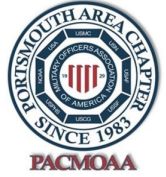




# The Salute Online



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 **PACMOOA** actively lobby legislatures for all US uniformed services members, we are nonpartisan and do not participate in political activities.

**VOLUME XXXXI Issue V** **LEARN MORE AT [PACMOOA.ORG](http://PACMOOA.ORG)** **MAY 2022**

**REMINDER: Although **MOAA** and **PACMOOA** actively lobby legislatures for all US uniformed services members, we are nonpartisan and do not participate in political activities.**

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



**Bill Ready for Cinco de Mayo**

Greetings,

I hope you are loving spring with the birds singing, the sun shining and temperatures warmer. I am! It is good to be back home and planning upcoming activities for PACMOOA. First, at our May Meeting, CAPT. Kevin Knoop, USN (Ret), will give a presentation on Beekeeping. I'm a former apiarist and look forward to his talk. Please come and learn about these vital pollinators. Next, we will participate in the Portsmouth Memorial Day Parade.

We are forming an Ad Hoc committee to plan our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration- **YOU** can serve on that committee. We also have openings on our scholarship committee. Opportunities abound for you to volunteer and serve. Just let me know.

We have filled two vacancies. Dolly Cherrington has volunteered to be the PACMOOA Historian. With our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary coming next April, Dolly is going to be very busy. Additionally, Kay Watkins has volunteered to be the Secretary for the PACMOOA Board. Thanks to Dolly and Kay for

“Stepping up!”

Information on all volunteer opportunities will be discussed at our meeting on May 13<sup>th</sup> at Roger Brown's Restaurant. See you there!

In closing, remember the Ukrainian people and the struggle they continue to endure from the Russians. I continue to pray for God to give our President the wisdom, discernment and strength to lead us safely and successfully to a satisfactory conclusion to this crisis. **Please pray for peace and for the Ukrainian people. May God bless America!**

Bill Smith  
COL USA (Ret)

**At right: 2017 Memorial Day Parade: (L-R) Sherry Ferki, Shirley Barker, Bruce Ferki, and Hal Hostetler**



PACMOAA  
LEADERSHIP

See Leadership Tab



## CHAPTER NEWS

## MAY CALENDAR

National Military Appreciation Month

Presentation of MOAA Medals to JROTC Cadets this month.

01 Silver Star Service Banner Day

05 Cinco De Mayo

06 MILITARY SPOUSE APPRECIATION DAY08 V-E DAY 194508-16 Armed Forces Week - Second Sat. Thru 3rd Sun. in May  
(not official)

08 MOTHER'S DAY Second Sunday

12 PACMOAA Dinner - Meeting Roger Brown's

13 Navy Nurse Corps Established 1908

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

16-21 **MISSION BBQ** Military Appreciation Days see p. 11.21 ARMED FORCES DAY Third Saturday in May22 Maritime Day

22 NOAA CORPS Birthday (1970)

27 **Top Gun II OPENS** in Theaters (Finally!)30 Memorial Day 139<sup>th</sup> Portsmouth Memorial Day Parade

## HAPPY MAY BIRTHDAYS

**Janet Boschen****Oran Chenault****Richard Grigg****Peggy Moran****The MAY PACMOAA Dinner**will be held on **Thursday, May 12<sup>th</sup>** at Roger Brown's Banquet Room,  
316 High Street, Portsmouth (757) 399-5377**Sign in and social hour begins at 6 PM, with Dinner Served at 6:30 PM.*****Buffett Menu****Caesar Salad**BBQ Ribs**Catfish Bites over rice**Collard Greens**Sweet Potato Casserole**Banana Pudding**Water, Tea, & Coffee*

**Cost is \$25** (includes gratuity & tax). Cash bar available. Please make your reservation no later than **Sunday, May 8<sup>th</sup>**, with Sherry Ferki at 757-686-4650 or by email at [navmedarmynurse@gmail.com](mailto:navmedarmynurse@gmail.com) .

**A RESERVATION MADE, IS A RESERVATION PAID!**

## GUEST SPEAKER

### CAPT KEVIN KNOOP, USN (Ret)

#### Bee Keeping in America



Born in Columbus, Ohio, CAPT Knoop grew up in a Navy family where his father, CDR John Knoop, was a Naval Aviator who served in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam conflict.

CAPT Knoop was awarded an Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarship and received his **Doctor of Medicine degree from Eastern Virginia Medical School in 1985**. He completed a Transitional Internship at Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth (NMCP), Virginia in 1986.

Following designation as **Flight Surgeon** in 1987, CAPT Knoop was assigned to **U.S. Naval Hospital, Guantanamo Bay (GTMO), Cuba, as Director, Leeward Point Branch Clinic, and Flight Surgeon**, GTMO Naval Air Station and Fleet Composite Squadron 10 where he logged more than 200 hours in various Naval aircraft to include the TA-4J Skyhawk, UH-1N Huey and the C-12 Huron.

After completing residency training in Emergency Medicine at University of Cincinnati in 1993, he returned to NMCP, serving as Assistant Program Director from 1994 - 1997 and Program Director from 1997 - 2002. CAPT Knoop served as **Director, Professional Education** from 2002-2009, was responsible for the oversight of NMCP's 14 medical and dental residency programs with more than 250 residents.

During Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2005, CAPT Knoop deployed as **Officer in Charge of Taqqadum (TQ) Surgical Shock Trauma Platoon** that treated approximately 400 injuries in the combat zone. He was among the Navy's first to complete the Fleet Marine Force Qualified Officer program and then serve as senior FMFQO board member while assigned to a combat zone.

CAPT Knoop served as **Executive Officer, U.S. Naval Hospital, Yokosuka, Japan**, from May 2009 to July 2011. He oversaw the hospital's successful H1N1 pandemic response, and directly oversaw every aspect of the MTF response to the Great East Earthquake, Tsunami, and radiologic disasters, including potassium iodine administration to over 30,000 personnel. CAPT Knoop then served as **Force Surgeon, III MEF, Okinawa Japan** from 2011-2012. Subsequently, he served as **Commanding Officer of the USNS Comfort** Military Treatment Facility from May 2011 – 2013.

CAPT Knoop's military awards include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal (three awards), Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (two awards), and the Humanitarian Service Medal.

CAPT Knoop has authored over 40 publications, has spoken at numerous academic conferences internationally and is senior author of a major Emergency Medicine textbook, *The Atlas of Emergency Medicine*, now in its 5<sup>th</sup> edition. He is currently the founding Program Director of the Riverside Regional Medical Center Emergency Medicine Residency program in Newport News, VA, as well as an American Red Cross Volunteer clinical faculty at the Naval Medical Center Portsmouth Emergency Department.

CAPT Knoop has two children: Amelia, a professional skateboarder, and recent Coach of the US Olympic Women's Skateboarding Team; and Stephen, a herpetologist and Co-founder of Eigen Chocolate. CAPT Knoop is married to Mary Jo Chandler, his High School sweetheart, who is a graduate of Eastern Virginia Medical School's Physicians Assistant program.

CAPT Knoop's interest in beekeeping began in the late 1970's and became a post military retirement hobby again in 2014.



## MEMBERSHIP

PACMOAA ended 2021 with 71 members and currently has about 93% of members paid/honorary members. That continues to be a much higher percentage of members paid by this time compared to previous years!!

Unfortunately, we have not had any new members yet this year. I mentioned last month that our Communications Chair, CDR Ken App, USN (Ret) did a wonderful job putting together a recruitment brochure last year that can be sent to potential members, shared at meetings, and used at recruiting events. If you have a friend or associate that is a potential member and might be interested in PACMOAA, I can mail them a brochure or send it to you to share. Just let me know.

A few points I included in the membership section in October of last year after attending a MOAA Chapter/Council Workshop per suggestion to increase membership and retention:

- Every member is a recruiter! Invite a friend that is eligible to PACMOAA activity. Remember, they can attend at ½ of the regular cost!
- Former officers as well as Surviving Spouses often join for camaraderie. PACMOAA has several members that are former officers.
- Stress variety of ways to join. Many currently serving officers join at a basic level – no fee and all communication electronic or join for 2 or 3 years and not have to remember to renew every year! Those levels would require a fee and they would receive mailed as well as electronic information, similar to current PACMOAA dues.

Any suggestions members have per recruitment would be appreciated. Thank you.

## PERSONAL AFFAIRS

### IN MEMORY OF CAPT HARRY MILLER



A Funeral Mass was held locally for CAPT Harry Miller in mid-April and 6 PACMOAA members/spouses attended. Unfortunately, Harry's daughter was not able to attend. Picture at left from PACMOAA 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with Charles Whitehurst, Jack Lyons, Henry Dowling, George McCann, and Harry Miller showing chapter charter. Thank you.

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



**IN MEMORIAM RUTH SKELTON**  
**“HAL’S FAVORITE MOTHER-IN-LAW”**



Ruth Skelton died on 22 April the age of 101. She was Brenda Hostetler’s mother and Hal frequently said she was his favorite mother-in-law. Brenda and Hal have been married over 50 years! Picture to the left at Ruth’s 99<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Ruth was an amazing woman who was an active member of the Highland Baptist Church for 75 years and started going on mission trips to the Eastern Shore in her 70’s, with Hal and Brenda Hostetler. She completed 25 mission trips! Ruth also volunteered at Emily Greene Shores, assisted living facility.

Ruth’s Homegoing Celebration was well attended and ten PACMOAA members/spouses attended the uplifting service. Several phrase she used often were repeated at the service: “I want to live until I die” and “No one can do everything, but everyone can do something.” Ruth was always busy and one of her church friends noted that when several men were gathered outside the church before the service, if they saw Miss Ruth heading toward them, they scattered or else she would put them to work! Another friend mentioned

that Miss Ruth was like a drill sergeant the Eastern Shore missions.

Ruth enjoyed telling jokes and Hal and many of her friends at the service told some of her jokes. She attended our Christmas Galas for many years with Brenda while Hal played in the Tidewater Concert Band, and I always enjoyed her jokes. It was always a pleasure to see and talk with Miss Ruth and it was obvious at her service that she was a beloved member of the community.



Picture to left Brenda and Miss Ruth at 2021 Christmas Gala

## SURVIVING SPOUSE CORNER

### Surviving Spouse Corner: Reflections of a Surviving Spouse Liaison

By: Barbara Smith    April 04, 2022

<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2022-news-articles/surviving-spouse-corner-reflections-of-a-surviving-spouse-liaison/>

Serving for the past six years as my chapter’s surviving spouse liaison has been a learning experience. When I first started in the role, I discovered there wasn’t any information or description for this undertaking. The chapter had over 60 surviving spouses (then called auxiliary members), but we didn’t have a separate list of them. That became my first job. I wrote a letter introducing myself and letting them know I was available for any assistance they might need. I also shared what I hoped to accomplish in the coming year (which at that time wasn’t much).

In 2016, I was honored to receive national MOAA’s Surviving Spouse Liaison Excellence Award. At the ceremony, I met the most fascinating group of ladies, the [Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee \(now Council\)](#). One of the members, Pat Farnsworth, became my mentor. She has always been available to me and has given me the confidence I needed to do this job.

Over the years, I have tried to include surviving spouses in the chapter’s monthly meetings. Every May, we have a surviving spouse/spouse appreciation luncheon at our regular chapter meeting with a program

designed for them. I didn't feel that was enough, so now we have a quarterly luncheon for surviving spouses/spouses with emphasis on issues and problems that are of interest to them.

At the end of the year, I send out a letter sharing what we have accomplished concerning surviving spouse issues and share what MOAA has on their legislative agenda for us. I try to attend all funerals to let spouses know I'm here for them.

Four years after being appointed to this position, I was elected to the chapter board. This allows me to vote, which I believe is a very important step forward.

I was honored in 2018 to become a member of national MOAA's Surviving Spouse Advisory Council. This has been an incredible experience. I have learned so much, which I have shared with my local chapter. I have also joined the [MOAA Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter](#), which is open to all surviving spouses and surviving spouse liaisons.

It has been my privilege to fill this position. I have met some inspiring women, shared some wonderful stories, and made memories and some dear friends.

I am beginning my seventh and final year as surviving spouse liaison. It is my hope that someone will step forward and bring a new look and fresh ideas to our chapter.

## REVIEW OF BIO AND PRESENTATION BY APRIL SPEAKER

### EDITH SMITH, SURVIVING SPOUSE



Edith Smith is the widow of Lt. Col Vincent M. Smith, USMC, Ret., who had the misfortune to suffer a fully disabling heart condition in 1987, at age 49. Vince was soon switched from CHAMPUS, his earned military health benefit of retirement, to Medicare. With the special help of Senator John McCain, AZ, and Congressman Bill Young, FL, Edith set out in 1990 to change the law with another wife (residing in Florida), whose husband suffered a traumatic brain injury at about age 50. Within 10 months legislation restoring CHAMPUS as second payer to Medicare was signed into law benefitting about 100,000 retired Medicare eligibles under age 65. A July 19, 1992, segment describing the mission of Terry Cox and Edith to change the law ran on Tom Brokaw's NBC "Nightly News." Mr. Brokaw ended the segment with his comment: "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned with a phone and a fax!" This was the beginning of Edith's long term advocacy efforts for disabled military beneficiaries and surviving spouses.

Edie began advocating for the repeal of the SBP-DIC offset over 20 years ago! Picture to the left shows Edie with Sen Bill Smith when he introduced the very first bill to repeal the SBP-DIC offset in 2001. *Edie and other widows/surviving spouses attended the ceremony at Andrews AF base on 20 December 2020 when President Trump signed NDAA 2020 repealing the SDP-DIC offset.* She has mentioned several times that she thinks the Virginia Military Widows: SBP-DIC Offset Facebook group was instrumental in the final inclusion of the SBP-DIC offset!!



A new Facebook group, Virginia Military Widows Property Tax Waiver, was formed to address JLC 2 (Expand Tax Relief for Surviving Spouses of Military Service Members to also include "Died in the Line-of-Duty"). Again, this constant communication facilitated the passage of this bill in the 2022 General Assembly. Gov. Youngkin signed this bill on Gold Star Spouses Day, 5 April. Edie was involved extensively with both Facebook groups in advocating for surviving spouses for both of these bills.

**NOTE:** Edith Smith graciously agreed to step in to be our April speaker after the NNSY CO found she could not participate in our program and notified PACMOAA on 1 April.

Edie shared her story as noted above with us as well as examples of encounters with legislators, both state and national. She stressed the importance of using Facebook to disseminate information quickly and its effectiveness. Edie shared several resources that will be distributed with the newsletter including the *MOAA Survivor Checklist Pamphlet*, additional items needed as well as the 4 virtual/Facebook groups she is involved with; a pdf of *Virginia 2020 DoD VA numbers*; and a pamphlet *Virginia Military Factbook* by the Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs 2020. Some interesting facts she shared included that in 2020, there were over 5 million retirees, dependents and survivors with about 737,000 Medicare-eligible spouses of retirees and 519,000 Medicare-eligible surviving spouses eligible for TRICARE. About 311,000 surviving spouses receive SBP (Survivor Benefits Plan) in Virginia. 430,345 DIC surviving spouses, with 15,600 living in Virginia. SBP is paid from military retirement. DIC (Dependency and Indemnity Compensation) is paid by the VA to eligible survivors of certain deceased veterans. Edie was very concerned that many younger surviving spouses are not aware of their benefits and/or interested in advocating for them.

As mentioned earlier, Gov Youngkin signed the bill to expand tax relief for surviving spouses of military members that died in the line of duty. This **only** applies to 100% disabled and probably only impacts 30-40 surviving spouses. Unfortunately, this bill only encourages counties to provide this property tax exemption and it has to be included in the local budget. The Virginia Military Widows Property Tax Waiver Facebook group is encouraging their members and providing resources/guidance on how to work with their local governments to pass a local ordinance to include this tax waiver.

In order to provide a property tax exemption equal to the property tax exemption Virginia has provided to the 100% permanent and total disabled veterans and their surviving spouses, **a Constitutional Amendment must be passed by Virginia voters in the next two years**. The efforts of MOAA and the Joint Leadership Council (JLC) are driving this equity goal for our service members who gave the ultimate sacrifice.

### From Edie's April Presentation. MOAA Survivor Checklist Pamphlet

<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/moaa-publications/survivor-checklist-detail/>

**\*\*Retired Dependent** status formally changes to **Surviving Spouse** ID card must be changed as soon as possible with permanent military ID at age 75.

Additional Essential Documents for a surviving spouse:

1. **USER NAMES and PASSWORDS** Computer... or home safe.
2. **Retiree's DEATH CERTIFICATE**...MUST STATE Service connected Cause of death can be changed, but very difficult to do.
3. Retirement papers **DD214** (or Form 1300 Active Duty death certificate.)
4. **Marriage license** SBP may go to former spouse, if one.
5. **Divorce papers for prior spouse**...if one DIC is paid ONLY to current spouse
6. **Retired Pay Statements** - will provide Survivor's name and percentage of SBP. SBP is automatic. If it is declined, the survivor must sign in agreement. Print off SBP application, review with spouse now.
7. **VA annual letter of disability award**. Keep claims documents...all information. Laws and programs change...don't know what you will need. Print off DIC application, Review.
8. Division of Motor Vehicles folder for **DV license plates** inherited by surviving spouse.
9. 100 % Perm and Total SC Virginia **property tax exemption** claims
10. Insurance named beneficiary...
11. **Pre Need Burial application** VA National Cemeteries... wait time for burials.
12. **CHANGE of ADDRESSES** to TRICARE, DEERS, DFAS, and VA...DoD computer programs do not talk to each other.
13. **Military ID card** will need to be changed. From dependent to survivor...permanent after age 75 for survivor.
14. **Bank** may require a closing of joint account...new account created

## PRIVATE Informational FACEBOOK Groups For Surviving Spouses.

“MOAA SURVIVING SPOUSES AND FRIENDS” 729 Members

“Military Widows: SBP-DIC Offset” 2500 Members Successful advocacy repealed the SBP-DIC offset in 2019

“DIC Surviving Spouses and Friends” 1700 Members

“DIC Surviving Spouses/DIC Increase Advocacy” 672 Members

## MOAA & LEGISLATIVE

### FY 2023 Appropriations: Will Congress Deliver, or Delay?

By: Dan Merry April 26, 2022

<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2022-news-articles/advocacy/fy-2023-appropriations-will-congress-deliver,-or-delay/>

Full appropriations for FY 2022 were signed into law March 15, after nearly six months of restricted funding based on the previous year’s appropriations. Where will we stand at the beginning of FY 2023?

If past is prologue, we may see another sequence of continuing resolutions (CRs), the result of Congress failing to fully fund the government. And if Congress cannot agree on the length of a CR, we could face a government shutdown as the fiscal year begins Oct. 1 – just five weeks before the midterm elections.

For decades, CRs have become a crutch for Congress. Lawmakers have passed a budget before the start of the new fiscal year just four times since FY 1977.

**[TAKE ACTION: [Ask Your Lawmakers to Fully Fund the Government on Time](#)]**

One would think, in a midterm election year, Congress would work overtime to deliver appropriations by the Sept. 30 deadline to garner support from their electorate. But try as they might, and given the demand signals from all ends, lawmakers haven’t wrapped up their budget work on time since FY 1997.

Here is how Congress fared over some recent election years:

- **2020:** The first CR pushed the deadline back to Dec. 11, then four more moved it to Dec. 28. Appropriations passed Dec. 27.
- **2018:** The first CR pushed the deadline back to Dec. 7, then another moved it to Dec. 21. The president vetoed a proposed extension to Feb. 8, 2019, triggering a 35-day partial government shutdown – the longest such shutdown in U.S. history. It ended when three comprehensive appropriations bills were signed into law Feb. 15.
- **2016:** After a CR through Dec. 9, two more extensions pushed the deadline to May 5, 2017. The president signed omnibus appropriations legislation that day – over seven months into the fiscal year.
- **2014:** A series of CRs pushed the deadline to Dec. 17. On Dec. 16, the president signed the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, which included full appropriations for all areas but those under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The act included a CR for DHS through Feb. 27, 2015, but another was needed through early March before full funds were allotted.
- **2012:** A long-term CR pushed the deadline to March 27. The day before it expired, the president signed the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, combining full appropriations for most areas through the fiscal year with a full-year CR for a range of sectors, including the departments of Energy, Interior, Labor, and State, along with financial services and other small agencies.

**[RELATED: [Budget Delays May Cost DoD More Than \\$40 Billion. Ask Your Lawmakers to Act](#)]**

### Finding a Long-Term Solution

Congress will continue to fail at keeping its own rules, and it is unlikely the political will exists to enforce the current timeline. Our servicemembers and their families suffer during CRs, and the practice is terribly wasteful of taxpayers’ dollars. Appropriating funds for a longer period, every two years, may be necessary to create some badly needed predictability.



Given this history, it is difficult to imagine our Congress will have a funding solution for the whole of government by the end of September. However, these are unique times: slowly emerging from the cloud of COVID, rampant inflation, a near-peer country invading its neighbor, and a president's budget that attempts to deal with these uncertainties. If ever there were enough compelling and contributing factors to "getting this done," this would be the year.

We must not kick the FY 2023 budget into the next year for a new session of Congress to deal with — this Congress has an obligation to not leave with unfinished appropriations on the table.

If we are to make progress, we must have the appropriations to match the authorizations and budget submitted to Congress. Without full funding, departments must execute "today's mission" with yesterday's appropriations, which are exceedingly inadequate.

[Send this letter to your lawmakers](#); we can all make a difference, but it will take Congress to deliver the solution by the end of September this year.

**Remember Advocacy in Action 2022 Issues** <https://www.moaa.org/content/take-action/advocacy-in-action/>

Even though the Advocacy in Action campaign primarily occurred in April, please make sure to contact your Congressman and Senators about these issues.

### Support the Major Richard Star Act

- **At Stake:** Concurrent receipt of DoD retirement pay and VA disability benefits for combat-injured veterans.
- **Learn More:** Download [MOAA's Issue Paper](#). Watch [this video](#) about the bill and the need for concurrent receipt.
- **Take Action:** [Send this message](#) to your lawmakers.

### Support the Stop Copay Overpay Act

- **At Stake:** Affordable mental health care for TRICARE beneficiaries, including retirees and families of servicemembers.
- **Learn More:** Download [MOAA's Issue Paper](#).
- **Take Action:** [Send this message](#) to your lawmakers.

### Ensure a Competitive Military Pay Raise

- **At Stake:** Preserving fair compensation for those in uniform and maintaining the all-volunteer force.
- **Learn More:** Download [MOAA's Issue Paper](#).
- **Take Action:** [Send this message](#) to your lawmakers.

**NOTE:** One of the Advocacy in Action issues for 2021 was not passed. See MOAA articles on toxic exposure: "Toxic Legacy" in the May Military Officer magazine and "Veterans Groups Gather to Support Toxic Exposure Reform Bill" dated April 20, 2022 at <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2022-news-articles/advocacy/veterans-groups-gather-to-support-toxic-exposure-reform-bill/>

**There are also post cards in your May Military Officer to mail to your legislators asking their support for comprehensive toxic exposure reform. Please mail these!!**

Submitted by MAJ Sherry Ferki, USA (Ret)

## VCOC

### VCOC Meeting Highlights

**SECOND QUARTER 2022 - Wednesday, 6 April,**

**10:30 AM – 12:30 PM Virginia War Memorial, Richmond, and Zoom Meeting**

(Meeting started 50 minutes late due to inability to get zoom to work)

**9 of 16 Chapters were present, thereby obtaining a Quorum.** 2 Chapters would have attended on Zoom

**PACMOAA Attendees: CDR Ken App** (in person with Donna), **MAJ Sherry Ferki**, via my Phone link. Sherry's audio was very good, and all could hear her.

#### 1. President's Report

CDR Linc Smith, USNR (Ret)

- Thank you to Monti Zimmerman for General Assembly legislative advocacy
- **Thank you to PACMOAA for opportunity to swear in Board of Directors**
- Steve Hornsby (Patriots Colony) made Honorary Member of VCOC
- **Meeting speaker introduction – Daniel Gade, Commissioner, DVS (Former Candidate for US Senate).** He arrived late but gave his view of the **Veteran Services Department.**

Strongly endorsed Tax Relief for retirees. Strongly suggested that the age be 40 and above, vice 50 and above, in keeping with the Governor's vision of the friendliest state for Military Retirees. On Legislation he used the term **“swing for the fences”** and **“hit more homeruns!”**

Asked help with getting National MOAA getting the VA to release names and addresses of in State Vets, which VA is not doing or being very cooperative. State has lots of Programs, but need to connect with Veterans, especially VETS at RISK!!!

He stood the entire time of his presentation and Q&A, with only one leg and on crutches. He didn't have any aide with him. I was very impressed! He gave out his personal cell number to all attendees.

**He was voted as an Honorary Member of the VCOC!**

**Virtual Advocacy in Action** Campaign Topics:

- ✦ Military Pay Raise @ 4.6% per Employment Cost Index (ECI)
- ✦ The Major Richard Star Act status
- ✦ The “Stop Copay Overpay Act”

#### Nominations and Voting for State & Federal Legislators of the Year

**U.S. Representative Elaine Lauria** and **State Delegate Kathy Tran** were nominated by the VCOC Legislative Committee and unanimously approved by those present as **The VCOC Federal and State Legislators of the Year for Mar 2021-Mar 2022.**

#### 2. Surviving Spouse Chair: **Sherry Ferki, MAJ, USA (Ret.)**

- **Guest Speaker: Ms. Maria Kelly** Maria was in person, and told her story, which was very moving.

**Sherry gave a follow-up on Maria.**

Next Meeting calendar: **2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of 1<sup>st</sup> month of Quarter** July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022 (So Chapters can get info together and send it in without rushing. Moved from 1<sup>st</sup> week in Quarter). In person and ZOOM. The VCOC Secretary, John Down, and I will be joining via ZOOM due to vacation.

**Submitted by CDR Ken App, USN (Ret), PACMOAA VCOC Representative**

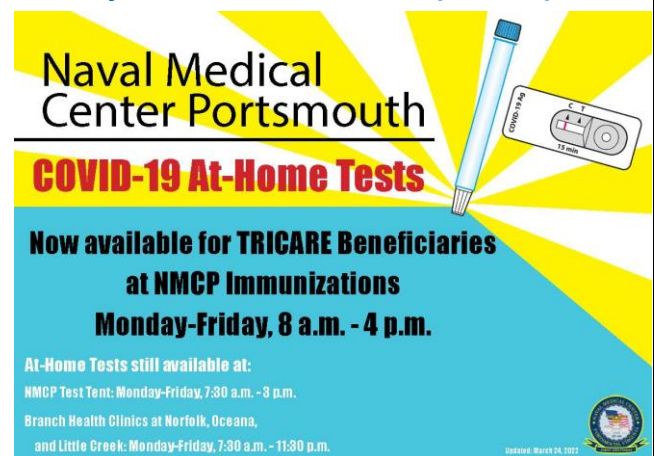
**At-Home Tests** COVID-19 at-home test kits are now available for pick up at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth (NMCP) and its Branch Health Clinics in Norfolk, Oceana, and Little Creek.

The at-home test kits are available to NMCP beneficiaries with a military ID card. Test kits can be picked up at the NMCP Testing Tents Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., and at Immunizations Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. They can also be picked up at the Branch Health Clinics (Norfolk, Oceana and Little Creek), Monday through Friday, 7:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Test kits are available on a first come, first served basis, while supplies last.

#### **NMCP Pharmacy Update**

April 1, 2022 via website at <https://portsmouth.tricare.mil/Health-Services/Pharmacy> and Facebook



**Naval Medical Center Portsmouth**

**COVID-19 At-Home Tests**

**Now available for TRICARE Beneficiaries at NMCP Immunizations Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.**

At-Home Tests still available at:  
 NMCP Test Tent: Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
 Branch Health Clinics at Norfolk, Oceana, and Little Creek: Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 11:30 p.m.

ISSUED: March 24, 2022

## COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

## 2022 Virtual JROTC Award Ceremonies 4/28/2022rev

School	Director	Phone No.	Date/ Time	Cadet Presenter
<b>CHESAPEAKE</b>	<i>All AFJROTC</i>		<b>18 May 2022 at Indian River HS</b>	<b>CAPT Rick Titi</b>
Deep Creek HS <a href="mailto:darrell.pearman@cpschools.com">darrell.pearman@cpschools.com</a>	MAJ Pearman CMSgt Pabon	558-5302	<b>1800-1930</b>	Ryan Ritter
Grassfield HS <a href="mailto:dirk.sandstrom@cpschools.com">dirk.sandstrom@cpschools.com</a>	Lt Col Sandstrom SMSgt Hillard	558-4516		Nicholas Bates
Great Bridge HS Christian Wendler <a href="mailto:christian.wendler@cpschools.com">christian.wendler@cpschools.com</a>	Lt Col Christian Wendler SMSgt Smith	546-3651		Thomas Sasso
Indian River HS Lynn Holmbeck <a href="mailto:lynn.holmbeck@cpschools.com">lynn.holmbeck@cpschools.com</a>	Lt Col Lynn Holmbeck CNSgt Patrie	578-7000		Derik Prasad
Oscar Smith HS <a href="mailto:michael.helsabeck@cpschools.com">michael.helsabeck@cpschools.com</a>	Col Michael Helsabeck MSgt Cain	548-0498		Tristan Davis
Western Branch HS <a href="mailto:bryan.spalla@cpschools.com">bryan.spalla@cpschools.com</a>	COL Bryan Spalla MSgt Hooper	638-7900		Mia Clarke
<b>PORTSMOUTH</b>				
Churchland HS <i>MCJROTC</i>	LtCol Paul Pratt	686-2500	<b>17 May 2022 0910</b>	<b>COL Bill Smith</b>
I.C. Norcom HS <i>NJROTC</i>	CWO2 Joseph Redwood 754-1439	393-5442 school	<b>25 May 2022 1800 in auditorium</b>	TBD <b>COL Bill Smith</b>
Woodrow Wilson HS <i>AJROTC</i>	SSG Orlanda Gordon MSG (R) Stanley Hill	465-2947 C 757-537- 9237	<b>7 May but no outside guests, drop of medal</b>	MSG Fernando Smith III
<b>SUFFOLK</b>				
Lakeland HS <i>AFJROTC</i> <a href="mailto:ericgriffin@spsk12.net">ericgriffin@spsk12.net</a>	Sgt Eric Griffin	925-5790	<b>20 May 2022 1320</b>	Cadet TSgt Cody Martin <b>CAPT Rick Titi</b>
Nansemond River HS <i>AFJROTC</i>	LtCol David Hedger Sgt Young	923-4101	<b>5 May 2022 6:30-8:00pm</b>	Christian Svatek <b>COL Hal Hostetler &amp; CAPT Bob Brewer</b>
Kings Fork HS <a href="mailto:nikkiwalton@spsk12.net">nikkiwalton@spsk12.net</a>	Mr Nikki Walton - temporary	923-5240	Waiting to hear	

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	26 May 2022 1315 in SHS gym	MSG Amos, Alyssa <b>MAJ Sherry Ferki</b>
Franklin HS <a href="mailto:drobinson@fcpsva.org">drobinson@fcpsva.org</a> <a href="mailto:lwright@fcpsva.org">lwright@fcpsva.org</a>	LTC Linwood Wright 1SGT Robinson	562-5187 school 802-0427 Robinson	Waiting to hear	



Submitted by Sherry Ferki  
Scholarship Co-Chair

**PROGRAMS**

- June – (Tentative) Princess Elizabeth of The Elizabeth River Project
- July – (Tentative) Joint Brunch
- September – TBD
- October - TBD



Submitted by:  
**COL Hal Hostetler, USA (Ret)**

**Mission BBQ Military Appreciation Days  
5/16-5/21**



**R & R**

**Space-A Travel Is Back for All After COVID Hiatus**

**APRIL 26, 2022**

Space Available passengers board a C-17 at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, bound for Guam. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Cohen A. Young/Air Force)

*(Editor's note: This article by Jim Absher originally appeared on Military.com, a leading source of news for the military and veteran community).*

The Air Mobility Command has announced that Space Available (Space-A) travel on military aircraft has returned for travelers to pre-pandemic availability.

According to a [press release](#), as of April 22, 2022, all restrictions on Space-A travel had been lifted. The Air Force aims to restore full service by May 13, 2022, according to the release.

**[RELATED AT MILITARY.COM: [Who Is Eligible For Space-A Flights?](#)]**

Restrictions put in place early in the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, effectively shut down all Space-A travel on



Air Mobility Command and contracted aircraft for anyone not traveling for medical care or on emergency leave. Now, those blocks will be completely lifted.

While all passengers are required to follow current federal COVID-19 travel procedures, those traveling OCONUS may have additional testing requirements and restrictions for travel to specific countries; those interested may find details on country-specific requirements in the Department of Defense's [Electronic Foreign Clearance Guide](#).

Space-A flights, or military hops, are a unique privilege provided to service members, retirees and their families. Under the Space-A program, eligible passengers can fill unused seats on DoD-owned or -controlled aircraft once all the space-required (duty) passengers and cargo have been accommodated. **Space-A flights are available to military members and their families, retirees and some disabled veterans.**

For additional information on Space-Available Travel, visit [Air Mobility Command's Travel website](#).

## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

A selection from LOVE Inspirational Meditations from Magnificat Inc. Written by Elizabeth Jennings a British prolific writer captures both the Easter & Mother's Day message appropriate for May.

### AT OUR BEST

There are so many loves we know,  
 Paternal kind, and one we feel  
 For somebody who's understood  
 Or nursed us when we're weak. We go  
 About in search of one which seemed  
 To find us as our best always,  
 The best of love won't fill our days.

It is ample and we have  
 A mine and heart not deep or wide  
 Enough for such a love to fill.  
 For this Christ cried out from a hill  
 Hoping God's love in him as man  
 Would find us ready Sloth or pride  
 Found us wanting. I've a plan,

One that found me, gave me rest  
 And love beyond our frail desires,  
 Compassion thriving at its best.  
 Even when we're found wanting, Christ  
 Let's us choose again. The Tree  
 Of Paradise turned to the one  
 Where God as man cried out for us.

Submitted by  
**CAPT Bob Brewer,**  
**USN (Ret)**  
**Chaplin**

**THAT'S A WRAP FOR MAY 2022**