

## MOAA JROTC-ROTC AWARD CEREMONIES 2023

Each year the Southwest Virginia Chapter solicits nominations for the MOAA JROTC/ ROTC Medal Awards and the Southwest Virginia Chapter Leadership Awards from 15 local high school JROTC units and the Virginia Tech and Radford University ROTC units. Chapter Awards Chair LTC Robert Habermann prepares the awards packages and presentation folders, forwards them to the respective school and arranges for chapter members to attend the awards ceremonies and present the awards to the recipients.



MOAA JROTC Medal Award to Cadet Jamie L. Rowlett, William Byrd High School, Navy National Defense Cadet Corps (NNDCC) 11 May 2023



Major James Milton Archer, Jr. Award to Cadet Lt. William Harrison Sloane, William Byrd High School, Navy National Defense Cadet Corps (NNDCC) 11 May 2023



MOAA JROTC Medal Award presented to Cadet CPT Jeremiah Garretson by LTC Curtis Armstrong USA (Ret.) Instructor Christiansburg High School/Montgomery County Corps of Cadets

### MAJ James Milton Archer, Jr., USA Award



In 2020 the Southwest Virginia Chapter established a new award to recognize a “distinguished” JROTC “senior cadet or midshipman” in the respective schools JROTC program who has demonstrated “superior” military leadership during his/her time in the program.

Cont. on Page 3 MAJ James Milton Archer, Jr., USA Award

## President's Corner

Greetings, it is hard to believe it is time for our summer break already. Seems like we just started back and now summer is here and time for a break already. That said it was a busy



year for our chapter. Thanks to Col Tom Dalzell USMC (Ret) hard work he was able once again to get us very interesting and engaging

speakers for our monthly meetings. Tom also publishes this newsletter which once again received a five-star award from MOAA National along with our web page. Thank you, Tom, for all that you do for our chapter.

The Chapter was active in the community also. From participation in parades (no marching required thanks to CAPT Gary Powers' USN (Ret) Shore Patrol Jeep), attending awards ceremonies for local JROTC units as well as the Virginia Tech and Radford University ROTC awards presentation, to participating in our new partnership with Affinity Care of Virginia and their we honor veterans' program. For those not familiar with Affinity Care's program, this is a program where a member of our chapter goes to an assisted living facility and presents a pin and citation to the veterans receiving care there. It is a short ceremony that I had the privilege to take part in.

Presidents Corner Cont'd on page 2

**2023 OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Presidents Corner** Cont'd from page 1

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I got to meet some great veterans from Korea, Vietnam and everything in between. Just be careful when you ask them for a story from when they served as you never know what you will get. Some were quite colorful to say the least.

We also met with our state legislators to ask for their support of the JLC legislative priorities for this year. I am happy to say that all but two passed the legislature and have been signed by the governor. I was told the items that did not pass, the real property tax exemption date for 100% disabled veterans, and removal of age requirement for income tax subtraction, while supported by both parties was not approved by the majority party in the legislator as they felt it would give the governor too many "wins" as he is of the other party. That said, maybe next year.

The main priority which was to grant tax relief to surviving spouses of members who died on active duty did pass. This was due to MOAA taking an active role as a member of the governor's own party did not want to advance it out of committee. MOAA had a group of surviving spouses write the governor who campaigned on this issue and it was also a priority of the first lady. The governor then met with MOAA members from the council of chapters as well as some surviving spouses and the head of the committee was given specific marching orders and it moved to the floor where it was passed.

As you know we are a volunteer organization with no source of funding other than our dues and donations. This spring the board went out with a request for donations to support our programs and we received a very positive response. Thank you to all who were able to support as your donations helped to keep us financially healthy.

I want to wish everyone a happy, healthy, and safe summer and look forward to seeing you again in September. Please take some time this summer to see if you can find a few hours a month to volunteer to serve on our board. We really could use the help as many of us are wearing multiple hats to cover vacant positions.

With respect,

Matthew K. Haag  
CAPT USN (Ret)

**OUR MISSION**

As the community face of the Military Officers Association of America, the Southwest Virginia Chapter's mission is to advocate for a strong national defense, be an influential provider and supporter of programs, benefits and services for our military community, and a source of social fellowship for our members.

**OUR VISION**

To Be An Influential Military Organization in Southwest Virginia.

*Continued from Page 1* MAJ James Milton Archer, Jr., USA Award

The new award will also be presented to Cadets participating in the Auxiliary, Civil Air Patrol program completing his/her senior year of high school or home-school equivalent.

The new award is the MAJ James Milton Archer, Jr., USA Award. The award is made possible due to a generous contribution from the Archer Family in memory of their father Major James Milton Archer, Jr., USA. The new award consists of an 8"x10" walnut plaque, \$50 remuneration, and a presentation letter in a certificate folder. Eligibility for the MAJ James Milton Archer, Jr., USA Award, the cadet or midshipman must:

- Be in the next-to-last year of the JROTC program, customarily in his/her junior year of high school.
- Be in good academic standing.
- Be of high moral character.
- Demonstrate a high order of loyalty to his/her unit, school, and country.
- Demonstrate superior military leadership.

### Leadership Awards

In 2009 the Board of Directors of the Southwest Virginia Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America established two Leadership Awards to be presented to ROTC Cadets /Midshipmen at Virginia Tech/Radford University during each academic year. Recipients are to be juniors or who will be starting their final year in the coming fall of the academic year. Each Leadership Award was named after a General Officer who was a member of the Southwest Virginia Chapter.

The first award is The General William B. Rosson Leadership Award and the second award is the Major General Lloyd B. Ramsey Leadership Award.

The Leadership Awards were established to recognize the recipient's academic, community service and leadership qualities that demonstrate exceptional potential for military leadership while a member of the Virginia Tech/Radford University ROTC Program. Each Leadership Award consists of an appropriate framed award certificate and a \$500 monetary award.

Criteria and application formats were coordinated through the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets and the three ROTC units. The Army, Navy and Air Force ROTC units at Virginia Tech and the Army ROTC unit at Radford University shall submit no more than two (2) nominations each for the leadership awards. The two nominations are to be made and approved by the respective heads of the ROTC units for endorsement and forwarding.

The Southwest Virginia Chapter Leadership Award Selection Committee shall select the two (2) Leadership Award recipients from the eight (8) nominations submitted.



General William B. Rosson



Major General Lloyd B. Ramsey



## MOAA JROTC AWARD CEREMONIES 2023

On Thursday 4 May 2023 a joint awards ceremony for the Air Force JROTC students from Patrick Henry and William Fleming High Schools (PHHS and WFHS) was held in the Patrick Henry High School cafeteria. Representing our chapter and presenting awards was CDR Lee Ensley, USN (Ret). An audience of several hundred parents, teachers, friends and relatives attended.



The MOAA JROTC Medal Award recipient for PHHS was Cadet Major Yasmeen Walker-Jackson.



The recipient of the Major James Archer, Jr. USA Award was Cadet Colonel Sheyla Moncada



The recipient of the Major James Archer, Jr. USA Award was Cadet Captain Elisha (Elijah) Shoemaker



The MOAA JROTC Medal Award recipient for WFHS was Cadet Chief Master Sergeant Nasiya Waddy.



During the ceremony, it was also announced that these three cadets, above right, from William Fleming will be enlisting in either the Navy or Marine Corps upon graduation. They are, from left to right: Tyler Rokicka, Christopher Austin and Elisha Shoemaker. Much credit for the success of all these cadets goes to their instructors. They are LCOL Steven Boyd, USAF (Ret) for PHHS, and Bradley Thayer, MSGT, USAF (Ret) for WFHS.




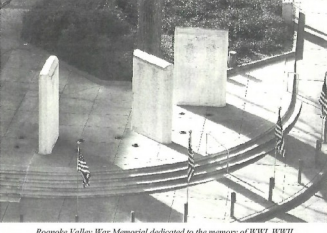
## MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY

On Monday 29 May 2023 members of the Southwest Virginia Chapter participated with the Roanoke Valley Veterans Council in a Memorial Day Ceremony at 9:30 AM at the Roanoke War Memorial in Freedom Plaza, Roanoke, Virginia.

*Somewhere a Soldier Died Today*


You may not be aware of it  
but then again you may  
That somewhere on this earth  
a soldier died today.  
They were young at heart  
when they went off to war  
And they know just what it was  
they were fighting for  
They were just ordinary young soldiers  
living an ordinary life  
With a mother, father, sister, brother  
perhaps they were a husband or a wife.  
There's no one who can replace them  
and those who know their love  
Know that they'd all be together  
some day with God above.  
They were just ordinary young soldiers  
whose life had just begun.  
But they died somehow  
as a result of the enemy's gun  
Some here around the world  
soldiers, men and women, now too  
Died today in the battle or from wounds  
puncturing me and you.  
So don't let a day go by  
that you don't say,  
  
"God bless that soldier somewhere who died for me today."  
  
*Helen Anderson Glass  
US Navy WWII*

**The Roanoke Valley Veterans Council**

*Roanoke Valley War Memorial dedicated to the memory of WWI, WWII, Korea and Vietnam War Dead, Freedom Plaza, Downtown Roanoke, Virginia*

**Memorial Day Ceremony**



The Roanoke Valley Veterans Council was founded in 1962 to bring together area veterans from all veterans service and military service organizations to serve a common purpose...to better the lives of our veterans causes, through the recognition of veterans needs individually and in groups and to maintain and enhance public awareness and knowledge of veterans contributions to our Nation, to the Commonwealth of Virginia, to their communities and their families.

The Roanoke Valley Veterans Council proudly represents Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, The 40 & 8, 29th Division Association, Fleet Reserve Association, Association of the United States Army, AMVETS, American Ex-POWs, Vietnam Veterans of America, Pearl Harbor Survivors Association, Air Force Association, Military Officers Association of America, Reserve Officers Association, Marine Corps League, Military Order of the Purple Heart, 82nd Airborne Association, WAVE, Military Order of the World Wars, and Career Armed Forces Reserve Association.

**Memorial Day Ceremony**  
Monday, May 29, 2023 | 9:30 am  
Roanoke War Memorial | Freedom Plaza  
Roanoke, Virginia

Master of Ceremonies.....	President, Perry C. Taylor, Jr. "Ace"
Posting of Colors.....	Honor Guard Disabled American Veterans, Chapter 3
National Anthem.....	Delegate Christopher T. Head Virginia House of Delegates 17th District
Invocation.....	Reverend Morris Bennett Andrew Chapel UMC
Introduction of Speaker.....	LTC Daniel E. Karnes US Army Retired
Memorial Day Address.....	Thomas J. Dalzell Colonel USMC (Ret.)
Placing of the Memorial Day Wreath.....	President Ace Taylor Col. Thomas J. Dalzell (Ret.)
Amazing Grace.....	Brandon Davis, Bagpiper
Taps.....	Bugler, Disabled American Veterans
Prayer for Peace.....	Chaplain Chris Wisdom U.S. Army Retired
Retirement of Colors.....	Honor Guard Disabled American Veterans
Benediction.....	Reverend Morris Bennett
Close of Ceremonies.....	President "Ace" Taylor

*Our prayer and sincerest thanks  
go out to all our military forces  
stationed around the world.*

Due to inclement weather the ceremony was moved into the sanctuary of Green Memorial Methodist Church. The President of the Roanoke Valley Veterans Council Perry C Taylor, Jr, "Ace" was the Master of Ceremonies and welcomed all present and recognized local dignitaries including Roanoke City Vice Mayor Mr. Joseph L. Cobb, Virginia House of Delegates, 17th District, Delegate Christopher T. Head and Virginia State Senator, District 19, Senator David Suetterlein. Southwest Virginia Chapter member LTC Dan Karnes, USAR (Ret) introduced the speaker COL Thomas Dalzell, USMC (Ret). The Honor Guard were members of the Disabled American Veterans, Chapter 3. Delegate Christopher Head sang the National Anthem. After the formal ceremony the Memorial Wreath was placed outside at the Wall of Honor, Roanoke War Memorial, Freedom Plaza.



**The Battlefield Cross**

The rifle with fixed bayonet pointing into the ground symbolizes a fallen soldier in battle, The boots represent the final march of the last battle, the helmet and dog tags are items the soldier has no further need for, and lastly, the price of freedom is visible here.



L to R : Perry C. Taylor, "Ace", Reverend Morris Bennett, COL Thomas Dalzell, LTC Dan Karnes, Delegate Christopher T. Head, and Chaplain Chris Wisdom.



Colonel Thomas Dalzell and Perry C Taylor during presentation of the Memorial Day Wreath and remembrance of our fallen heroes.



The Memorial Day Wreath placed at the Wall of Honor, Roanoke War Memorial, Freedom Plaza 29 May 2023.

## MOAA ROTC AWARD CEREMONIES 2023

On Thursday 20 April 2023 Southwest Virginia Chapter members attended the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Academic Year 2022-2023 Military Awards Ceremony. Numerous Joint Awards, Olmsted Foundation Scholar Awards, University Honors Awards and Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Awards were presented to selected Cadets in front of the entire Corps of Cadets. The Southwest Virginia Chapter was honored to participate in the awarding of the MOAA ROTC Medal Awards and the Southwest Virginia Chapter Leadership Awards.



The Southwest Virginia Chapter General William B. Rosson Leadership Award presented to Radford University Army Cadet Shelby Valade and the Southwest Virginia Chapter Major General Lloyd B. Ramsey Leadership Award presented to Virginia Tech Air Force Cadet Jacob Osborn by chapter member Colonel Thomas Dalzell, USMC (Ret) at the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Military Awards Ceremony 20 April 2023

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) Medal Awards presented to Senior Air Force Cadet Jacob Osborn, Senior Army Cadet Ian Eckstrom and Senior Navy Cadet Elijah Swan by chapter member Colonel Thomas Dalzell, USMC (Ret) at the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets Military Awards Ceremony 20 April 2023

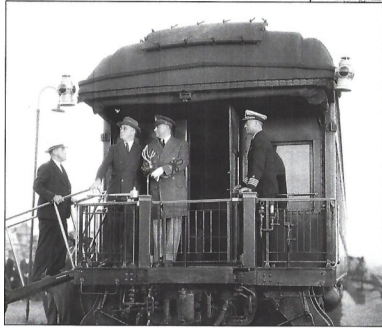
## SECDEF Recommends Pacific Command Boss to Be Navy's Next Top Officer

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin has recommended to the president that Adm. Samuel Paparo, the commander of U.S. Pacific Fleet, become the Navy's 33rd chief of naval operations. NBC News first reported Monday that Paparo's name was sent to the White House last week. Two defense officials with direct knowledge of the process, who requested anonymity to discuss the matter, confirmed the accuracy of the NBC report. President Joe Biden would still need to formally nominate Paparo and send the pick to Congress for approval. Monday's news flew in the face of conventional Beltway wisdom, with some news reports and talking heads predicting that the current vice chief of naval operations, Adm. Lisa Franchetti, would become the next CNO and the first woman to hold the title and to serve on the Joint Chiefs. Multiple sources said privately that high-ranking Pentagon officials were operating under the assumption Franchetti would be nominated for CNO right up until the NBC story broke. Last week, several current and retired flag officers told Defense News that Franchetti's selection for the job was among the "worst-kept secrets" in Washington. White House officials did not immediately respond to a request for comment Monday. Paparo assumed command of PACFLEET — the tip of the Navy spear when it comes to containing China — in May 2021. His spokesperson did not return a request for comment Monday after Franchetti was expected to be nominated as CNO, command of PACFLEET has in the past often led to the job of leading the joint-force U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, a route taken by current INDOPACOM head Adm. John Aquilino. Navy officials declined to comment on the Paparo nomination Monday, and Defense Department officials declined to provide an on-record comment by Navy Times' deadline. "This is a Presidential decision," Navy spokesman Rear Adm. Ryan Perry said in a statement. "The United States Navy has several highly qualified senior leaders, and it would be inappropriate to speculate which leader the President will nominate to serve as the next Chief of Naval Operations." Gilday is statutorily required to step down after four years. His last day will be Aug. 21, and the following day a new leader will have to be in charge. If Biden's pick for CNO cannot be confirmed by that date — a possibility, as Alabama Republican Sen. Tommy Tuberville is not allowing military nominations to move forward in the Senate — then Franchetti will be called upon to perform the duties of CNO. Arnold Punaro, a former staff director on the Senate Armed Services Committee, told Defense News that the services' current vice chiefs can perform the duties of chief with no limitations, should there be a delay in the Senate confirming new service chiefs.



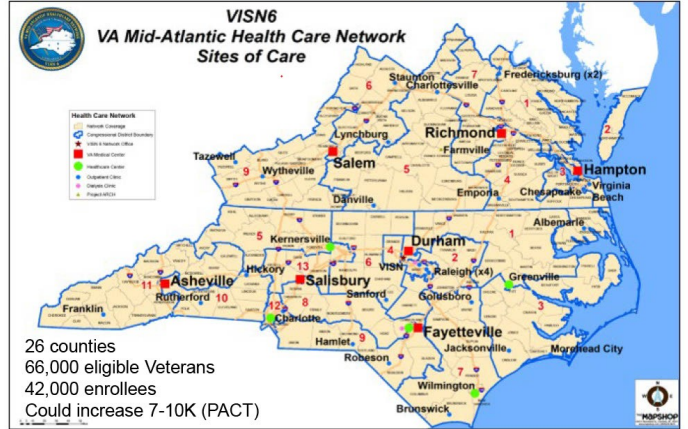
# SALEM VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

On Thursday 20 April 2023 Ms. Rebecca J. Stackhouse, Executive Director Salem VA Health Care System, provided an in-depth update on the Salem VA Health Care System. The United States Veterans Administration Hospital in Salem Virginia was dedicated during a speech by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on Friday 19 October 1934. The VA Health Care System covers 26 counties in Virginia and North Carolina as shown on the map insert.



In the early 1990s, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA)—one of the three administrations of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)—began developing a strategy to expand its capacity to provide outpatient primary care, especially for veterans who had to travel long distances to receive care at VA facilities. To facilitate access to primary care closer to where veterans reside, VHA began implementing a system for approving and establishing Community-Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs). A CBOC is a fixed health care site that is geographically distinct or separate from its parent VA medical facility. A CBOC can be either VA-owned and VA-staffed or contracted to Healthcare Management Organizations (HMO). Regardless of how it is administered, a CBOC must have the necessary professional medical staff, access to diagnostic testing and treatment capability, and the referral arrangements needed to ensure continuity of health care for current or eligible veteran patients. VA policies require all CBOCs to be operated in a manner that provides veterans with consistent, safe, high-quality health care.

## Our Healthcare System



Choose VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs 3

## VA Clinics (formerly Community Based Outpatient Clinics)



Choose VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs 4

## Medical Center Profile

- Complexity = 1C (medium)
- FY22 Uniques = 33,284
- Authorized Beds = 221
  - 56 medical/surgical
  - 38 acute inpatient psychiatry
  - 60 (90) CLC
  - 37 Domiciliary
- FY22 Admissions = 3,069
- FY22 Outpatient Visits = 409,900
- FTEE = 1,710 (Goal = 1,850)
- Budget = \$510,000,000
- Research Expenditures = \$1.89M (+60 active protocols)
- 4 Medical School Affiliations ~ +60 Allied Health Training Affiliations
  - 650 Medical Residents and Fellows
  - 250 Allied Health trainees

[www.salem.va.gov](http://www.salem.va.gov)

Choose VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs 6



Ms. Rebecca Stackhouse, Executive Director  
Salem VA Health Care System

"Salem VA Health Care System" Continued on Page 8



Continued from Page 7 "Salem VA Health Care System"

### Salem VAMC Clinical Services

- Cardiology
- Center for Integrated Pain Management
- Dentistry
- Dermatology
- Dialysis
- Emergency Medicine
- Endocrinology
- Gastroenterology
- Inpatient Medicine
- General Surgery
- Hematology/Oncology
- Home Based Primary Care
- Imaging
- Infectious Disease
- Mental and Behavioral Health
- Nephrology
- Neurology
- Nuclear Medicine
- Occupational Health
- Ophthalmology
- Thoracic Surgery
- Pathology and Laboratory
- Pharmacy
- Orthopedics
- Otolaryngology
- Primary Care
- Pulmonary/Critical Care/Sleep Disorders
- Rehabilitation
- Rheumatology
- Telehealth
- Urology
- Vascular Surgery
- Women's Health

- Intensive Community Mental Health Recovery (ICMHR) Program
- Housing and Urban Development – Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH)
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS)
  - Transitional Work
  - Supported Employment
- Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center (PRRC)
  - Currently closed due to staffing shortages
- Domiciliary: Residential PTSD & SUD Programs
- Suicide Prevention



## Home Care

- Home Based Primary Care (HBPC)**
  - FY 2022 Average Daily Census: 319.63 (includes Lynchburg, Salem, Staunton, Wytheville)
- Durable Medical Equipment (DME)**
  - Contract: Performance Medical Solutions (Joint Commission Accredited)
- Home Oxygen**
  - Contract: Commonwealth Home Care (Joint Commission Accredited)

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### COMPACT Act

- Preventing Veteran suicide is our top clinical priority.
- Under Section 201 of the COMPACT Act of 2020, eligible Veterans in acute suicidal crisis are now able to go to any VA or non-VA health care facility for emergency health care at no cost.
  - This includes inpatient or crisis residential care for up to 30 days and outpatient care for up to 90 days.
- Veterans do not need to be enrolled in the VA system to use this benefit.

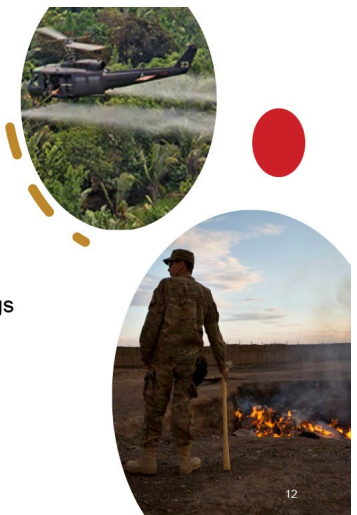


### The PACT Act

- The PACT Act is one of the largest health and benefit expansions in American history. This new law expands and extends eligibility for VA health care for Veterans with toxic exposures and Veterans of the Vietnam era, Gulf War era, and Post-9/11 era.
- Every enrolled Veteran will receive an initial toxic exposure screening and a follow-up screening at least every 5 years.



- Thus far, SVAHCS has completed 16,145 initial screenings and 6,422 secondary screenings.
- 92% of secondary screenings have been resolved.



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Continued from Page "8 Salem VA Health Care System "



- Anticipate 7,000-10,000 Veterans in Salem’s catchment area will be eligible for either healthcare services or expanded services.
- Plan to utilize opportunities specific to section 704 to build a new VA Clinic in Bedford or Franklin county to close space gap, if approved.

### Facility Projects and Construction

- 4J Patient Privacy (\$8.5M)
  - Estimated completion date of 5/30/23
- Emergency Department (\$8.8M)
  - Estimated completion date of 6/30/23
- Boiler Plant (\$17.3M)
  - Estimated completion date of 11/30/23
- Elevator Replacements (\$6.8M)
  - Buildings 1, 4, 5, 10, 11, 76, 143



### Facility Projects and Construction

- Upcoming Construction Projects:
  - Renovate Surgical Suite Phase II (\$11M)
  - Renovate for Patient Privacy Phase II (\$10.5M)
  - Renovate Primary Care (\$8.7M)
  - Consolidate ICU/PCU (\$8.5M)
  - Replace Nurse Call System (\$2.4M)

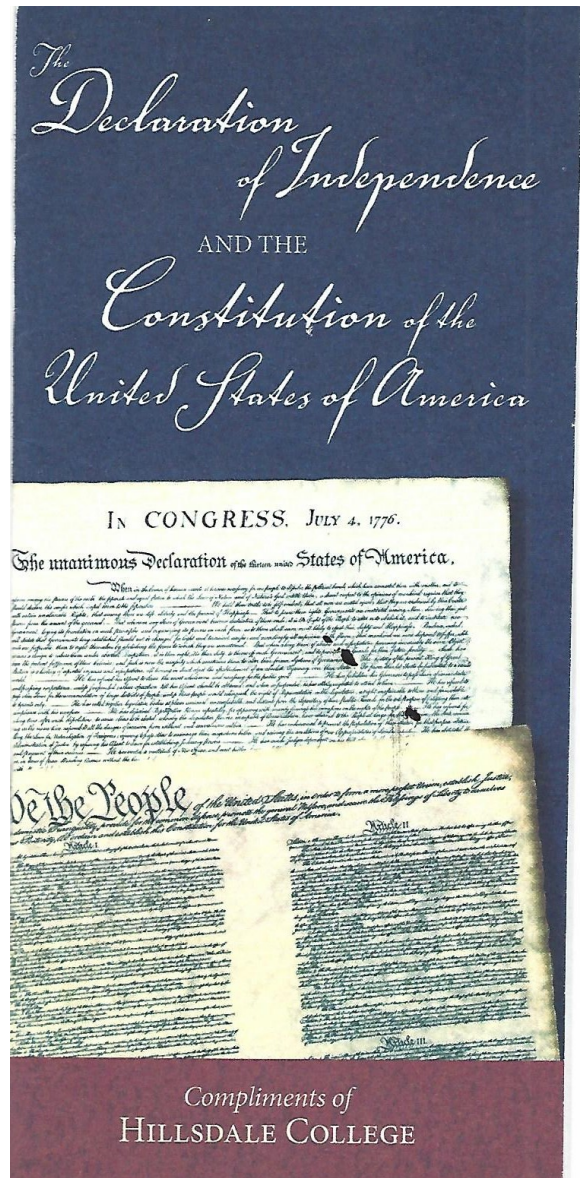


Chapter President CAPT Matt Haag, USN (Ret) presenting a Chapter Commemorative “Mug” to Ms. Rebecca Stackhouse in appreciation for her presentation to the membership on the status of the Salem VA Health Care System



### 17 MAY 2023 MEMBERSHIP BBQ PICNIC MEETING

On Wednesday 17 May 2023 the Southwest Virginia Chapter gathered at the American Legion Post 3 shelter facility in Salem, Virginia for a BBQ picnic catered by Mission BBQ in Roanoke.



The program was on “The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States of America”. Copies of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were provided to all and a 100 question quiz was passed around to test their knowledge of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution..



Continued from Page 10 - “Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States of America”

Also on our program this day the Southwest Virginia Chapter welcomed Ms. January Gerow, Director of Operations to provide information on a program called “VITTLES FOR VETS”. Vittles for Vets provides weekly grocery cards to qualified veterans



struggling with poverty in SW Virginia. The cards are used to buy healthy and life sustaining food, with restrictions on junk food, alcohol, and tobacco products. Vittles for Vets is a 501c3 organization serving veterans and their families in over a dozen counties in Southwest Virginia. They are a small group of volunteers led by Bill McCann, founder of Vittles for Vets. Over 95% of all donations they receive go directly to their grocery card program. Each week, Vittles for Vets sends a \$50 grocery card to each veteran who qualifies for their program through a participating veteran’s service agency. The cards are used on healthy food choices and prohibit the purchase of tobacco, alcohol, or junk food items. Since March of 2020, they have more than doubled their list of qualified veterans in need while also losing the opportunity



to organize large fundraising events due to COVID 19. As a result, they now have more than 100 veterans in their program and have had to cut their grocery gift cards to just \$25 a week.

With the passing of COL Roger Talmadge and the demise of the Military Family Support Center the Southwest Virginia Chapter is considering partnering with “Vittles For Vets” to support our military veterans and families in Southwest Virginia.



Chapter President CPT Matt Haag, USN presents the Chapter Commemorative “Mug” to January Gerow in appreciation for her presentation on the “Vittles For Vets” program.

Chapter President CAPT Matt Haag, USN presents the MOAA Colonel Marvin J. Harris 5 Star Communications Award for the Chapter newsletter “The Communique” and chapter Web Site to COL Thomas Dalzell, USMC newsletter editor.

## MOAA'S LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

MOAA's Legislative Priorities for advocacy as the 118th Congress continues its work. Their focus remains on all seven of the uniformed services and their service-earned entitlements.

- Compensation and Service-Earned Benefits
- Military Housing
- Health Care for Currently Serving and Retirees
- Health Care and Benefits for Veterans
- Service Families
- Survivors
- Guard and Reserve

As protecting health care and service-earned benefits is a challenge, MOAA will press forward to engage Congress to shape outcomes in these vital areas. There are steep hills before us. Our nation has a rising debt of more than \$30 trillion and a deficit of more than \$3 trillion. Because of this, MOAA anticipates robust attempts to control federal budgets, reduce or eliminate unprogrammed expenditures, and reduce entitlements. MOAA needs you to be ready to reach out to your legislators and keep that engagement going as necessary to make sure your voice is heard. **Details at <https://www.moa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2023-news-articles/advocacy/moaas-legislative-priorities-118th-Congress/>**

## VIRGINIA COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS/JOINT LOGISTIC COUNCIL INITIATIVES

- JLC 2023 Initiatives: JLC 2023 Approved Initiatives
- JLC 2023-01 Expand Tax Relief for Surviving Spouses of Military Service Members to also include “Died in the Line-of-Duty”
- JLC 2023-02 Real Property Tax Exemption Effective Date.
- JLC 2023-03 Removal of Age Requirement Income Tax Subtraction
- JLC 2023-04 Appropriate \$400,000 (GF) for State Veterans Cemeteries; Eliminate Spouse/Dependent and Guard/Reserve Burial Fees
- JLC 2023-05 Virginia National Guard State Park Admission
- JLC 2023-06 Virginia National Guard Income Tax Exemption

**A summary of the approved 2023 JLC Initiatives Policy papers for each initiative can be accessed on the JLC webpage at: <https://www.dvs.virginia.gov/dvs/joint-leadership-council-veterans-service-organizations-2>**





## **HERE'S HOW MUCH TRICARE PHARMACY PRESCRIPTION PRICES WILL RISE NEXT YEAR**

By: Karen Ruedisueli 10 May 2023

TRICARE pharmacy users will see cost increases in 2024 as the Defense Health Agency implements prescription medication copays set by the FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

That same legislation gives DoD authority to adjust copays for 2028 and beyond to reflect changes in the cost of pharmaceutical agents and prescription drug dispensing. MOAA already has started discussions on Capitol Hill to establish guardrails on this authority, with the goal of legislation to limit DoD increases on prescription drug copays.

[TAKE ACTION: [Urge Your Lawmakers to Restore the TRICARE Pharmacy Retail Network](#)]

As of Jan. 1, TRICARE copays for prescription drugs will increase as follows:

### **TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery (Up to a 90-Day Supply)**

- Generic formulary drugs: from \$12 to \$13
- Brand-name formulary drugs: from \$34 to \$38
- Non-formulary drugs: from \$68 to \$76

### **TRICARE Retail Network Pharmacies (Up to a 30-Day Supply)**

- Generic formulary drugs: from \$14 to \$16
- Brand-name formulary drugs: from \$38 to \$43
- Non-formulary drugs: from \$68 to \$76

Prescriptions obtained at military treatment facility (MTF) pharmacies still will have zero out-of-pocket cost.

At retail pharmacies, beneficiaries will continue to pay either the TRICARE copay or the actual retail cost of the drug, whichever is lower. You can check retail cost estimates for your prescription drugs using the Price a Medication tool.

### **Making MHS Reforms Work for You**

The TRICARE retail and mail-order pharmacy programs were extended to Medicare-eligible retirees in 2001 with the legislation that created TRICARE For Life (TFL). Until then, the only prescription drug benefit available to military retirees ages 65 and up was zero-out-of-pocket-cost prescriptions at MTF pharmacies.

As Congress shaped military health system reforms, MOAA successfully blocked dozens of proposals that would have increased beneficiary cost sharing, including a TFL enrollment fee and catastrophic cap increases up to \$5,000.

[RELATED: [MOAA's TRICARE Toolkit](#)]

MOAA also objected to fee increases for survivors, as well as for medically retired servicemembers and their families. As a result, protections for these populations were included in the FY 2018 NDAA – their pharmacy copays will remain unchanged next year. There also will be no change for active duty servicemembers – they will have no out-of-pocket costs for medications obtained at the MTF, a retail pharmacy, or via mail order.

MOAA continues work to restore the TRICARE pharmacy network, cut by nearly 25% due to reduced network requirements in the new TPharm5 contract, with efforts to secure a report to obtain detailed data on beneficiary impact. We appreciate the MOAA members who traveled to Washington, D.C., last month for our Advocacy in Action event and met with lawmakers to explain how pharmacy network cuts impact military families.

Please watch [The MOAA Newsletter](#) for updates on our advocacy efforts related to the TRICARE pharmacy benefit, including a call to action to share your perspectives.



## Extension of Pandemic Prescription Rule Will Help Hundreds of Thousands of Vets

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

The federal government has extended a rule that allowed physicians to prescribe controlled medications across state lines -- a pandemic exception that was set to expire Thursday that would have affected hundreds of thousands of veterans in the Department of Veterans Affairs health system. The Drug Enforcement Administration and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, or SAMHSA, announced Tuesday they are extending all telehealth flexibilities allowed under the pandemic for six months, as well as the allowances for controlled medications prescribed through Nov. 11, 2024.

The VA [has pushed for the expansion of telemedicine allowances that were introduced](#) in the early weeks of the COVID-19 pandemic, to include medical treatment and prescribing across state lines. According to VA Secretary Denis McDonough, the emergency declarations boosted the VA's ability to provide care to veterans in rural or remote areas, as well as those with disabilities that make it challenging for them to travel to and from appointments. According to VA Secretary Denis McDonough, the emergency declarations boosted the VA's ability to provide care to veterans in rural or remote areas, as well as those with disabilities that make it challenging for them to travel to and from appointments. McDonough estimated that if the COVID-19 emergencies ended without any intervention, 2.7 million veterans in rural locales who use VA health care and another 1.3 million veterans who are not enrolled in VA health services would lose easy access to their prescription drugs.

[RELATED: [PACT Act Claims Reach Major Milestone](#)]

The national emergency pandemic measures are set to end Thursday -- a move that will end federal allowances for hospitals treating COVID-19 patients, shift development of COVID-19 treatments and vaccines back to the private sector, and end the availability of free at-home COVID-19 tests and vaccines for consumers. DEA officials said they needed extra time to review the 38,000 comments the agency received on proposed telemedicine rules it published in February, which called for permanently extending flexibility to prescribe certain non-narcotic medications without a prior in-person visit and allowed physicians to prescribe buprenorphine, the medication used to treat opioid use disorder, without an in-person visit. Under both proposals, however, the DEA set a prescription limit of 30 days, after which an in-person examination would be required to receive refills -- a limitation that raised concerns among many patients. DEA officials said they are taking the comments they received on the proposal "seriously and are considering them carefully."

[RELATED: [Veterans Can Wait Weeks to Get VA Help for Drug, Alcohol Abuse](#)]

"We recognize the importance of telemedicine in providing Americans with access to needed medications, and we have decided to extend the current flexibilities for six months while we work to find a way forward to give Americans that access with appropriate safeguards," DEA Administrator Anne Milgram said in a press release Tuesday. Congress has extended permissions for providers to conduct appointments online for two years, but the prescription allowances, particularly the waiver of a Drug Enforcement Agency requirement that controlled substances such as opioids, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) medications and benzodiazepines must have an in-person medical evaluation, also would have expired, prompting the DEA to publish the two interim rules in February. Now, the federal government has until Nov. 11, 2023, to decide the future of some telehealth prescriptions, while those with existing prescriptions of many controlled medications will retain them through November 2024.

[RELATED: [VA Secretary Calls Onboarding Times for New Hires 'Indefensible'](#)]

"We strongly support policies that promote access to effective and safe treatment for opioid use disorder, including through telemedicine platforms, and ensuring continued access to necessary controlled medications past the COVID [public health emergency]," said Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, assistant secretary for mental health and substance use at the Department of Health and Human Services, referring to the ability to prescribe drugs for the treatment of opioid addiction. More than 1.1 million Americans have died from COVID-19 since February 2020, including at least 24,642 veterans. Cases, hospitalizations and deaths are on the decline, with 1,109 Americans dying last week from the disease, according to the VA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

### MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY

On Monday 29 May 2023 The Southwest Virginia Cemetery Volunteers and Chapter Surviving Spouse Representative Mary Lou Summers conducted a Memorial Day Ceremony at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin Virginia at 1100 hours. Southwest Virginia Chapter Vice President CAPT Gary Powers, USN (Ret) was Master of Ceremonies.



Colors by Boy Scout Troop 249 of Pulaski, Virginia



CAPT Gary Powers, USN (Ret) Master of Ceremonies.



29th Infantry Division Band, Fife and Drums Section



UAW "Ride for Freedom" truck

The 29th Infantry Division Band, Fife and Drums Section performed music for the wreath-laying ceremony. Boy Scout Troop 249 of Pulaski, Virginia presented the colors, Roanoke Composite Squadron - Civil Air Patrol led The Pledge of Allegiance. The UAW "Ride for Freedom" truck took part in the Memorial Day ceremony to salute prisoners of war-missing in action (POW-MIA) from all wars, as well as the brave men and women who have served – and continue to serve – to protect America.



The guest speaker was former Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, Rodney McKinley, USAF (Ret). Chief Master Sergeant McKinley was the 15th Chief Master Sergeant appointed to the highest noncommissioned officer position in the United States Air Force. He served as a personal advisor to the Chief of Staff and the Secretary of the Air Force on all issues regarding the welfare, readiness, morale and proper utilization in progress of the enlisted force.

*Continued on Page 16 "Memorial Day Ceremony"*



*Continued from Page 15 "Memorial Day Ceremony"*

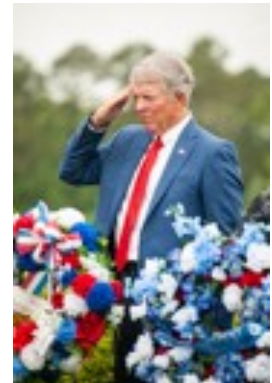
The Keynote Speaker was Vietnam War Veteran and Prisoner of War, Major Theodore "Ted" Sienicki, USAF (Ret). Ted Sienicki enlisted in the U.S. Air Force Reserve to attend Officer Candidate School on April 18, 1969, and entered OTS on July 22, 1969, graduating with a commission as a 2d Lieutenant on October 21, 1969. Lt Sienicki attended Undergraduate Pilot



Training at Randolph AFB, Texas, from November 1969 to April 1970, and then switched to Undergraduate Navigator Training, earning his navigator wings at Mather Air Force Base, California, in April 1971. He then completed F-4 Phantom II Combat Crew Training as a Weapon Systems Officer (WSO) in January 1972, followed by service as an F-4 Weapon Systems Operator with the 25th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Ubon Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand, from February 1972 until he and pilot, Tim Ayres, were forced to eject over North Vietnam and were both taken as a Prisoners of War on May 3, 1972.

He spent 330 days in captivity and was released during Operation Homecoming on March 28, 1973. He was briefly hospitalized to recover from his injuries at Westover Air Force Base, Massachusetts. He retired from the Air Force on August 1, 1989.

Major Theodore "Ted" Sienicki, USAF (Ret).



There were 22 organizations including the 6 branches of the military who presented wreaths. Bagpiper, Andrew Shields played Amazing Grace. It did rain during most of the program, but that didn't seem to put a damper on the program.



## New VA Pilot Program Supports Caregivers' Mental Health

By: René Campos 31 May 2023

To be a caregiver for someone we love is one of the toughest roles we may take on in our lifetime. And many veteran caregivers selflessly accept their daily care giving responsibilities as something to treasure, because these actions grant them more time with their loved one.

However, it can also, at times, cause caregivers to feel overwhelmed, or to experience periods of isolation and stress.

To aid veteran caregivers during these difficult times, the VA has launched a new virtual pilot program to provide mental health services for caregivers enrolled in the [Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers](#) (PCAFC).

MOAA [first reported](#) on this program late last year as one of several initiatives the VA was expected to roll out in 2023 — a year designated as “The Year of the Caregiver.”

### [TAKE ACTION: [Urge Your Lawmakers to Support Services for Older Veterans](#)]

“This program is a significant step forward in addressing the mental health needs of caregivers enrolled in PCAFC,” said Dr. Colleen Richardson, executive director of the [Caregiver Support Program](#) (CSP). “Through these virtual clinical resource hubs, CSP will provide the mental health resources our nation’s caregivers and their veterans need through counseling and support.”

Congress directed the VA to expand PCAFC in the 2018 [MISSION Act](#). Specifically, the law required the VA to provide counseling, training, and mental health services (excluding medication management) to caregivers enrolled in PCAFC.

The pilot program, established by CSP in coordination with the VA Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, will rely on the resource hubs — [a VA.gov article](#) described the hubs as specialized centers focused “on the unique mental health needs of caregivers through evidence-based therapeutic modalities with services centered around couples, family therapy and the individual needs of the caregiver.” While most care will come virtually, caregivers will have access to in-person services. If this first wave of implementation is successful, then the initiative will roll out two additional waves sometime in FY 2024.

### [RELATED: [MOAA's Tips for Lifelong Caregiving](#)]

More than 2,300 veteran caregivers across the country may be eligible for these tele-mental health services, as VA’s first clinical resource hub began seeing caregivers within the [Veterans Health Care System of the Ozarks](#) on May 1. The hub will serve the following locations:

- Fayetteville and Little Rock, Ark.
- Gulf Coast and Jackson, Miss.
- Alexandria, Shreveport, and New Orleans, La.

The VA also is in the process of hiring a clinical director to oversee implementation and manage the pilot program at the national level. Each clinical hub is expected to employ three psychotherapists and one advanced medical support assistant to provide mental health counseling and support services to eligible caregivers.

The White House also is focused on caregivers’ [mental health](#) and [improvements](#) to VA’s PCAFC program, issuing various mandates via executive order this year.

## Surviving Spouse Corner: A Day as a Lobbyist



From left, MOAA Surviving Spouse Advisory Council members Renée Brunelle-Matthews, Nora Durham, Pat Green, Gail Joyce, Barbara Smith and Vivianne Wersel pose with former council member Micki Costello (far right) during MOAA's Advocacy in Action event April 26 in Washington, D.C.

All eight members of the Surviving Spouse Advisory Council (SSAC) were among the nearly 200 MOAA members, leaders, and staff who participated in the association's annual Advocacy in Action event April 26 to meet with legislators about several important issues. (Learn more about these issues at [MOAA.org/AiA](https://MOAA.org/AiA).)

By the time the day was over, SSAC members visited with about 60 legislators and/or their staffs from seven states. Each came away feeling the message was well received and the experience was positive.

SSAC member Dr. Vivianne Wersel said the event gave her the opportunity to cultivate relationships with members and staffers from North Carolina as well as with other MOAA members.

Barb Smith, of Virginia, thought it was a great experience and, because this was her second time participating, she felt more confident and involved.

Capt. Kathy Thorp, USN (Ret), a MOAA board member and surviving spouse, summed up her experience: "Every time I visit the Hill, there is an underlining thrill of excitement. To walk the halls and witness the everyday rhythm of our democracy in action is something everyone should do in their lifetime. To witness MOAA in full force, with chapter and council presidents, surviving spouses, board members, and MOAA staff advocating for our military and their families, surviving spouses, and our veterans, always brings me overwhelming pride to be able to volunteer my time and energy for this organization."

SSAC members already are looking forward to 2024 when they can once again be "lobbyists for a day."

All MOAA members can add their voice to the effort by sending a message to their legislators. Visit MOAA's Legislative Action Center for details.



## MOAA Charities

Chapter members are encouraged to consider the following MOAA Charities in your planned giving.

- Support MOAA Charities by shopping with Amazon Smile
- Consider a bequest to The MOAA Foundation
- Consider a bequest to the MOAA Scholarship Fund
- Contributing cash and securities to MOAA Charities
- Setting up a Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA)
- Establishing a Designated Scholarship
- How Charitable Gift Annuities (CGAs) can provide income for life
- Donating via an IRA Charitable Rollover/Qualified Charitable Distribution

## DO YOU KNOW?

Did you know that the Southwest Virginia Chapter of MOAA undertakes annual MOAA Medal awards presented to distinguished JROTC Cadets/Midshipmen in 14 area high schools and the four ROTC Cadets/Midshipmen at Virginia Tech and Radford University? Did you know that these awards recognize the recipient's academic, community service and leadership qualities that demonstrate exceptional potential for leadership while a member of their respective JROTC/ ROTC Programs? These JROTC/ ROTC awards consist of a MOAA Medal Award and an appropriate Award Certificate. The chapter bears the cost of the MOAA Medal Awards, presentation folders and mailing costs.

Did you also know that the Southwest Virginia Chapter of MOAA has established two Leadership Awards presented to ROTC Cadets/Midshipmen at Virginia Tech and Radford University during each academic year? Recipients are to be juniors or who will be starting their final year in the coming fall of the academic year. The Leadership Awards were established to recognize the recipient's academic, community service and leadership qualities that demonstrate exceptional potential for military leadership while a member of the Virginia Tech and Radford University ROTC Programs. The two Leadership Awards each carry a \$500 monetary award and an appropriate Award Certificate. The chapter bears the cost of the two Leadership Awards, presentation folders and the two \$500 monetary awards.

The South West Virginia Chapter of MOAA has been a strong supporter of the Military Family Support Center. At this time The Military Family Support Center is undergoing transition and the Southwest Virginia Chapter is looking into options to restart the mission to identify and provide for the morale, welfare, and informational needs of military families (of all branches and components) who reside outside of the established support networks. During 2023 the chapter hopes to merge with another food pantry to be able to provide supplies and distribute food stuffs to needy military families.

The South West Virginia Chapter of MOAA also supports the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin, Virginia each year providing a MOAA Mobile Vehicle and with the Christmas Wreath Laying Program providing and placing wreaths on veterans' grave sites. The Chapter funded and dedicated a "Memorial Bench" at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin, Virginia in honor of LTC James "Pat" Green, USA (Ret) who was the person most responsible for getting the cemetery located at Dublin, Virginia.

These programs are extremely important for the SWVC to continue as the community face of the Military Officers Association of America, to be an advocate for a strong national defense, to be an influential provider and supporter of programs, benefits and services for our military community, and to be a source of social fellowship for our members. The chapter has no regular financial stream except for chapter dues or donations. During the coming year we will be asking for your personal and financial support of our outreach programs and our monthly membership meetings.



## 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. The Chapter also has a Facebook page at MOAASWVA

## WANT TO KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON AT MOAA

- Legislative Accomplishments?
- Legislative TAKE ACTION Center?
- Publications and Reports?
- Military Officer Magazine?
- Newsletters?

**Log on to MOAA.org**

## **MOAA Southwest Virginia Chapter**

**P.O. Box 3090**

**Roanoke, VA 24015-1090**

**Email: [info@moaaswva.org](mailto:info@moaaswva.org)**

**Webpage: [www.moaaswva.org](http://www.moaaswva.org)**

**Facebook: MOAA SWVA**

**The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) and the Southwest Virginia Chapter (SWVC) of MOAA** are a nonprofit veterans' association dedicated to maintaining a strong national defense and ensuring our nation keeps its commitments to currently serving, retired, and former members of the uniformed services and their families and survivors. Membership is open to those who hold or have ever held a warrant or commission in any component of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Space Force, Public Health Service, or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and their surviving spouses.

## UPCOMING MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMS

**21 September 2023** – Board of Directors meeting. Program by Dr. Deedie Kagey will present a program on "**When Past is Prologue: A History of Roanoke County.**"

**19 October 2023** – Program TBD

**16 November 2023** - Board of Directors meeting. Program by LTC Roberta Chrissy, USA (Ret) "**Pentagon Survivors Tell Their Stories**"

**14 December 2023** - Board of Directors meeting. Program TBD

**A REMINDER THAT A GREAT LUNCH IS PROVIDED AT EACH MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**FUTURE PROGRAMS BEING CONSIDERED - TBD:**

1. **Mr. Mike Stewart, RRAC Director on "The Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport - Current Status and The Future"**
2. **Virginia Tech "Center for Advanced Automotive Research" on the Smart Road.**
3. **Professor Frank Stritter on "Heroes of the Coast Guard".**
4. **Dr. Paul Levengood on the "Marshall Foundation".**
5. **Ms. Sara Stanford or Ms. Harris, Carly on the "Sports Nutrition Program For Athletes At Virginia Tech"**
6. **CAPT Gary Powers, USN (Ret) on "History of the 303rd Bomb Group & RAF Molesworth, UK"**





**CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP**  
**as of 30 June 2023**

Regular Members 109  
Surviving Spouses 9  
Total Members 118  
Talk to a fellow officer about joining the Southwest Virginia Chapter!

**JOIN THE CHAPTER**

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 **moaswva.org** or on face book at **moaswva** then Contact COL Bob Brown, USA (Ret), Chapter Membership Chair at (540) 904-2810 or email at **rfbrown68@gmail.com**.



**MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA**  
**SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER - ENROLLMENT/RENEWAL FORM**

Name (First ,Middle, Last, Rank) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Branch of Service \_\_\_\_\_ Retired \_\_\_\_\_ Active Duty \_\_\_\_\_ NG \_\_\_\_\_ Former Officer \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse Name \_\_\_\_\_ MOAA Membership ID No. \_\_\_\_\_

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 Chapter Newsletter *The Communique* is published quarterly and sent to the membership by email. Printed copies will be provided upon request. The next issue will be published at the end of September 2023.

Presidents Corner  
MOAA JROTC and ROTC 2023 Awards  
MOAA and VCOC Legislative Priorities/Initiatives  
Memorial Day 2023  
Salem VA Health Care System  
VA Pilot Program Supports Caregivers' Mental Health  
TRICARE pharmacy prescription prices  
Extension of Pandemic Prescription Rule

*Featured in This Issue*

Bring a fellow officer  
and their spouse to  
our next meeting.



**NEVER STOP SERVING!**



Military Officers Association of America  
Southwest Virginia Chapter  
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