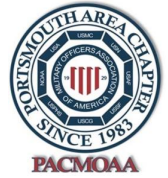




The Salute Online



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 XXXXII Issue VII LEARN MORE AT PACMOAA.ORG AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2023

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

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



PACMOAA family--It's been a long summer--- Have spent most of it recovering/rehabbing from a painful rotator cuff surgery, but found time to take a ocean cruise from Seattle to Alaska (I will ask to set aside a dinner meeting to show pictures--only kidding).

Looking forward to sharing summer experiences at our September dinner.

The program will be "Remembering our local Bataan & Corregidor ex-POWs", presented by world-renowned composer Stephen Melillo.

Hopefully, we see a few potential members, since MOAA is putting out an "eblast" to advertise our chapter (Thanks Sherry). Please bring a guest with you to enjoy the comradery and the great meal prepared by Roger Brown's.

In closing, please set aside time on Friday September 15th to remember the POW's and those who are still missing in action ...anchors aweigh.

Bruce
Bruce LaLonde CPA
Capt. (Ret) USN
757-241-3026

July Brunch Pics



CAPT Rick Titi USN (Ret), CDR Ken & Donna App, and Chris and CAPT Roger Hirsh USN (Ret), Center: CW4 Karl and Angela Wilson. Far right: LTC Herb DeGroft USMC (Ret) chowing down!

**PACMOAA
LEADERSHIP**

Please see Leadership Pulldown



CHAPTER NEWS

AUGUST

- 04 US COAST GUARD Birthday (1790)
- 04 Vietnam Conflict Begins 1964
- 05 Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) Established 1943
- 07 Purple Heart Day
- 13 1st Women Marine 1918
- 14 National Navajo Code Talkers Day

SEPTEMBER

- 02 VJ Day 1945
- 04 Labor Day
- 11 Patriot Day *Remember a moment of Silence at 0846*
- 11 Grandparents Day
- 14 **PACMOAA Dinner – Speaker Composer Stephen Melillo**
- 15 **POW/MIA Recognition Day**
- 17 Constitution and Citizenship Day
- 18 US AIRFORCE Birthday (1947)
- 16-17 NAS OCEANA AIR SHOW
- 22 Autumnal Equinox First Day of Fall
- 24 Gold Star Mother’s Day
- 26-27 Rosh Hashanah

HAPPY AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Dolly Cherrington Herb DeGroft Karl Wilson

HAPPY SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Ken App Scott Dickinson Paul Lucas Blaine Persall
Hans Sachse Linc Smith Bill Smith Margret Wilshusen
Richard Yesensky

The September Dinner

will be held on **Thursday, September 14th** 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

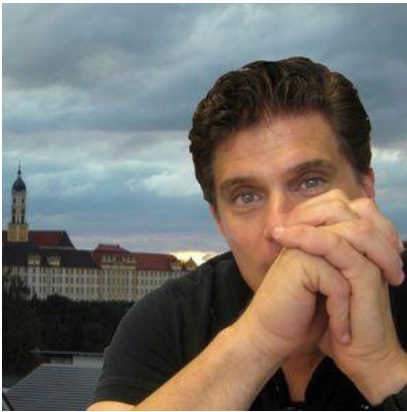
- Harvest Salad*
- Marinated Flank Steak*
- Catfish ½ Baked - ½ Fried*
- Mashed Potatoes w Gravy*
- Broccoli Medley*
- Chocolate Cake*
- Corn Muffins and Butter*

Cost is \$25 (includes gratuity & tax). Cash bar available. Please make your reservation no later than **Sunday, September 10th** with Sherry Ferki at 757-922-7030 or by email at navmedarmynurse@gmail.com

A RESERVATION MADE IS A RESERVATION PAID

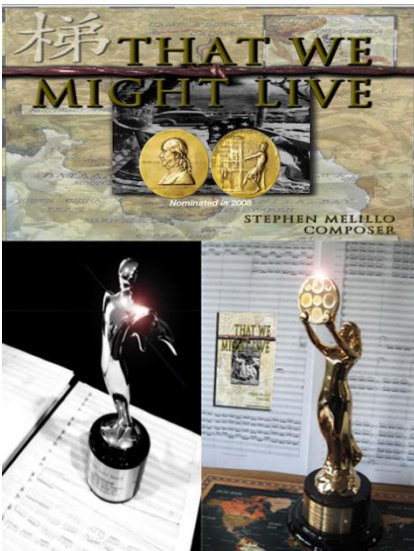
GUEST SPEAKER

REMEMBERING OUR LOCAL BATAAN & CORREGIDOR EX-POWS



Stephen Melillo is a world-renowned composer, winner of multiple *Gold Global Music Awards* in 2022-23, a *Hollywood Music in Media Award* for “Best Epic/Orchestral Music” in 2022, and a *Best New Age Album Award* in “New Age Radio Awards” for “*The Grey II-III*” in 2023. Stephen’s more than 1330 works include 4 symphonies, several concerti and over 45-hours of Music for Ensembles of the 3rd Millennium™. Stephen’s *Symphony III: Lightfall*, was nominated for the *Pulitzer* and *Nemmers Prize in Music* in 2015. Winner of *three 2009 Telly & Ava Awards* for his 2005 Visualized Concert, *Kakehashi: That We Might Live*, Stephen’s concert-version was nominated for the *Pulitzer Prize in Music*. A fourth *Telly Award* was given for “Best Use of Music” in the 2019 feature film, *One Little Finger*, produced by Rupam Sarmah. A fifth *Telly Award* and *Scorpius Award* included Stephen’s work on the 2019 *Reckoning of Darkness*, produced by Christopher Kulikowski. Stephen’s 15 feature film scores include the Academy Award-nominated *12:01 PM*.

Stephen has been a recipient of the ASCAP Concert Awards each year since 1992. **STORMWORKS**, Stephen’s pioneering, self-publishing entity, has gone from 0 to many thousands of worldwide renderings since 1992 simply by word-of-mouth. He has 52 Albums and 9 books on varied streaming services and novels, including: *Only for*



Now; Ahab, a Love Story, the prequel to Melville’s *Moby Dick*; and most recently, the sequel, *Death to Moby Dick, a Love Story*.

Stephen will share his experiences of spending time and hearing the stories of the local ex-POWs from Bataan and Corregidor including delivering a speech written on behalf of the Men, the ex-POWs of Bataan & Corregidor which he gave on the Navy base at the 2015 POW/MIA Recognition Day and at the Dismal Swamp for the 2016 Death March Reenactment. He will also share brief excerpts from an epic musical tribute he composed to honor these men – **BEYOND COURAGE, Kakehashi: That We Might Live**.

NOTE: Stephen will bring DVDs of his “Visualized” concert version of *Kakehashi: That We Might Live*, which was premiered to the *American Defenders of Bataan & Corregidor* in 2007, sent to Congress, and resulted in many of the ex-POWs receiving *Bronze Stars* and *Purple Hearts*. The charge for the DVD will be \$10, cash or check.

MEMBERSHIP

PACMOAA had 66 paid members as of 23 August 2023, that includes our 4 new members this year and 5 life members. Sadly, as noted in the Personal Affairs section, COL Gordon Nelson died recently. Twila Nelson will be added as a Surviving Spouse member. Another loss occurred this summer when Board member MAJ Steve Watkins retired from the Army and he and his wife Kay (Board member and Secretary) relocated to Atlanta. We wish them success in their new home and will miss them! Thus, we have 53 regular members and 13 Surviving Spouses that have paid their dues this year.

At the MOAA Virtual Chapter Training on 26 July, chapter effectiveness was again discussed. Recruiting and Retention are at the center of Chapter Health. PACMOAA consistently does very well with retention of current members other than deaths but has faced the same issue with recruiting that most other VSOs face of decreasing new members. Active duty and recent retirees are not as interested in joining groups/organizations as the WWII, Korean and Vietnam veterans.

Please Memorize the VETERAN CRISIS HOTLINE Dial 988 then press 1

I need help with recruiting. Any assistance or suggestions you can provide would be most appreciated. **We all need to be recruiters!** We have an amazing program for September so this would be a great time to invite a neighbor or friend to attend and see what PACMOAA does!

At several recent MOAA virtual meetings I've attended, today's environment was discussed. Attitude toward membership varies with different generations and there are varying degrees of awareness about MOAA in the community. Declining membership and aging membership were both mentioned – both of which apply to PACMOAA and most chapters in Virginia! MOAA is stressing recruiting younger members and is targeting those between 40 and 60 years old. Earlier this year at a VCOC meeting, members were encouraged to stress to potential members that their membership helps the organization with legislative advocacy. Thus, maintaining or improving military benefits that include all Uniformed Services, National Guard and Reservists, family members and Surviving Spouses.

I will be happy to send you a copy of our recruitment brochure and will bring some to each meeting.

Every Member is a Recruiter!!

PACMOAA Dues, Dinners, etc. Online

Members need to create and/or login to their PayPal account.

From the Account Overview page, click the Send button. If prompted for whether the money will be sent to a business or friend, enter "friend". Type PACMOAAreasurer@gmail.com in the block where it says "name, @username, email, or mobile" and click "next". Enter the amount to transmit and add "For PACMOAA Dues" 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.

PERSONAL AFFAIRS

IN MEMORIAM

COL Gordon Nelson, COL, USA (Ret)



**COL Gordon Nelson,
USA (Ret)
Staff Photographer
Salute Newsletter Editor
Website Manager for over
10 Years**

I am very sorry to report the death of Gordon Nelson on 23 July. Gordon was a member of PACMOAA for over 15 years and I worked closely with him for 12 of those years on the newsletter, keeping the membership roster updated, and in helping him organize the material for PACMOAA's 35th Anniversary Celebration. I also acted as the Interim Newsletter Editor when Gordon and Twila were visiting Sicily and other areas. Gordon provided me with a word document with the basic set up of our newsletter. This gave me a much better

appreciation of all the time and effort he put into producing our monthly newsletters!! Sadly, my newsletter was not up to his standards so when they returned from vacation, Gordon redid the newsletter and sent it out again! Gordon also served as the staff photographer and took wonderful pictures at our monthly meetings and at the Annual Portsmouth Memorial Day Parade. He was meticulous in staging the shots, so they came out well. He also took videos of special events like the POW/MIA Remembrance Ceremony performed at one of PACMOAA's dinner meetings and put it on the website so everyone could watch it! Maintaining the PACMOAA website and keeping it updated as well as mailing the printed newsletters were some more of the many tasks that Gordon performed for PACMOAA. His dedication to PACMOAA was amazing and greatly appreciated. The only picture I could find of Gordon from his many years of attending PACMOAA events was the picture above from our 35th Anniversary Celebration in 2018!



In recognition of his many years of dedicated service to PACMOAA, Gordon was awarded MOAA's Outstanding Service Award. The first sentence reads "You are recognized for your exemplary performance as the Newsletter Editor to the Portsmouth Area Chapter of MOAA" and ends with "display your commitment and dedication to this chapter". The document was signed by LT GEN Dana Atkins, USAF (Ret), President of MOAA on 12 November 2020.

Gordon had to step down from all of the jobs listed above in 2019 due to health issues but continued to be a resource for myself and CDR Ken App, the member that took over all of his jobs! Four PACMOAA members and two spouses were able to attend Gordon's Memorial Service and several of us went back to his house after the service. It was good to share stories with Twila and their children as well as to watch the slide show prepared with pictures from his childhood through recent family get togethers. The Tribute Video (slide show) as well as Gordon's obituary can be accessed at <https://www.rwbakerfh.com/obituaries/Gordon-M-Nelson?obId=28548966>. Gordon will certainly be missed, and Twila and his family are in our thoughts and prayers.

Note: The family asked that memorial donations be made to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, P.O. Box 5014 Hagerstown, MD 21741.

LTC Shirley Barker, USAR (Ret) Obituary



Shirley Sealey Barker, 92, died on May 19, 2023. Born in 1931 in Greensboro, NC to Thomas S. Barker, Sr. and Alma Sealey Barker, Shirley moved with her family to Cradock, VA when she was in the 2nd grade. After graduating from high school, she attended Meredith College for two years, studying music. Although she entered the field of nursing, music would remain one of her lifelong passions.

She earned a Diploma in Nursing at Norfolk General Hospital in 1953 and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Baylor University in 1956. In addition to graduate studies in nursing at Emory University, Shirley was awarded a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Virginia Commonwealth University in 1982.

Shirley served on active duty in the Army Nurse Corps from May 1957 to October 1971. While on active duty she was stationed at Fort Campbell and Fort Knox, Kentucky and also served in Army hospitals in France, Japan, and Ethiopia. Her foreign postings led to a lifelong interest in travel. In 1972 she entered the US Army Reserves, retiring in 1983 at the rank of Lt. Colonel.

In the 1980's Shirley returned to Cradock to care for her mother. For the remainder of her life, she was an active member of Cradock Baptist Church, teaching Sunday School and ministering to the church's special needs members. She also indulged her passion for music by singing with the Singing Beez and playing the piano.



A proud military veteran, Shirley was an active member of the Portsmouth Area Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America, serving in a variety of leadership positions for over 20 years, including President, Legal Representative, and Hospitality Co-Chair.

She was predeceased by her parents, Thomas S. Barker, Sr. and Alma Sealey Barker, her brother, Thomas S. Barker, Jr. and a special sister-in-law, Sabra

B. Barker. Survivors include her nephews Albert (Mary), William (Leigh), and Charles, and their extended families as well as a host of Sealey and Barker cousins.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Cradock Baptist Church, PAC/MOAA or a charity of your choosing.

Please leave condolences at www.wjsmithandson.com.

Published by Daily Press on Jun. 4, 2023.

Several PACMOAA members were able to attend Shirley's visitation and funeral. Her nephews and their families were very appreciative of PACMOAA members attending and loved hearing stories about Shirley's activities with PACMOAA. Shirley was a member of PACTROA/PACMOAA for 30 years and was an active participant for 29 of those years! We will miss seeing her smiling face collecting money for dinner at the sign in table and our thoughts and prayers go out to her family.

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2023

This has been as very difficult year for PACMOAA with the deaths of 4 longtime members between mid-April and the end of July! Some of the issues the surviving spouses experienced included dealing with **multiple bank accounts in 3 or 4 banks and/or some accounts only being in 1 spouses' name** and all essential documents not being together and easily located, for example – birth certificates, divorce decrees (if applicable), and separation certificate (DD 214). At a recent surviving spouse webinar I attended, one of the speakers mentioned the importance of having **all utilities in both names**. I know I get frustrated when I call up to ask a question about an account and if it is only in my husband's name. The company representative states they cannot give me any information about the account without my husband's verbal permission, but he is usually not available at that time! I can't imagine how much more frustrating and overwhelming it would be for surviving spouses.

As I mentioned in the February Personal Affairs column, at every Surviving Spouse Forum or Virtual Chapter meeting I've attended, a frequent comment I've heard is” **I wish we had prepared better before my spouse died” and they urge attendees to try to prevent the experiences they had from happening to other spouses!**

Several MOAA resources that can help our spouses before they become surviving spouses include:

Personal Affairs Guide: A Personal Inventory for Peace of Mind (2021) MOAA has created this workbook to assist you early in your military career in gathering all of your family's crucial information in one place to save digitally or print for your records <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/moaa-publications/personal-affairs-detail/>

Help Your Survivors Now: A Guide to Planning Ahead (2021) This guide can help you prepare, make decisions, and ease the financial, medical, and property transition for your family after you're gone. For our PREMIUM and LIFE Members, benefits and financial counseling with MOAA staff experts can assist you through this process. Sign up for LIFE membership today and your spouse will maintain a LIFE membership with access to all benefits upon your death <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/moaa-publications/help-your-survivors-detail/>

Survivor Benefits Plan: Security for Your Survivors (2019) Use this publication, which includes worksheets, to help you in making your Survivor Benefit Plan decisions. <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/moaa-publications/survivor-benefit-plan--security-for-your-survivors-detail/>

Updated information <https://www.moaa.org/content/benefits-and-discounts/pay-and-benefits/survivor-issues/survivor-benefit-plan2/>

NOTE: Copies can be downloaded as noted above or ordered by calling MOAA 1-800-234-6622. I also have extra copies of most of these publications and can bring them to meetings and/or mail them to you. Please let me know if you would like me to bring any of the booklets listed above.

MOAA webinar: *Preparing a Spouse or Family Member for Survivorship* (2 hour webinar)

<https://www.moaa.org/content/benefits-and-discounts/transition-and-careers/transition-center-webinars/survivorship-2023-webinar-archive/> Aug 2023

Please share this with other MOAA members.

NOTE: You need to be a Premium or LIFE member to access booklets and webinars.

All Above submitted by:

Sherry Ferki, MAJ, USA (Ret)

PACMOAA 2nd VP/Membership Chair

Surviving Spouse Liaison and Personal Affairs Chair

SURVIVING SPOUSE

Surviving Spouse Corner: Calling All Bibliophiles

<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/member-spotlight/surviving-spouse-corner-calling-all-bibliophiles/>

By: Suzanne Walker August 02, 2023

Summertime is the perfect time to catch up on reading. Whether you read e-books or enjoy turning the pages of books or magazines, there are so many wonderful stories to enjoy.

MOAA's summer reading list is available in *Military Officer* magazine each year (Premium and Life members can access the digital version of the July issue [at this link](#)), and you can find great suggestions from libraries, magazines, or recommendations from friends and family.

Do you enjoy fiction, nonfiction, biographies, or self-help genres? It's often fun to select something you would not normally choose. For those who want a shorter read, there are some great articles in *Military Officer* and other publications. Perhaps you've attended an event where the author signs and reads from their book – or maybe you have considered writing a memoir or fiction story of your own.

[MOAA WEBINAR RECORDING: [Advice for Aspiring Authors](#) (Premium/Life Member Login Required)]

Another way to enjoy a good read is to join a book club. Online book clubs are very popular and turn a solitary experience into a social party. Bookworms from across the country, and around the world, can find a platform to enjoy a conversation about a favorite book. Book club apps can match you to a group that enjoys the same kinds of books.

[The Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter](#) just initiated a book club that meets monthly. They alternate between fiction and nonfiction titles and vote as a group on the next selection to read. The conversation offers perspectives of the book that you might not have considered. The social aspect of the discussions makes reading much more fun. All Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter members are welcome to attend these gatherings monthly on Zoom.

[RELATED: [MOAA Member Books](#)]

The August selection is [The Confidant: The Untold Story of the Woman Who Helped Win WWII and Shape Modern America](#) by Christopher C. Gorham.

Please join us for the Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter meeting Aug. 15 at 5 p.m. Eastern. Come prepared to stay after the meeting to join the book discussion (or learn about the book if you haven't had time to read it).

[TELL US: What's Your Favorite Book? Email us at SSACouncil@moaa.org]

The MOAA Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter [was founded in 2018](#). Interested in applying? Download membership materials [at this link](#). You can also join MOAA's [Surviving Spouses Facebook group](#).

Happy reading!

Surviving Spouse Corner: Finding Your Path After Losing Your Spouse

By: Barbara Smith

<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/member-spotlight/surviving-spouse-corner-finding-your-path-after-losing-your-spouse/>

June 30, 2023

When you lose your spouse, you often face lifestyle questions that need to be answered. Do I stay in my home? Should I move closer to my children? Should I go back to work? Should I start volunteering?

Like others, when I lost my husband 20 years ago, I needed to address those questions.

My situation was different than some because my mother, who was 94 at the time, had been living with us for 13 years. She wasn't keen on moving, which meant we weren't going anywhere.

[SURVIVING SPOUSE CORNER: [9 Ways to Get Through Hard Times](#)]

When she passed away four years later, I decided to get back to work. But my home wouldn't remain empty for long.

Soon after my mother's death, my older sister retired and wanted to move in with me. She relocated from California to my home in Virginia. She stayed two years and then moved to Colorado, where she had wanted both of us to move initially.

Was that the end of my roommate revolving door? Far from it: Next came my grandson and his best friend for what was supposed to be a six-month stay while one found a job and the other finished school. Instead, one stayed with me for two years and the other for six. I learned living with young boys was much different than raising my three daughters.

Next came my daughter and son-in-law, who wanted to relocate from the Washington, D.C., area after retiring. They have been here for going on five years.

[SURVIVING SPOUSE CORNER: [A Day as a Lobbyist](#)]

Do I miss my privacy sometimes? Of course. I'm sure my housemates also miss theirs from time to time. But it's been a very good fit.

There are pros and cons to an open-door policy — what has worked for me and my family in recent decades might not be ideal for you. But I believe life has a way of leading us to where we're meant to be — and in this case, it's kept me in my home.

Evidently, that is what I always wanted.

Send Us Your Feedback - We'd love to hear from you. Please let us know if this article was helpful by sending an email to sscomm@moaa.org.

MOAA & LEGISLATIVE

NDAAs Update: What's in the House and Senate Bills, and What Happens

Next <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/advocacy/ndaas-update-whats-in-the-house-and-senate-bills,-and-what-happens-next/>

August 02, 2023 By [MOAA Government Relations Staff](#)

From the topline figure to key details on pay and benefits, including TRICARE coverage, the versions of the FY 2024 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) passed by the House and Senate have significant differences to resolve when lawmakers from both chambers return to Washington, D.C., in September.

MOAA will continue to engage with Congress, the executive branch, and other important stakeholders as the FY 2024 NDAA makes its way through the legislative process to ensure the issues most important to the uniformed services community remains at the forefront of this year's bill. You can help by lending your voice to our cause by signing up at our [Legislative Action Center](#).

Here's what you should know about the contents of the House version ([H.R. 2670](#)), which passed on July 14, and the Senate version, ([S. 2226](#)), which passed July 27.

[TAKE ACTION: [Urge Your Legislators to Support the All-Volunteer Force](#)]

Topline Authorization

Please Memorize the VETERAN CRISIS HOTLINE **Dial 988 then press 1**

The Senate FY24 NDAA calls for \$886 billion in accordance with a debt ceiling deal, while the house version calls for \$875 billion. Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle and in both chambers painfully acknowledge DoD has not passed an audit and are committed to ensuring an audit is completed for improved oversight of spending taxpayers' dollars. A tough negotiation is expected in the conference given the lower topline number in the House NDAA.

Pay, Benefits, and Quality of Life

- **5.2% Pay Raise.** While you won't find it in the legislative text of either the House or Senate version, Congress supported the pay raise by keeping it tied to the Employment Cost Index – a [key MOAA priority](#). The defense appropriations bill may seek to address [pay table reform](#).

[**RELATED:** [MOAA President Outlines Key Priorities for New House Quality of Life Panel](#) | [Full MOAA Testimony](#)]

- **Basic Needs Allowance (BNA).** MOAA prefers the House language, which removes the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) from BNA eligibility calculations to ensure families struggling with food insecurity have access to this needed benefit. The Senate bill extends the authority of service secretaries to determine high-cost areas or “a demonstrated need” in the implementation of the BNA.
- **CONUS COLA.** The Senate included a provision to increase access to the CONUS cost-of-living allowance (COLA) for servicemembers stationed in high-cost areas. Currently, the rate is paid when a servicemember or their family is in an area where non-housing expenses are 8% over the national average. The Senate language would reduce it to 5%.
- **Family Separation Allowance.** The House bill contains a provision increasing Family Separation Allowance II (FSA-II) from \$250 per month to \$400 per month. FSA-II was raised to \$250 in 2004 and hasn't been adjusted since. This payment provides a vital source of income to help families offset additional costs when their servicemember is away.
- **Housing.** The House version would authorize \$200 million more than requested by the administration to improve housing and barracks. Both chambers included the establishment of a Military Housing Readiness Council to provide enhanced oversight and more consistent engagement with stakeholders.

[**TAKE ACTION:** [Urge Your Legislators to Pay Full Housing Costs for Servicemembers](#)]

- **Child Care.** DoD, like the nation, is experiencing a significant shortage of child care providers. In an effort to address the shortage, the House NDAA includes a standardized program to provide discounted child care for DoD child care employees, starting with no fee for the first child and no more than 50% for the second child. Both NDAA versions address the need to focus on recruitment and retention of employees for child development programs. The House version also requires DoD to conduct a recurring review and revision of pay for child care staff.
- **Spouse Employment.** The House version expands the military spouse licensing and business costs reimbursement program to include more transitioning spouses. It also provides a modest amount of student loan deferment for dislocated military spouses. Both the Senate and House bills contain provisions that would provide military spouses with assistance in obtaining doula certifications.

[**TAKE ACTION:** [Urge Your Legislators to Support the Military Spouse Hiring Act](#)]

Military Health Care

- **Pharmacy Network Cuts.** Both the House and Senate responded to MOAA's call for a report on how TRICARE pharmacy network cuts have impacted beneficiary access to prescription drugs. The Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) included directive report language for a Government Accountability

Office (GAO) evaluation on beneficiary access in their committee report. The House bill includes a provision for DoD reporting on access changes resulting from the narrowed network.

[TAKE ACTION: [Help MOAA Fight Cuts to the TRICARE Pharmacy Network](#)]

- **Military Health System Reform Oversight.** The SASC report includes a directive for a GAO assessment of military medical staffing at military treatment facilities (MTFs) to address reported challenges with competing priorities between the services and the Defense Health Agency (DHA). The SASC also requires a DoD brief on military personnel staffing of MTFs and the management structure for DHA's authority, direction, and control of those facilities.

Arlington National Cemetery

A provision in the House version of the NDAA signals lawmakers' intent to [protect burial with military honors](#) and prevent a reduction in service-earned benefits. The House version contains language from the Expanding America's National Cemetery Act ([H.R. 1413](#)) requiring a joint report from DoD and the VA with "a proposal to increase national cemetery capacity through the expansion or modification of a national cemetery that has, or will have, the capacity to provide full military honors."

[TAKE ACTION: [Ask Your House Member to Support the Expanding America's National Cemetery Act](#)]

This is an important signal from the House on the importance of continuing military funerals with honors and keeping our nation's promise to our military community – a signal that runs counter to a previous proposal in the federal rulemaking process to dramatically reduce eligibility for Arlington National Cemetery based on awards.

[MORE ABOUT THE PROPOSAL: [Arlington National Cemetery Information Paper](#)]

The report requirement is missing from the Senate version of the NDAA. While your lawmakers are home for their August recess, consider calling their office and ask to speak with their military legislative assistant to secure co-sponsorship H.R. 1413 and keep the report language in the NDAA through the conference process. Use MOAA's toll free Capitol Hotline – 866-272-MOAA (6622) – and share with your network.

Star Act Missing From NDAA

It is very disappointing that the text of the [Major Richard Star Act](#) (S. 344/H.R. 1282) – which would authorize receipt of earned DoD retirement pay, without an offset, for those injured in combat and forced to medically retire – has not been included in this year's NDAA. Over two-thirds of Congress co-sponsored this legislation, with [327 in the House](#) and [71 in the Senate](#). Unfortunately, House and Senate leaders have not allowed a floor vote because they are concerned over cost.

[TAKE ACTION: [Ask Your Lawmakers to Support the Major Richard Star Act](#)]

To stay up-to-date on the latest news, check out [MOAA's Advocacy News page](#) and read the weekly MOAA newsletter (subscribe [at this link](#)).

MOAA Looks Out For You

MOAA is committed to protecting the rights of servicemembers and their families. Lend your voice and support these efforts today. Because the larger our voice is, the greater our impact will be.

Summer Advocacy in Action Campaign Starts Strong, But We Still Need Your Help

<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/advocacy/summer-advocacy-in-action-starts-strong,-but-we-still-need-your-help/>

By: Dan Merry August 23, 2023

Note from MOAA: [Read a recent message](#) from Lt. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, USAF (Ret), MOAA's president and CEO, about our Legislative Action Center; or [go straight to the sign-up page](#) to be a part of our advocacy efforts throughout the year.



MOAA national and our member-leaders throughout our [network of councils and chapters](#) are in the home stretch of the [2023 Advocacy in Action Summer Campaign](#), which wraps up when members of Congress return to Washington, D.C., after Labor Day. This gives us more time to build support for our two main issues:

- [Urge Your Legislators to Pay Full Housing Costs for Servicemembers](#)
10,238 actions taken as of Aug. 22 via our Legislative Action Center.
- [Support a TRICARE Pharmacy Network Report in the FY 2024 NDAA](#)
20,728 actions as of Aug. 22.

Building Momentum

In past years, MOAA members would read an article about our advocacy efforts in *The MOAA Newsletter* and send a letter directly to their legislators. The system has changed a little thanks to our Legislative Action Center, which helps MOAA evaluate responses and determine what topics are of the most importance to our members.

We have increased our advocates by over 3,000 in the past month, bringing us to 19,400. This is welcomed progress, but many more registrations are needed to better represent our overall membership base of more than 360,000.

If you already signed up, we thank you for doing so. Spread the word among your friends and families, others in your MOAA chapter, and throughout your in-person and online networks.

[RELATED: [Congress Can Make a Difference for Military Families by Restoring Full BAH](#)]

If you have not signed up yet, please do so – and then send letters to your legislators about the housing allowance and TRICARE pharmacy benefit issues noted above. You also can scan the many [Key Advocacy Issues](#) tracked by MOAA and join in the efforts of your fellow members.



The fiscal challenges on the horizon are palpable; we must continue to prepare for the possibility of decrements to service-earned benefits. To face such stark and unprecedented cuts, we will need more than the 19,400 advocates on our bench. [Register today](#) and lend your voice to MOAA's cause.

Submitted by: MAJ Sherry Ferki, USA (Ret)

VCOC

Third Quarter Meeting, July 12, 2023 10:07 am – 11:25 am Dedona House Leesburg - Truncated Minutes
12 of 15 Chapters Present 80%. **PACMOAA had three people attend. CAPT Bruce LaLonde, MAJ Sherry Ferki, and CDR Ken App the voting member. MAJ Sherry Ferki USA (Ret) is the new VCOC Treasurer starting in JAN 2024.** VCOC recognized LTG Dana Atkins, outgoing MOAA President. **State Senator Jeremy McPike was selected as the VCOC State Legislator of the Year.** There was no consensus on a Federal Legislator of the Year, therefore there will not be one this year.

LTC Mark Belinsky, MOAA, Stressed need for the MOAA Legislative Action Center especially on:

HR 1413 Study to expand Arlington National Cemetery.

HR 2547 Basic Allowance Housing back to 100% from 95%

HR 3232 Respect for Grieving Widows Act. Forgiveness or offset the last months retired paycheck to a joint account for over a period of time after the death of a retired member.

MAJ Sherry Ferki VCOC Surviving Spouse Representative, Many Surviving Spouses do not use the internet and request that all chapters and VCOC used printed material for their SS.

Fourth Quarter Meeting Oct 25, 2023 Biennial Luncheon & Remembrance Ceremony at Falcon's Landing MOAA Chapter in Northern VA In Person and Virtual.

Submitted by: CDR Ken App, PACMOAA VCOC Representative.

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP RECOGNITION DINNER 2023

PACMOAA was able to utilize part of the \$300.00 MOAA Community Outreach Sponsorship awarded in 2022 and 2023 to help recognize the scholarship winner, her parents and the JROTC Color Guard from Manor High School. Again, many thanks to MOAA for their continued generous support through this sponsorship. USAA previously offered this sponsorship. This was the 7th time PACMOAA was awarded this grant!

The 2023 scholarship recipient is Caroline Lewton from Smithfield High School. She plans to attend VA Tech and major in mechanical engineering. Caroline has maintained a 4.1 GPA in an advanced study program and is in the top 15% of her class!

These quotes from one of her letters of recommendation describes her achievements “Caroline is a 4-year member and Captain of the JROTC Rifle Team and is the top marksman on the team. The team is the top AJROTC rifle team in the state of Virginia. She is fit and takes pride in her athletic performance. She leads by example.

Caroline’s leadership transcends the JROTC classroom. She attended the West Point Summer Leader Experience this past summer as well as the JROTC STEM Summer Camp at VT. She participates in multiple Clubs: BETA, National Honor Society, Operation KAM and the Patriot Shooting Club. She also finds time to volunteer and fundraise with over 80 hours in JROTC alone: car washes, blood drives, event set up and clean up. I know you will be pleased selecting Caroline as a MOAA scholarship recipient. She will make you proud.”



Caroline Lewton, her mom, Samantha, and her Dad, Ryan, were able to join us as was her JROTC instructor, LTC Pete Badoian, USA (Ret) and his wife, Christine. This was the 2nd time in the past 3 years that a student from Smithfield JROTC was selected as a PACMOAA Scholarship recipient – Jade Lewis was selected in 2021! It was a pleasure to talk with such an accomplished student, her parents, and LTC Badoian. It was also interesting to have 3 JROTC Instructors attend: Col Paul Pratt, USMC (Ret) from Churchland High School, SFC Orlanda Gordan, USA (Ret) from Manor

High School, and LTC Pete Badoian, USA (Ret) from Smithfield High School.

After being presented a certificate, Caroline read a prepared statement to the group as follow:

“Hello, I’m Caroline Lewton. Thank you so much for inviting me tonight. I am very excited to be receiving this scholarship.

A little about me...

I am a senior about to graduate from Smithfield high school with honors. Next year I will be attending the Virginia Teach School of Engineering and the Corps of Cadets. I have received an Army ROTC scholarship.

Throughout high school I have taken all honors, dual enrollment, and AP classes maintaining a GPA of 4.12. Because of my academic accomplishments I have been accepted into the National Honor Society and BETA club. When I was a freshman, I decided to try the JROTC program at my school just for the heck of it. Then they couldn’t get rid of me. When I first started the program, I was shy and not too confident in some of my abilities. Now that I’m leaving the program, I have learned to be a leader, how to be responsible and how to be confident in myself. Two people who have influenced me throughout high school were my JROTC instructors LTC Badoian and 1SG Hunter. During freshman year, I also decided to try for the JROTC air rifle team. I made the team and have been on the varsity team for 4 years. This year I am the executive officer of the program along with being the rifle team captain.

My parents have also been a big influence in my life. They have taught me to work hard for what I believe in and to stick with my fundamental values. I am grateful for their support. They have always been supportive throughout my life.

Some goals I have in the future are to graduate from Virginia Tech with a mechanical engineering degree and commission as an Army officer and be part of the Army Corps of Engineers.

Thank you again for inviting me here today and awarding me this scholarship.”



The Manor AJROTC under the leadership of SFC Orlanda Gordan, presented the colors before we said the Pledge of Allegiance and were led in prayer by Bob Brewer, CAPT, USN (Ret). We were happy that the JROTC cadets could join us for dinner this year. The Woodrow Wilson High School AJROTC (now Manor High School JROTC), last presented colors at the annual scholarship dinner meeting in June 2018 while under the leadership of LTC Dickens, USA (Ret). PACMOAA again offers our congratulations and best wishes for a successful college experience and military

career to this outstanding student. Her parents and JROTC Instructor are to be commended for facilitating the success of Caroline thus far.

Submitted by: Sherry Ferki, MAJ, USA (Ret)

Scholarship Committee Co-Chair and JROTC Awards Chair



Update from 2022 PACMOAA Scholarship Winner

7/9/23



Good Afternoon,

Over this last year, my life has changed astronomically since I received the PACMOAA Scholarship. I matriculated into the VMI Ratline on August 20th, 2022 and started my career at VMI as a Rat. The freshmen experience, or the Ratline, taught me how to become mentally tough and how to work under pressure. I became close with my classmates and roommates, my Brother Rats, through shared suffering. When I felt the urge to quit, they were there to support me and help me tough it out. My Dyke, (First Class mentor) provided me his wisdom and company during the Ratline and was always a pillar of support that I could turn to. After I "Broke out" of the Ratline and my class was recognized by the rest of the corps, I found that I made friends with a lot of upperclassmen, as they had seen me as a good Rat (affectionately called Rat Ties).



During my first year at the Institute, I involved myself with the Band, Glee Club and Jazz Band. I played trumpet at many institute events, and in the spring, I applied and was selected to become one of the five cadet buglers. Also in the spring, (after Breakout) I earned the rank of corporal, which is the entry NCO position in the corps. Next summer, I get to go back to school early to help train next year's incoming Rats.

NROTC at VMI is an awesome program. The staff, both cadet and active duty, create well thought out plans that benefit my training. I found it easy to get involved in the morning PT workouts we had. I hope to earn some sort of leadership position in the NROTC unit in the future. One great opportunity NROTC gave me at VMI was the ability to attend the US Naval Academy's Command Seamanship Training Squadron (CSTS). CSTS was a four-week training period at the Academy where I sailed a sailboat with USNA Midshipmen from Annapolis to Boston. I loved the experience as I had always wanted to know how to sail.

Currently I am at CORTRAMID, a Navy training experience for NROTC Midshipmen to explore the major fields in the Navy. This next week is Aviation week, and I get to visit the squadrons based in Norfolk and fly in training aircraft.

Despite the challenges of the Ratline and my freshman year at VMI, I feel like I have excelled and am excited to continue my next three years at the Institute. I can't thank the generous donors of PACMOAA scholarship fund enough for giving me an opportunity to attend VMI.

Very Respectfully,
Cadet Howard Link
 Band Company
 VMI Class of 2026

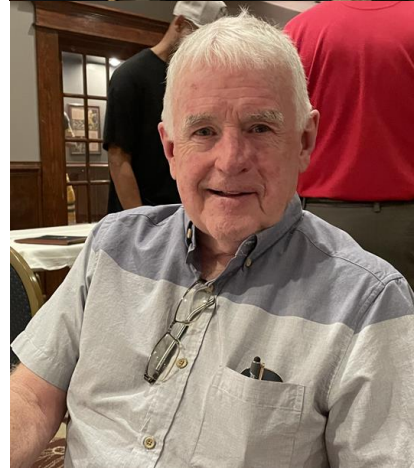
ANNUAL JOINT BRUNCH 16 JULY 2023



What a great way to spend part of a Sunday at Roger Brown's— delicious food, wonderful camaraderie, visiting members from other chapters as well as with **Nolan Bursch**, (pic at left with **MAJ Sherry Ferki USA (Ret)**) **Outreach Representative for Rep. Jen Kiggans**. Thirty-seven members, spouses, and guests participated in our annual brunch at Roger Browns –5 from VIPMOAA (including their **President COL Jim Pauls USA (Ret)**, with **COL Hal Hostetler USA (Ret)**



(Bottom right), 12 from HRCMOAA including their **President CAPT Loren Heckleman USN (Ret)** with **CDR Chris USN (Ret)** & **Sharon Mayfield** (in pic at left), 18 from PACMOAA (including **President CAPT Bruce LaLonde USN (Ret)**). **LT Paul Stott USN (Vet)** (Right), a member of the Hampton Roads Association of Naval Aviation, HRANA, a potential new member,



also attended. This is the 1st time in the 22 years I've been a PACTROA/PACMOAA members that all 3 chapter's presidents attended!

Submitted by Sherry D Ferki, MAJ., USA (Ret)

PACMOAA 2nd VP/Membership Chair

HRCMOAA Sylvia & COL Jim Smith USA (RET)

Below: Chris and CAPT Roger Hirsh USN (Ret)



Sharon Nix, with another couple from VIPMOAA Below: CDR Bert Ortiz USN (Ret)& Suzanne Ortiz



HRCMOAA Mary & CDR John Uhrin USN (Ret) Above: Heather & CDR Scott Dickinson USN (Ret)

PROGRAMS

September 14, 2023 Stephen Melillo Composer - Remembering Our Local Bataan & Corregidor Ex-POWs

Oct 12, 2023 – Steve Zollos Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia (SSSEVA)

Nov 9, 2023 Annual Business Meeting – PACMOAA Election of New Officers for the Leadership Team

December 14, 2023 PACMOAA Annual Christmas Gala

POSITIONS OPEN FOR NOVEMBER 2023 BALLOT

Members elected this fall will serve from January 2024 to January 2026 unless otherwise designated. ***Please consider becoming a member of the Leadership Team as an elected officer or appointed.*** PACMOAA needs as many different perspectives as possible to help us represent all our members and their interests! The Nominations Committee Chair is Bill Smith. If you are interested in running for any of the positions listed below or have any questions, please contact Bill Smith (757-333-0871, wmsmith6487@gmail.com) or Bruce LaLonde (757-673-7380, brucelalonde@cs.com) before the 12 October 2023 meeting.

The Board of Directors is composed of the elective officers: President; 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Vice presidents; Secretary; and Treasurer; the immediate Past President; and Four Elective Directors who will serve for a period of two years. Leadership Team members are expected to attend quarterly board meetings as well as additional meetings as necessary. The board has conducted virtual meetings since May 2020.

Note: Good computer skills are essential to facilitate speedy communication among the Board members.

Positions to be filled with a brief overview include:

1st Vice President: Is Program Chair, a member of the BOD, and fills in for the President in his absence.

2nd Vice President: Is a member of BOD and Membership Chair.

Secretary (for the last year of a two-year term): Is a member of the BOD, provides notification of meetings, writes and maintains minutes of all BOD meetings and the Annual November Business Meeting, and prepares correspondence as needed.

Treasurer: Collects and maintains financial records. Prepares a quarterly budget and annual report to the board. Financial or accounting background would be helpful!

Two Board Members for 2-year terms and 1 for the last year of a two-year term: “The Board of Directors shall have supervision, control, and direction of the affairs of PACMOAA, shall determine its policies or changes therein within the limits of the Bylaws, shall actively prosecute its purposes, and shall exercise direction in the disbursement of funds. It may adopt such rules and regulations for the conduct of its business as may be deemed advisable and may, in the execution of the powers granted, appoint such agents as it may consider necessary”

Above from PACMOAA Bylaws. Also participate in quarterly board meetings and other duties as designated.

CHAPLAIN’S CORNER

After reading local news and seeing the violence and crime on television, I feel that we need a more positive way of looking on life. Thankfully I found a thoughtful poem from the Salesian Collection: Poems of Joy titled “Keep Smiling” by Sr. Miriam Barker, C.D.S. which spoke to me as a way to accept some of the dark side of our world today.

Keep Smiling

Keep smiling when the sun would hide,
 And shadows fall like night-
 When storms would toss and turn you round,
 And nothing would be right.
 Keep smiling, for the sun’s around
 The corner, never fear—
 For then the clouds will vanish, and
 The skies will soon be clear.
 Keep smiling, ’tho your heart would break,
 And tempest take its toll—
 When tears, like rain from angry skies
 Would flood your troubled soul.
 Keep smiling, yes, for clouds will part,
 And sun will soon begin
 To warm you heart as God restores
 Your peace and joy within.



Submitted by
CAPT Bob Brewer,
USN (Ret)
Chaplin



CDR Ken App, USN (Ret)
Salute Editor

THAT’S A WRAP FOR AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2023

Please fill out the form below if any contact information has changed and submit to Sherry Ferki or Ken App.

PACMOAA MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL FORM 2023

FULL NAME: _____ NICKNAME: _____

GRADE/RANK: _____ SERVICE: _____ BIRTH DATE: _____

STATUS: Active Retired Former Surviving Spouse

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ CELL PHONE: _____

MOAA Membership No.: _____ (From MOAA card or Military Officer Mailing Label)

Spouse's Name: _____ Spouse's Nickname: _____

Please consider serving as a board member or committee? () Yes () No

<u>Please circle payment plan you select:</u>	Discount	15%	20%
			<u>Best Value</u>
Membership Category	1 Year	2 Year	3Year
Retired/Active/Vet Regular (Voting Member)	\$25.00	\$42.50	\$60.00
Surviving Spouse (Voting Member)	\$20.00	\$34.00	\$48.00
Active Duty (Basic Non-Voting Member)	\$5.00	\$8.50	\$12.00

Mail payment to: PACMOAA at PACMOAA, PO Box 5353 in Portsmouth, VA 23703

Or pay via 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 PACMOAATreasurer@gmail.com in the block where is says "name, @username, email, or mobile" and click "next". Enter the amount to transmit and add "For PACMOAA Dues" 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.

DATE: _____ SIGNATURE: _____