



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.

VOLUME XXXX Issue V

LEARN MORE AT PACMOAA.ORG

MAY 2021

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Buenos Dias,

I hope everyone has been vaccinated or is in the process of obtaining them. I am heartened by the progress made to date and am optimistic that a return to some greater degree of normalcy is near. Do what is best for your health and for our community.

We had a marvelous time last month at Roger Brown's. Not everything was perfect, but we have worked with Roger Brown's to resolve any issues and I am confident our relationship will continue to grow. Our dinner/membership meeting was well attended, the food was good, and we had a wonderful program! It was so nice to visit and fellowship with our members and guests (rarely had any guests on Zoom).

I was elated to finally have an opportunity to interact with you. If you are comfortable personally, I encourage you to attend our next meeting at Roger Brown's on May13, 2021.

Finally, MOAA has designated May as it's **Advocacy In Action** month. Most of their meetings with Congress will be virtual, but you can support MOAA's efforts by mailing the letters in your MOAA Magazine to your Congressional representatives or by calling your representatives. Thanks for your personal advocacy for veterans.

During our April Membership Meeting, we were treated to a marvelous presentation by **CAPT. Lisa Mulligan**, Commander, Naval Medical Center Portsmouth (NMCP). Although she was unable to attend in-person, CAPT Mulligan, via Zoom, informed us of the rich history of NMCP as well as giving us a feel for the population NMCP serves. It was a most informative, interesting, and entertaining presentation.

CAPT Mulligan discussed NMCP's origin before the Civil War and highlighted landmark events from then until now. From a small single building growing into a major medical facility, CAPT Mulligan explained NMCP's growth throughout its history.

The second part of the Presentation concerned NMCP's current mission and operation. The statistics concerning current staffing levels, patient population, surgeries performed, prescriptions filled, etc. are simply mind blowing. Also, NMCP's role in the fight against Covid 19 has been significant. From staffing the USNS Comfort for deployment to New York City to currently staffing vaccination centers in several states, the role NMCP's personnel have played is impressive. We truly are blessed to have such a resource in our community.

CAPT Mulligan discussed the initial Nurse Training Program conducted by the Navy in the early 1900s. There were twenty female graduates and three were assigned to Portsmouth with the rank of "Nurse". I thought that today, those three nurses would be so impressed by the current commander's knowledge, ability, and professionalism. Unimaginable at the turn of the century, I am proud that today, a fully capable and qualified woman is in command of NMCP.

Bill Smith
COL USA (Ret)

PACMOAA LEADERSHIP

Please see in main page Header



CHAPTER NEWS

MAY CALENDAR

National Military Appreciation Month

Presentation of MOAA Medals to JROTC Cadets this month. TBD

01 Silver Star Service Banner Day07 MILITARY SPOUSE APPRECIATION DAY Friday before Mother's Day08 V-E DAY 194508-16 Armed Forces Week, 2nd Sat. Thru 3rd Sun. in May

09 MOTHER'S DAY Second Sunday

11-15 Peace Officers Memorial Week Week of May 15th

13 Navy Nurse Corps Established 1908

13 PACMOAA Dinner Meeting -1800 (6pm)

15 Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) Established 1942

16 ARMED FORCES DAY Third Saturday in May21 Red Nose Day 202022 Maritime Day

22 NOAA CORPS Birthday (1970)

31 Memorial Day 137th Portsmouth Memorial Day Parade (Virtual - No VSO's invited)

HAPPY MAY BIRTHDAYS

Janet Boschen

Oran Chenault

Richard Grigg

Peggy Moran

THE MAY DINNER MEETING WILL BE **BOTH IN-PERSON & VIRTUAL.**Our dinner will be held on **Thursday May 13th** at Roger Brown's Banquet Room.**Sign in and Social hour begins at 6:00 PM, dinner served at 6:30PM.****Speaker 7:30 PM – CAPT ALEX KONCZEY USN (Ret),** who will speak to us about his life in Hungary and the Blue

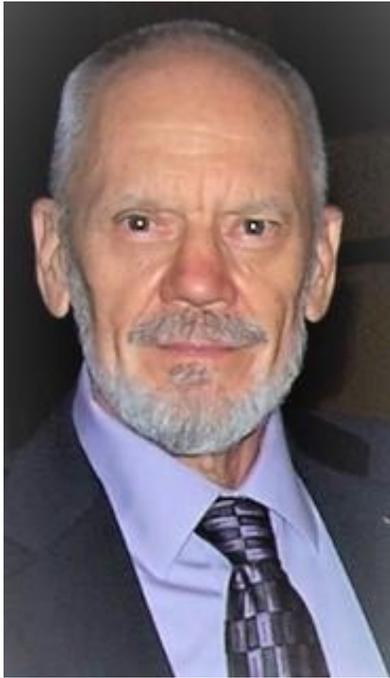
Angels. His Bio appears on page 3.

BUFFET MENU

*Harvest Salad, Cornbread with Honey Butter,
Lemon Pepper Chicken Breast, Baked Flounder, Mashed Sweet Potatoes
Sautéed Vegetables
Bread Pudding with Bourbon Glaze
Coffee, Tea, Water*

Alcoholic Beverages may be purchased from the wait staff.

Cost is **\$25.00** (includes tax and gratuity). Please make your reservation no later than **Friday, May 7th** 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****All CDC and VIRGINIA COVID-19 Precautions remain in effect.** Masks must worn when not eating or drinking, and when moving about while in the restaurant.



Alex Konczey CAPT USN (Ret)

Alex Konczey was born in Beregszasz (BEH-reg-sahz), in the North Eastern part of Hungary. After WWII it became part of the Soviet Union. He lived most of his young life in Budapest. He lived under Communism for over 9 years and was a Hungarian Freedom Fighter against the Russians in 1956. He immigrated to the US in 1957.

After graduating from the University Of South Dakota in 1964 in Vermillion, SD, Alex entered Medical School under a Navy Ensign 1915 program for Med Students, with the intent of becoming a "part time pilot and part time doctor" in the Navy. The Navy had small cadre of people who worked on cockpit design and human engineering. But it was determined that by finishing Med School he would be over the age limit for flight training, & was Commissioned an Ensign on Nov 26, 1965 as a Student Naval Aviator and entered Naval flight training.

He fulfilled his dream and designated a Naval Aviator on May 10, 1967. He had four squadron tours and 12 deployments which took him all over the world.

He served on the USS Ranger, CVA-61 and the USS Oriskany, CVA-34, during Vietnam flying the A-4 Skyhawk. As Chief of Staff for CNATRA, he requalified in the TA-4 Skyhawk and F/A-18B Hornet.

He has flown 14 different combat aircraft including both tactical jets and the P3-C Orion, Antisubmarine Warfare (ASW) aircraft, accumulating over 7,800 pilot hours, which puts him in the **top 5% among all Navy pilots**. He retired as a U.S. Navy Captain with 30 years of active duty service.

Significant assignments:

- Serving as an exchange pilot with the Royal Australian Air Force
- Commanding an elite intelligence gathering organization in Japan
- Commanding Patrol Squadron Four Six (VP-46) at NAS Moffett, CA from Feb 1984 -July 1985
- Served as Deputy Chief of Naval Air



Training - the number 2 position in overseeing the entire Navy Flight Training Program

- As Commander Fleet Activities Okinawa, Commanded 5 Navy Facilities in Japan

Awards: Legion of Merit with 3 gold stars, Meritorious Service Medal with 2 Gold Stars, 3 Air Medals, Navy Commendation Medal with 3 Gold Stars, Joint Services Achievement Medal, Navy Achievement Medal, and various unit and campaign awards.

Alex loves the Navy and fully believes in the saying: *"if you are fortunate to find something you **really loved to do**, you never have to work a day in your life"*.



2020 Col. Marvin J. Harris Communications Awards

Each year, MOAA recognizes affiliates that achieve excellence in communications with four- or **five-star** Col. Marvin J. Harris Communications Awards. Councils and chapters may submit entries in up to two categories: newsletters (print or electronic) and websites. MOAA is pleased to announce 210 five-star awards and seven four-star awards to 139 affiliates for 2020. Congratulations!

PACMOAA has won a Five Star Award for both *THE SALUTE* newsletter and our Website *PACMOAA TODAY!* CDR Ken App is our Newsletter Editor and The Website Manager. **Well Done Ken!**

MEMBERSHIP

Update May 2021

PACMOAA has a little over 70% of the members on our current roster that have paid their dues as of 1 May. That number includes our 6 Life members and 2 Honorary Life Members. Several of our members moved out of state and there are 19 members that have not paid their dues yet. Hopefully, some of these members will pay at our May dinner meeting. I will be following up with the other members via letters, email and phone calls. If you're not sure if you've paid your dues, please contact me or our treasurer, Hans Sachse.

There has been some confusion per paying PACMOAA dues and/or MOAA dues. **Your MOAA membership dues do not include PACMOAA membership dues.** MOAA has had the option of paying for multiple years for some time. PACMOAA just started that practice this year. Unlike some organizations, e.g., the American Nurses Association and the Virginia Nurses Association, PACMOAA does not get any money from your MOAA dues. Our dues support the activities of the PACMOAA chapter.

One item reiterated at the MOAA 2021 Council and Chapter Leaders' Virtual Workshop on 30 April and 1 May included: Every member is a recruiter and should have an elevator speech they can use to promote joining the chapter. The PACMOAA Mission Statement is a great short overview and was included in the recent revision to the PACMOAA Bylaws in October: "PACMOAA support the military community through legislative advocacy (State and National – Advocacy in Action which is occurring now), mentoring youth (JROTC awards and PACMOAA scholarships), and community involvement" (e.g., Portsmouth Volunteers for the Homeless and Toys for Tots). I included examples of how PACMOAA accomplishes this mission.

Submitted by Sherry Ferki, MAJ, USA (Ret)
Membership Chair

FROM MOAA & LEGISLATIVE

Advocacy in a Virtual Environment: How to Make Your Voice Heard from moaa.org (Advocacy in Action for 2021)

By: Allison Reilly April 20, 2021

The global pandemic caused many organizations, including MOAA, to adjust advocacy strategy. In MOAA's efforts to never stop serving, the organization continues to be a voice for our members and the entire uniformed service community in a virtual environment.

[MOAA's Government Relations team](#) regularly meets with lawmakers and their staffs in remote settings to ensure that servicemembers past and present, their families, caregivers, and survivors remain a priority for the 117th Congress. There are many ways MOAA members can support these efforts by advocating from your home.

[GET INVOLVED: [MOAA's Advocacy in Action 2021](#)]

One of the easiest ways to engage with your lawmakers is to call their office. You may do so toll-free via MOAA's direct line to the Congressional switchboard at (866) 272-6622. Just ask the Capitol operator to connect you with your legislator's office. You likely will talk to a staff assistant or a legislative assistant for

your member of Congress; their job is to hear your concerns and relay this information to the senator or representative.

Send a Letter

Another way to make your voice heard is by writing a letter to your elected official. Typically, a member of Congress prefers letters on legislative issues be sent to their Washington, D.C., office. Click these [House](#) and [Senate](#) links to find your elected officials' D.C. addresses. Elected officials often receive a lot of correspondence from their constituents, so it may take a few weeks for you to get a response.

[RELATED: [Advocacy in Action: Details on MOAA's Spring Campaign](#)]

Send an Email

Members of Congress may also be reached through email. An effective way for MOAA members to contact their elected officials through email is by using our [Take Action Center](#). Not only can you use the Take Action Center to find out who your elected officials are, you can also use our pre-made templates to send messages to Congress on important issues to the uniformed service community. Messages on the Take Action Center can be customized, and MOAA encourages our members to add personal notes to these emails.

These messages are part of this year's Advocacy in Action campaign. Send them to your lawmakers today, and share the links with fellow MOAA members and nonmembers alike:

- [Support Comprehensive Toxic Exposure Reform Legislation](#)
- [Fix the TRICARE Young Adult Coverage Gap](#)
- [Support the Military Hunger Prevention Act](#)

Engage on Social Media

Connecting with your elected officials on social media is an excellent way to stay up to date on their priorities as a legislator. Popular social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram allow for lawmakers and their staff to stay connected with their constituents on what issues are most important to their district or state. A Congressional Management Foundation [survey](#) from August 2020 found that some Senators and representatives increased their engagement on Facebook to better address larger groups of constituents during the pandemic. MOAA often participates in social media campaigns to interact with members of Congress. Elected officials often provide their social media information on their website.

[RELATED: [MOAA on the Hill: Testimony Outlines Legislative Priorities for Veterans](#)]

Stay Informed and Connected

Keep yourself up to date on legislative issues important to MOAA by visiting our website for regular updates. Also, make sure you are subscribed to *The MOAA Newsletter* to receive weekly emails to stay current on MOAA's legislative efforts. You can check your MOAA newsletter subscription preferences [here](#).

By going to MOAA's website, you can also read about the history of our [legislative accomplishments](#) and what our [legislative priorities](#) for the 117th Congress are. Additionally, you can follow MOAA's official [social media accounts](#) and encourage other servicemembers to follow us, as well!

With the support of our membership's advocacy efforts, MOAA will continue to strive toward meaningful legislative reform that will positively impact those who serve and have served, and their families and survivors. We encourage our members to take advantage of MOAA's many resources to stay informed, inform others, and serve as an advocate in their community. For any questions on how to best make your voice heard, contact our Member Service Center at legis@moaa.org or by calling (800) 234-6622.

NOTE: VCOC Team is in the process of setting up appointments with all state legislators now. MAJ Ferki is lead for PACMOAA.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR UPCOMING EVENTS FOR SPRING, SUMMER AND FALL 2021

13 MAY: Program/Dinner meeting at **Roger Brown's Restaurant**
 10 JUNE: Program/Dinner meeting honoring **scholarship winners**
 TBD JULY: **ANNUAL SUMMER BREAKFAST/BRUNCH** with Hampton Roads and Peninsula Chapters.
 13 JULY: Q3 VCOC meeting
 15 JULY: PACMOAA Board meeting
 12 SEPTEMBER: Program/Dinner meeting
 13 OCTOBER: Q4 VCOC Meeting, Biennial meeting and luncheon
 14 OCTOBER: Program/Dinner meeting
 11 NOVEMBER: Annual business meeting and PACMOAA elections
 9 DEC: Annual Christmas Gala

PERSONAL AFFAIRS/SURVIVING SPOUSES

May 2021

I found an excellent webinar on the MOAA website: Preparing Your Spouse to Be a Survivor at <https://www.moaa.org/content/benefits-and-discounts/transition-and-careers/transition-center-webinars/preparing-your-spouse-to-be-a-survivor/>

The items covered in the hour long webinar include: The planning stage, a survivor's loss, MOAA resources, MOAA publications, Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP), VA benefits, and SBP/DIC offset. One of the issues addressed is planning for your digital estate. This includes knowing the user/password for all your accounts, shopping, emails, documents, etc.

The Surviving Spouse Update at the MOAA 2021 Council and Chapter leaders' virtual workshop also stressed the importance of planning ahead with steps to prepare (giving yourself deadlines for talking with family members, etc.) , important documents to collect and steps to take with them, as well as the importance of preparing balance sheets. The balance sheets should look at the combined income and expenses of both spouses as well as that of each individual if one survives the other. Some families have found that they do not have adequate life insurance or other income and that issue should be addressed as soon as possible. This may be done by a financial planner. The education of members and their spouses was stressed and the importance of "helping your spouse be a surviving spouse before that time in your lives happens". Slides from the workshop should be available soon so I could copy some of the information if anyone does not have access to the internet.

I would be happy to provide further information or resources if anyone is interested in more. In our military careers, we always had to plan ahead and be prepared for emergencies. This is carrying on that military tradition!

Submitted by Sherry Ferki, MAJ, USA (Ret)
 Personal Affairs Chair and Surviving Spouse Liaison

HEALTH RELATED ISSUES

Defense Health Program Faces \$1.8 Billion Budget Shortfall Due to COVID-19 from moaa.org

April 21, 2021 *Editor's note: This article by Patricia Kime originally appeared on Military.com, a leading source of news for the military and veteran community.*

The Defense Department is anticipating a \$1.8 billion budget shortfall as the result of unexpected COVID-19 pandemic expenses, military health officials said Tuesday.

Medical treatment and the military response to the pandemic are expected to push [Tricare](#) costs \$1 billion higher than anticipated in the fiscal 2021 budget. The remaining \$800,000 in unexpected increases will be in the military health system itself, according to Dr. Terry Adirim, acting assistant secretary of defense for health affairs.

And that estimate could rise once the DoD assesses the financial impact of its pandemic response support to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Adirim told members of the Senate Appropriations defense subcommittee during a hearing on the military medical budget.

[RELATED: [You Ask, MOAA Answers: TRICARE Select Enrollment Fee](#)]

Adirim said the DoD doesn't anticipate asking Congress for additional funds and instead will look inside the department and at "sustainment and modernization funding and postponing facilities maintenance" to cover the costs.

"We are working within the department to try and mitigate these shortfalls, but it's challenging," she said.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the DoD has seen more than 280,000 cases of COVID-19 among U.S. military personnel, family members, DoD civilians and contractors. The virus has caused 324 deaths across the department, including 24 service members.

For the DoD, the pandemic prompted the unanticipated purchase of millions of pieces of personal protective equipment and ventilators, medical treatment for COVID-19 patients, vaccines and all associated personnel costs of supporting the department's response. That includes the deployment last year of two [Navy](#) hospital ships and establishment of at least six expeditionary field hospitals, as well as deployments of medical personnel to civilian medical centers to bolster staff.

[LATEST NEWS AND GUIDANCE: [MOAA.org/Coronavirus](#)]

As of mid-March 2021, nearly 3,000 military medical and support personnel were deployed to 11 states and the U.S. Virgin Islands **to assist with community vaccinations**, according to U.S. Army North. **NOTE: This doesn't include the 240 med personnel recently deployed from NMCP to administer vaccines to Norfolk's Military Circle Mall, Boston and NY!**

The Defense Health Agency's total fiscal 2021 budget was nearly \$51 billion, including almost \$18 billion in personnel, construction and health care accrual costs. The program's nearly \$33.6 billion in discretionary funding was \$500 million more than the department's budget request, and the health program received an additional \$365 million provided to the program from overseas contingency operations.

The department also was awarded \$10.5 billion in pandemic relief funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security, or CARES, Act, \$4.4 billion of which it planned to use for coronavirus-related medical care, including protective equipment.

The service surgeons general told senators they don't anticipate the budget constraints to affect readiness, saying they "identify our readiness requirements up front."

[RELATED: [COVID Relief Legislation Stops VA Copayments, Cost Shares Through September](#)]

"Right now, we do not have a shortfall, as we've worked through our readiness requirements ... but we'll have to assess that as the fiscal year continues," said Army Surgeon General Lt. Gen. Scott Dingle.

"Medical readiness of our force is paramount and No. 1," [Air Force](#) Surgeon General Lt. Gen. Dorothy Hogg said. "Everything that we do will be directed toward that and so, at this point, no shortfall. I do have a concern as we move forward, if there is a shortfall, how that's going to get covered."

Navy Surgeon General Rear Adm. Bruce Gillingham agreed, saying, "I think this is something that we will watch carefully and continue to work internally."

Two lawmakers on the panel noted several areas where they believe the Defense Health Agency could save money. Sen. Richard Shelby, R-Ala., questioned what he called redundancies between DoD medical research and programs at other agencies, such as the National Institutes of Health.

Sen. Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis., asked why the department spent \$1 billion on a mandatory anthrax vaccine in the past five years when much of the force faces a larger threat from the current pandemic and future threats.

"I'm concerned that our spending priorities are not aligned with both current and emerging threats," Baldwin said. "We've known that a pandemic based on a novel virus that would attack the respiratory system could cripple our country, yet we did not purchase PPE, we did not re-shore manufacturing of critical medical supplies or vaccines."

The Biden administration has not yet released its proposed fiscal 2022 federal budget, although it has issued a statement that it will ask for [\\$715 billion in discretionary funds for the DoD](#) and will eliminate separate funding for overseas contingency operations, rolling those requests into the base budget.

COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATE: From the NMCP Website

<https://portsmouth.tricare.mil/Portals/130/DAP%20Beneficiary%20vaccination.pdf>

All local cities are offering the vaccine but limited supplies and have different schedules. You should call your local health department or sign up online at this time.

SURVIVING SPOUSE CORNER

Resources for Surviving Spouses

By: Barbara Smith April 30, 2021

As a surviving spouse and a member of MOAA, you have access to a host of people who are there to guide you through any difficulties or questions you might have. MOAA exists to protect military benefits and to offer you resources which cannot be found elsewhere.

MOAA membership is 350,000 strong, of which 16% are surviving spouses. Experts in the Washington, D.C., area advocate for legislation benefiting our community; they are equally vigilant when fighting legislation that would harm our benefits.

You are encouraged to visit MOAA.org, where you can sign up to receive [The MOAA Newsletter](#) and choose areas of most interest to you, such health care and earned benefits, finance, and spouse and family.

On the homepage when you see the prompt "I AM A," scroll down and click on "Surviving Spouse," which will lead you to the [Surviving Spouse Page](#). This site provides information relevant to our community.

MOAA has a Surviving Spouse Advisory Council (SSAC) consisting of eight surviving spouses advocating for issues and concerns of interest to our community. Email SSACouncil@moaa.org with any questions or concerns you may have.

MOAA's Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter meets once a month and is open to all MOAA surviving spouses and surviving spouse liaisons. Speakers cover important information regarding issues and concerns one month and the next is an open forum meeting taking questions and hearing concerns of attendees. [Learn more about the chapter, including how to join.](#)

Additionally, [MOAA's Surviving Spouses and Friends](#) Facebook group provides information, answers questions, and offers an opportunity to interact with others traveling the same course. Although not sponsored by MOAA, another Facebook group, [DIC Surviving Spouses & Friends](#), is open to all surviving spouses who receive or who have questions regarding Dependency and Indemnity Compensation.

[RELATED AT MOAA.ORG: [Dependency and Indemnity Compensation](#)]

Check out your [local MOAA chapter](#) where you can meet new people and other surviving spouses. Some of our events have speakers on a variety of subjects that might interest or concern you, with some other events providing entertainment. Most chapters have a surviving spouse liaison who is there to assist you with any issues or concerns you might have or just to provide some comfort or a sounding board.

[Read past Surviving Spouse Corners.](#)

Pictures of the April Dinner meeting at Roger Brown's Restaurant in Downtown Portsmouth



CDR Barb & CAPT Gordon Iams, USN (Ret), guests of Donna and Ken App Alex Konczey, Bob Brewer, Cindy Brewer & Margaret Konczey



CDR Linc Smith, VCOC, Karl & Angela Wilson



Barb Iams, Donna App, & Rick Titi enjoying the buffet



Hal & Brenda Hostettler & Karen Smith

THAT'S A WRAP FOR MAY!