Meeting

2 JULY: Virtual VCOC Quarterly Meeting

JULY OR AUGUST: Possible dinner/luncheon TBD

AUGUST: PACMOAA BOARD MEETING - Date/if virtual or in person TBD

Remember that your membership is important. It is one of our three main objectives/goals. 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.

PACMOAA had 60 paid members, including 6 life members and 6 new members, as of 15 May 2020. There were 71 members at the end of 2019 and one of those moved so **there are still 13 members that have not renewed yet.**

Recruiting has been going well this year with 6 new members for the year compared to 7 new members for 2019!! Many thanks to our membership chair, Dolly Cherrington, and to those members that have invited guests to dinners as prospective members.

If you have not done so, **please pay your dues as soon as possible!!** Please include the renewal form in this newsletter to help us update our records. If you're not sure if you've paid or not, please check with our membership chair, Dolly Cherrington, at dcherrington@earthlink.com or with our treasurer, Hans Sachse at hsachse@earthlink.com. 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 for your membership and ongoing support!

LEGISLATIVE

Write to Congress to Evaluate Military Health System Reform against COVID-19 Lessons Learned

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused extraordinary flux in the civilian health care system together with increased demands on uniformed medical providers. Act now to urge Congress to halt plans to cut uniformed medical personnel and reduce military treatment facility capacity.

Take action on MOAA website at takeaction.moaa.org or call your legislators!!

VIRTUAL STORMING THE HILL 2020 – This can be accessed online by clicking on Advocacy on the MOAA homepage

While the ongoing pandemic forced the cancellation of in-person events connected to Storming the Hill 2020, MOAA will continue its advocacy mission with a Virtual Storm highlighting the need to protect the military health care benefit earned by millions of servicemembers, past and present.

Check this website for Virtual Storm news, resources, and updates. You can download materials below, as well as find links to send critical messages to your legislators.

Questions? Contact MOAA's Member Support Center at msc@moaa.org or call (800) 234-6622. To learn more about joining MOAA, click [here](#).

PRESERVE MILITARY HEALTH CARE

- **ISSUE PAPER:** [Congress Must Evaluate Military Health System Reform against COVID-19 Lessons Learned \(PDF\)](#).
- **TAKE ACTION:** Ask your members of Congress to join the fight to halt billet reductions and end military treatment facility downsizing amid COVID-19 uncertainty.
 - [Call your lawmaker](#)
 - [Send a letter to your lawmaker](#)
- **GET SOCIAL:** Share the importance of this issue on social media using #MOAASstorms on social media, and keep up with (and share) the latest from MOAA on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [other social platforms](#). Already on Twitter? [Send a Tweet now](#).
- **MORE NEWS:** Get the latest on [your health care benefits](#).

STORMING PARTICIPANTS

Were you scheduled to Storm the Hill with MOAA this year? Storming team leaders have a role in this Virtual Storm; please click [here](#) for details (login required).

Formerly registered stormers can click [here](#) to download information related to travel reimbursement.

Having trouble logging into the participant site? Please email msc@moaa.org or call [\(800\) 234-6622](tel:(800)234-6622).

ADDENDUM: by Sherry Ferki - I have participated in several webinars per the need to initially stop and to now reassess both the military and civilian section functioning. A few very interesting facts per the history of these changes include: originally restructuring was looking at best utilization of resources and skills, e.g., a surgeon in a small military hospital might infrequently perform certain procedures versus a larger medical facility that performed the same procedure/surgery frequently. Theoretically, the patients would receive better care in the larger facility, both from a surgical and nursing standpoint. 2017 report was supposed to show plan for accomplishing this but that was not done. In 2018, Sec. Maddox noted the big focus was readiness and affordability. - To help accomplish this 18,000 medical billets were shifted to a "lethality"/warrior role. **This was NOT the original intent of the restructuring.**

Any contact you can make with your legislators looking at the points in the issue paper would be most helpful. Please let me know if you are successful in talking with any legislators or their aides as MOAA is trying to keep track of our success in communicating with our legislators per this issue.

MINUTES FROM 2ND QTR VCOC MEETING 8 MAY 2020

Note: this VCOC meeting was held via ZOOM and several members experienced technical difficulties including myself. Highlights included below.

- 1. President's Report** included mention of Virtual Storming the Hill from 1 May – 30 May. Boyd Nix (VCOC President), Linc Smith (VCOC 1st VP) and I (representing PACMOAA and the Military Uniformed Services Nurse Advocate Virtual Chapter) participating in the training session via webinar on 30 April 2020). More information to be included on this elsewhere in this newsletter!
- 2. Communication and Public Affairs:**
 - Reviewed all the chapters as well as VCOC that received 5 Star Award – 11 chapters from VCOC recognized. NOTE: PACMOAA has not entered this in some time but will do so for 2020!
 - Chapters were encouraged to send in articles per chapter activities like scholarships, etc.
- 3. Membership and Chapter Affairs:** There are several Shenandoah Chapters that were discussed. Apparently 2 chapters are having difficulty maintaining their status as a chapter,

and may have to possibly disband or becoming satellite chapters like one other VCOC chapter. Jim Stephan reviewed the written report Dolly sent in.

4. Legislative Report: Frank Wickersham:

- JLC 2020 Initiatives reviewed – See discussed below.
- JLC Legislative Initiatives timeline for 2021 discussed per Leg. Committee.
 - 22 July – VSOs present initiatives for 2021 but it was noted that for this year, legislators started sending in bills for 2020 issues!
 - 21 Oct – Vote on issues and rank them
 - 16 Dec – Meet with Board of Veterans Services
- VCOC Congressional Awards voted on nominations at Legislative Committee meeting preceding this meeting.
 - Congressional Legislator of the Year for Virginia Congressman Denver Riggleman (VA-5)
 - State Legislator of the Year – Senator Bryce Reeve (D-17)

5. **Discussion per MOAA mobility carts.** “All three Virginia Veteran Cemeteries in Amelia, Dublin & Suffolk report high value from the MOAA mobility carts currently in use to assist family visitors with mobility limitations in accessing gravesites”, from letter sent by then VCOC President Dan Warren in Sept. 2019. Donations were short to purchase one, so a Board member donated rest of funds needed. This is an ongoing issue, as the carts are refurbished golf carts and need to be replaced periodically.

6. **Third Quarter VCOC meeting** in July will be virtual.

Submitted by Sherry Ferki, MAJ, USA (Ret)

STATUS OF JLC 2020 Initiatives AS OF 21 APRIL 2020:

JLC 2020-01 - 2nd Resolution – Personal Property Tax Exemption. WILL BE ON BALLOT NOVEMBER 3 ,2020

JLC 2020-02 - Counting Military Absentee Ballots After Election Day. APPROVED!!

JLC 2020-03 - Income Tax Subtraction for Certain Low-Income 100% Disabled Veterans. CONTINUED UNTIL 2021

JLC 2020-04 - Virginia National Guard Emergency Response Pay. APPROVED!!

JLC 2020-05 - Tax Credits for Employers who Hire VNG and Reserves. HOUSE AND SENATE HAD DIFFERENT BILLS AND BOTH CONTINUED UNTIL 2021.

JLC 2020-06 - Microloans for Veterans Program (MVP). LEFT IN HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS – MONEY NEEDED DID NOT MAKE IT INTO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY APPROVED BUDGET

UPDATES FROM NAVAL MEDICAL CENTER PORTSMOUTH

15 May 2020 COVID-19 UPDATE FOR BENEFICIARIES: First and Finest, We have received many inquiries asking when NMCP and the Branch Health Clinics (BHCs) will be returning to our full healthcare services in addition to updates on our current COVID-19 policies. Our leadership is working closely with health experts throughout the CDC, Navy Marine Corps Public Health Center, Navy Medicine, and the Defense Health Agency to develop a plan for reintegration of all our services in a thoughtful and incremental way to meet the clinical needs of all of you while ensuring the safety of all. We will be expanding services for active duty and high-

risk patients as our first priority over the next two weeks as we restore services. We recognize that COVID-19 will still be a concern for us moving forward as we prepare for more routine operations. As of right now, NMCP and BHC's will maintain its COVID-19 policies at this time. We have however updated our Visitor Policy that will be effective on May 18, 2020. The rate of new cases is declining in the Hampton Roads area. However, our medical personnel know that as our local community gradually reopens, a potential spike in cases is not out of the question. NMCP and BHC's will continue to maintain its thorough disinfecting procedures, call center, car triage, entrance screenings with temperature checks, adherence to the current masking as well as social distancing standards for the foreseeable future. NMCP personnel must remain healthy to care for our active duty service members and beneficiaries. As soon as updates to our services are established, we will post that information on our social media platforms and our website. Thank you for understanding and patience during this COVID-1 pandemic.

Effective 18 May 2020 This modified visitor policy includes NMCP Facility and Branch Health Clinics. Changes include: • **NO VISITORS:** ♣ Patients with suspected COVID-19 due to increased risk of contamination. ♣ No visitors under the age of 18, unless the child is here for his/her own medical care. This includes children of NMCP staff members. • **LIMITED VISITORS:** ♣ One visitor per patient in the building at a time. ♣ Visitors must not have symptoms of illness or suspected exposure to illness. ♣ Visitors are asked to comply with recommended precautions (wearing of masks, gowns, etc.) ♣ Visitors are asked to wash hands prior to entering a patient's room and upon exit. Frequent additional hand hygiene is strongly encouraged. ♣ Visitor policy will be flexible for families experiencing end-of-life situations.

COMMUNITY SERVICE/ACTIVITIES

May is usually a very busy month for PACMOAA with National Nurses Week, JROTC award ceremonies, the Memorial Day parade as well as the PACMOAA dinner meeting and Board Meeting. Needless to say, none of these occurred so I am including some memories from last year.



National Nurses Week May 2020

Picture from 2019 luncheon with Donna App, Twila Nelson, Sherry Ferki in back row and Dolly Cherrington, Alice Fticsar, and Shirley Barker in the front row.

Happy Nurses Week 2020 to all PACCMOAA members/spouses including those pictured above and Heather Dickinson, Mary Lou DeGroft, Joyce Johnson, and Jamie Wise.

JROTC Award Ceremonies



Col Hal Hostetler presenting MOAA award to Cadet Alexis Rudolph at Churchland High School MCJROTC award ceremony on 9 May 2019.

PACMOAA members presented MOAA medals and certificates to 12 cadets at 7 different ceremonies, the 6 Chesapeake AFJROTC programs hold a combined award ceremony. Thus far this year, I have heard from 8 schools that are having virtual award ceremonies of their cadets and have distributed the medals and certificates to the JROTC leaders.

136th Annual Portsmouth Memorial Day Parade canceled this year. Pictures from previous years – below Ferki car, below and right – Ray & Peg Cicirelli, Ron Pyle & Sherry



This was one of the oldest continuous parade in the nation until this year!

HOW TO GET READY FOR 2020 HURRICANE SEASON

From American Red Cross Website 07 May 2020

BEFORE A HURRICANE



Listen to local area radio, NOAA radio or TV stations for information.



Be prepared to evacuate and know your routes and destinations.



Check your emergency kit and replenish as needed.



Navigating the impacts of the coronavirus is challenging. But even as we deal with these demanding times, the June 1 start of hurricane season is coming and it's important to get prepared. And because of COVID-19, getting prepared will look a little different than in other years. With that thinking in mind, the American Red Cross has tips to help you.

MAKE A PLAN In light of the coronavirus, you may have to adjust any previous plans you made. You may need to leave your

home quickly and travel to a safe place outside the affected area. If authorities advise you to evacuate, be prepared to leave immediately with your evacuation kit (“go bag” of emergency supplies).

- Plan now if you will need help leaving or if you need to share transportation.
- Ask friends or relatives outside your area if you would be able to stay with them. Check and see if they have symptoms of COVID-19 or have people in their home at higher risk for serious illness. If they have symptoms or people at higher risk in their home, make other arrangements. Check with hotels, motels and campgrounds to see if they are open. Find out if your local emergency management agency has adapted its sheltering plans.
- Check with the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) and update emergency plans due to Coronavirus.
- Plan ahead for your pets. Keep a phone list of pet-friendly hotels/motels and animal shelters that are along your evacuation routes. Remember, if it’s not safe for you to stay home, it’s not safe for your pets either.

BUILD A KIT Assemble two kits of emergency supplies and a one-month supply of prescription medication. Start with this basic supply list:

- **Stay-at-home kit** (2 weeks of emergency supplies): Include everything you need to stay at home for at least two weeks with items such as food, water, household cleaning and disinfectant supplies, soap, paper products and personal hygiene items.
- **Evacuation kit** (3 days of supplies in a “go bag”): Your second kit should be a lightweight, smaller version that you can take with you if you must leave your home quickly. Include everything you need to be on your own for three days:
 - Food and water
 - personal hygiene items
 - cleaning and disinfectant supplies that you can use on the go (tissues, hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol and disinfecting wipes)
 - Cloth face coverings for everyone in your household who can wear one safely. Cloth face coverings are not a substitute for physical distancing. Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others in public. Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing or is unable to remove it without help.
 - Infant formula, bottles, diapers, wipes and diaper rash cream
 - Pet food and extra water for your pet
 - Cash or traveler's checks
 - Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records saved electronically or in a waterproof, portable container
- **1-month supply of prescription medication**, as well as over-the-counter medications like cough suppressants and fever reducing drugs and medical supplies or equipment. Keep these items together in a separate container so you can take them with you if you have to evacuate.

Some supplies may be hard to get, and availability will worsen in a disaster, so start gathering supplies now.

BE INFORMED Have access to weather alerts and community notifications. Be sure that you can receive official notifications even during a power outage. Always follow the directions of your state and local authorities.

- Use the [Red Cross interactive map](#) to identify likely disasters in your area.
- Learn about your community’s response plan for each disaster and determine if these plans have been adapted because of COVID-19.

- Find contact information for state, local and tribal [governments and agencies](#), and for [state emergency management agencies](#).
- Because of COVID-19, stay current on advice and restrictions from your state and local public health authorities as it may affect your actions and available resources and facilities.

[Take a First Aid and CPR/Course online](#) to learn what to do in case emergency help is delayed. Download the Red Cross Emergency App for instant access to weather alerts for your area and where loved ones live. Expert medical guidance and a hospital locator are included in the First Aid App in case travelers encounter any mishaps. These apps are available to download for free in app stores or at redcross.org/apps.

Disasters won't stop, even during a pandemic. Hurricane season runs from June 1 to November 30 and early reports predict a busy year with 16 named storms in the Atlantic Ocean, eight of these becoming hurricanes and as many as four reaching major hurricane strength. A combination of warm sea temperatures and other factors could lead to the development of more named storms than usual.

Hurricanes cause problems for people in coastal areas. But these storms can also cause damage hundreds of miles inland. People living inland should get ready too.

Visit redcross.org/hurricane for full information about what to do before, during and after a hurricane.

NO, I'M NOT COMING DOWN!
We've been on 20 walks today. Leave me alone.



TO HELP LIGHTEN YOUR DAY!