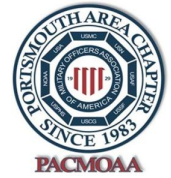




The Salute Online



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 XXXIV Issue VII

LEARN MORE AT PACMOAA.ORG

AUG/SEP 2025

The Mission: PACMOAA supports the Military Community through legislative advocacy, mentoring youth, and community involvement.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



PACMOAA family:

Excited about beginning our 43rd year of advocating for the benefits and quality of life for uniformed members and their families. We ended our last dinner honoring our partner JROTC units and awarded 2 scholarships to 2 amazing young ladies. The 60 members and guests in attendance celebrated the 250th birthday of the US Army, paid tribute to Colonel Hal Hostetler, and honored LtCol Paul Pratt upon his retirement from the MCJROTC unit at Churchland High School.

Please join us at our next meeting for fellowship and conversation, while listening to our local Chesapeake, Suffolk, and Ilse of Wight State Senator Emily Jordan, who will make us aware of what's happening at the State government level.

Anchors aweigh Bruce,
CAPT Bruce LaLonde CPA,
USN (Ret)
PACMOAA President



CDR Scott Dickinson being awarded the Leadership and Service Bear from PACMOAA President, CAPT Bruce LaLonde at the June Scholarship Dinner Meeting.

BELOW: CAPT Bruce LaLonde awarding 1LT Jason Susnoskie a Certificate of Appreciation from PACMOAA. Pictured from L to R are: COL Irv Lindley, LTC Pete Badoian, CAPT Bruce LaLonde, 1LT Susnoskie, MAJ Sherry Ferki, COL Bill Smith, and CWO Karl Wilson. Other Army personnel were 1SG Marvin Hunter and Charli Albers (Army ROTC), who were in attendance for the US Army's 250th Birthday Celebration (See page 12).



VETERAN CRISIS HOTLINE Dial 988 then press 1

**PACMOAA
LEADERSHIP**

Please see Leadership Tab



CHAPTER NEWS

AUGUST

- 04 US COAST GUARD Birthday (1790) 235th Birthday
- 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

- 01 Labor Day
- 02 VJ Day 1945
- 11 PACMOAA Dinner Meeting 1800 Speaker State Senator Emily Jordan**
- 11 Patriot Day
- 11 Grandparents Day
- 17 Constitution and Citizenship Day
- 19 POW/MIA Recognition Day
- 18 US AIRFORCE Birthday (1947)
- 19-21 NAS OCEANA AIR SHOW
- 22 Autumnal Equinox - First Day of Fall
- 28 Gold Star Mother's Day
- 23 Rosh Hashanah

HAPPY AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Dolly Cherrington Herb DeGroft Twila Nelson Karl Wilson

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Ken App (80TH) Scott Dickinson William Jones Paul Lucas
Blaine Pearsall Hans Sachse Linc Smith Bill Smith
Margaret Wilshusen

September Dinner Meeting

will be held on **Thursday, September 11th** 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

MENU

TBA

Will be sent separately when received

Tea, Sweet Tea, Coffee, Lemonade and Water

Cost is \$25 (includes gratuity & tax). Cash bar available. Please make your reservation no later than **Sunday, September 7th** with Sherry Ferki at 757-922-7030 or by email at:

navmedarmynurse@gmail.com.

A RESERVATION MADE IS A RESERVATION PAID

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www.pacmoaa.org

SPEAKER

State Senator Emily Jordan



Senator Emily Jordan understands the concerns of families in Western Tidewater and Southside because she has spent a lifetime in the region.

Emily was first elected to the House of Delegates in November of 2017 and now serves in the Virginia Senate representing the 17th District which includes all of Suffolk, Franklin, Isle of Wight, Greensville, Southampton, Emporia and parts of Dinwiddie, Chesapeake and Portsmouth.

In the Virginia Senate, she serves on the Courts of Justice Committee, General Laws and Technology, and Rehabilitation and Social Services. These committees consider issues related to criminal and civil code, public safety, building & construction, State agencies, social & mental health services and many other issues.

Whether it is providing support through legislative action or constituent service, Emily and her office take providing support services their top priority.

Emily is a Mom and small business owner. She lives in Windsor with her husband, Andrew, who has spent his career in law enforcement. Her and her family love serving the people of the 17th Senate District.

MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2025

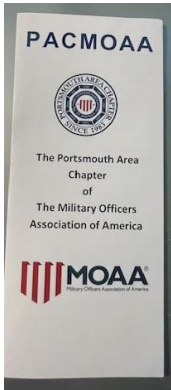
PACMOAA currently has 70 paid members with 5 new members, 1 member moved and 1 died. In a recent MOAA Council and Chapter Roundtable on Recruiting and Retention, the composition of MOAA's overall membership and chapter member was reviewed. Most of MOAA's 350,000 members do not belong to chapters and only about 53% of them have paid membership, either Premium or Life! *Basic members do not pay dues and are not eligible for any MOAA benefits except to receive electronic updates.* MOAA's membership dues help pay for legislative advocacy to protect our earned benefits!

The chapter demographics are better with almost 70% of members being Premium or Life members. About 55% are Life members, 18.5% are basic and 12.3% are only chapter members. PACMOAA exceeds the norm with 59% Life members, 17 % basic and only 1 chapter member in that is not a MOAA member. **Current members**, increasing your membership from basic to Premium or Life really will help MOAA accomplish its mission of maintaining or improving benefit for veterans through legislative advocacy!

Also at that recent MOAA Roundtable one member shared some of his tips for recruiting: **Share the chapter newsletter** with other veteran service organizations and/or civic organizations that you belong to; make sure those organizations know that the **MOAA Foundation** has a crisis relief program, interest-free education grants and loans, etc.; and **develop relationships** with local base Commanders, XO's and Senior NCOS and share these resources. CAPT LaLonde shares the PACMOAA newsletter at all the Portsmouth Mayors Military Affairs Committee meetings and has been attending change of command ceremonies and trying to establish relationships with local commands. All the local JROTC instructors were invited to the June meeting and 7 attended from 5 schools! PACMOAA is utilizing some of these ideas already.

Every member of PACMOAA needs to be a recruiter for us to thrive! Feel free to forward our newsletter to friends or groups you belong to and share information about PACMOAA as much as possible. Word of mouth is

still the best way to interest potential members. When individuals join MOAA as a Premium or Life member, they are given either a 1- or 2-year free membership to their local chapter.



PACMOAA is doing well with retention, but we need to work on recruiting some younger members. MOAA's goal is to recruit more members between 40 and 60. About 33% of PACMOAA members fall within this age range and 22% are over 80!

I will be happy to send you a copy of our recruitment brochure and/or the PACMOAA Overview sheet and will bring some to each meeting. Thank you for any assistance you can provide in helping to increase our membership so we can accomplish the PACMOAA Goals of Membership, Legislative Advocacy, and Community Activities/Service!

REMINDER: Many members include donations for our **SCHOLARSHIP FUND** with their dues and/or dinner payments and this can be done in-person, via mail, or online. The students are very appreciative of any assistance they can obtain to help with their college expenses!!

Reminder per Guidelines for Paying PACMOAA Dues/Meals/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 PACMOAAreasTreasurer@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/ SURVIVING SPOUSE

PERSONAL AFFAIRS UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2025

Gail Joyce, a Surviving Spouse that is on the MOAA Board of Directors as the Surviving Spouse Representative and Vice President of the MOAA Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter spoke to PACMOAA members in October 2024 on "Every Life Needs a Battle Plan". She recently led a breakout session Surviving Spouse Training at the MOAA Experienced Leaders Virtual Workshop and usually does similar presentation multiple times each year. In the review of breakout sessions, Gail reminded everyone about the great new MOAA publication – *Preparing for the Loss of a Military Spouse*. This publication is available for Premium and Life members online at <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/moaa-publications/help-your-survivors-detail/>. At the Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter meeting on 19 August, Gail mentioned that a common comment she hears at her training sessions is "I wish someone had given me this information before I became a Surviving Spouse"!

Active Duty, Retired or Former Officers and/or their spouses should utilize the publication mentioned above or a similar resource to make sure their spouse is prepared before their death! Gail's program, "Every Life Needs a Battle Plan" is also available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IdDJyqrMjrU&pp=0gcJcF8Ao7VqN5tD>.

IN MEMORIUM

Robert Charles Parker Jr. Obituary



We bid farewell to Robert Charles Parker Jr. in Annandale, Virginia, whose journey of life gracefully concluded on August 14, 2025 at the age of 88. Robert touched countless lives with warmth and kindness, leaving behind cherished memories that will forever echo in hearts. Leave a sympathy message to the family on the memorial page of Robert Charles Parker Jr. to pay them a last tribute.

He was predeceased by: his wife Eleanor Parker (Miller); his parents, Robert Parker and Vera Parker (Johnston); and his brother Paul Parker. He is survived by: his children, Robert C. Parker III of Seattle, WA and Colleen P. Vorbach (Joseph) of Falls Church, VA; his sister-in-law Dorothy Parker of Massapequa, NY; and his grandchildren, Leia Fecher (Josiah), Dylan Vorbach and MaryFrances Vorbach.

Viewing was held on Wednesday, August 20th 2025 at 9:00 AM at the Saint Philip Catholic Church (7500 St Phillips Ct, Falls Church, VA 22042). A Mass of Christian burial was held on Wednesday, August 20th 2025 at 9:30 AM at the same location.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Bob's memory to the Parkinson's Foundation (<http://www.parkinson.org>.) or the Military Officers Association of America Foundation (<https://moaadonate.funraise.org>) are welcome.

From <https://www.echovita.com/us/obituaries/va/annandale/robert-parker-jr-20177832>

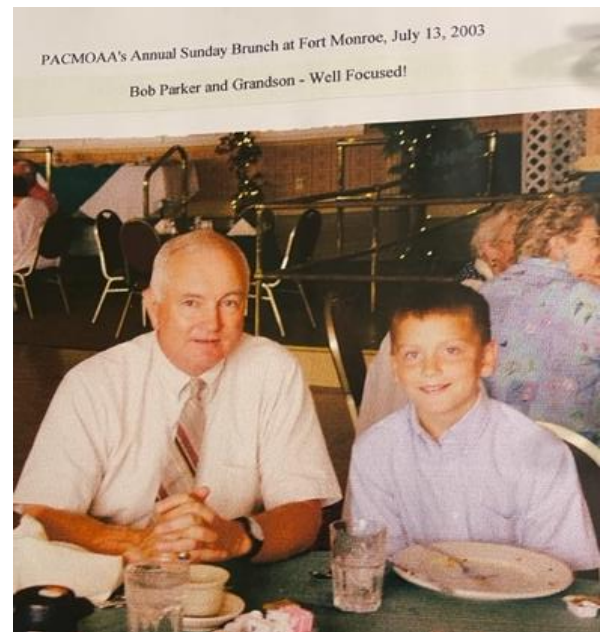


CAPT Bob Parker, USNR (Ret), was an active member in PACMOAA for 34 years until he was relocated to Northern VA with family members due to health issues. He was the PACTROA President from Jan 2001 to Jan 2003 and talked me into running for the Presidency in 2002. As my mentor, Bob encouraged me to call him for any questions. Frequently when I called him, I heard his wife Eleanor say "Sherry is on the phone. You told her to call!" I was then President for two terms; Bob served as the Immediate Past President and Nominations Committee Chair 4 years. He also served as the VCOC Rep. and was on the Board of Directors several times. Bob participated in board meetings often even after his term finished and attended most PACMOAA dinner meetings. Bob served on the Scholarship

Committee with me, Bob Steorts (pictured above with Bob Parker and myself), and Lynn Terry for many years. We met at Bob and Eleanor's house frequently.

The first visit to a PACTROA dinner meeting that my husband and I attended was at the invitation of Alice Taves and we sat with Harry Miller and Bob. I joined PACTROA that night! Bob was a very special friend of mine and my last surviving PACMOAA mentor; Jack Lyons and Bob Steorts were the other two. I miss the fellowship we shared and feel blessed to have had him as a friend and mentor. Please keep his children, Colleen and Robert, their families, and his sister-in-law in your thoughts and prayers.

Bob with his grandson at the Annual Joint Brunch in 2003 pictured to the right.



Surviving Spouse Corner: Questions About USAA Subscriber's Accounts

By: Susan R. Collins August 01, 2025 <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2025-news-articles/member-spotlight/surviving-spouse-corner-questions-about-usaa-subscribers-accounts/>

Recently, I've heard questions about what happens to a USAA Subscriber's Account when the account holder passes away. These accounts hold part of USAA's capital and allow the association to share earnings with members, some of whom may qualify for senior bonus distributions.

Upon the death of my husband in 2021, USAA asked whether I would like to take the money out of the account and start the account over again as a new owner, or to take some money out in small withdrawals.

[USAA bylaws](#) state that upon the death of the account holder:

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

“[P]ayment will be made to the widow(er) or, if there is no surviving spouse, to the estate. However, if a widow(er) entitled to such payment chooses to continue membership in his or her name, at the option of the widow(er), such amount may be paid to the widow(er) or retained in the subscriber's account; any election to receive such payment must be made in conjunction with the decision to continue membership in such widow(er)'s name.”

[RELATED: [More Financial Programs From USAA and Other MOAA Partners](#)]

Either option may make sense as part of your financial plans moving forward. My advice: Contact USAA to learn more about your options.

More resources regarding Subscriber's Account distribution are available [at the USAA website](#).

Surviving Spouse Corner: Support Is Needed for Surviving Spouses Legislation

Dr Vivianne Wersel 3 June 2025 <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2025-news-articles/member-spotlight/surviving-spouse-corner-support-is-needed-for-surviving-spouses-legislation/?ite=5137&ito=2538&itq=f069a069-df7d-4afe-9c4c-015116c8d2e7&itx%5Bidio%5D=9782996>

In April, MOAA members — including members of MOAA's [Surviving Spouse Advisory Council](#) — gathered in the nation's capital for Advocacy in Action, a day to visit lawmakers and advocate for key issues. This year, MOAA identified five issues for members to discuss. Learn more in [this event wrap-up](#).

Your voice still holds power even if you could not attend Advocacy in Action in person. Members, friends, and family — including non-members — can use MOAA's [Legislative Action Center](#) to support legislation, including bills affecting military survivors and families, from anywhere.

[RELATED: [MOAA Earns Spot on 'Top Lobbyist' List for 18th Straight Year](#)]

MOAA tracks and advocates for legislation that affects military surviving spouses and dependents. MOAA offers an easy way to reach out to your elected officials about these bills through its [Legislative Action Center](#). Click the links below to take action.

[Caring for Survivors Act of 2025 \(H.R. 680/S. 611\)](#). This bill proposes increasing the monthly Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) payable to surviving spouses through the VA. It also seeks to reduce the required period a veteran must have been rated totally disabled from 10 years to five years for survivors to qualify for benefits.

[Love Lives On Act of 2025 \(S. 410/H.R. 1004\)](#). This bill would eliminate the remarriage penalty for surviving spouses, allowing them to retain DIC, Survivor Benefit Plan, and TRICARE benefits regardless of age if they remarry. It also restores TRICARE if a subsequent marriage ends and preserves access to education and commissary benefits.

[Fairness for Servicemembers and Their Families Act of 2025 \(S. 385/H.R. 970\)](#). This legislation will require the federal government to regularly review and update Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) coverage limits to ensure they keep pace with inflation and rising market costs. Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI) is also included in this legislation. The bill has already been passed by the House, and we hope the Senate will act swiftly to do the same.



Keep up with the latest from Capitol Hill by bookmarking [MOAA's advocacy news page](#).

Above articles submitted by:
Sherry Ferki, MAJ, USA (Ret)
PACMOAA 2nd VP/Membership Chair
Personal Affairs Chair and Surviving Spouse Liaison

MOAA & LEGISLATIVE

MOAA-Backed Caregiver Aid, Plus Other VA-Focused Legislation, Moves Through Key Committee

By: René Campos August 18, 2025 <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2025-news-articles/advocacy/moaa-backed-caregiver-aid,-plus-other-va-focused-legislation,-moves-through-key-committee/>

A legislative lifeline for veteran caregivers who face an uncertain future as their caregiving duties end was among six MOAA-backed bills advanced through the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee late last month.

[TAKE ACTION NOW: [Urge Your Lawmakers to Support Veteran Caregivers](#)]

The committee's efforts will result in progress across critical areas of veteran and caregiver support. The bills moving forward as of July 30:

- **S. 879, Veteran Caregiver Reeducation, Reemployment, and Retirement (3R) Act:** Provides job training, professional relicensure support, retirement planning, and bereavement counseling to family caregivers who are enrolled in VA's Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC), which will assist them after their caregiving duties conclude.
- **S. 275, Veterans' Assuring Critical Care Expansions to Support Servicemembers (ACCESS) Act:** Expands residential rehabilitation treatment program for veterans with mental health and substance use disorders, particularly in geographic areas where VA services are limited or not available. It also enhances veterans' access to community care.
- **S. 607, Improving Veteran Access to Care Act:** Requires VA to establish an interdisciplinary patient team to modernize scheduling, coordinate services, and cut wait times.
- **S. 1245, Servicemembers and Veterans Empowerment and Support Act:** Strengthens health care and benefits for survivors of military sexual trauma and assault.
- **S. 1383, Veterans Accessibility Advisory Committee Act:** Creates an independent advisory body to improve accessibility for veterans with disabilities.
- **S. 2392, Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act:** Authorizes an annual cost-of-living adjustment to protect the value of veterans' compensation and benefits.

These measures reflect MOAA's longstanding commitment to protecting earned benefits and expanding services for those who have served.

[RELATED: [\\$455 Billion VA Spending Bill Clears Final Hurdle in Senate](#)]

Why Caregiver Support Matters, Especially Now

Two caregivers [recently filed a federal lawsuit](#) challenging the VA's practice of automatically denying appeals to PCAFC caregivers after their veteran's death. These caregivers argue they deserve benefits retroactive to their application date, even if the veteran has passed away.

This development highlights the deeply troubling challenges caregivers must overcome when their caregiving duty ends — either due to the veteran's death or separation from the program. Many caregivers face financial instability, limited bereavement support, and barriers to employment or retirement planning.

Your Voice Matters – Take Action Today

MOAA has been a strong advocate for the Caregiver 3R Act, which addresses many of these challenges head-on. By providing education and retraining assistance, employment support, retirement counseling, and transition resources, the bill would give caregivers the tools they need to rebuild their lives when caregiving ends. It ensures the nation honors caregivers' sacrifices and recognizes the vital role they play in the health and recovery of our veterans.

[Support the Caregiver 3R Act](#) by visiting MOAA's Legislative Action Center. Join us in urging lawmakers in both chambers to pass legislation (S. 879 and H.R. 2148) that would ensure caregivers receive the long-term resources and recognition they've earned.

NOTE: Tips for Lifelong Caregiving from Elizabeth Dole Foundation at:

<https://www.moaa.org/micro/caregiver/homepage/caregiver-homepage/>

TRICARE Improvements, Housing Help, and More: MOAA Presses Congress to Safeguard Key NDAA Measures

By: Brenden McMahon August 18, 2025 <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2025-news-articles/advocacy/tricare-expansion,-housing-help,-and-more-moaa-presses-congress-to-safeguard-key-ndaa-measures/>

Provisions designed to improve the TRICARE benefit, military housing, child care, and other critical programs are “essential to addressing the challenges facing today’s servicemembers and strengthening the foundation for those who will serve tomorrow,” MOAA’s president and CEO wrote to key lawmakers as must-pass defense authorization legislation takes shape.

Lt. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, USAF (Ret), urged lawmakers to ensure important servicemember- and military family-focused provisions remain intact as the FY 2026 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) moves toward floor consideration. The letter was sent to every member of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees – panels that play a pivotal role in shaping defense policy.

[GET INVOLVED: [Visit MOAA's Legislative Action Center](#)]

The Aug. 12 letter came after both committees passed versions of the NDAA but before either chamber has taken floor action. This pre-floor period is a critical opportunity for lawmakers to add, amend, or protect provisions before the legislation advances to the next phase of the congression

Kelly’s letter identifies several priority items from both the House and Senate committee-passed NDAA bills:

House

- **Presentation by a Veterans Service Organization (VSO) in Transition Assistance Program (TAP) Counseling:** Supports transition by requiring approved VSO involvement to help navigate and access benefits.
- **Family Separation Allowance (FSA) Increase:** Increases FSA to \$400 per month, improving support for families while servicemembers are away from home in service of our country.
- **Pilot Program on Access to Obstetrical and Gynecological Care Under TRICARE Prime:** Streamlines access to care by eliminating a TRICARE Prime referral requirement for OB-GYN care.
- **Pilot Program to Treat Pregnancy as a Qualifying Life Event for Enrollment in TRICARE Select:** Improves access to prenatal care by allowing pregnant beneficiaries to switch TRICARE plans outside of the annual open season.

[TAKE ACTION: [Improve TRICARE Access for Families](#)]

Senate

- **Modifications to Calculation of Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS) for Enlisted Members:** Protects BAS from decreased payments.
- **Increased Awareness and Improved Calculation of Rates for the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH):** Requires the creation of online tools to support servicemember understanding of their pays and how they are calculated.

- **Report on Unmet Need for Child Care in Areas with Significant Populations of Members of the Armed Forces:** Directs DoD to assess the unmet childcare need for each military installation, review efforts to recruit and retain childcare providers, and develop a plan to reduce those unmet needs.
- **Expansion of Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record (ILER):** Directs DoD to expand the ILER to document all exposures, including within the U.S., and ensure the data is available to the VA for care, research, and benefits processing.
- **Improvements to Annual DoD Reports on Waivers of Privacy and Configuration Standards for Covered Military Unaccompanied Housing:** Increases oversight of unaccompanied housing waivers and requires get-well plans for facilities that don't meet standards.

Ensuring these provisions are part of the final bill “will result in meaningful improvements to overall quality-of-life and important support programs,” Kelly wrote.

The coming weeks will determine whether these MOAA-backed provisions survive the floor debate and amendment process. Stay tuned for more information about how your grassroots advocacy can help keep these measures in place to support the uniformed services and veteran communities.

ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Major Richard Star Act: Fact vs. Fiction By: Jeff Goldberg August 20, 2025 <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2025-news-articles/advocacy/major-richard-star-act-fact-vs.-fiction/> “Despite overwhelming support in recent sessions, misconceptions remain about this effort to support combat-injured retirees. “

MOAA President: Collaboration Is Key to Supporting Our Community By: Kevin Lilley August 12, 2025 <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2025-news-articles/recommended-reads/moaa-president-collaboration-is-key-to-supporting-our-community/> Message from MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Brian Kelly , USAF (Ret) to recent panel discussion he moderated at 12th Annual Warrior Symposium.

3 Priorities, 1 Mission: MOAA's Summer Advocacy in Action Topics By: Terry Waters August 05, 2025 <https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2025-news-articles/advocacy/3-priorities,-1-mission-moaas-summer-advocacy-in-action-topics/> “Supporting combat-injured veterans (Support Combat-Injured Veterans: Pass the Major Richard Star Act – H.R.2102/S. 1031). Combating spouse unemployment (Support Military Spouse Hiring Act- H.R. 2033/S.1027). Improving TRICARE access (The TOTAL Care Act -H.R. 1699) and The Improving Access to Prenatal Care for Military Families Act (H.R. 4281/S. 2239). Each topic has an issue paper and **Take Action** link.

How You Can Help

“During the August recess, lawmakers are listening closely to their constituents — and we need your help to deliver this message in every district and every state. Along with sharing the link to our [Summer Advocacy in Action landing page](#), you can:

- Sign up for the [Legislative Action Center](#) to send messages directly to your lawmakers. Signing up will also enable you to receive priority alerts on breaking issues on Capitol Hill that affect those in uniform.
- Call your elected officials today directly via MOAA's Capitol Hotline at (866) 272-MOAA (6622).
- [Get in touch](#) with your local MOAA chapter to engage and drive forward grassroots legislative advocacy at the local level.
- As always, MOAA remains a nonpartisan voice advocating for a strong national defense and support for those who serve. These three issues — fair pay for combat-injured veterans, employment opportunities for military spouses, and access to care for TRICARE families — are all directly tied to the health, strength, and

readiness of the all-volunteer force.”

NOTE: August Recess lasts from 4 August to 1 September 2025, and legislators are “available” in the area they represent.

VCOC AND JLC

Virginia Council of Chapters (VCOC) The 4th Quarter VCOC Biennial Luncheon and Remembrance Ceremony will be held at the Virginia War Memorial October 14, 2025, from 1000 to 1530 Hours. It is the most Central Location for All Chapters. It will not be available virtually due to cost from the Virginia War Memorial! If you would like to attend, or need more information about this event, please contact Sherry Ferki, a form will be sent out soon on that. Cost will be \$30 per person, which includes lunch by Mission BBQ.



Submitted By: Ken App
CDR USN (Ret)
PACMOAA VCOC Representative

VCOC Legislative Report & JLC Update

The Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations held a meeting on June 18, 2025. The major component of the meeting was the review of the 2026 Legislative Initiatives. These initiatives are just beginning to be formulated. The list is not yet complete. However, there were three initiatives that were properly formatted and had letters of support. Those are listed as follows:

- **Veterans Textbook Support Grant**

This initiative aims to establish a grant to provide financial assistance for textbooks and course materials for student veterans, strengthening their educational outcomes, and aligning Virginia with neighboring states that already offer veteran-specific educational benefits to student veterans. The objective is to provide \$1000 per year for eligible veterans who meet criteria. There was considerable discussion about the need for and importance of making sure students are not receiving other VA benefits that cover textbooks, etc. There will be further follow up with the sponsors of the initiative to revise.

- **Veterans Suicide Death Information Access**

The objective of this initiative is to ensure access to vital death certificate records, medical certifications, and data from investigations by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner for the DVS Suicide Prevention Program are available to perform reviews, analysis, and obtain data on the quantity, common causes, and methods of suicide used among military members, veterans, and their families. Also to require DVS to give an annual report to the General Assembly and Governor’s office as well as statewide outreach to promote suicide awareness. This initiative was presented in 2025 and failed. There is no fiscal impact statement and it is not currently in the Senate’s budget at this time.

- **Inclusion of USPHS and NOAA in Income Tax Subtraction**

This initiative seeks to align the Virginia code with the Federal code in defining member eligibility for state income tax relief, up to \$40,000 in income, as “Uniformed Services” instead of “Armed Forces” as the current Virginia code reads. The financial impact to Virginia is based on the number currently retired USPHS and NOAA members – 339.

More initiatives are expected. More updates to follow.

Additional information was shared on keeping a watchful eye on the VMSDEP program. This program was tied to the budget process in 2024; the General Assembly will begin working on the new budget in January 2026.

This information was presented by John Down, MOAA Representative to the JLC and Monti Zimmerman, VCOC Legislative Representative at the VCOC 3rd Quarter Board of Directors meeting held on July 8, 2025.

Submitted By: Mary L. Snyder, PACMOAA VCOC Legislative Representative

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Thank you Lake Prince Woods for being a PACMOAA Sponsor!

COMMUNITY

ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP RECOGNITION DINNER 2025

PACMOAA was able to utilize the \$300.00 MOAA Community Outreach Sponsorship to help recognize the scholarship winners, their parents and the JROTC Color Guard from I.C. Norcom High School. Again, many thanks to MOAA for their continued generous support through this sponsorship. USAA previously offered this sponsorship. This was the 9th time PACMOAA was awarded this grant!

Picture at right (L to R): PACMOAA President, CAPT Bruce LaLonde, MAJ Sherry Ferki, Charlise Albers, Dane Cunningham, CDR Scott Dickinson.



It was great to see so many PACMOAA members and guests for this special night recognizing the achievements of 2 graduating seniors. JROTC Instructors from all the units in our area were also invited. **Charlise (Charli) Albers** and her parents, Bradley and Rachel were able to join us as were her JROTC instructors, LTC Pete Badoian, USA (Ret) and 1SG Marvin Hunter, USA (Ret). This was the 4th time in the past 5 years that a student from Smithfield JROTC was selected as a PACMOAA Scholarship recipient! **Dane Cunningham** and her mother, Nikema, were also able to attend as was her JROTC Instructor from Deep Creek High School, MAJ Darrell Pearman, USAF (Ret) (Pictured Right).



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



JROTC Students in Attendance (L to R) Charlise Albers, Cadet McKayla Tarescavage, Cadet Eilain Sanchez (Deep Creek HS), Dane Cunningham, and guest Tyler Berry.

It was a pleasure to talk with such accomplished students, their parents and instructors. Both Charli and Dane are going into nursing, Charli in the Army and Dane in the Air Force and Charli’s mom is also in nursing school. As a retired Army Nurse, I was very excited to talk with both of these future military nurses!



LEFT: JROTC Instructors from all the units in our area were also invited. Five schools were represented – LTC Pete Badoian, USA (Ret), Smithfield HS, Lt Col Dirk Sandstrom, USAF (Ret) from Grassfield HS; LtCol Paul Pratt USMC (Ret) Churchland HS, Speaker 1LT Susnoskie USA, MAJ Darrell Pearman USAF (Ret), LtCol Tom Barrett, USAF

(Ret), 1SG Marvin Hunter USA (Ret), Smithfield HS, and SMSgt Nicole White, USAF (Ret) from Oscar Smith HS, incoming instructor. Not pictured CWO2 Joseph Redwood, USN (Ret) from I.C. Norcom HS who provided the Color Guard for the meeting.



LEFT: LtCol Paul Pratt, USMC (Ret), formerly Lead Instructor at Churchland HS also attended. He just retired after 15 years of service to the MCJROTC unit there and was recognized with a Certificate for Outstanding Service from PACMOAA!

Submitted by Sherry Ferki, MAJ, USA (Ret)

Scholarship Committee Co-Chair

PACMOAA CELEBRATING THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE US ARMY!!!

What a wonderful final meeting before the summer break! In addition to recognizing the scholarship winners, their families, the I.C. Norcom Color Guard and JROTC Instructors, PACMOAA also celebrated the Army’s 250th Birthday! Cake at right

Below: Mary Snyder, 1LT Jason Susnoskie CDR David Von Rump. 1LT Susnoskie, US Army ROTC instructor at Norfolk State University delivered a very interesting program reviewing his path to becoming an Army Officer and eventually a ROTC Instructor.





PACMOAA BOD with US Army Personnel Attending

ABOVE: COL Bill Smith gave a very heartfelt tribute honoring COL Hal Hostetler, USA (Ret) who has not been able to join us this year due to medical issues. For over 15 years, Hal continuously served in a variety of Leadership positions including Secretary, President, Immediate Past President and Nominations Committee Chair, 1st VP and Program Chair, VCOC Legislative Rep and Assistant Legislative Rep, PACMOAA’s representative to the Portsmouth Mayors Military Affairs Committee, and PACMOAA’s “Entertainer” especially at the Christmas Gala. YouTube video link: <https://youtu.be/2vEPMaeTsAY>
 Many thanks to Mary Snyder for getting a beautiful cake to help us celebrate the Army’s birthday and to Col Bill Smith for bringing a saber to cut the cake with!

PACMOAA will celebrate the Navy’s 250th Birthday at our 9 Oct meeting and the Marine Corps 250th Birthday at the 13 November meeting.

ANNUAL JOINT BRUNCH 13 JULY 2025



What a great way to spend part of a Sunday at Roger Brown’s– delicious food, wonderful camaraderie, visiting with members from other chapters as well as with *Nick Roland, (Right) Outreach Representative for Rep. Jen Kiggans.* Also in the photo Craig & Kathy Schnept, along with Sherry Ferki. **Forty members, spouses, and guests** participated in our annual brunch at Roger Browns – 17 from VIPMOAA (Picture at Left: VIPMOAA Immediate Past President, Jim Pauls, with



PACMOAA President Bruce LaLonde), 2 from HRCMOAA, and 20 from PACMOAA. This was the best attendance from VIPMOAA in some time! So many were registered from Patriots Colony, they were able to utilize the facilities bus! I even met a retired Air Force Nurse from VIPMOAA that was an Army 91C (LPN) before she went to nursing school. What a treat since I rarely meet any Army Medical people!



CAPT Rick Titi, with CDR Scott Dickinon (Re-upping?)>

Left: HRCMOAA Charles Shaver and his wife.



Right: (L to R) VIPMOAA Tom Russell, Jack Greenhalgh, Joan Steinmiller, Ted Fahrlander, Phyllis Merrick, and Ann Russell.





Clockwise from top left: 1. VIPMOAA Jim Pauls & Paul Fameli; 2. Karl & Angela Wilson, Joyce Johnson, VIPMOAA Karen Coccio, and Cindy Brewer; 3. Mary Snyder at the sign in table; 4. Dena Cain with Paul Stott; 5. Bruce Ferki, Kathy Schnepf, and Sherry Ferki; 6. Bob Brewer, Irv and Dotty Lindley.

Articles & some photos Submitted by Sherry D Ferki, MAJ, USA (Ret)
 PACMOAA 2nd VP/Membership Chair
 Retired Army Nurse

PLEASE CONSIDER BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

POSITIONS OPEN FOR NOVEMBER 2025 BALLOT

Members elected this fall will serve from January 2026 to January 2028 unless otherwise designated.

Please consider becoming a member of the Leadership Team as an elected officer or in an appointed position. PACMOAA needs as many different perspectives as possible to help us represent all our members and their interests! Spouses can run for office and will have full voting rights while serving as an officer!

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 primarily 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, prepares correspondence as needed.

Treasurer: Collects dues 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: “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". *From PACMOAA Bylaws*. Also participate in quarterly board meetings and other duties as designated.

Please let us know if you have any questions and/or you are interested in becoming more active and/or running for office. Contact Bill Smith, COL, USA (Ret) Nominating Committee Chair, Immediate Past President at (252) 333-0871 or wmsmith6487@gmail.com before the 9 October meeting.

SUMMER 2025 COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES



1. Joint Base Langley Eustis (JBLE) Retiree Appreciation Day on 14 June 2025 – MAJ Sherry Ferki and COL Irv Lindley manned the PACMOAA table and shared MOAA and PACMOAA information with participants. About 20 groups had tables including several other VSOs. The event was held in the PX which had several displays honoring the Army’s 250th Birthday. There was a short beginning ceremony and then attendees visited the vendor tables. Sherry discussed MOAA and PACMOAA with the 733rd Mission Support Commander, COL Laura Hutchison and also the new Chaplain assigned to JBLE. Sherry also spoke with Retiree Service Officer (RSO), SFC (Ret) Christie Crowder, about the need to disseminate info better about retiree activities. Apparently, she supports retirees from the JBLE area all the way to Virginia Beach.

2. Navy Medicine Readiness & Training Command (NMRTC) Change of Command Ceremony on 11 July 2025

– CAPT Bruce LaLonde and CAPT Jim Hoffower attended the change of command ceremony in Portsmouth and welcomed Capt. Kim Shaughnessy-Granger as the 81st commander of NMRTC.

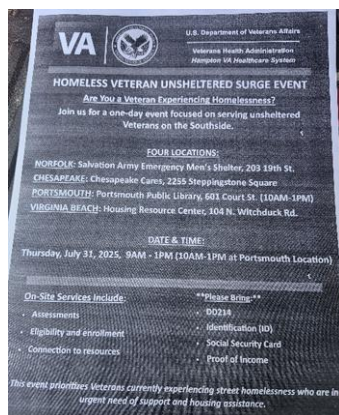


3. “The Importance of Veterans Service Organizations” on 11 July 2025– MAJ Sherry Ferki presented a program for the Lake Prince Woods Veterans Group monthly meeting. She discussed MOAA; Advocacy in Action; the hierarchy in Virginia (MOAA, VCOC, JLC, and PACMOAA); legislative issues in Virginia including the proposed 2026 JLC objectives for the General Assembly. Since members of the group vary in terms of time in the service and if officer or enlisted, all were encouraged to join the VSO most appropriate for them.

4. VA and Portsmouth Housing Action Consortium on 31 July 2025

– CAPT Bruce LaLonde worked with them in identifying homeless veterans in Portsmouth. They were able to place 5 homeless, unsheltered veterans in hotels and also place them in the queue to receive permanent support. One of the veterans was living in a car with his wife and two children.

Submitted by: Sherry Ferki, MAJ, USA (Ret) 2nd VP/Membership Chair



PROGRAMS

Please mark your calendars NOW for the remaining Dinner Meetings listed below.

9 October 2025 Celebrating the Navy's 250th Birthday, CAPT Kim Shaughnessy-Granger, NC USN.
CO of NMRTC and NMCP

13 November 2025 Annual Business Meeting & Celebrating the USMC 250th Birthday

11 December 2025 Christmas Gala

8 January 2025 Installation of New PACMOAA Officer Installation

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

For September I found a wonderful writing about life by Edgar A. Guest in *A Book of Blessings* published in 1918 which gives an insight to life and how we should live.

*Life is a gift to be used every day.
Not to be smothered and hidden away;
It isn't a thing to be stored in a chest
Where you gather your keepsakes and
Treasure you best.*

*It isn't a joy to be sipped now and then
And promptly put back in a dark place again,
Life is a gift that the humblest may boast of
And one that the humblest may well
Make the most of.*

*Get out and live it each hour of the day,
Wear it and use it as much as you may.
Don't keep it in niches and corners and grooves,
You'll find that in service its beauty improves*



Submitted by
CAPT Bob Brewer, USN (Ret) Chaplain

CDR Ken App, USN (Ret)
Salute Editor
Editor's Avatar >



THAT'S A WRAP FOR AUGUST/SEPTEMBER!

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

PACMOAA MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL FORM 2025

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: _____

Are you willing to serve as board member or on a 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 (Non-Voting Member)	\$5.00	\$8.50	\$12.00

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

NOTE: For members joining after July 1st, \$12.50 for Regular Members or \$10 for Surviving Spouse

Or pay via PayPal: 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 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: _____