



The Salute online



Monthly newsletter of the Portsmouth Area Chapter, an affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America, serving Portsmouth, Chesapeake, Suffolk, Smithfield, Franklin, and surrounding counties, Virginia, since 1983. Dinner meetings are 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 and do not participate in political activities.

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DECEMBER 2020

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



I hope that you all had a good Thanksgiving with your family, even though most of us had a much smaller Thanksgiving Celebration than normal. With all the changes in our world over the past 9 months, we have had to become more adaptable than ever before. The resilience we learned in our military career has stood us in good stead!

As far as I know, none of our members have had to be hospitalized with COVID 19 or lost family members or friends to this terrible disease. One of our members, Rick Titi, is "a volunteer guinea pig in Walter Reed's COVID study of AstraZeneca's vaccine! Walter Reed (WR) and Fort Belvoir in VA are participating in this study that I know of. They want 500 people each, **still need more**. I was told an AF

Colonel lady physician in Texas is in charge of the military contribution to it, nationwide. WR Infectious Disease military staff are involved. Contractor of AstraZeneca is Geneva Group also coordinating day to day appointments and nurses work. Nurse will call me Tuesday AM to check up (about a week after 1st dose). A number of appointments over 2 years. Can quit at any time (to get a more reliable vaccine perhaps). I am in least successful (62%) study group getting two full doses, instead of half dose first as immunology pros say is best." Excerpts from Rick's email sent 26 November.



Only 12 people were able to attend the November dinner meeting due to flooding, busy work schedules, and a misunderstanding per dinner timeframe. There were also some technical difficulties connecting to Zoom via the hotel website so the business meeting started about 15 minutes late. I am sorry if any of you tried to sign in to the business meeting and were not able to. In addition, there were some technical difficulties with sound, trying to help the group at the hotel hear as well as those on Zoom. I really appreciated everyone's patience! It was a pleasure to see the members/spouses that attended our dinner meeting and to see the 2 members (Ken App and Jack Lyons) that participated in the Zoom meeting.



With only 9 members participating including those at the dinner and on Zoom, no vote occurred on the items listed on the agenda for the business meeting. They will be voted on at the January Zoom meeting. Thank all of you that participated in our elections. We had slightly less participation than last year with 32% voting this year versus 34 last year. Both years we had electronic, mailed, and in person voting. (Continued on page 3)

PACMOAA LEADERSHIP

SEE WEB PAGE



DECEMBER CALENDAR

- 07 PEARL HARBOR DAY
- 10 PACMOAA VIRTUAL CHRISTMAS GALA
- 11 HANUKKAH
- 16 Battle of the Bulge 1944
- 17 Wright Brothers Day
- 21 1st Day of Winter
- 25 CHRISTMAS
- 26 KWANZAA
- 31 NEW YEAR'S EVE

DECEMBER VIRTUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT

As with many of our holidays and meetings this year, the Christmas Gala had to be changed to a virtual meeting. With the rollback to COVID 19 restrictions in mid-November due to rising case numbers, gatherings are limited to 25 people. This significantly impacts our Christmas Gala – even with a much smaller band, less than 20 people could attend.

The Board of Directors decided to have a virtual Christmas Celebration **via Zoom**. Hal's band, Tidewater Concert Band, will perform our Christmas concert from Calvary Baptist Church at 2117 London Blvd in Portsmouth at **7 pm on 10 December**. The concert will be performed in the Sanctuary of the Church and if some members want to attend to listen to the music in person, they can. Only the band and some PACMOAA members will be there.



Churchland MCJROTC Cadets at December 2019 Christmas Gala at left.

PACMOAA will be collecting Toys for Tots and the boxes will be at the church. Toys can be dropped off Monday – Thursday between 0900 and 1430. The boxes should be there soon and PACMOAA will send out a notice when they are set up. Lt Col Pratt will pick up the toys on 10 December the night of our Zoomed Christmas concert.



Darlene Washington, Executive Director at PVH, with box of donations collected at December 2019 Christmas Gala to the left.

Portsmouth Volunteers for the Homeless (PVH) have greatly expanded their services during the pandemic and so their needs have changed some. They are also opening a shelter to new guests this week and have been very busy making sure they are adhering to all the COVID-19 protocols. There have been some new people in the reception area and they don't always know when people drop off items, but would like to

recognize all donations if possible. As mentioned before, items can be dropped off in person or delivered by Amazon Smile. Their hours are 7 am to 6 pm 7 days a week. PACMOAA has been donating to PVH since 2011 and PVH has continued to expand their services to help the homeless in our area.

Thanks for any assistance you can provide. Take care and be safe.

Our on-going PVH Service Center and Winter Shelter services material donation needs are listed below.

- • XL Ziploc bags (10 gallon size)
- • Deodorant (travel size)
- • Disinfectant Spray
- • Disinfectant Wipes
- • Razors (Men's and Women's)
- • Bleach (chlorine)
- • Kitchen Trash bags
- • Garbage Bags
- • Mops / Brooms
- • Women's Bras (larger sizes)
- • Cleaning Products
 - o Disinfectant Solution
 - o OdoBan
 - o Bathroom Cleaner
 - o Scrub Brushes
- • Hand Sanitizer (large and individual size)
- • Body Wash (Men's and Women's; full size)
- • Foot Powder (travel size)
- • Toilet Paper
- • Paper Towels
- • Disposable Gloves (non-latex)

Since we can't meet in person this year and won't have the gift exchange, perhaps you can donate the money you would use for that to one of the very needy charities in our community like the Foodbank, SSSEVA (Senior Services of Southeastern VA), etc.

Sherry Ferki, MAJ USA (RET)

BIRTHDAY WISHES

Freida Anderson

Ron Fritz

Hal Hostetler

Bruce LaLaonde

Irene Wagner

Continued from Page 1 FROM THE PRESIDENTS'S DESK

I want to say a special thanks to Scott Dickinson for "volunteering" to count the ballots. This was an interesting contrast to the ballots returned via regular mail/email and in person voting for our proposed bylaws revisions voted on in October, which had a 50% return rate!

Hopefully by now, you all have signed up for the FEDVIP program/ reviewed your current plan, if you want dental and/or vision coverage. The end of the open season is 14 December so be sure to sign up/update your coverage for 2021. With the FEDVIP program, you can only sign up one time or change your plan in the year during the open season, usually in the Nov - December timeframe unless you have a life change like marriage, divorce, death, etc.

REMEMBER, that flu shots are even more important this year than usual especially for our members over 65 and/or with chronic conditions! Those groups are more likely to have a more severe response to COVID 19. TRICARE pays for the flu vaccine if you go to a civilian Dr. or pharmacy.

More info on our Christmas concert is under **CHRISTMAS CONCERT** above (*Separate invite for Zoom*), but if you are not able to “attend”, I hope you and your families have a Blessed Christmas and Happy New Year and hope to see you next year, when we are able to meet in person or via Zoom. The holiday season can be stressful, especially for service members deployed away from home and family. This year is even more stressful for all of us with all the changes that have occurred this year and many of us being separated from our families and friends!!

As we “**Never Stop Serving**”, please remember our troops currently serving – Active Duty, Reserve, National Guard, and their families; retirees and their families; and all the veterans and wounded warriors in your thoughts and prayers. Please remember our country also during this very difficult time and continue to provide love and support to your family, friends and community. My thoughts and prayers are with all of you and your families as we continue to navigate through this most unusual and stressful year.

MEMBERSHIP

The salute extends a hearty welcome aboard to LTC James (Jim) Anderson, USAF (Ret) from Chesapeake
CAPT John Cordle, USN (Ret) and his wife Gudrun from Chesapeake

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Remember that membership is important. The PACMOAA Goals in order are Membership, Legislative, and Community Activities. Without adequate membership, legislative advocacy and community involvement are severely impacted!

PACMOAA had 72 paid members as of 27 November. This included 6 life members, 1 honorary Life Member, and 10 new members. PACMOAA ended 2019 with 71 members

With the rollback of restrictions in Virginia on 13 November, as mentioned earlier, the Board of Directors decided to have virtual meetings for December, January and March but we still need to invite friends to join PACMOAA. Starting in January, PACMOAA will be able to accept dues payments, dinner payments, etc. online. This should make paying your dues easier in 2020. More info will be included in the January newsletter per how this process will work. Hopefully, this will make it easier for new members to join also!!

LEGISLATIVE

FROM THE MOAA TAKE ACTION CENTER at www.moaa.org 29 November 2020

These important issues require your immediate attention. Send your elected officials a MOAA-suggested message today.

[Pass a Budget to Avoid Damage Caused By Continuing Resolutions](#)

Continuing resolutions stall plans to modernize DoD and improve the lives of servicemembers, military families, retirees, and veterans. New programs receive no funds while outdated ones limp forward. Looming shutdowns put some servicemembers’ pay at risk. Ask your lawmakers to pass a budget before the current continuing resolution expires on Dec. 11, 2020.

[Ask Your Lawmaker to Help Expand Benefits for Vietnam Veterans Exposed to Agent Orange](#) The Senate version of the FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) would expand the VA benefits available to Vietnam veterans exposed to herbicides such as Agent Orange, adding medical conditions scientifically linked to such exposure.

[Urge Your Lawmakers to Support FY21 NDAA Provisions to Stop Cuts to Military Medicine](#)

Act now to urge your elected officials to support FY21 NDAA legislation that will halt cuts to military medicine and increase congressional oversight of these efforts.

NOTE: Military Medical Personnel have been deployed for the **3rd time this year** to assist hospitals in the civilian sector.

“Sixty-seven Air Force nurses and other personnel deployed to hospitals and long-term care facilities in North Dakota, while 62 medical personnel deployed to three hospitals in El Paso, Texas, and a critical care team is now working at a hospital in Guam. DOD personnel also are helping with telemedicine on the island, said Kenneth R. Rapuano, the assistant secretary of defense for homeland defense and global security, in a Nov. 24 briefing. In addition, there are hundreds of personnel on prepare-to-deploy orders, and more than 20,000 National Guardsmen deployed across 52 states and territories to help with pandemic response, he said” per 24 November 2020 article in Air Force Magazine.

Submitted by Sherry Ferki, MAJ, USA (Ret)

VCOC

JLC (Joint Leadership Council) 2021 Initiatives: During the October 21, 2020 meeting, the JLC adopted the following seven initiatives for 2021, and forwarded them to DVS and the General Assembly:

2021-01 Income Tax Subtraction for Certain Low-Income Disabled Veterans

OBJECTIVE: To allow individual income tax subtraction for the amount of annual retirement compensation received for service as a member of the U.S. Armed Forces, or the Virginia National Guard, for 100% service-connected disabled veterans with a federal adjusted gross income not exceeding 150% of the federal poverty level for a 4 person household.

2021-02 Tax Credits for Employers Who Hire National Guard and Reserves

OBJECTIVE: To ensure Individual and corporate income tax credit; employers of National Guard members and self-employed National Guard

2021-03 Expand Tax Relief for Surviving Spouses of Military Services Members “Killed in Action” to also include “Died on Active Duty”

OBJECTIVE: To expand Tax Relief for Surviving Spouses of Military Services Members of the Armed Forces to include both “Killed in Action” and “Died on Active Duty.”

2021-04 Disabled Veteran State Park Passport

OBJECTIVE: To expand the Disabled Veterans Passport for free entry into state parks and discounted services to all service-connected disabled veterans.

2021-05 Reduced Price Annual Passes to Virginia State Parks for Guard members

OBJECTIVE: To ensure Virginia’s continued commitment to the men and women of the Virginia National Guard by offering a 50% discount on Virginia State parks annual pass.

2021-06 No Cost License Plates for Guard members

OBJECTIVE: To ensure Virginia’s continued commitment to the men and women of the Virginia National Guard by changing the current 50% reduced price for a maximum of two license plates per household and registrations to 100% reduction for a single (1) license plate and registration.

2021-07 Partial State Tax Exemption for Military Retirement Income

OBJECTIVE: To reform the Virginia state tax law, creating a partial exemption on military retirement income beginning in 2021.

NOTE: The Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations falls under the Virginia Department of Veterans Services and is comprised of 24 different VSOs. Several groups you will probably recognize are American Legion, DAV and MOAA. Before this organization formed, each VSO went to the Virginia

Legislature with their own priorities. With all VSOs speaking with one voice, we have been much more successful in support of Virginia's veterans and their families!

Sherry Ferki, MAJ, USA (RET)

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

DEC 2020

Veteran's Day Event in Portsmouth

After receiving a last minute announcement from PACMOAA's COL Irv Lindley, Chair of the Portsmouth Mayor's Military Affairs Committee, Brenda and I attended a low key, little publicized Veteran's Day event at the Flag pole at the foot of High Street in Downtown Portsmouth. The City did not advertise due to the covid-19 situation, but conducted the ceremony so that the string of celebrations was not broken. Only a hand full of people were there and involved. The two presenters who spoke and placed a wreath by the flag were Mayor John Rowe (of PACMOAA) and Captain (DR.) Lisa Mulligan, Commander of the Naval Medical Center Portsmouth. Also present was Portsmouth Mayor Elect, Shannon Glover

To conclude the ceremony, Mayor Rowe asked me to lead in the benediction. At the event I had a cordial chat with CAPT Mulligan who suggested she would be happy to speak to our chapter next year possibly sometime between February and June.



The photo to the left is of Mayor Rowe, CAPT Mulligan, and Mayor Elect Glover.

MOAA COVID-19 Emergency Financial Relief Grant

Who is Eligible?

The MOAA Foundation COVID-19 Relief Fund offers financial assistance **for currently serving (including National Guard and Reserve), spouses of currently serving, veterans (with an honorable discharge), and caregivers of the same who are experiencing an unexpected, short-term financial setback due to the COVID-19 pandemic.** Open to all ranks and U.S. uniformed services. Preference will be given to those who are not eligible for support from service relief societies.

What We Will Help With

- Rent
- Mortgage
- Auto Loan/Lease
- Utilities (electric, water, heat)
- Cell phone payments
- Internet access
- Additional grant categories, outside of the list above, will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Instructions

For auditing purposes, you **MUST** include a copy or copies of any current bills (mortgage/rent payments, auto loan/lease, utilities (electric, water, heat), cell phone payments, Internet access) up to **\$500**. Bills must have name and/or address of the applicant noted on the application, or, have the name of a spouse or family member with the same address included on the application. If bills adding up to less than \$500 are submitted, this will be considered the requested grant amount by the applicant.

Bills can be uploaded as scans, screenshots or pictures. Bills with a past due balance dated prior to March 1, 2020 will not be considered. The MOAA Foundation will not assist with any legal fees.

If awarded the grant, funds will be disbursed to the individual applicant, and a payment receipt showing these funds were used for their requested bill coverage is required to be submitted to relief@moaa.org within 30 days.

ONLY upload bills at this time. **DO NOT** include documents with personally identifiable information (such as your DD-214 or anything including your Social Security number).

Above info is from the MOAA website

Clarification per process from MOAA Member Services Representative:**For online submissions..**

If you are submitting the form online, you should have the applicant fill out the online form first. **Link to the form:** <https://www.moaa.org/billreliefapp>

On that form, the applicant will put in the chapter point of contact's email (**navmed1@cox.net**)- once the applicant submits their application, an auto-email of their application as a PDF will be sent to the email address they list within the application. The applicant's submission will also be automatically sent to the Relief@moaa.org inbox.

Once that chapter point of contact receives the applicants PDF submission, then the chapter point of contact can proceed with "verifying" the applicant's submission. The chapter point of contact will then fill out their own submission form - a chapter verification form, which can be found here: <https://moaa.org/billreliefverify>

This chapter verification form will automatically be submitted to the Relief@moaa.org inbox as well.

For separate e-mail/physical/mail in submission...

To find fillable PDFs or printer-friendly applications and chapter verification forms, those can be located using the links listed above on each separate website."

For any additional questions or concerns regarding the Relief Grant application process, please contact Relief@moaa.org. Thank you for your Life Membership and continued support of MOAA.

12 NOVEMBER 2020 PACMOAA BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES**With additions from 19 November Board Meeting****REPORTS: President: MAJ Sherry Ferki**

- Thanks to all Leadership Team members for all their work over the past 2 years.
- Thanks to COL Ben Barnard, USAF (Ret) and CWO3 Doug Weller, USCG (Ret) finishing up 2 years of service on the BOD.
- 5 Star Level of Excellence for 10th year in a row!! MOAA membership IMPORTANT to maintain this!!

1st Vice President/Programs: CWO3 Karl Wilson

- Dec: Christmas party with Hal's band, Toys for Tots, and collecting for Portsmouth Volunteers for the Homeless. Will be held via Zoom due to new restrictions.
- Jan: Installation of Officers: COL Linc Smith, VCOC 1st VP
- *Board decided to only have ZOOM meetings and to have meetings every other month starting in Jan for a 3 month trial.*
- Suggestions for speakers : CAPT Mulligan , CO NMCP

- *Changed board meetings cycle to January, April, July, and October on 3rd Thursdays. This would place the board meeting prior to the November business meeting.*

2nd Vice President/membership: LCDR Dolly Cherrington: Absent.

- As of 1 January 2011, 114 members
- As of 31 December 2019, 70 members
- Current membership numbers members:72 with 64 regular and 8 surviving spouses
- New members this year: 10
- Deaths this year: 1 (CAPT Larry Anderson, USN (Ret))

Secretary: COL Hal Hostetler: No report at business meeting. Minutes approved at BOD.

Treasurer: CDR Hans Sachse as of 18 November

- Overall status : Better than previous years with decreased loss due to fewer dinner meetings
- Dinner meetings: Continued loss of about \$100/meeting before spacing issue due to COVID
- Received USAA grant again to help defray costs of June Scholarship dinner and this will be carried over to be used at a later date for Scholarship winners and/or JROTC.
- Balance in operating fund: \$6842.25 with \$3663.78 available in checking account.
- Balance in scholarship fund: \$2800 available after last payment for 2020 scholarship recipients with additional \$5255.24 in Savings account.
- Audit for 2017 - 2019: CAPT Jeff Westling is working on audit for 2017 and 2018.
- Online payment of dues discussed. Jeff Westling to set it up and coordinate with Hans Sachse and Bill Smith

VCOC Rep.: LCDR Dolly Cherrington: Absent. Reports for all meetings in newsletter.

Leg. Rep.: CWO3 Karl Wilson

- VCOC
 - Jan meeting via Zoom
 - 2021 JLC objectives will be in next newsletter
 - No meetings of SE Regional Legislative Committee this year – Karl to follow up per status
- National
 - Continue to respond to MOAA alerts and send in postcards in magazine
 - Still **IMPORTANT** to keep following up with legislators per need to pass **FY21 NDAA!!**

Personal Affairs Report: MAJ Sherry Ferki

- Longtime members Bob Parker and Gordan Nelson continue to have medical problems as do some other PACMOAA members.

Scholarship committee:

- **Continued support of scholarship program with donations allows PACMOAA to award 2 scholarships/year. Many donate when paying their dues!!**
- Two scholarships awarded for 2020.

Website/Roster Manager/Facebook Adm.: CDR Ken App

- Newsletter and website issues/problems discussed

Newsletter and website : Thanks to Gordon for all his hard work on both of these for 12 years ! Sherry edited the newsletter until Sept. Ken App is now the Editor as well as Facebook and Website Manager. Gordon to be awarded Outstanding Service Award from MOAA!

BUSINESS ITEMS ADDRESSED:

1. Update on November elections – Congratulations to new members of Leadership Team. Thanks to Scott Dickinson for “volunteering” to count ballots and Hal Hostetler for leading Nominating Committee.

- a. President – COL Bill Smith, USA (Ret)
- b. Secretary - LCDR Paul R. Lucas USN (Ret)
- c. 2nd VP – 1 year of term – MAJ Sherry Ferki, USA (Ret)
- d. 3rd VP - CDR Kenneth G. App USN (Ret)
- e. 2 BOD - CAPT Robert Brewer, USN, (Ret)
CAPT Roger Hirsh, USN (Ret)
- f. 1 BOD – 1 year term - COL Harold R. Hostetler, Jr., USA (Ret)

1. Issues that were to be discussed and voted on, but will be discussed on voted on at the January meeting and will be detailed again in the January newsletter:

- **New dues structure** – detailed info in November newsletter
- **Proposal to increase dinner cost at Hilton Garden Inn** – Detailed agenda sent out via email and regular mail before meeting.
- **Proposed amendment to current bylaws** to add spouse of a member as a potential officer.

2. Efforts to increase membership

- Joint chapter recruiting event at Patriots Colony in Williamsburg – held via Zoom 28 Oct. 45 people attended. No response from attendees as of 25 Nov.
- Continue 1/2 price dinner cost for potential new member or new member attending for the first time? Not applicable at this time.
- Reaching out to local JROTC leaders- Woodrow Wilson HS & Smithfield HS Army JROTC leaders attended July meeting and invited to join several times.

3. BOD decided to change frequency of meetings to every other month starting in January as attendance for past 4 meetings (2 via Zoom, and 2 combination of Zoom and in person, averaged 16 attendees (12.5 of them were members)) each month.

4. Events PACMOAA members participated in 2020.

- 6 program meetings (2 via ZOOM) versus 8 normally.
- 1 to 3 PACMOAA Leadership members attended VCOC meetings (3 via ZOOM).
- Several members very involved with MOAA Storming in the spring and in the Summer Storming, both focusing on changes in military health care system and cutting 18,000 medical billets.
- BOD met 6 times this year and 5 via ZOOM. Normally 4 BOD meetings per year.
- Hal Hostetler Portsmouth Mayor's Military Affairs Committee meetings – several canceled due to COVID
- Have published 10 newsletters so far this year with 1 more scheduled for Dec – usually 10 newsletters/year.
- Ken App set up PACMOAA Facebook page for members.
- Only 1 local HS had an award ceremony via ZOOM that MAJ Ferki attended – Churchland JROTC awards.
- Many community activity events canceled like Portsmouth Memorial Day Parade.
- Donations to PVH decreased as only 4 in person meetings but some members donating via Amazon Smile or dropping off at PVH.
- Any other activities?

5. Other items mentioned at BOD meeting 17 November

- MOAA COVID 19 grants – detailed elsewhere in newsletter
- Starbucks Military Family Store on Effingham in Portsmouth being dedicated to NMCP on 4 December
- Planning individual Zoom training sessions to help more members feel comfortable participating in PACMOAA Zoom meetings.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

A Pandemic Poem-Prayer

--by [Phyllis Cole-Dai](http://phylliscoledai.com), syndicated from phylliscoledai.com, Jul 02, 2020

Phyllis Cole-Dai is a writer and poet, perhaps best known for 'The Emptiness of Our Hands,' a spiritual memoir chronicling the 47 days that she and co-author James Murray practiced "being present" while living by choice on the streets of Columbus, Ohio. On her 58th birthday earlier this year, she wrote 58 one-line pandemic prayers and crafted them into a poem.

ON MY 58TH BIRTHDAY: 58 PANDEMIC PRAYERS

May we all survive to another birthday.
 May we greet the sun each morning and rejoice in being alive.
 May we breathe the miracle of fresh air.
 May we honor every moment as a chance to begin anew.
 May we root our faith in richer soil than worry.
 May we let separation knit us close.
 May we see faces besides our own in the mirror.
 May we recognize all people as kin.
 May we cherish them as much as ourselves.
 May we stay home to keep them safe.
 May we nurture the body that houses our soul.
 May we have adequate shelter, food, water, medicine, and rest.
 May we share freely from our abundance.
 May we resist the temptation to hoard.
 May we ask for help without hesitation or shame.
 May we draw comfort from the company of animals, flowers, and trees.
 May we befriend the sounds of silence.
 May we welcome the intimacies of solitude.
 May we dive to the depths of our being and bring up blessings we didn't know we had.
 May we be sanctuary for one another.
 May we refuse to dwell in the blindness of denial, indifference, or contempt.
 May we tame our temper and carry no grudge.
 May we empathize even with those we dislike.
 May we gift one another with radical attention.
 May we listen to one another as if lives depend on it.
 May we speak as if our voice will be the last sound ever heard.
 May we explore how to touch without touching, how to hold without holding.
 May we not be embarrassed by tears and trembling.
 May we learn from our children the joy of unstructured time and the solace of routines.

May we reassure our children about the monsters beneath their beds.
May we create new rituals of togetherness.
May we laugh from our bellies.
May we cultivate wonder.
May we help our society to do better than it has done.
May we examine problems from all angles and talk straight as lines.
May we base decisions on collective wisdom rather than contagious fear.
May we invest our trust in those who are experts, not those who pretend.
May we value health over wealth.
May we dedicate our daily work both to those we love and to the common good.
May we sustain those workers whose invisible labor sustains us all.
May we protect those who put themselves at risk to protect us.
May we transform the impossible into the doable.
May we inquire into the welfare of strangers.
May we stand up for those who are scapegoated and targeted by hate.
May we sing porch to porch until all the world is our neighbor.
May we drop expectations of how hard or long this road will be.
May we pace ourselves as we go.
May we each shoulder more of the load so that nobody stumbles beneath it.
May we prepare ourselves for the unknown.
May we follow the light of our brightest prayers.
May we live together into better versions of ourselves.
May we plant the seeds of a new world in what remains of the old one.
May we remember in the dark hours that we're not alone.
May we let no one die forsaken, in pain, or untouched by kindness.
May we grieve the lost, though we cannot gather.
May we do right by their memory.
May we not waste a minute of the precious time they should have had.
May we love one another as we would be loved.
May our children survive us all.

March 26, 2020

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Even though this was written in March, it is still most applicable. This prayer was forwarded to PACMOAA by member Herb DeGroft. Many thanks to Herb!

Bob Steorts, Chaplain

THAT'S A WRAP FOR DECEMBER 2020!!! MAY 2021 BRING RELIEF FROM THIS PANDEMIC!!!