



# 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 VI

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

JUNE/JULY 2021

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Greetings,

Karen and I had a wonderful time in California last month while attending our nephew's wedding. Regrettably, it caused us to miss the presentation by Alex Konczey on the Blue Angels. Several members told me it was most interesting and informative. Thanks Alex!

I also want to thank Karl Wilson for presiding over the meeting in my absence. It is nice to be able to leave important events in such capable hands. Thanks, Karl.

This month we met via Zoom with Representative Bobby Scott and his staff. Sherry Ferki, Karl Wilson, Hal Hostetler and I had a good discussion with Representative Scott about MOAA's three major legislative priorities- Basic Needs Allowance, Parity for TRICARE for Young Adults and Comprehensive Toxic Exposure Reform. Rep Scott indicated he supports all of these initiatives. In addition, Sherry Ferki made him aware of an issue with concurrent receipt and Rep Scott is supportive of that as well. We invited him to come and speak

to our membership in the fall and will work with his staff to schedule the meeting.

PACMOAA received two 5 Star awards from MOAA. Thanks to the dedication of Ken App, we were awarded the Col Marvin J. Harris Communications Award 5 Star for our Website and The Salute.

Ken spends many hours each month posting articles of interest/import on our website and in editing and publishing The Salute.

Thanks, Ken, for all you do.

Warm Regards,

Bill Smith  
COL USA (Ret)

June Speaker's Biography on page 3.

PACMOAA LEADERSHIP

PLEASE SEE LEADERSHIP PAGE



## CHAPTER NEWS

### JUNE CALENDAR

- 4-7 Battle of Midway 1942
- 06 [WWII D-Day 1944](#)
- 10 PACMOAA Scholarship Dinner Meeting
- 14 [US Army 246<sup>th</sup> Birthday](#) (1775)
- 14 [Flag Day](#)
- 20 Father's day
- 21 [Summer Solstice](#)
- 22 GI Bill Signed 1944
- 23 [USCG Auxiliary Birthday](#) (1939)
- 25 Start of Korean War 1950
- 27 [PTSD AWARENESS DAY](#)

### HAPPY JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Martha Anderson      Joyce Johnson      June Leckrone  
Irv Lindley              Kevin Terry

### HAPPY JULY BIRTHDAYS

Tom Cahill              Sherry Ferki  
Roger Hirsch          Andre Mayfield

**THE 10 JUNE DINNER MEETING** is our Annual Scholarship Recognition night. Our 2 scholarship winners and their families will be invited. PACMOAA received a grant from USAA for \$300.00 last year to help sponsor our annual dinner recognizing the scholarship winners so it will be used this year. **Many thanks to USAA for their generous support.**



The Dinner will be held at Roger Brown's, 316 High Street, Portsmouth, 23704  
**Sign in and Social hour begins at 6:00 PM, dinner served at 6:30PM.**

**Speaker 7:30 PM– Chesapeake City Councilman, Don Carey.**

#### ***BUFFET MENU***

*Buffet Salad, Cornbread with Honey Butter,  
Brisket, Fried Catfish, Wild Rice  
Sautéed Green Beans  
Apple Cobbler  
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 **Sunday, June 6<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!**

## Chesapeake Councilman Don Carey

Don Carey was elected to Chesapeake City Council for a four-year term commencing July 1, 2020.

A native of Norfolk, Virginia, Councilman Carey graduated from Booker T. Washington High School and Norfolk State University (NSU), before becoming the first NSU football player drafted into the NFL in the Division I era. Over his 10 year professional playing career, Carey received numerous awards for accomplishments both on the field and in the community. Among these was the *Walter Payton Man of the Year Award*, presented by the Detroit Lions.

Following his retirement from the NFL, Carey founded The Don Carey REECH Foundation, Inc., which uses sports as a catalyst to connect with and educate students about careers in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) fields. Carey speaks at many schools of every level,

challenging, teaching, and inspiring the next generation of leaders around the country.

A published author, Carey's first book, "It's Not Because I'm Better Than You," shares his personal story and the principles he and others have used to achieve success. The book, released in 2017, has been met with extremely positive reviews.

In 2018 Carey received Norfolk State University's *Graduate of the Last Decade* award and, in 2019, was inducted into the NSU Athletic Hall of Fame. He continues to serve the community of Chesapeake, sitting on various boards and participating in several organizations that spearhead positive change across the city.

***"I would unite with anybody to do right and with nobody to do wrong."***

***- Frederick Douglass***

## MEMBERSHIP

**UPDATE June 2021**

### WELCOME ABOARD

PACMOAA wishes a hearty welcome to 3 new members

CAPT Gordon Iiams, USN (Ret) and his wife CDR Barbara (Barb) Iiams, USNR (Ret) from Suffolk.

CAPT Alexander (Alex) Konczey, USN (Ret) and his wife Margaret from Chesapeake.

PACMOAA has 65 members paid as of 28 May. That number includes our 6 Life members and 2 Honorary Life Members as well as 7 new members for 2021. Sadly, three of our longtime members died this year – Henry Boschen, James Yandle, and Irene Wagner. Several of our members moved out of state, and there are 10 members from 2020 that have not paid their dues yet. I have been following up those 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.

**Your membership is important!** Local chapters are critically important to the ultimate success of MOAA. Membership and dues are critical to chapter survival. There is power in numbers. As a chapter member you enjoy the camaraderie and community of meeting with other local members who share the exceptional experience of military service and financially support the chapter. You become something larger than a lone voice by lending necessary strength in numbers to effectively support the greater good. Another important component of PACMOAA membership is legislative involvement. Part of your dues pays membership in the

Virginia Council of Chapters representing you in Richmond via the Joint Legislative Council, which advises the State Legislature on all matters concerning military personnel and their families in Virginia.

As a member, you receive information focused on issues from the websites and publications from MOAA and PACMOAA. Our website is **PACMOAA TODAY**. Our newsletter is published in three forms: *The Salute* by mail, *The Salute express* by email and *The Salute online*. We also have a **Facebook** page. If you're interested in joining the PACMOAA Facebook group, send a request to [thesalute1@gmail.com](mailto:thesalute1@gmail.com). Please help us protect the benefits earned by veterans, retirees, reservists, National Guard and active duty military as well as their spouses and dependents by continuing your membership and **convincing others that it is in their best interest to join**.

**Membership Chair, MAJ Sherry Ferki, Handing out Membership Pins to:**



**MAJ Steve Watkins, USA**



**CDR Blaine Pearsall USN (Ret) & wife Debbie**



**CDR Barb Iiams, USNR (Ret) & CAPT Gordon Iiams USN (Ret)**



**CAPT Alex Konczey USN (Ret) & wife Margaret**

## PERSONAL AFFAIRS

**JUNE 2021**

Please keep our members/families that are having problems in your thoughts and prayers and reach out to them if you can. Most do not want information to be included in the newsletter but we have several members having significant medical issues and or with recent hospitalizations. If you or your family member is ill or needs assistance, please let me know. PACMOAA is the most supportive group that I have every belonged to and we have many members that would be happy to help or direct you to appropriate resources. Please remember several of our surviving spouses – Freida Anderson ( Larry Anderson died on 26 May 2020) and Janet Boschen (Henry Boschen died on 22 January and will be buried in North Carolina near his family on Memorial Day). Our thoughts and prayers go out to both of them and their families.

Sherry Ferki, Personal Affairs Officer

**Irene B. Wagner**

Mrs. Wagner was a long time PACMOAA member but has not been able to attend any activities in some time due to health issues. Several times in the past few years when I called to check on her, I was told she still enjoyed the PACMOAA newsletter! Our thoughts and prayers are with her family.

Some excerpts from her obituary published in the Virginian Pilot on 25 May 2021 follow:

The internment will be held at a later date at Arlington National Cemetery.

Irene died Saturday, May 22, 2021, at her home surrounded by her loved ones.

Irene Helen (Babey) Wagner 1946 worked for Western Union until her marriage to Glenn Carl Wagner on May 12,. The Navy brought them to Virginia where they made their permanent home and raised their family. Irene was an active member of the Ladies League at Redeemer Lutheran Church and later Resurrection Lutheran Church. She loved her church family and enjoyed faithfully serving her Lord through the many church activities. One of her favorites was to visit nursing homes and tend to her senior friends. Through the years, Irene and Glenn continued to stay connected with their military friends, attending ship reunions and participating in the **Portsmouth Area Chapter of MOAA**. Irene was a true patriot and wore her red, white, and blue colors proudly. Her generation truly was the "Greatest Generation".

As much as Irene loved her country, her love for her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren resonated the loudest. Her face lit up with their calls, particularly face-time calls. She was proud to own an iPad. Irene loved family and the opportunity to get together with them. She is survived by her children, Dr. Sandra L. Wagner of Alexandria, VA, Barry A. Wagner and his wife Joy of Wilmington, NC, and Sharon Renner and her husband Charles of Franktown, VA. Her grandchildren are Shane (Cameron) Wagner, Baxter (Allen) Smith, Matthew (Shelly) Wagner, Anna (Dan) Sterrett, and Kate Renner. Her great-grandchildren are Allen, Bennett, and Barry Helen Smith, Will and Sam Wagner, Riley and Walker Wagner, Anson and Selig Sterrett, and Emmit Lewis.

Irene was predeceased by her parents John and Anna Babey, her husband Glenn C. Wagner, her sisters: Leona Taylor, Evelyn Spencer, Alice Fuhr, Julia Slegh, her brothers: John Babey and Robert Babey, and her granddaughter Sarah E. Renner.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that memorials be sent to Resurrection Lutheran Church, 916 Centerville Tpk N., Chesapeake, VA 23320.

Sherry Ferki, Personal Affairs Officer  
Home number: 686-4650 Cell: 630-5608

## SURVIVING SPOUSE CORNER

### Help Us Help You from moaa.org

By: Suzanne Walker  
May 28, 2021

The Surviving Spouse Advisory Council (SSAC) just wrapped up a busy month. Members of the SSAC joined hundreds of MOAA council and chapter presidents and board and staff members for the [Advocacy in Action event](#) to support MOAA's advocacy initiatives. The SSAC also participated in the [Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter](#) meeting, the [council and chapter Virtual Leaders' Regional Workshop](#), and the [Florida Council of](#)

[Chapters annual convention](#). These activities help the SSAC achieve its mission to encourage, engage, and educate.

To further ensure the council fulfills its mission, we want to hear from you. Tell us what issues are important to you as you navigate life without your loved one. We have several avenues you can use to express your opinions, ask questions, learn about resources, and receive support from fellow surviving spouses. From [The MOAA Newsletter](#), [Military Officer magazine](#), and [MOAA.org](#) to the [MOAA Surviving Spouses and Friends Facebook group](#) and the [Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter](#) we are here for you.

Would you like to connect with others who have similar interests, like gardening, genealogy, cooking, or travel? Would you like to participate in one of the MOAA-sponsored cruises but need a travel companion? Are you interested in attending a MOAA-sponsored social gathering near your home but are unsure about taking that first step?

Connect with the SSAC and let us know what is important to you. Send emails to [sscomm@moaa.org](mailto:sscomm@moaa.org).

## FROM MOAA & LEGISLATIVE

### Here's Why MOAA Remains Focused on Planned Military Health System Reforms

From moaa.org

By: Kevin Lilley, May 19, 2021

DoD health care reforms passed into law as part of the FY 2017 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) are just now taking shape, and MOAA has made it a priority to ensure these changes do no damage to the military health care benefit.

Part of MOAA's effort on this issue has been to keep it on the radar of key lawmakers, and a [May 12 hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee's Subcommittee on Personnel](#) showed how that work is paying off ... and why it's necessary to keep focused on these changes.

DoD has ended its COVID-triggered "strategic pause" on moving control of military treatment facilities (MTFs) from the services to the Defense Health Agency (DHA) and "[rightsizing](#)" [dozens of locations](#) as part of the transition, Dr. Terry Adirim, acting assistant secretary of defense for health affairs, told the Senate panel. The restart involves DoD "revalidating the assumptions" made prior to the pandemic when allocating health care resources, Adirim said, and ensuring any MTF closures or downsizing occurs "only when we are certain that TRICARE networks can provide timely and quality access to health care for our beneficiaries."

**[RELATED: [MOAA's Advocacy in Action](#)]**

This has been MOAA's main concern throughout the realignment process – a concern heightened by a 2020 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report outlining how DoD's initial analysis [relied on incomplete and/or inaccurate information](#).

MOAA successfully fought [for language in the FY 2021 NDAA](#) requiring DoD officials to reassess its pre-COVID analysis and to certify to the relevant congressional committees that reforms will not harm beneficiaries' access to quality health care.

### Reaching All Beneficiaries

Asked how officials planned to ensure continued coverage for those in rural areas, Adirim pointed to advances in telemedicine and virtual care, allowing this type of treatment to reach more beneficiaries. MOAA [has](#)

[supported these advances](#) – Adirim called telemedicine “one piece of expanding health care” – but they won’t solve all medical needs for those in underserved areas. Only a complete, post-COVID analysis of regional health care markets can inform sensible changes to the system.

These telehealth services also will strengthen another area of concern for the military medical system, Adirim said, allowing providers to offer more behavioral health care options to more beneficiaries. DoD is attempting to bring in more psychiatrists, Adirim told the panel, and said keeping behavioral providers in the TRICARE network has been “very difficult” as the industry skews toward a “cash-only” (no insurance accepted) model.

MOAA has made it a priority to ensure mental health benefits for TRICARE beneficiaries, including a longstanding [push to lower copays](#) on these and similar visits, where cost can become a barrier to receiving much-needed care.

## Medical Billet Cuts

Since they were announced in the FY 2020 administration budget request, MOAA has raised awareness of the risks associated with cutting approximately 18,000 medical billets, or 18% of the uniformed military health system workforce.

Asked about the Navy’s plans to cut billets at some of its military treatment facilities, Naval Operations Deputy Chief and Chief of Naval Personnel Vice Adm. John Nowell said, “I will assure you that we will not shift any family member or retiree care or care for our servicemembers if it affects Military Medical Force readiness.” He also said care would not be moved out of MTFs in areas where the TRICARE network doesn’t have the capability or capacity to absorb it and committed to maintaining graduate medical education.

**[RELATED: [Navy’s Top Officer Pledges ‘Closer Look’ at Planned Medical Billet Cuts](#)]**

For more on MOAA’s ongoing health care initiatives as well as other advocacy efforts, visit MOAA’s [Advocacy News page](#).

## Billet Cuts Affecting Military Medical Facilities and Patients, Lawmaker Says

From MOAA. Org

May 26, 2021 *This article by Karen Jowers originally appeared on Military Times, the nation's largest independent newsroom dedicated to covering the military and veteran community.*

Military beneficiaries are beginning to feel the effects of the personnel cuts in military medical facilities, a lawmaker told a panel of witnesses who are the top military medical officials.

And defense medical officials said they are “revalidating” their [assumptions made before the pandemic](#) for medical personnel requirements at each location, as well as the capacity of local civilian networks to take care of additional patients.

“I know the realignment is not only affecting the military hospital in my region, but is affecting many other districts across the country as well,” said Rep. Derek Kilmer, D-Wash., whose district includes Naval Hospital Bremerton. Hospital staff has been reduced by about 100 billets over the past year, he said. “When hospital staff leave, either because they retire or move to another installation, their positions are no longer being filled.”

**[RELATED: [Navy's Top Officer Pledges 'Closer Look' at Planned Medical Billet Cuts](#)]**

Kilmer referred to DoD’s plans, announced in 2019, to cut about 18,000 military medical billets throughout the services, as part of health care reform, moving those billets to operational forces. An estimated 190,000 retirees, family members and some active duty family members would be moved out of military treatment facilities.

Because of the cut of about 100 billets at the Bremerton hospital, Kilmer said, “unfortunately, we’ve seen some of these changes come at the expense of improving health care outcomes for the folks that I represent, including

veterans and [active duty military and their families](#). We've seen them lose access to quality care, so I'm concerned about the ability of local civilian providers to adequately cover the gaps in care.

"For example, a [retiree] living in Kitsap County in my district could be forced at times to drive over two hours to receive treatment in Seattle."

**[RELATED: [Letter to SECDEF Warns Against TRICARE Fee Hikes, Medical Billet Cuts](#)]**

Kilmer asked the senior medical leaders what steps are taken before reforms are fully implemented to ensure that service members and their families have uninterrupted access to quality health care providers.

Defense and service officials are "revalidating" their manning plans for each location that were made before the pandemic, said Army Lt. Gen. Ronald Place, director of the Defense Health Agency. The results of that effort are being reviewed by defense and service officials, and should be provided to Congress sometime this summer, he said, in testimony before the defense subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee.

"In the meantime, my responsibility, my requirement, is to make sure that care can be delivered, whether that care is on site, on the installation in our facilities, or in the network," Place said. "If we can't manage it in the network, then not reduce it within what's happening on the installation."

**[RELATED: [MOAA's 2020-21 TRICARE Guide: Top Advocacy Priorities](#)]**

Following a pandemic-induced pause last year, the Defense Department resumed its massive health transformation efforts that include reorganizing and reducing the military services' medical billets to focus more on the operational forces. That transformation also includes moving the management of military treatment facilities worldwide from the control of the military services, to the authority and responsibility of DHA.

Kilmer asked for more insight into the analysis that's being conducted, and what consideration is being made to the availability of care and the proximity of care in the local community. "And what consideration is made to the impact that this will have on our service members? Because frankly the sense from folks in our area is that there isn't adequate sensitivity to those issues," he said.

"I'm sorry folks feel that way," Place said. "Certainly our intention is for all those considerations to be taken into account. One of the challenges we have to work through is the super sub-specialization of care in America, and in some locations of relatively rural America, as you mention, it takes some time to get from Whidbey Island or from Bremerton to Seattle where super specialty care is delivered.

"But there's not enough requirement for it in the greater Bremerton area or the greater Whidbey Island area. So how do you balance the service members and family members who are stationed there using the Exceptional Family Member program as well as delivering primary and specialty care in those locations? That's the balance we have to work through. ..."

## **Advocacy in Action: Details on MOAA's Spring Campaign on [moaa.org](http://moaa.org)**

By: Dan Merry February 09, 2021

We all miss the opportunity for in-person meetings on Capitol Hill with our legislators and their staffs. This annual event has been popular with our Chapters and Councils, as well as our Board of Directors and the MOAA staff.

The big event this year is Advocacy in Action, the new name for our annual legislative push on Capitol Hill.

**[[ADVOCACY IN ACTION RESOURCES](#)]**

Last year, due to the pandemic, we were forced to pivot our engagement to virtual platforms — this gave us an opportunity to include others in these meetings over the month of May. Not quite a bright silver lining, but it did give many others the opportunity to be part of our advocacy mission from home and helped generate over

19,000 letters spread out over every congressional office — all 535! Our members conducted 253 meetings in virtual platforms — on top of those letters and phone calls — to ensure 100% contact.

Based on too many unknowns this year, MOAA will repeat the virtual meetings, again targeting the month of May. Check your [MOAA Newsletter](#) and MOAA's [Advocacy News page](#) for updates.

Our topics this year address those who are currently serving, veterans and recent retirees, and members of the National Guard and Reserve forces.

### **Topic 1: Comprehensive Toxic Exposure Reform**

This focus on comprehensive toxic exposure reform highlights those currently serving, veterans, those recently retired from active duty, and the Guard and Reserves. When most people hear about toxic exposure, they think of Agent Orange and Vietnam, and we work that, too. However, there is a significant lack of awareness of the current toxic exposures for those in uniform today and since 9/11.

Among one of the more notable and impactful exposures are from the burn pits and other fires during the Gulf War in Afghanistan and Iraq. Additionally, there are exposure risks from firefighting chemicals and contaminated drinking water, to name a few.

We seek the basics: expanded health care for those who were exposed, the creation of an advisory council, and to reauthorize the Agent Orange authorities which expired in 2015. This issue hits more than the servicemembers — it is a direct impact to the families who are or will be the caregivers.

### **Topic 2: TRICARE Young Adult Parity**

There is a glaring disparity between commercial health care plans that cover adult children to age 26 and TRICARE, which requires a separate premium for young adult coverage. In 2013, TYA monthly premiums were \$152 for Standard and \$176 for Prime; today, those monthly fees are \$257 and \$459 respectively, which is an unsustainable curve, charting a course for TYA plan failure.

The Health Care Fairness for Military Families Act of 2021 ([H.R. 475](#)), sponsored by Reps. Elaine Luria (D-Va.) and Michael Waltz (R-Fla.), expand TRICARE eligibility to young adult dependents up to age 26. Learn more about the legislation [at this link](#).

Military kids face unique challenges — the average military kid will move six to nine times during their school years and experience repeated family separations. Yet, current law leaves military kids transitioning to adulthood without the same health care protections afforded to families with commercial plans. Ensuring health care access and affordability is particularly important during the current pandemic.

As COVID-19 impacts higher education pathways and makes it more difficult for young adults to find jobs, we must ensure military families who have sacrificed so much in support of our nation have the same health care protections for their young adult children as their civilian counterparts covered by commercial plans.

### **Topic 3: Basic Needs Allowance**

This proposed allowance would address our servicemembers and their families who are most vulnerable to food insecurity and are finding it difficult to make ends meet. The subsistence allowance would be provided automatically to servicemembers whose gross household income (not including their Basic Allowance for Housing, or BAH) is below 130% of the federal poverty line. This recurring struggle was exacerbated by COVID-19 layoffs.

While a small number of servicemembers qualify for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), many do not because their BAH is considered income. These families turn to food pantries instead: The Armed Services YMCA reported a 400% increase in grocery demand at their food pantries on and near military installations during the pandemic.

(A note for those reaching out to their legislators: This issue is intended to be a “leave-behind” issue, to be supported by upcoming publications and other materials. However, if you have personal examples or are in a military district with many servicemembers, feel free to touch on this if time permits.)

## What’s Next

Upcoming online materials will have all the information you need to start making appointments and garnering support from your legislators on these important issues.

Please remember our [entire Government Relations staff](#), along with The Military Coalition and other partners, continues to work MOAA’s other legislative priorities throughout the year.

## PACMOAA INVOLVEMENT IN ADVOCACY IN ACTION MAY 2021 UPDATE

**15 April MOAA Training Webinar for Legislative Advocacy/Advocacy in Action** – MAJ Ferki participated in the webinar that included an overview of the 3 MOAA issues for Spring 2021. In relation to *Comprehensive Toxic Exposure Reform*, it was also noted that after the Gulf War - only 40% of claims were approved due to training issues with the VA. Also, the VA currently gives them access to care for only 5 years after discharge! Per *Parity for TRICARE Young Adults*, the goal is to make TRICARE comparable to civilian health plans with dependents covered until 26 years old, thus fixing a gap in TRICARE coverage. To *Provide a Basic Needs Allowance for Military Families Facing Food Insecurity* addresses a long standing issue impacting junior enlisted families primarily that was made significantly worse by the pandemic. Multiple resources were also provided per contacts in each legislators office, sample letters to send to legislator’s contact person, tips per conducting Zoom meetings effectively, etc.

**24 April VCOC Advocacy in Action 2021 planning meeting** – Dan Merry, MOAA VP for Government Relations gave overview of MOAA Advocacy in Action 2021. One interesting fact noted during the review of the need for comprehensive toxic exposure reform was concerning a rare type of cancer that occurs in 2% of the general population and in about 60% of Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan veterans! The two bills MOAA supports in the House and Senate are different than the one Jon Stewart supports. MOAA is focusing on diseases with scientific evidence associating them with toxic exposure rather than 30-50 diseases, about half with no evidence supporting the claim.

MAJ Ferki participated along with 6 other VCOC officers and members. The discussion also included more tips on building relationships with legislators and marketing MOAA.

**29 April VCOC 2<sup>nd</sup> Advocacy in Action planning meeting** – MAJ Ferki participated along with 9 other VCOC leaders and members. Reviewed teams from last year; discussion per letter from VIPMOAA to Rob Whitman, disagreeing with bill proposed by Elaine Luria per Parity with TRICARE Young Adults; need for all participants to review MOAA Legislative Affairs Tenants in Council/Chapters Handbook; as well as schedule for meetings with legislators ( who is contacting legislators in each district as well as Senators).



**25 May PACMOAA Advocacy in Action Team meeting with Congressman Bobby Scott (D), 3<sup>rd</sup> District.** CWO3 Karl Wilson, PACMOAA Legislative Rep. led PACMOAA team including COL Hal Hostetler, Assist. Legislative Rep.; COL Bill Smith, President; and MAJ Sherry Ferki, Immediate Past President, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP, and

MUSNAVC member and they met with **Bobby Scott**, and his aide, Randi Petty. After introducing attendees, Karl reviewed each of the 3 MOAA priorities for Advocacy in Action 2021 and Bobby Scott expressed his support for all. He mentioned that he thought he was a co-sponsor of the toxic exposure reform bill but according to <https://www.govtrack.us> on 25 May, he is not a co-sponsor of either of the 2 bills supported by MOAA: Veterans Burn Pits Exposure Recognition Act, H.R. 2436 or Toxic Exposure in the American Military (TEAM) Act, H.R. 2127. Congressman Scott did ask his assistant to check on his status as a co-sponsor. We will follow up on this. MAJ Ferki briefly discussed the MAJ Richard Star Act and will send additional info on this issue to Bobby Scott’s office. The review of legislative issues lasted about 20 minutes. Bobby Scott was also invited to be a speaker at a future meeting, possibly in October and asked his assistant to check his schedule.

**COMMUNITY NEWS**

**PACMOAA 2021 Scholarship Winners**

Thank you to the Scholarship Committee members this year: Co-Chairs Scott Dickinson and Sherry Ferki and Lynn Terry. The online application and grading forms that Scott set up in 2017 really facilitated the review process. There were 7 applicants for the two 2021 PACMOAA scholarships; all were in JROTC and 4 had GPAs over 4.1! It is amazing how the selected students could maintain such outstanding grades while participating in many extracurricular activities such as sports, band, clubs/honor societies, and community service as well as providing leadership in many of these endeavors.

**Both recipients selected are very competitive and well-rounded students: J Barrett Ferguson from Smithfield High School and Toni Jade Lewis from Great Bridge High School.** Both are outstanding students that maintained excellent grades while being active in JROTC (both made all A's in their JROTC classes), school sports, school clubs and holding a variety of leadership positions.

**Barrett Ferguson** plans to attend Virginia Tech and major in aerospace engineering. He had a 4.24 average and took mainly Honors, AP, DE (dual enrollment in high school and college) and DL (distance learning) courses. Barrett was involved in multiple sports – cross country, track and field and Tidewater Striders as well as being involved in several honor societies – National Honor Society, Math Honor Society and Beta Club. He noted he was most proud of being selected as the Smithfield Good Citizen his senior year in high school! Barrett was also very involved in his church including being a leader in the Youth Ministry. During his JROTC career, Barrett, was chosen as a Company Commander his junior year (this position usually goes to a senior) and as the Battalion commander his senior year! These are some of the accomplishments of Barrett during his high school career.

**Jade Lewis** plans to attend Liberty University, major in chemistry, had a 4.3 GPA, and most of her courses were Honors or AP (advanced placement). She was involved in many school activities/clubs like Marching Band, District Band, Writing Club and soccer. Leadership positions included Section Leader and Drum Major in the band as well as S2S (Student 2 Student) Vice-President. JROTC leadership positions included Drill Commander, 1<sup>st</sup> SGT, and Projects Officer. Like Barrett, Jade was in several honor societies – National Honor Society, Music Honor Society and Tri-Mu Honor Society and active in her church. These are some of the accomplishments of Jade during her high school career. Both students were very active in community service and received numerous awards.

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

Submitted by Sherry Ferki, Scholarship Committee Co-Chair

**2021 Virtual JROTC Award Ceremonies 5/29/2021**

School	Director	Phone No.	Date/ Time	Cadet Presenter
CHESAPEAKE	All AFJROTC		Virtual at each school	

Deep Creek HS	MAJ Pearman CMSgt Pabon	558-5302		Elisa Cepeda
Grassfield HS	Lt Col Sandstrom SMSgt Hillard	558-4516		Aubrey MacDougall
Great Bridge HS	Lt Col Christian Wendler SMSgt Smith	546-3651		Kyle Albin
Indian River HS	Lt Col Lynn Holmbeck CNSgt Patrie	578-7000		Elizabeth Spangler
Oscar Smith HS	Col Michael Helsabeck MSgt Cain	548-0498		Daniel Rew
Western Branch HS	<u>COL Bryan</u> <u>Spalla</u> MSgt Hooper	638-7900		No award
<b>PORTSMOUTH</b>				
Churchland HS <b>MCJROTC</b>	LtCol Paul Pratt	686-2500	<b>2 June 2021</b> <b>1000</b>	Cadet Nathaniel Blyden Col Hal Hostetler, USA (Ret)
I.C. Norcom HS <b>NJROTC</b>	CWO2 Joseph Redwood 754-1439	393-5442 school		No Response
Woodrow Wilson HS <b>AJROTC</b>	SSG Orlanda Gordon MSG (R) Stanley Hill	465-2947 Cell 757- 537-9237	<b>13 May 2021</b> <b>virtual</b>	SFC Fernando Smith
<b>SUFFOLK</b>				
Lakeland HS <b>AFJROTC</b> <a href="mailto:terrellrogers@spsk12.net">terrellrogers@spsk12.net</a>	SMSgt Terrell Rogers (ret)	925-5790	No National Awards this year	
Nansemond River HS <b>AFJROTC</b>	LtCol David Hedger Sgt Young	923-4101	No awards this year	
Kings Fork HS <a href="mailto:rodneychatman@spsk12.net">rodneychatman@spsk12.net</a>	MSgt Rodney Chatman	923-5240	No awards this year	
Smithfield HS <b>AJROTC</b> <a href="mailto:pbadoian@iwcs.k12.va.us">pbadoian@iwcs.k12.va.us</a>	LTC Badoiam 1SGT Marvin Hunter	357-0056	<b>2 June 2021</b> <b>1330</b>	C/MAJ Claudia Kilgore COL Hal Hostetler, USA (Ret)
Franklin HS <a href="mailto:drobinson@fcpsva.org">drobinson@fcpsva.org</a> or <a href="mailto:lwright@fcpsva.org">lwright@fcpsva.org</a>	LTC Linwood Wright 1SGT Robinson	562-5187 school 802-0427 Robinson	No response	

**BELATED HAPPY NURSES DAY/WEEK**

In May 2019, 7 of 8 PACMOAA nurses enjoyed lunch together in celebration of National Nurse Week. Last year, that was not a possibility. Since restrictions have just been lifted, I hope we can get together in the summer for a belated celebration. Since 2019, PACMOAA has had 2 retired Navy nurses join as members and , after our last Nurses Week luncheon , I found out that Mary Ellen DeGroft is also a nurse. As far as I know, PACMOAA has 10 nurses ( 5 retired Navy or Army nurses, one former Navy nurse, and 5 civilian nurses) or spouses/surviving spouses. Thank you all for your service as nurses both in the military and civilian world!!

**NATIONAL MEMORIAL DAY CONCERT ON 30 MAY 2021**

This annual concert always remembers veterans from all wars since World War I but this year recognized women that served during the Vietnam era (265,000) in a variety of jobs but with special emphasis on Military Nurses (7,500 of the 11,000 women serving in country were nurses, other women included Red Cross and USO volunteers). About ½ million troops fought in Vietnam. The words of Diane Carlson, former Army nurse that was in country from 1968-69, were read. She described the stark contrast between her experiences in Vietnam and the difficulty adapting to being back in the US, the same experience shared by many returning Vietnam veterans. Shortly after attending the opening ceremony of the Vietnam Memorial in 1982 in D.C., she started working on the Vietnam Women's Memorial Project . The Vietnam Women's Memorial was dedicated in 1993 and I was a Charter Member of the associated Foundation.

There was also a special section on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger (Airborne) Company formed in 1950 along with 3 other Ranger Companies. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger Unit was the first and only all African-American company and served in the Korean War. The words of Sgt Cleveland Valrey were read and GEN Colin Powell recognized the three 2<sup>nd</sup> Ranger (Airborne) Company members that attended the concert.

"There was a very poignant section on Gold Star families with actresses reading the words of a mother and her daughter discussing the death of a husband and father and it's lifelong impact!"

Another tribute was done for the 1<sup>st</sup> responders especially those from 911 and footage from that beautiful September morning when terrorists attacked the U.S. was shown along with the impact on the nation and the sense of unity that occurred afterwards. GEN Mark Milley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, forcefully discussed the impact on the War on Terror on the U.S. and on the military.

Submitted by Sherry, retired Army Nurse

**CHAPLAIN'S CORNER**

To Any Service Member,

During the Persian Gulf War, I was stationed aboard the naval amphibious ship *USS Nassau*. As a senior Marine intelligence analyst, my workdays were routinely twelve to sixteen hours long. Like all veterans, we looked forward to receiving mail from home.

Unlike the Vietnam War, the Gulf War found support among most Americans. As a result, we soldiers received an enormous amount of "To any service member" mail from the states. I never took any of those letters, since I wrote my wife and two children on a daily basis, as well as occasionally writing notes to my daughter's classroom, and I didn't feel I had time to write anyone else.

After five or six months of hearing the mail orderly announcing the availability of "To any service member" mail, I decided to take a few of the letters. I planned, as time permitted, to drop them a line telling them "Thanks" for their support.

I picked up three letters, and placed them in my cargo pocket and proceeded back to work. Over the next week or so, I started responding to the letters. When it came time to answer the third letter, I noticed it had no return address, but a Colorado postmark, which made me think longingly of home. I had missed spending Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's with my family, and I was lonesome for them.

I opened the card and started to read the letter enclosed. About the third or fourth sentence down, it read, "My daddy is a Marine over there, if you see him tell him hi and I love and miss him." This statement really touched me and made me miss my family even more. I looked down to the signature - and sat in stunned silence as tears filled my eyes.

My own daughter Chris had signed the letter.

Nick Hill from *Chicken soup for the Veterans Soul*

This reminded me of a package I received from my daughter when I was TDY to Guam and Thailand, flying B-52 missions to Vietnam. It was a small container of homemade cookies she had made and sent to me. She was five years old. It meant so very much to me. My daughter is now 47.

We never know what a small kindness will do for others.

Bob Steorts, Chaplain

**PICTURES FROM OUR MAY DINNER MEETING**

Check-in and Social Hour



Gladys Steorts & LTC Shirley Barker USA (Ret)



Angela Wilson and Bruce Ferki



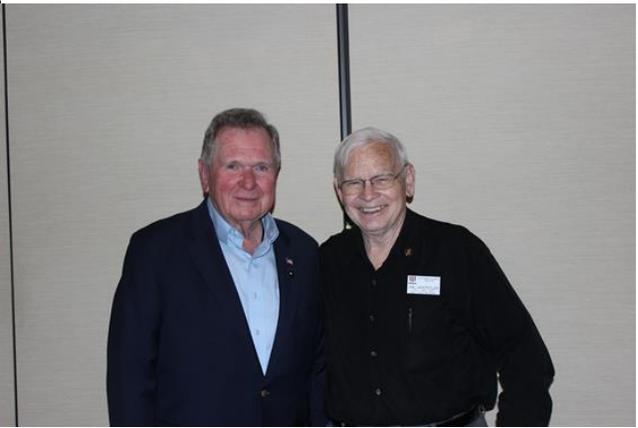
Brenda Hostettler & Angela Wilson



Donna App & LTC Bob Steorts USAF (Ret)



Carol & CPT John Rowe, USA (Vet)



COL Irv Lindley USA (Ret) & COL Hal Hostettler USA (Ret)



Guest Steve Carl & LTC Bob Steorts, USAF (Ret)



Margret Konczey with Cindy Brewer



The speaker intro by CAPT Bob Brewer



CAPT Alex Konczey on the Blue Angels



Certificate of Appreciation presentation to CAPT Alex Konczey USN (Ret) by PACMOAA 1<sup>st</sup> VP CWO3 Karl Wilson USA (Ret)

**BE SURE TO MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE ANNUAL JOINT BRUNCH 2021**

The Portsmouth Area Chapter (PAC), Peninsula Chapter (VIP), and the Hampton Roads Chapter (HRC) of MOAA are hosting a brunch buffet at Roger Brown's Restaurant on Sunday 18 July from 1000 to 1300.

**The address for Roger Brown's is:**

316 High Street  
Portsmouth, VA 23704

**Brunch Buffet includes:**

Omelet Station  
Waffle Station  
Scrambled Eggs with Cheddar Cheese  
Apple Wood Smoke Bacon  
Sausage and Peppers  
Hash Browns  
Fresh Fruit  
Muffins  
Ham and Cheese Sliders  
Pasta Salad  
Harvest Salad  
Coffee, Tea, Orange Juice

**Cost of brunch is \$22.00 per person which includes tax and gratuity.** Payment may be paid by using PayPal\* (See instructions below) or at the door with cash or check made out to PACMOAA. Cash bar is available. Dress is casual.

**Reservations are required NLT July 14, 2021 to Sherry Ferki at [navmed1@cox.net](mailto:navmed1@cox.net) or 757-686-4650.** PACMOAA must pay for the number of people registered, **SO A RESERVATION MADE IS A RESERVATION PAID!!!**

**\*Or PayPal:**

From the PayPal Account Overview page, click the Send button. If prompted for whether the money will be sent to a business or friend, enter "friend". Type **PACMOAA**Treasurer@gmail.com in the block where is says "name, @username, email, or mobile" and click "next". Enter the amount to transmit and add "For brunch, VIP or other-see **Note** below" in the note section and click "continue". Review the information, including the bank account or credit card you want the funds to come from. Press "Send payment now" when everything looks correct. **Note:** Each chapter adds correct abbreviation for their chapter: HRC – HRCMOAA, VIP – VIPMOAA, or PAC – PACMOAA

**THAT'S A WRAP FOR JUNE/JULY 2021!**