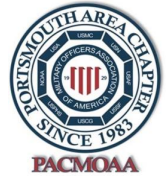




# The Salute Online



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 X

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

DECEMBER 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:

As 2023 comes to a close, I would like to personally thank the PACMOAA leadership team and the membership for your support towards our goals of membership and advocacy.

During our informative November business meeting we introduced 3 new members to our ranks...this is fantastic. Additionally, Sherry Ferki and Ken App led us through a power point presentation that highlighted the accomplishments our chapter achieved throughout the year. It was an amazing collage of parades, awards, and scholarship. Again thank you for your efforts.

Looking forward to sharing the Christmas spirit with you at our December dinner and listening to the tunes of the Tidewater Concert Band...see you there...Anchors Aweigh

Bruce

Bruce LaLonde CPA  
CAPT USN (Ret)  
757-241-3026

Right: CAPT Bruce LaLonde with Teresa Wilfong at the University of Tennessee Veteran's Day Celebration



At the VCOC 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Meeting at Falcons Landing, MAJ Sherry Ferki USA (Ret) was awarded the MOAA President's Award for Leadership (Left)

CDR Ken App USN (Ret) was awarded the MOAA Leadership Award. (Right)

Both awards were presented by CAPT Bruce LaLonde USN (Ret), at the Nov Business Meeting.



VETERAN CRISIS HOTLINE Dial 988 then press 1

PACMOAA  
LEADERSHIP

See Leadership Pulldown



CHAPTER NEWS

DECEMBER 2023

- 07 PEARL HARBOR DAY
- 07-15 Hanukkah
- 14 PACMOAA Christmas Gala with Tidewater Concert Band
- 16 Wreath Laying At Horton Veteran’s Cemetery (See November Salute)
- 16 Battle of the Bulge 1944
- 17 Wright Brothers
- 21 1<sup>st</sup> Day of Winter
- 25 CHRISTMAS
- 26 KWANZAA
- 31 NEW YEAR’S EVE

HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Ron Fritz Hal Hostetler, Jr  
Bruce LaLonde Lois Yandle

The November Dinner Business Meeting

will be held on Thursday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at Roger Brown’s Banquet Room,  
316 High Street, Portsmouth (757) 399-5377

**Sign in and social time begins at 6 PM, with Dinner Served at 6:30 PM.**

*Buffett Menu*

- Harvest Salad*
- Slow Roasted Brisket*
- Baked Salmon w Basil Sherry Cream Sauce*
- Mashed Potatoes and Gravy*
- Roasted Mixed Vegetables*
- Corn Bread & Honey Butter*
- Apple and Pecan Pies*
- Water, Tea, and Coffee*

Cost is \$30 (includes gratuity & tax). Cash bar available. Please make your reservation no later than Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup> with Sherry Ferki at 757-922-7030 or by email at [navmedarmynurse@gmail.com](mailto:navmedarmynurse@gmail.com)

**A RESERVATION MADE IS A RESERVATION PAID**



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## MEMBERSHIP

### Update December 2023

#### WELCOME ABOARD

Lt Col Daniel (Dan) Akeredolu, USAF (Ret) and his wife Lisa from Chesapeake  
 CDR Michael (Mike) Riley, USN (Ret) from Portsmouth  
 LCDR Paul (Scooter) Stott, USN (Vet) from Chesapeake

What a great November meeting with 3 new members joining!!! Many thanks to Irv Lindley and Ken App for inviting friends. As I've mentioned in the past, we need everyone to be a recruiter. Only 1 new member this year joined in response to the many letters and emails I've sent out from the MOAA Real Time monthly list of potential members! Word of mouth is most effective. Remember, you can invite a potential new member to dinner and



**Lt Col Dan Akeredolu  
 USAF (Ret)**



**LCDR Paul (Scooter) Stott  
 USN (Vet) with Dena Cain**



**COL Irv & Dottie Lindsey,  
 CDR Mike Riley USN (Ret)**

their dinner will only cost half price. This is a great way to introduce them to our organization and the camaraderie when attending a meeting and the Christmas Gala is a wonderful meeting to invite a potential member to. PACMOAA had 68 members as of 29 November 2023, that includes our 9 new members this year, 3 of whom are surviving spouses of long-time PACMOAA members, and 5 life members. At the end of 2022, PACMOAA had 67 members. Thus, this is the first time in 6 years that the membership increased from the previous year!! Many of the younger potential PACMOAA members do not want a social club but to belong to organizations that give back to the community. Thus, focusing on 1) legislative advocacy for military benefits that include all Uniformed Services, National Guard and Reservists, family members and Surviving Spouses and 2) Community Service should be our enticement to interest fellow officers and Surviving Spouses to join PACMOAA and MOAA. *Every member of PACMOAA needs to be a recruiter for us to thrive!*

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 can pay 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 [PACMOAATreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:PACMOAATreasurer@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, or Dinner, etc" 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.

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



**PERSONAL AFFAIRS/ SURVIVING SPOUSE**

November through January are always very busy and stressful months for most of us. That is especially true if you've suffered a loss. No longer sharing family gatherings with your spouse and/or other loved ones is especially difficult. MOAA has published several articles about finding your way after losing your spouse and establishing a new norm.

<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/>

<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2022-news-articles/surviving-spouse-corner-finding-a-new-normal/>

“TAPS (Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors) is a national nonprofit organization providing compassionate care and comprehensive resources for all those grieving the death of a military or veteran loved one.” Per <https://www.taps.org/mission>. Their services can be accessed by **spouses, children, parents, siblings, extended family members, battle buddies, and friends**. TAPS provides support regardless of the circumstances of the death, the length of time since loss, the relationship to the deceased, or the duty status at time of death. **The TAPS 24/7 Helpline** is staffed by trained professionals who provide emotional support, resources, and information. The number is **800-959-TAPS (8277)**.

The articles listed below are from the TAPS website and address dealing with grief over the holidays, ways of coping and recreating family traditions.

<https://www.taps.org/articles/2023/holiday-grief-tips>

<https://americanhospice.org/working-through-grief/coping-with-holidays-and-family-celebrations/>

<https://www.taps.org/articles/28-4/recreating-holiday-traditions>

Whether it is the first holiday without your loved one or the loss occurred some time ago, grief is experienced differently by each of us and in different time frames. We cannot compare our losses but can try to help each other along the way. One of the references on the TAPS website noted that of the survivors that connected with TAPS in 2022, about 27% suffered their loss more than 2 years earlier and some had experienced their loss over 10 years earlier! Please take care of yourself, your families and your friends. I think the biggest benefit of the pandemic was that it reminded us of the importance of family and friends and that we need to appreciate the time we have with them. This time of year, reminds us of that fact even more.

**Surviving Spouse Corner: Facing Your Holiday Blues**

<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/member-spotlight/surviving-spouse-corner-facing-your-holiday-blues/>

By: Pat Green December 01, 2023

The holiday season is a time of joy. It's a time of get-togethers with family and friends. But it also can be the perfect storm of events and emotions. For those suffering the loss of a spouse, it might be overwhelming and a time of dread.

Some have a fear of going to a party alone, of becoming emotional, or being alone and lonely on days that used to hold so many happy memories. Others worry the weight of carrying their grief is visible and contagious. A few are trying to decide how much jolliness is appropriate, what lessons about grief and coping they are teaching their children and grandchildren, and whether the absence of decor and tradition signal the sadness and depression that surrounds us.

All these considerations can weigh one down, and the numbness sets in. Fortunately, there are some coping skills that work.

**Find your comfort zone.** Initially, you might feel you want to cocoon, and be antisocial. For most of us, crying is necessary. A lot of crying is best done privately. You also need time to focus on *your* health and happiness. Maybe you sit out the holidays. Eventually though, you must ...

**Embrace change.** After a necessary (your time frame) grieving period, accept the reality that no holiday will be the same again, and adjust.

[SURVIVING SPOUSE CORNER: [Thrift Savings Plan Considerations](#)]

Instead of the big holiday dinner at your house, take the family out. If it's affordable, rent a cabin in the woods or a house at the beach. Assign dishes for each guest to bring. Announce that your only responsibility is the turkey, gravy, and dressing. Relax. Do things simply.

If you and your spouse hosted an annual holiday cocktail party, and you feel up to entertaining, do something different. Alcohol is a depressant, and tears are harder to hold back if you've been drinking. Have a cookie-sharing party or a neighborhood open house.

Decorate, but keep it simple. Guests will enjoy the party whether your tree is 5 feet or 15 feet tall. A wreath trimmed with a red ribbon on the front door might be all you have the energy for, and it's enough!

Ask the leadership of your church, temple, or mosque for suggestions for changes in rites or religious ceremonies. Possibly a family member can assume the role your spouse held in presiding over a customary event.

If you are truly alone, find your solace and your footing in helping others. This will be a difficult time, but good times will follow. Many of us have been in your shoes. As you now know, that is why we are called "surviving spouses."

Submitted by Sherry Ferki, Surviving Spouse Liaison and Personal Affairs Chair

## MOAA & LEGISLATIVE

### **[NDA Update: MOAA Priorities in Play as House, Senate Begin Final Negotiations](https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/advocacy/nda-update-moaa-priorities-in-play-as-house,-senate-begin-final-negotiations/)**

<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/advocacy/nda-update-moaa-priorities-in-play-as-house,-senate-begin-final-negotiations/>

By: Kevin Lilley November 28, 2023

If lawmakers follow their own schedule, the FY 2024 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) should become law within three weeks, offering a legislative vehicle for many of MOAA's priorities which have reached the late stages of the NDAA assembly process.

House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) made passing the NDAA by the close of 2023 part of his to-do list [shortly after taking the speaker's gavel](#). Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) told fellow senators in a Nov. 26 letter that the chamber would finish its work on the bill before the end of its current work period, which ends Dec. 15 (the House is scheduled to wrap up the day before).

Barring any extensions or exceptions, this points to a three-week period, at most, for negotiations between members of a joint House-Senate conference committee which will work out the differences between the chambers' NDAA versions. MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, USAF (Ret), outlined MOAA's priorities for this must-pass bill in [an August letter to legislators](#). Highlights include:

- **Protecting Your TRICARE Benefit:** MOAA supports a House provision (Section 765) which would require a detailed Government Accountability Office (GAO) report on access to the TRICARE pharmacy benefit – a report necessitated by [significant cuts to the retail pharmacy network](#).
- **Restoring the Military Housing Benefit:** MOAA supports House NDAA language increasing the Basic Housing Allowance (BAH) to 96% of local rental and utilities costs, up from the current 95%. This would be a meaningful step toward restoring the full 100% benefit, a position championed by MOAA in this year's Advocacy in Action campaign.

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

[TAKE ACTION: [TRICARE Pharmacy Access](#) | [BAH Restoration](#)]

- **Boosting Servicemember Compensation:** Along with a 5.2% pay raise to keep pace with the private sector, MOAA supports language in the House bill reforming the military pay table, which would result in higher pay for younger members and help combat ongoing recruiting challenges.
- **Preserving Earned Burial Benefits:** As Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) nears capacity, MOAA supports language in the House bill requiring a report on potential locations of the “next ANC,” which would eliminate the need for new eligibility rules at the current location and protect this earned benefit for generations of retirees. ([Learn More](#) | [Take Action](#))
- **Strengthening DoD Hiring Power:** MOAA supports a House NDAA provision eliminating the so-called “180-day rule,” which would allow DoD to tap into a talented pool of military retirees immediately to meet its staffing requirements. ([Learn More](#) | [Take Action](#)).
- [Read the full letter](#) for more about MOAA’s NDAA priorities, and keep up with the latest NDAA news and other MOAA advocacy priorities by subscribing to [MOAA’s weekly newsletter](#), visiting our [Advocacy News page](#), and registering for our [Legislative Action Center](#).

Submitted by Sherry Ferki, MAJ, USA (Ret)

### Understanding the Unseen Costs of a Continuing Resolution

<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/advocacy/understanding-the-unseen-costs-of-a-continuing-resolution/>

By: Kevin Lilley NOVEMBER 28, 2023

As we approach the third month of the new fiscal year, the government remains budget-less – operating under its second continuing resolution (CR) ... and continuing a long tradition of a broken funding process.

Since the start of the fiscal year moved to Oct. 1 with the 1977 budget cycle, Congress has passed at least one CR in every year but three. The last year without a CR was 1997. DoD’s plans to operate without a budget have become “routine in nature,” according to a [2021 Government Accountability Office \(GAO\) report](#), regularly postponing contracts or training in anticipation of budget gridlock.

Alongside routine preparation comes routine waste – money that could be going to address systemic issues within DoD, from [horrendous barracks conditions](#) to [ongoing recruiting challenges](#), and could be used in support of preserving the service-earned benefits MOAA fights to protect.

[TAKE ACTION: [Ask Your Lawmakers to Pass a Budget](#)]

Multiple reports from various agencies point to a lack of study into the full costs of CRs. In 2019, then-Defense Secretary Mark Esper said the lack of a budget [cost the department \\$19 billion](#). And two years earlier, then-Navy Secretary Richard Spencer added a compelling visual to his financial outlook.

“We have put \$4 billion in a trash can, poured lighter fluid on it, and burned it,” [Spencer said](#) in describing the money lost by his department due to CRs from 2011 to 2017.

### Lost Funds

An Air Force contracting offer outlined this wasteful process writing [for The Government Affairs Institute at Georgetown University](#):

- **Mismatched Money:** CRs offer limited budget flexibility, so if a program is ready to move from testing to production, for instance, it may be stalled instead, with no money allocated in the production budget and funds going to waste in the testing budget.
- **The Price of Planning:** Appropriators must spend time and money preparing for potential shutdowns, moving around what funds they can to anticipate CRs, and making other costly last-minute adjustments.

- **Hiring Headaches:** “As a previous Squadron Commander, with hiring authority for the civilian personnel assigned to the unit, I can attest that attracting and hiring talented employees was made more challenging by the limitations and fiscal uncertainty caused by the CR,” Lt. Col. Timothy Cabana wrote. “The demand for talent is high and high performing workers did not wait around for the government to pass a budget before taking another position.”

On top of this waste comes a new wrinkle for the current CR – an automatic 1% across-the-board budget cut if Congress hasn’t passed a full budget by Jan. 1, with no exception for DoD or the VA, under [language in the 2023 debt ceiling deal](#).

[NDAA UPDATE: [MOAA Priorities in Play as House, Senate Begin Final Negotiations](#)]

### Ending the Cycle

While members of MOAA’s advocacy team have taken these issues to key lawmakers repeatedly, these representatives and their staffs need to hear from those who matter most – their constituents.

[Send a simple message](#) through our Legislative Action Center and make it clear to your senators and House members that the status quo of costly CRs isn’t acceptable – not when so much needs done to maintain the strength of the all-volunteer force. Share the link with your network: You don’t have to be a MOAA member to [join the action center](#) and participate in all of MOAA’s ongoing advocacy efforts.

Constant pressure from constituents can snap this cycle and end an all-too-regular (and wasteful) rush to fund the government at year’s end. Make your voice heard today.

### Legislators Back MOAA-Supported Plan to Help End Hunger in the Ranks

<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/spouse-and-family/legislators-back-moaa-supported-plan-to-help-end-hunger-in-the-ranks/>

By: Kevin Lilley November 28, 2023

A bipartisan group of 20 lawmakers asked leaders on the House and Senate Armed Services committees to include a provision in the annual defense authorization bill expanding the Basic Needs Allowance (BNA) to cover more of the 286,000 servicemembers and their families facing food insecurity.

[The Oct. 23 letter](#) came about a month after [a letter addressed to the same committee leadership](#) from MOAA and other advocates in support of the same provision – Section 621 of the House version of the FY 2024 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). The provision would exclude the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) from BNA calculations, meaning more servicemembers would qualify for the assistance established in the FY 2022 NDAA.

Less than 3,000 servicemembers receive BNA under its current setup, according to the letter. Making a “common-sense adjustment to the eligibility guidelines for the BNA will help ensure the majority of military families who struggle with food insecurity are able to access this critical support,” the letter reads.

### [TAKE ACTION: Ask Your House Member to Strengthen the Basic Needs Allowance]

The NDAA provision mirrors [H.R. 1764](#), the bipartisan Military Food Security Act of 2023. The MOAA-supported legislation would change the existing BNA regulation, which allows service secretaries to remove BAH from income considerations in some circumstances, and require such removal for all who seek assistance. The bill does not have a Senate companion, but the Oct. 23 letter includes the signatures of 11 senators, such as Tammy Duckworth (D-Ill.) and Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska).

The NDAA provision is just one MOAA-supported section designed to improve quality of life for servicemembers and their families. Others address issues such as:

- **BAH Restoration:** House Section 4401 would increase the BAH rate to 96% of local rental and utilities costs, up from the current 95% and on the way to the MOAA-supported restoration of 100%.



- **Family Separation:** House Section 628 would increase the Family Separation Allowance to \$400 per month.
- **Child Care:** House Section 643 would assist DoD in staffing its child care centers by providing discounted child care for these workers.

Supporting military families, especially younger families who may be more vulnerable to economic insecurity, remains a key priority for MOAA ... and should be a key priority for lawmakers as the NDAA enters the stretch run. Your messages to your representatives make a difference – if you haven't already, be sure to register for [MOAA's Legislative Action Center](#) so you can engage with your legislators on these issues and others.

“Our servicemembers are our military's greatest resource,” the letter states. “When they experience hunger, we put our national security at risk. We must give members of our military every possible tool to focus on the mission and be ready to defend our Nation when called to action.”

## MOAA Council Leader Recognized for Tackling Military Issues at the State Level

<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/member-spotlight/moaa-council-leader-recognized-for-tackling-military-issues-at-the-state-level/>

November 07, 2023 By *Kathie Rowell*

Col. Monti Zimmerman, USA (Ret), pictured at right, is described as “fearless” by those who work with him on legislative issues that advance military initiatives in Virginia, including spearheading MOAA efforts to reduce the state income tax burden paid by Virginia military retirees.

For his doggedness and results, Zimmerman has been named the 2023 recipient of the [Colonel Steve Strobridge Legislative Award](#) at the council level.

Among his volunteer roles are serving as the [Virginia Council of Chapters](#) third vice president and legislative affairs chair,

and as vice chair of the [Virginia Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Organizations \(JLC\)](#), a governor-appointed board that encompasses 25 veteran service organizations.

Zimmerman retired from the military in 2016 after a 30-year career that took him from the Air Force to the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve. He deployed to Bosnia and Afghanistan, where he rode horses with special operations forces and worked with the two warlords who are portrayed in the movie *12 Strong*.

A Life Member of MOAA, he attended a MOAA retiree appreciation event and was asked to participate in the [Northern Virginia Chapter](#) of the Virginia Council of Chapters. He decided to focus on state legislation.

[GET INVOLVED: [Find a MOAA Chapter](#) | [MOAA Virtual Chapters](#)]

“Most people don't understand how their state legislatures work and then don't understand how to actually properly advocate to make an impact or a difference,” he said. “I determined that I can make a greater impact working on the state of Virginia than I could working on federal legislation.”

His leadership in an effort to reduce state income taxes paid by Virginia military retirees resulted in the passing of a tax deduction for the first \$10,000 of their retired pay for 2022 with an increase to \$20,000 for 2023 and an additional \$10,000 for each of the next two years. The tax break starts at age 55, but Zimmerman is actively engaging legislators to remove the starting age and to include retired members of the U.S. Public Health Service and NOAA.

[RELATED: [MOAA's Military State Report Card and Tax Guide](#)]

An issue Zimmerman has become passionate about is providing surviving spouses of those who died on active duty, not killed by enemy, with the same accrued benefits as those killed by enemy.

“In Department of Defense actuarial, those two groups are treated identical, but as far as state benefits accrual, some states treat them as polar opposites, so killed by enemy get all these benefits; died on active duty get nothing.”





He’s been shepherding an initiative that would provide property tax relief for surviving spouses of those who died on active duty and expects a constitutional amendment eliminating the disparity will be included on the November 2024 Virginia general ballot.

National Guard Maj. Kevin Hoffman, JLC chairman, worked with Zimmerman to rectify pay scale inequities for Virginia Guard members and to make needed changes to a tuition assistance program.

He describes Zimmerman as fearless.



“He will go up to any legislator at any time, at any place and talk to him or her about whatever MOAA or JLC or Guard Association issue is in his mind at the time. He will be talking and he'll be engaging and he'll gain support. It's remarkable.”

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

**VCOC**

The next 2024 VCOC meeting dates need to be established. The specific dates are typically in January, April, July, and October.

**PROGRAMS**

December 14, 2023 PACMOAA Annual Christmas Gala

**January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Installation of New Officers – Col Diana Kupchella RN JD USAF (/ret), New VCOC President Please NOTE Change of Day, WEDNESDAY, for this Meeting Only**

February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, March 14, 2024, American Legion and VFW TBA

**Community Affairs**

**PACMOAA MEMBERS ATTEND SEVERAL VETERANS DAY CELEBRATIONS LAKE PRINCE WOODS**



Three PACMOAA members attended the event on 9 November: Cpt Jim Jones, USMCR (Vet); MAJ Sherry Ferki, USA (Ret); and CAPT Oran (Sonny) Chenault, USN (Ret) along with two spouses – Bruce Ferki, and Jane Chenault. Sherry, Sonny, and Jane are pictured to the left. Sonny is a *PACMOAA Charter member!*

After colors were presented by the Lakeland HS AFJROTC, there was a

short presentation by LPW and then an active-duty soldier described the historical unit at Langley AFB he has the honor of serving with. Each veteran was recognized in a slide show with pictures of themselves when serving. Refreshments and fellowship followed the program.

Sherry and Jim Jones pictured to the left with Lakeland HS AFJROTC Instructor, Capt. Sasha Fountain. Nansemond River HS



**PORTSMOUTH VETERANS DAY EVENT** was held on 11 November at Portsmouth High Street Landing (Flagpole Stage) with guest speaker CAPT James P Mosman and attended by CAPT Bruce LaLonde, USN (Ret), COL Hal Hostetler, USA (Ret), and COL Irv Lindley, USA (Ret).

**PORTSMOUTH CATHOLIC REGIONAL SCHOOL VETERANS DAY REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY** was held on 15 November with CAPT Bruce LaLonde, USN (Ret) as guest speaker.

**PLEASE CONSIDER BRINGING DONATIONS TO PORTSMOUTH VOLUNTEERS FOR THE HOMELESS (PVH) TO PACMOAA CHRISTMAS GALA**

Excerpts from PVH Executive Director's Update on 18 November 2023

It has been **1,469 nights** of continuous and uninterrupted sheltering for us since the opening of our regular Winter Shelter season in November 2019. Our shelter services would have typically been **175 nights** from mid-November to the beginning of May.

We have successfully sheltered through the devastating impacts of a highly contagious novel respiratory disease in a congregate environment, not experiencing our first Coronavirus outbreak until January 2022 –two years into the public health disaster.

As state and federal funding have shifted to managing an endemic public health event, the day-to-day reality of what's happening on the ground is still tenuous.

The end of emergency pandemic funding, including hotel vouchers and rent/mortgage/utility assistance is driving households into homelessness and seeking shelter.

Economic disruptions have had greater adverse impacts within homeless populations and our communities need more time to recover.

PVH's "**Service Center-to-Shelter**" model which extended shelter services from a 6-month operation to 12-months has been successful in keeping our homeless citizens safer, protected and focused on rebuilding their lives. Emergency shelter with coaching provides a safety net to continue work on re-housing plans and barriers.

Partnering with other providers, we have assisted with -  
Individual housing  
Securing SNAP benefits  
Securing DD214 documentation  
Helping secure birth certificates, social security cards and government issued photo identification cards  
Helping many secure employment

Achieving these milestones would be significantly more difficult without being able to provide a safer night sleep as well.

We are extremely grateful to our supporters, friends, donors and volunteers for standing with us from the beginning...you are our Cheerleaders!

Grateful to the many churches, civic, social and fraternal organizations who respond to our needs throughout the year, helping us meet financial gaps.

**Note:** PVH has coordinated continuous uninterrupted night sheltering since the pandemic began.

**On-going PVH Service Center and Shelter material donation needs are listed below from 27 November Update.**

- Disposable gloves (non-latex), Toilet paper
- 3-ply masks
- Kitchen trash bags, large garbage bags
- Room deodorizer (solid)
- Bathroom cleaner

They can still use laundry detergent, personal care products, etc.

**Note:** PVH is a non-profit 501 (c) 3 corporation governed by a twenty-one (21) member independent Board of Directors. Before COVID, PVH provided nightly shelter for homeless persons in partnership with local faith communities, social and civic organizations, from mid-November to April. They provided a twelve (12) month Outreach Service Center where clients could shower, do laundry, receive their mail and use the telephone. The Outreach Service Center continues to serve with extended hours from pre-pandemic.

**PACMOAA had donated items to this most worthwhile organization since their Executive Director, Delores Washington (pictured at right) spoke at our meeting in October 2011. PACMOAA donations have fallen off over the past 3 years, but the need is ongoing! Every little bit helps!**

**You can call PVH at 757-399-0200 if you have any questions or go to their Facebook page.**



### Toys for Tots

Toys collected by Churchland High School MCJROTC at the Christmas Gala will be distributed locally at Military Circle in Norfolk. Toys for all ages and genders are fine. Please buy new gifts and **DO NOT Wrap Them!** If you buy a toy that needs batteries, please attach package of batteries to toys. Some parents may not have the extra money to buy batteries or may not be able to find them close to Christmas day. Thank you for any contributions you can make!!!



## PACMOAA BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

### NOVEMBER 9, 2023

#### Pledge/Prayer

Welcome by **President Bruce LaLonde**

**Dinner (6:30-7:15 pm)**

#### Treasurer's Report-CDR Hans Sachse, USN (Ret)

Nov 9<sup>th</sup> update reviewed. Copy available upon request. President LaLonde praised Hans for very detailed record keeping and mentioned sponsorship to help chapter raise money for scholarships. Bruce encouraged members to think about planned giving.

#### Membership Report – MAJ Sherry Ferki, USA (Ret)

Currently 68 members, 55 Regular and 13 Surviving Spouses with 9 new members, 3 joined tonight! Deaths this year- 4 long-term members – JP Barreca, Bob Steorts, Shirley Barker, & Gordon Nelson.

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

**Recruitment Activities** – Sent out emails/letters to MOAA list of potential new members every month. Only 2 or 3 responses and 1 new member this year from that list! Sherry and Ken participated in JBLE Retiree appreciation Day on 14 Oct.

### **Personal Affairs/Surviving Spouse Liaison**

- Reminder **TAPS** (Tragedy Assistance Program For Survivors) is a wonderful resource for anyone that has experienced the loss of a military member. Contact at **800-959-TAPS(8277)** 24/7, can **chat online**, or at **taps.org**. More detailed info in October newsletter.
- Make sure you information is current for spouse in the event of your death.
- Surviving Spouses can also be buried/interred in Albert G. Horton Jr. Memorial Cemetery in Suffolk free of charge. This was one of the JLC objectives that was successful this year!
- Surviving Spouses/family members can participate in the “Red Flag” wreath laying at Horton Cemetery. You need to make a reservation so that you can lay the Christmas wreath on the grave of your family member or loved one. Go to [www.hortonwreathsociety.org](http://www.hortonwreathsociety.org) then sign up on the Sign-Up Genius.
- As noted in November newsletter, members that died over the past 2 years were remembered in the Biennial Memorial Service.

**Legislative Report** - CAPT LaLonde reviewed the relationship between PACMOAA, VCOC, & MOAA. MAJ Ferki and CDR App briefly discussed some of issues listed below:

- 2023 VCOC legislative achievements – Briefly reviewed, more details in Nov newsletter.
- JLC Objectives for 2024- Only 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> year for Tax Relief for Surviving Spouses of Military Members who “Died in the Line-of-Duty” and 2 related to National Guard.”

### **Programs Report – COL Hal Hostetler, USA (Ret)**

Reviewed programs including VCOC President in Jan.; Honor Flight; CAPT Thompson from the NMCP Pharmacy; and Steve Melillo, world-renowned composer presented “Remembering Our Local Bataan & Corregidor Ex-POWs.

### **VCOC Representatives Report – CDR Ken App, USN (Ret)**

Acts as PACMOAA representative to Virginia Council of Chapters which meets nominally 4 times a year, January, April, July, and October. I was present at all meetings, one in-person (OCT 25, 2023 Biennial Luncheon), and 3 Virtual.

Additionally, CAPT Bruce LaLonde and MAJ Sherry Ferki (VCOC Surviving Spouse Liaison) were present virtually at ALL VCOC Meetings. Mrs. Mary Snyder was present virtually at the October Biennial Luncheon as the new Asst PACMOAA Legislative Acts as PACMOAA representative to Virginia Council of Chapters which meets nominally 4 times a year, January, April, July, and October. I was present at all meetings, one in-person (OCT 25, 2023 Biennial Luncheon), and 3 Virtual.

Lastly, MAJ Sherry Ferki, USA (Ret), was sworn in as the new VCOC Treasurer for 2024-2026.

The JLC nominated, and the VCOC voted unanimously for, Del Jeremy Pike as the 2023 State Legislator of the Year. There was no Federal Legislator of the Year voted on.

### **Communications Report - CDR Ken App, USN (Ret)**

**Salute Newsletter:** 3 versions, Express, Online, and B&W mailed.

**Express Advantages:** Full color, pictures, Layout highlights, Digital Links

**Website: Lots of info and Hotlinks: Homepage links:** Join MOAA, MOAA Take Action, MOAA Home Page, MOAA Goals, JLC 2023 Goals, Naval Hospital COVID page, “Find your Legislators” which changes in 2024, interactive MAP with directions from YOUR Location to Roger Brown’s, **PACMOAA – Who can Join, Join now, or Contact Us.** You can also read past PACMOAA Salute Newsletters from 2015 to the present.

**Facebook-** Publishes Updates on Pharmacy, COVID and Happenings.

**Recruiting Brochure:** Updated yearly or as required.

**Master Roster:** Maintains and updates. Use for Directory and Master Email Lists

**Master email:** Updated as required.



**Directory:** Updated as required. Published Annually or as Required.

### Scholarship/JROTC Report – MAJ Sherry Ferki, USA (Ret)

One \$2000 scholarship awarded this year, 2<sup>nd</sup> installment to be paid in Jan 2024. For 2022 & 2023 second excellent candidates had incomplete applications!

14 JROTC groups in PACMOAA area. Discussed in detail in slide show – 7 Award ceremonies held and PACMOAA Leadership Team presented awards at each one, 12 cadets presented awards.

### Election Report – Congratulations to the newly elected Leadership Team Members!

1st VP - Col Hal Hostetler, USA (Ret)

2<sup>nd</sup> VP – MAJ Sherry Ferki, USA (Ret)

Secretary – CAPT Valerie Parker, USN (Ret)

Treasurer – CDR Hans Sachse, USN (Ret)

BOD – CDR Scott Dickinson, USN (Ret) and COL Irv Lindley, USA (Ret)

**LOE-** Any contacts with elected representatives (in-person or virtually) and/or community involvement (like Advocacy in Action (AiA), Memorial Day parade, Veterans Day event attendance, Portsmouth Mayors Military Affairs Committee)

Advocacy in Action (AiA) – On 11 May, 3 PACMOAA members met with Rep Bobby Scott and several of his team to review MOAA obj for 2023

Memorial Day Parade – PACMOAA car with CAPT LaLonde & LCDR Wall in parade

Portsmouth Mayors Military Affairs Committee – CAPT LaLonde attends each meeting for PACMOAA; Col Irv Lindley is Chairman of Committee.

Veterans Day Event – MAJ Ferki along with 2 other PACMOAA members attended ceremony at Lake Prince Woods

### Old Business

- **PACMOAA 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration – MAJ Sherry Ferki, USA (Ret)**

58 attendees, 4 AJROTC from Manor HS in Portsmouth, 9 guests and 1 former member and BOD (Ben Barnard)

- **Community Activities PowerPoint presented by MAJ Ferki** covered JROTC activities including awards, fundraising, Color Guard and Toys for Tots; Portsmouth Mayor’s Military Affairs Committee and other community outreach by CAPT Bruce LaLonde and MAJ Sherry Ferki. Available on PACMOAA website.

### New Business

- Awards
  - Chapter – Harris Communication Award for 5 Star Level & LOE 5 Star Level
  - Individual – Leadership Award for CDR App & President’s Award for MAJ Ferki
- New LOE Timeline – All awards now due end of January.
- Any VCOC or MOAA training members attended this year?



### PACMOAA Goals and Objectives – CAPT LaLonde

- **Membership – #1 Goal!!**
- **Legislative Advocacy** – State and Federal issues impacting veterans/their families.
- **Community Involvement – Country and city need our involvement reaching out to youth!**

Submitted by MAJ Sherry Ferki, USA (Ret)

Acting Secretary

**CHAPLAIN'S CORNER**

During World War II one of the most famous Christmas songs written was by lyricist Kim Gannon and composer Walter Kent and recorded in 1943 by Bing Crosby. It was sung from the point of view of a soldier stationed overseas during the war writing a letter to his family. These words, still popular, continue to show our love of others at Christmas.

I'll be home for Christmas  
You can plan on me  
Please have snow and mistletoe  
And presents by the tree

Christmas eve will find me  
Where the love light gleams  
I'll be home for Christmas  
If only in my dreams

I'll be home for Christmas  
You can plan on me  
Please have some snow and mistletoe  
And presents by the tree

Christmas eve will find me  
Where the love light gleams  
I'll be home for Christmas  
If only in my dreams



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

**CDR Ken App, USN (Ret)**  
Salute Editor



**THAT'S A WRAP FOR DECEMBER 2023**  
**Merry Christmas!**

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