



The Communiqué

Southwest Virginia Chapter
Military Officers Association of America



A Five-Star Chapter

VOLUME 13 NUMBER 2

ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

APR-MAY-JUNE 2021

RETURNING TO NORMAL?

As the Southwest Virginia Chapter enters the second quarter of 2021, the country is starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel. Scientists, doctors, the medical community and industry have made great strides in developing effective vaccines to combat COVID-19. The Federal Government and the states initiated programs and procedures to get these vaccines administered to as many citizens as possible and set a date to establish "Herd Immunity" by 2022.

The Southwest Virginia Chapter continued its chapter activities with Zoom meetings in April and May, support of the Military Family Support Center, MOAA JROTC and ROTC Awards programs and recruitment efforts reaching out to the military community.

During the early part of the year culminating in the April May time frame is normally when the chapter receives nominations from the 15 area high school JROTC units and the 3 Civil Air Patrol (CAP) units, units for the MOAA JROTC Medal Awards and the Major James Milton Archer, Jr. USA Awards. MOAA ROTC Medal Award nominations and Chapter Leadership Award nominations are also solicited from Virginia Tech and Radford University. Due to COVID-19 restrictions on in person attendance in schools receipt of nominations were not submitted from all schools. .

The MOAA JROTC Medal Awards and The Major James Milton Archer, Jr., USA awards were sent to 8 area high schools; Bassett, Chatham, Dan River, Franklin County, George Washington (Danville), Patrick Henry, and William Fleming and 1 Civil Air Patrol (CAP) Unit, the Montgomery CAP. Several high schools reported that they were not undergoing JROTC this year due to COVID but hoped to be up and running for the next scholastic year.

Three 2021 MOAA ROTC Awards were forwarded to Virginia Tech for presentation in a ZOOM awards ceremony on Thursday 22 April 2021. The three MOAA ROTC award recipients were Junior Air Force Cadet Calvin Yuan, Junior Army Cadet Luke Sprecht, Junior Navy Cadet Joseph LaFleche.

The 2021 Chapter Leadership Award nomination packages were due 29 March 2021. Four nominations were received from Virginia Tech. Of these four nominations three were not acceptable as they were not juniors but seniors graduating in May 2021. The Board of Directors agreed to only award the General William B. Rosson USA Leadership Award to Midshipman Michael M. Collins of the Virginia Tech NROTC Unit. Midshipman Collins has a GPA of 3.86 in Mechanical Engineering and upon graduation will be commissioned an officer in the United States Navy or the United States Marine Corps.

The Patrick Henry High School AF JROTC Program conducted a joint awards ceremony on Friday 7 May 2021 at 1900 hours in the football stadium. President Lee Ensley attended the ceremony and assisted in the awards ceremony.

President's Corner



The Black Lives Matter movement, and the recent, continuing tragic incidents between law enforcement personnel and

Black Americans are cause for us to re-examine race relations in this country. Acts of violence against Asian Americans have also been increasing. The trends are of great concern to me. I think it is important, as military officers, to look back at our country's history and the contributions that minority groups have made to our rise as the most powerful country in the world, as well as to our national defense. It is incontrovertible, in my opinion, that the country our founders fought to create could not have existed without the 250 years of slave labor used to tame the American wilderness, produce the cash crops that funded our wealth, both North and South, and allow a lifestyle for thousands that made us strong enough to envision independence from our British overlords. During the Revolutionary War, many African-Americans fought for both their personal freedom and for the country that had so long enslaved them. Historians estimate that between 5,000 and 8,000 Black descendants of enslaved Africans participated on the

Continued on Page 2 *President's Corner*

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Continued from Page 1 "President's Corner"

American side during the war. In 1770, as tensions were increasing, one of the first casualties of what became the revolution was a middle-aged runaway slave who worked as a sailor and rope-maker, Crispus Attucks, killed by British soldiers with 4 other Americans in what became known as the Boston Massacre.

During the Civil War, approximately 179,000 Black men served in the Union Army – approximately ten percent of the entire army. Another 19,000 served in the minuscule American Navy. A total of 40,000 Black servicemen died during the war.

During World War II, 1.2 million Black Americans served. They faced segregation while they served and after they returned home. The Tuskegee Airman were the first Black military aviators in the U.S. Army Air Corps. They flew more than 15,000 sorties and earned more than 150

Distinguished Flying Crosses. During the attack on Pearl Harbor, Doris “Dorie” Miller, a Black Navy cook, ran from the galley to the deck of the battleship West Virginia and grabbed an unmanned machine gun for which he had no training, shooting down several Japanese aircraft. Miller was awarded the Navy Cross for that action, an award second only to the Medal of Honor. Two years later, he was killed in action. In 1973, a Navy frigate was named for him and, planned for 2032 is CVN-81, a Gerald Ford-class aircraft carrier.

And what about other minority ethnic groups? Also in WWII, 33,000 Japanese Americans served in the military, despite the fact that thousands of their fellow Japanese Americans were imprisoned in internment camps in the west of this country. Navaho Code Talkers of the U.S. Marine Corps, recruited from the poverty and destructive environment of reservations, whose ancestral tribes had been slaughtered and nearly eradicated, were instrumental in creating and using both formal and informal secure communications so critical for U.S. forces during both World Wars. The tribes they were recruited from – Navaho, Comanche, Meskwaki, Hopi, Lakota, Mohawk, Cherokee, Choctaw – continue today to provide outstanding members to the U.S. armed forces.

During the Korean War, more than 600,000 Black Americans served in the armed forces. More than 5,000 died in combat. In Vietnam, 300,00 Black Americans fought. This was the first American war in which troops were not officially segregated. Killed in action, 7,243 Black Americans.

Black Americans, and all Americans of ethnic and religious minority groups who are citizens and residents of this country, continue to serve with honor and to die in the Middle East. So, with all their service, how were Black Americans and other

ethnic minority American service members treated back home? In my opinion, not very well. In 1942, Jackie Robinson, a four-letter athlete and graduate of UCLA, who would later become the first Black American to play baseball in the Major Leagues, was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Army. In 1944, he was ordered to the back of an Army bus. He refused, was arrested, court martialled. Although Robinson was subsequently acquitted, undoubtedly, other service members continued to be accused of race-based infractions that were no longer the official law of the U.S. Military. I have often heard it said that “times were different back then.” Well, very recently, a Black Latino Army Second



Continued on Page 3 "President's Corner"

Continued from Page 2 President's Corner

Lieutenant, in uniform, was pepper sprayed and thrown to the ground by law enforcement officers in Wilson, Virginia. Camera footage revealed no violations by the Lieutenant who was driving a sparkling new SUV with temporary plates.

Even the mention of the contributions of Black Americans to our shared history is objectionable to some. During this year's Memorial Day commemorations, a white, retired, 77-year-old Army Lt. Colonel, was invited by the local chapter of the American Legion to give a speech at a cemetery in Ohio. When he began speaking about the role of African Americans in establishing the Memorial Day national holiday, the event organizers intentionally pulled the plug on his microphone.

After all these years of contributions by Americans of every ethnic group to our beloved country, why does the injustice and racial prejudice and hatred continue? Why must some Americans refuse to grant that all Americans, including most especially those who commit to military service, have a right to share equally in this great experiment called American democracy? It is incomprehensible to me that we human beings could continue to treat fellow human beings with such hatred.

I once heard a description of the British Empire: "It wasn't always good, but it certainly was great." The same can be said of America. All patriotic Americans should honor those who continue to contribute to the greatness of their country, regardless of creed or color, or their individual decisions about how they best can serve the ideals of their country. World Champion Heavyweight fighter Muhammad Ali was convicted of draft evasion after refusing to fight in a war he believed was wrong, for a country he believed was wrong in its treatment of Black Americans. Because of that conviction which was later overturned by the Supreme Court, Ali was banned from the ring for three years at the height of his career.



Colonel (at the time) Daniel "Chappie" James Jr. in front of his McDonnell-Douglas F-4C Phantom in Thailand during the Vietnam War

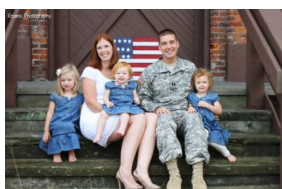
In contrast, Gen. Chappie James, who flew in three of this country's wars, refused to think of himself as a Black American. He considered himself, first and foremost, a fighter pilot. They were both following their own ideals, their own moral codes. Each was right and each is honored to this day for that personal commitment. That freedom is what has made America great. May it never be lost.



THE MILITARY FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER.

Our military service members represent only one percent of our population, but they carry the responsibility of protecting our entire country. But they do not do it alone. Their spouses, children, parents and other members of their family share in the duty and sacrifice of serving our country. We provide support for all of our remote military service men and women and their families. Many families are unfamiliar with where they can find information, due to the limited resources available at local military armories and reserve centers. This is where we bridge the gap by providing a place for service-specific military and general civilian information. We need your support both financially and as a volunteer. We are located at 1215 McNeil Drive SW Roanoke, Virginia 24014. Phone: (540) 983-1766. Facebook - Military Family Support Center @milfamily.org.

Contact awilliams@milfamily.org



"Countering Terrorism Threats in the Context of Great Power Competition: Russia, China, Iran, and Managing Terrorism."

On Thursday 15 April 2021 the Southwest Virginia Chapter held its monthly Board and membership meeting by Zoom. The guest speaker and program was presented by CDR Youssef Aboul-Enein, USN.



CDR Aboul-Enein is a U.S. Navy commander in the Medical Service Corps. Since 9/11, he has been immersed in and advised on counterterrorism and Middle East affairs at the highest levels of the defense department and intelligence community. He has trained thousands of deploying U.S. military personnel in a military career that spans more than two decades. CDR Aboul-Enein has taught graduate level courses on Islam and the Middle East at both the National Intelligence University and National Defense University. He is the author of several books, most notably, *"Militant Islamist Ideology: Understanding the Global Threat."*

CDR Aboul-Enein highlighted his recent book, *"Middle East 101"* (Naval Institute Press, 2019), which was featured in last year's MOAA Magazine "Military Officer," as one of the top 5 books to read this summer for the Military Professional. In his book he proposes a common framework and definition of "Militant Islamist Ideology" to be considered by all ranks within the U.S. military. It seeks to define the differences between Islam, Islamist, and Militant Islamist, with the objective of disaggregating the immediate threat posed by Militant Islamist groups, and disaggregating them from Islamists and Islam. Winning this long war against militant Islamist ideology will require a higher level of nuanced understanding that will enable U.S. military personnel to comprehend that militant Islamists operate with the friction of diverse Islamic practices, nationalism, and tribalism inherent in the human landscape of the region.

Chapters highlight how Militant Islamist ideology takes fragments of Islamic history and theology to weave it into a narrow, pseudo-intellectual ideology that justifies their violence against Muslims and non-Muslims alike and their radical worldview.

Without a realistic and sound doctrine-based definition of the threat we shall be stuck between two extremes in American national policy discourse, those who advocate all Islam is evil and those who advocate all Islam is peace. These extremes are not effective in deriving effective policy or addressing the nuances and perversion that Militant Islamist ideology has wrought upon Islam that is just beginning to outrage many Muslims. We cannot afford to call this phenomenon Islamism or Islamo-fascism and somehow link this as the new fascism or communism. It is imperative to begin thinking about this problem in new ways delineating between Islam, Islamist, and Militant Islamist, thereby providing both Muslims and non-Muslims a common reference to the ideology of the Militant Islamist which al-Qaida represents. Militant Islamists alienate not only the United States but even Islamist political groups like the Muslim Brotherhood and HAMAS. It is time for a more nuanced definition of the threat.

CDR Aboul-Enein addressed what he termed counter terrorism "Hot Spots" and the need to have oversight and management of these various terrorist threats which he considered were more of a nuisance and not critical threats. He addressed what he saw as the "great powers competition" between the United States, China and Russia and the challenges for access to critical minerals and hegemony throughout critical areas of the globe. In the case of Russia the main aim is to decouple the USA from NATO. CDR Aboul-Enein stressed the necessity of the US military to make the necessary changes to meet the threat especially in the area of cyber warfare and to be aware of the competition from industry drawing highly trained individuals away from the armed forces. He feels that the current refugee problems facing Jordan, Israel and other areas pose an economic threat. Leaving Afghanistan will allow Al Qaeda to establish bases from which to cause instability in the region.



2303 Williamson Road, NE
Roanoke, VA 24014



CIVIL AIR PATROL 101

On Thursday 20 May 2021 the Southwest Virginia Chapter held its monthly membership meeting by Zoom. The guest speaker and program was presented by BGEN Scott Van Cleef, USAF (Ret). General Van Cleef is currently the Treasurer of the Southwest Virginia Chapter. General Van Cleef entered the Air Force in 1972 after being honored as a distinguished graduate of Purdue University's ROTC program. He was equally honored after completion of pilot training and has since flown the F-4, F-5 and F-16 fighters. He commanded an F-16 fighter squadron and was the vice commander of an F-16 training wing. Additionally, the general served a joint tour in Cairo, Egypt, and staff tours at Headquarters Air Combat Command and the Air Staff. The general next served as deputy commander of 16th Air Force and as director of the Combined Operations Center at 5th Allied Tactical Air Force. His last operational tour was as commander of the 52nd Fighter Wing, where he also commanded the 52nd Air Expeditionary Wing during the Kosovo conflict. He is a command pilot with more than 3,300 flying hours.



He joined CAP nine years ago. Initially he flew as a mission pilot but has since given up flying as a pilot. He remains qualified as an aircrew member doing the mission observer and aerial photography missions. He's currently in his third year as the commander of the Roanoke Composite Squadron. As such, he's responsible for all aspects of the training of 37 senior members and cadets, and for carrying out the CAP missions of emergency services, aerospace education and cadet programs.

General Van Cleef presented an excellent detailed program using a power point slide presentation. The following slides encapsulate the main parts of his presentation.



Civil Air Patrol Mission Statement

Supporting America's **communities** with emergency response, diverse aviation and ground service, youth development, and promotion of air and space power.



- Established December 1st, 1941 under the Office of Civilian Defense
- 1946: Incorporated Non-Profit (PL 476)
- 1948: Auxiliary of the USAF (PL 557)



Congressional Charter



Emergency Services



SAR, DR & DSCA
Homeland Security
Counterdrug
Humanitarian Services
ROTC & JROTC Flights
UAS Chase
Sensor T&E



Cadet Programs

Leadership
Character Development
Aerospace Education
Physical Fitness
Core Values
Drug Demand Reduction



Aerospace Education

STEM, Cyber & UAS
Adult & Cadet CAP Members
AE (Teacher) Members
Youth of America
General Public



Membership and Resources

2021 Statistics	
Membership	
Officers	33,091
Cadets	21,270
Total	54,361
Units	
NHQ, Region, Wings, Units	1,437
Equipment	
Aircraft	560
Gliders	54
Vehicles	1,042
LMR Radios – Short/Mid Range	20,816
HF Radios – Long Range	1,653
VHF Repeaters – Tactical & Air	697



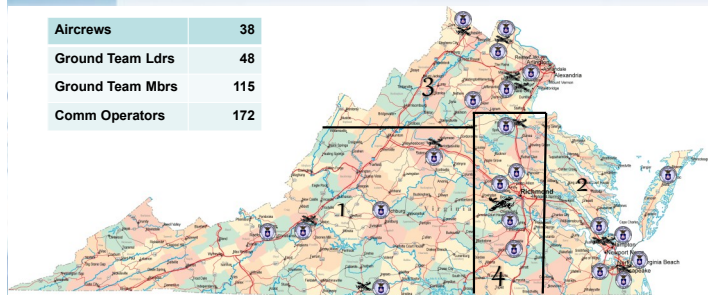
CITIZENS SERVING COMMUNITIES



Virginia Wing

Members	1,935
Aircraft	12
Vehicles	26

Aircrews	38
Ground Team Ldrs	48
Ground Team Mbrs	115
Comm Operators	172



Continued on Page 6 "Civil Air Patrol 101"

Continued from Page 5 "Civil Air Patrol 101"



Emergency Services

Civil Air Patrol saves lives and provides assistance in communities all across the nation through our emergency-services and operational missions:

- Disaster Relief
- Humanitarian Services
- Air Force Support
- Counterdrug



Emergency Services

- CAP's AOR is border-to-border and coast-to-coast within the CONUS, plus Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands
- CAP flies about 100,000 hours annually
- 70% Mission Support
- 30% Training
- Additional capacity is available to support customer needs



Gippsland GA-8 (16/1)



Cessna 182 (310/10)



Cessna 172 (195/2)

- Operate from 2500' runways
- Cruise ~110-135 kts
- Range: 500-700 miles
- High wing, good look-down visibility



Aerospace Education

CAP's AE mission is to educate, inspire, and instill an understanding of the importance of aerospace in today's world and to prepare American citizens to meet the challenges of a sophisticated aerospace society



CAP offers K-12 national standards-based educational products that inspire over 150,000 youth annually toward STEM subjects and careers

Teachers and youth leaders who join CAP receive free classroom materials, professional development opportunities, orientation flights plus much more



Cadet Programs

CAP motivates over 21,000 youth, aged 12-20, to live the Core Values (Integrity, Volunteer Service, Excellence and Respect)

Cadets advance through a hierarchical curriculum

- Advanced cadets mentor junior cadets
- Cadets meet in community venues or in school settings

CAP cadet officers (top 15% of all cadets) are eligible for E-3 upon enlistment in USAF

Approximately 10% of Air Force Academy cadets get their start in CAP




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Chapter membership dues are due 1 January 2021. Dues are \$30.00. Surviving spouses dues are \$15.00. Please mail dues to : MOAA, SW Virginia Chapter, P.O. Box 3090, Roanoke, VA 24015-1090

MEMBER PROFILE

Anita A. White Colonel US Army (Ret) is a native of Danville, Virginia. Colonel White was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Ordnance Corps after graduating from the Reserve Officer Training Corps at the University of Virginia in 1980. She has served at various levels of command and staff positions throughout her career. She retired in 2010 after completing 30 years of service in munitions and multi-functional logistics fields in the United States Army.



She holds a Master's in Management from Webster University, Saint Louis, Missouri, and a Bachelor of Arts in Biology from the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Virginia. In 2020, she earned a Bachelor of Science in Social Work from Longwood University and is a member of the Phi Alpha Honor Society for Social Work. She is currently pursuing a Master's in Social Work from Virginia Commonwealth University. She is a graduate of the basic and advance Ordnance Officer courses, Associate Logistics Development program, Army Management Staff College, and the Command and General Staff College. Colonel White has a certificate in Procurements and Contracting from the University of Virginia.

Early in her career, Colonel White served as the Commander of an ammunition unit in Korea and in numerous munitions operations officer positions in Oklahoma, California, Germany, and Saudi Arabia. She was awarded a Bronze Star for her performance of duty during combat operations as the 22nd Support Command Ammunition Plans and Operations Officer in Operation Desert Storm, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

Colonel White's multi-functional logistical career started during her command of battalion and brigade size Logistics Support Elements in Virginia and during combat operations in Operation Task Force Eagle and SFOR 10 in Bosnia and two tours in Operation Iraqi Freedom in Jordan and Kuwait. She served as the Chief of the Missile and Munitions Divisions at Fort Belvoir's 55th Materiel Management Center and 9th Theater Support Command, and at the 377th Theater Support Command on Camp Arifjan in Kuwait. During this phase of her career, she received the Ordnance Order of Samuel L. Sharpe Medal for integrity, moral character, and professional competence and the Army Staff badge.

She retired again in 2015 as a Logistics Management Specialist from the Department of the Army in Washington, D.C. During her twelve years of service, she wrote policy and managed logistical information technology investments. She was awarded the General Brehon B. Somervell Medal of Excellence for Logistics and two Commander's Awards for Civilian service. Her military decorations include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service medal with 4 oak leaf clusters, Army Commendation Medal with seven oak leaf clusters, National Defense Service Medal with a Bronze Service Star, two Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medals, and the NATO Medal.

Her many civic activities for her church and organizations in the Danville and Pittsylvania County communities include being the Sunday School Superintendent, High Street Baptist Church; Treasurer, Danville Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated; Member, Danville Chapter of the Links, Incorporated; Chair, Board of Directors, Southern Area Agency on Aging; President-elect, The Luncheon Pilot Club of Danville; Board member, YMCA of Danville; Board member, Project Literacy; Executive Board member, American Legion Post 29; Silver Life member, NAACP.

She is presently a Caregiver for her 91-year-old Father, a great nephew and 2 dogs. WELCOME ABOARD!!



Christiansburg: 540-394-3311

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Dublin: 540-674-5100

Hollins: 540-777-1230

Ridgeway: 276-956-2002

Roanoke (Brambleton Ave): 540-989-5245

Roanoke (Williamson Rd): 540-362-1868

Salem: 540-380-4607

Vinton: 540-890-5010

Winston Salem: 336-768-3886

MEMORIAL DAY 2021

On MEMORIAL DAY Monday 31 May 2021 at 1000 hours members of the Southwest Virginia Chapter conducted a Wreath Laying Ceremony at Lee Memorial Plaza in Downtown Roanoke. Organized and directed by LTC Dan Karnes, USAR (Ret) chapter members assembled to commemorate all the men and women who have died while serving in the military for the United States of America. The ceremony began with a musical interlude on the trombone by Mr. Ed Griffin followed by an opening prayer, then the Pledge of Allegiance of the Flag recited by all present. Chapter President CDR Lee Ensley, USN (Ret) welcomed all present followed by reading Memorial Day remarks by past U S Presidents. Additional remarks were read by COL Thomas Dalzell, USMC (Ret) followed by placing the Memorial Wreath by LTC Dan Karnes and CDR Lee Ensley. A hand salute was rendered by all present while Taps were played by Mr. Ed Griffin followed by a moment of silence.



Southwest Virginia Chapter Awarded the 2021 Five Star Chapter

Colonel Marvin J. Harris Communications Award



This award is based on the 2020 calendar year recognizing the chapter for its exemplary communication efforts, "newsletter", in communicating with its members and community. Since 2014 the chapter has been awarded (6) Five Star Awards for newsletter and (5) Five Star Awards for Website. There

was no submission for the website award in 2019.

Southwest Virginia Chapter Awarded the 2021 Five Star Chapter

Level of Excellence Award



This award is based on the 2020 calendar year programs and events. Since 2010 the chapter has been awarded (6) Five Star awards and (5) Four Star Level of Excellence Awards. The award is a lookback on the 2020 calendar year programs, initiatives and successful experiences shared by chapter leaders.



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CHAPTER REPRESENTATIVES MEET WITH CONGRESSMAN MORGAN GRIFFITH

On Tuesday 1 June 2021 representatives from the Southwest Virginia Chapter of MOAA, Chapter President CDR Lee Ensley, Chapter Awards Chair LTC Bob Habermann and Chapter Community Service Representative LTC Dan Karnes met with U.S. Congressman Morgan Griffith, Virginia's 9th District Congressman. MOAA had requested local chapter representatives meet with their representatives in what was called “MOAA’s Signature Advocacy Event” to connect with their legislators on issues affecting the military community. VCOC coordinated the interviews with each MOAA Chapter in Virginia. After each meeting with a lawmaker interviewers were asked to fill out a form to let MOAA HQ know how the meeting went. MOAA’s Government Relations team engages Congress year-round and information on lawmakers and their staff may help them with other advocacy lines of effort. Interviewers were to ask each lawmaker and their staff what issues has their interest for our uniformed community. The three topics suggested were: (1) Support comprehensive toxic exposure reform legislation; (2) Fix the TRICARE Young Adult coverage gap; (3) Support the Military Hunger Prevention Act.

Topic 1: Comprehensive Toxic Exposure Reform

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

Topic 3: Basic Needs Allowance

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

According to the Southwest Virginia Chapter interview team, the meeting with Congressman Griffith and his Deputy District Director went well and their concerns are being forwarded to the Congressman's legislative team in Washington.

Topic 2: TRICARE Young Adult Parity

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

The Health Care Fairness for Military Families Act of 2021 (H.R. 475), sponsored by Reps. Elaine Luria (D-Va.) and Michael Waltz (R-Fla.), expand TRICARE eligibility to young adult dependents up to age 26.



L to R: LTC Bob Habermann, LTC Dan Karnes, Congressman Morgan Griffith, CDR Lee Ensley



MOAA's COUNCIL AND CHAPTER AFFAIRS VIRTUAL LEADERSHIP TRAINING SESSION

Chapter Membership Chair COL Bob Brown, USA (Ret) participated in MOAA's Council and Chapter Affairs Northeast Region Virtual Leadership Training Session from 31 April- 1 May 2021. The workbook was created to share information, resource tools, and best practices to enable council and chapter leaders to grow and sustain strong chapters.

Membership Emphasis by Col (Ret) Bob Brown



I was fortunate to recently attend the MOAA National training session where a key area of emphasis was the need to increase national and local chapter membership. For National MOAA the desire is to increase overall membership as well as encourage members to upgrade from Basic to Premium or Life membership. Local chapters also have great potential for growth as only 12% of National members are currently affiliated with a local chapter. In our area alone there are over 400 retired or former officers who are MOAA National members but who are not in our chapter. During the last two years primarily through letters to those on this list we have increased our chapter membership by over 20%. But, there is still much we can do. I believe the best way forward is personal contact with other active, retired, or former officers we know in our community who may or may not be MOAA members or even know about MOAA. I have listed below some of the key reasons to join our chapter that you can share as you encounter potential members. Please let me know the name and email of potential members you identify so I can follow-up with them and share more detail regarding chapter membership.

Don't forget to refer them to our chapter web site: moaaswva.org which contains excellent information about all the activities of our chapter.

Reasons to Join the Southwest Virginia Chapter of MOAA

1. **Make yourself heard.** We provide critical grassroots support for MOAA's national legislative agenda. With our benefits under attack, MOAA is in the fight to preserve them. Chapter members let their legislators know what's on their minds and open doors for MOAA's legislative team in Washington, D.C. In these difficult times, MOAA members need to stick together, and our local chapter is the best way we know to do that.
2. **Give back to the community.** Our chapter is an ambassador in our local community, supporting countless programs that make a difference in the lives of others. Our members continue their "officership" service and are giving back in the truest sense.
3. **Value added to chapter members' lives.** Our monthly chapter meetings offer interesting programs and opportunities to interact with civic, political, military, and business leaders on issues important to members.
4. **Networking with fellow officers.** Our chapter includes second-career members in the work force and retired service members who have contacts in our community that can be valuable to transitioning officers.
5. **Stay informed.** Chapter newsletters, websites, and meetings provide you with the latest information on local, state, and national issues and changes to military benefits.
6. **Influencing state legislation.** We are active in the Virginia Council of Chapters that unites chapters in the state. Through this Council we lobby for and help pass state level legislation that affects military members and their families.
7. **Camaraderie with a purpose.** Our chapter is composed of active duty, former, and retired officers from every branch of service, including National Guard and Reserve, as well as surviving spouses. The camaraderie we share not only gives each of us a chance to connect with other members with similar backgrounds and interest, but to also develop close and lasting friendships.

CONTACT ME : Tel (H) 540-904-2810, (C) 864-973-7146 or email: rbbrown68@gmail.com

COLONEL BOB BROWN, USA (Ret)

The Marine Corps Is About to Reinvent Itself—Drastically

BY KYLE MIZOKAMI, APR 2, 2021

The service is undergoing its biggest reorganization in 100 years, shifting from a second land army to smaller amphibious units. But why now? The U.S. Marine Corps is on the verge of its first major reorganization in a century, one that will position America's premier amphibious force to land on China's doorstep. The Marines will organize into smaller units capable of operating across vast distances, seizing China's network of artificial island bases in the South China Sea. The revamp will see the Marines trade in their tanks, artillery, and even some F-35s in return for long-range missiles, unmanned boats, and anti-ship weapons.



The Marines' plan to reorient from essentially a second land army to concentrate on amphibious operations in the Asia-Pacific. The Marines have fought in Iraq and Afghanistan since 9/11 as a land force, divorced from their traditional amphibious mission.

(Afghanistan, for example, is a landlocked country.) The Marines will organize three littoral regiments, each capable of operating along coastlines or across island archipelagos.

The Marines plan to conduct island-hopping campaigns with a new Light Amphibious Warship (LAW), a long-range amphibious ship capable of carrying a company or more of Marines thousands of miles. The LAWs won't have much room for heavy equipment, and most of the gear, like 155-millimeter howitzers and main battle tanks, won't be all that useful for taking over small islands, anyway. Toward this end, the Marines will lighten up their force structure.



Under the new plan, the Marine Corps will totally divest itself of law enforcement and tank battalions, decrease infantry battalions from 24 to 21, slash artillery cannon batteries from 21 to just five, reduce amphibious vehicle companies from six to four, and cut

the number of helicopter and tilt-rotor squadrons. The Marines will also reduce their purchase of F-35C Joint Strike Fighters, the carrier-capable variant of the F-35 fighter jet. Reductions in artillery, tanks, and other weapons will allow the Marines to invest in other weapons, particularly 14 new Navy-Marine Expeditionary Ship Interdiction System (NMESIS). These batteries, armed with Norwegian-developed Naval Strike Missiles, will allow the Marines to fend off Chinese warships, making a 115-mile no-go zone around Marine positions.

As the Marines advance through a chain of islands, their anti-air and anti-ship missiles will make it increasingly difficult for Chinese ships and aircraft to operate around them, eventually squeezing them out entirely.

The Marines will also procure over 100 Long Range Unmanned Surface Vessels (LRSUV), among other systems. Equipped with sensors and weapons, LRSUVs could circle islands held by China, identifying troop concentrations and then bombarding them with precision weapons. This would be a smaller-scale, more focused version of the large naval bombardments of World War II, when hundreds of ships would hurtle thousands of tons of unguided artillery shells against targets on islands like Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

Overall, the aim of the Marines' new littoral concept is to complement a war at sea by taking over enemy positions on land. The Marines would systematically isolate, bombard, and overrun China's network of artificial islands in the South China Sea, and then set up air defense and anti-ship batteries to make the space around them hostile to Chinese forces. This would restrict the Chinese Navy's and Air Force's room to maneuver, pushing them out into the open water—where the U.S. Navy would take them on.

The Marines' new operating concept might be too light to operate against heavily mechanized enemies, however, like the North Korean People's Army or Russian Ground Forces. While the Marines will have no shortage of tank-killing firepower, they'll lack tanks capable of slugging it out with other tanks, especially when advancing into territory against tank-heavy forces.

Continued on Page 12 "The Marine Corps Is About to Reinvent Itself"

Continued from Page 11 “The Marine Corps Is About to Reinvent Itself”

If that happens, the Marines say they’ll request tank support from Army units. But the Army may have other plans.

This decade looks to be a period of flat military spending, thanks to COVID-19, a growing national debt, and other economic priorities. Most, if not all, of the U.S.’s armed services will have to pick and choose the capabilities in which they’ll invest. The Marines are just the first service to make bold trade-offs.

The Marine Corps of 2030 might not be an effective fighting force against everyone, but neither is the Corps of today. The difference? If the Marines get their way, they’ll be laser-focused against their most likely “big war” scenario.



Chapter Website Up and Running

The Southwest Virginia Chapter website is now up and running. To access the site go to moaaswva.org. The website is one of the primary means to keep in touch with the current membership, connect with potential members and keep members advised on current issues of importance to the active duty, retired and former military, their spouse and family.

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**SW VIRGINIA CHAPTER RECEIVES A MOAA
2021 COMMUNITY OUTREACH GRANT**

The MOAA Foundation Board of Directors upon reviewing the recommendations of the 2021 Independent Community Grant Scoring panel has awarded the Southwest Virginia Chapter a grant of \$2,500. Based on the information provided in the application, and the increase in need mentioned because of the COVID-10 pandemic, MOAA is also offering the SWVC and additional COVID-19 Relief grant of \$1,250. MOAA is pleased to offer these grant funds in support of the SWVC community outreach program in support of the Military Family Support Center. Thanks to Chapter President Lee Ensley for writing the grant proposal and developing the necessary MOU between the SWVC and the MFSC.

**CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP
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Regular Members 112
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Looking to join the Southwest Virginia Chapter? Want more information on how to join and become involved? Check us out on the chapter website at moaaswva.org or on face book at [moaaswva](https://www.facebook.com/moaaswva) then Contact COL Bob Brown, USA (Ret), Chapter Membership Chair at (540) 904-2810 or email at rbbrown68@gmail.com.

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Annual Chapter Dues are \$30.00. Widows (ers) dues are \$15.00. Dues for those entering MOAA between 1 July and 31 December are \$20.00. Please mail dues payment to: **MOAA, Southwest Virginia Chapter, P.O. Box 3090, Roanoke, VA 24015-1090**

*Note: The *Communique* is now published quarterly. The next issue will be published September 2021.*

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