

## 4 MAJOR MILITARY EVENTS THAT HAPPENED ON CHRISTMAS

On Christmas Day every year, many Americans relax and enjoy time with their families. For many of our troops, though, it can be a day of sacrifice and hardship. Over the history of the U.S., several big military actions have taken place on December 25. Here are four noteworthy ones.

### 1776: Washington's Famous Crossing of the Delaware



The winter of 1776 didn't start as a good one for General George Washington's Continental Army. They suffered many defeats in the first few months of the American Revolution and had been pushed out of New York and New Jersey into Pennsylvania. For the troops, morale was low.

Washington needed to renew faith in the battle for independence, so he decided to surprise the Hessians — German troops hired by the British — who were stationed in Trenton, New Jersey. He figured that doing so after the enemy's Christmas celebrations would find them groggy and unprepared for a fight, especially as a terrible winter storm was brewing.

So late Christmas night, Washington and his troops hopped in boats and waded across the icy Delaware River to test his theory — and he was right. At dawn on Dec. 26, about 2,400 frozen Continentals pushed into Trenton, and they did indeed surprise the enemy, who surrendered within an hour and a half.

The mission, which became known as the Battle of Trenton, was of huge significance to the Continental Army's cause. Not only did it raise the troops' spirits, but it revived the hope of the colonists, who were beginning to think their battle for independence wasn't feasible.

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## President's Corner

### Happy Holidays and a Joyous New Year to all.



As you read this, we should be well into holiday festivities. I sincerely

hope that everyone is taking time to relax and enjoy family and reflect on the many blessings we have enjoyed this past year. The chapter has also enjoyed a successful year with many successes thanks to our hard working and dedicated members.

Membership continues to grow as we have recruited 7 new members since January. Welcome aboard to our newest members:

- LT Amanda Marko, USN**
- COL David Corman, USAF (Ret)**
- LTC David MacNamee, USAF (Ret)**
- LTC Chris Obenshain, USA**
- LT Gary Sayre, USN**
- LTC Paul Bolton, USA (Ret)**
- CPT George D. Henning USA**

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

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 Mrs. Mary Lou Summers

Welcome back to several former members who have become active once again. Thanks to Membership Chair, **COL Bob Brown** and Secretary, **LTC Steve Jamison** for their continuing efforts managing and recruiting membership.

Thanks to the chapter's Board of Directors who have worked hard to make this year so successful. Thanks also to our newest members who have agreed to serve on the Board **LTC David MacNamee, LTC David King and LT Gary Sayre.**

A very special thanks to **COL Tom Dalzell** for organizing so many great programs and excellent speakers for our meetings this year. Thanks to all who actively participate in our numerous community events, ceremonies and our awards programs.

Congratulations to all as MOAA National once again recognized our chapter as a **Five Star Chapter for 2023.** Thanks to all who work to make this recognition possible and your dedication to the chapter.

Let us also pause and remember a special friend we lost this year, **LTC Dan Karnes.** Dan had such an impact not only in MOAA, but numerous veterans organizations throughout the area. His strong commitment to veterans and to mental health issues serves as his lasting legacy.

Thanks to everyone for your dedication and generosity in making this year a success for the SWVA MOAA Chapter. I wish you all the happiest of Holidays and a most prosperous 2025.

CAPT Gary Powers, USN (Ret)  
 "Non sibi sed patriae" (Not for self but for country)

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**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.



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### 1864 - THE FIRST BATTLE OF FORT FISHER



For most of the Civil War, North Carolina's Fort Fisher saw very little combat. But that changed on Christmas 1864, when the Union decided it wanted to capture the last port the Confederates held on the Atlantic Ocean. It was a debacle for the Union.

This First Battle of Fort Fisher was a naval siege in the American Civil War, when the Union tried to capture the fort guarding Wilmington, North Carolina, the South's last major Atlantic port. Led by Major General Benjamin Butler, it lasted from December 24–27, 1864. The Union navy first attempted to detonate a ship filled with powder in order to demolish the fort's walls but this failed. It just blew up their ship and alerted the Confederates of an imminent attack. The navy then launched a two-day heavy gunfire bombardment on Christmas Eve in order to demolish the fort and compel surrender, most of which fell short or missed its target

On the second day, the Union army started landing troops in order to begin the siege. But Butler got news of enemy reinforcements approaching, and in the worsening weather conditions, he aborted the operation, declaring the fort to be impregnable. To his embarrassment, Butler was relieved of command on January 8, 1865, and was replaced by Major General Alfred H. Terry, who led a follow-up expedition that captured the fort one week later.

So on Christmas morning, Union commanders decided to shell an area north of the fort so troops could land and come ashore. But when they did, more disappointment followed — the fort's heavy artillery was completely unscathed, so that was a no-go, too. It was only then that the Union ordered troops to retreat.

While the first Battle of Fort Fisher was a massive failure for the Union, the second wasn't. In mid-January 1865, Union troops were finally able to capture the fort, effectively cutting the Confederates off from global trade and supplies. The Civil War ended three months later.

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## **1972 - OPERATION LINEBACKER II IN NORTH VIETNAM**



American troops were in the middle of the biggest bombing mission in military history during the Christmas season of 1972. The air campaign, called Operation Linebacker II, has largely been considered the action that ended U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War.

President Richard Nixon ordered the bombings to begin on Dec. 18 after North Vietnamese delegates walked out on peace talks. Nicknamed the "11 Days of Christmas," the operation consisted of 11 successive days of raids by B-52 Stratofortress bombers flown in from Andersen Air Force Base in Guam.

The only day that both sides got a reprieve was Christmas, when troops were given a 36-hour break to celebrate. During that time, Nixon ordered the North Vietnamese to return to the bargaining table. The North Vietnamese refused, so the bombings continued until Dec. 29, when they agreed to resume peace talks.

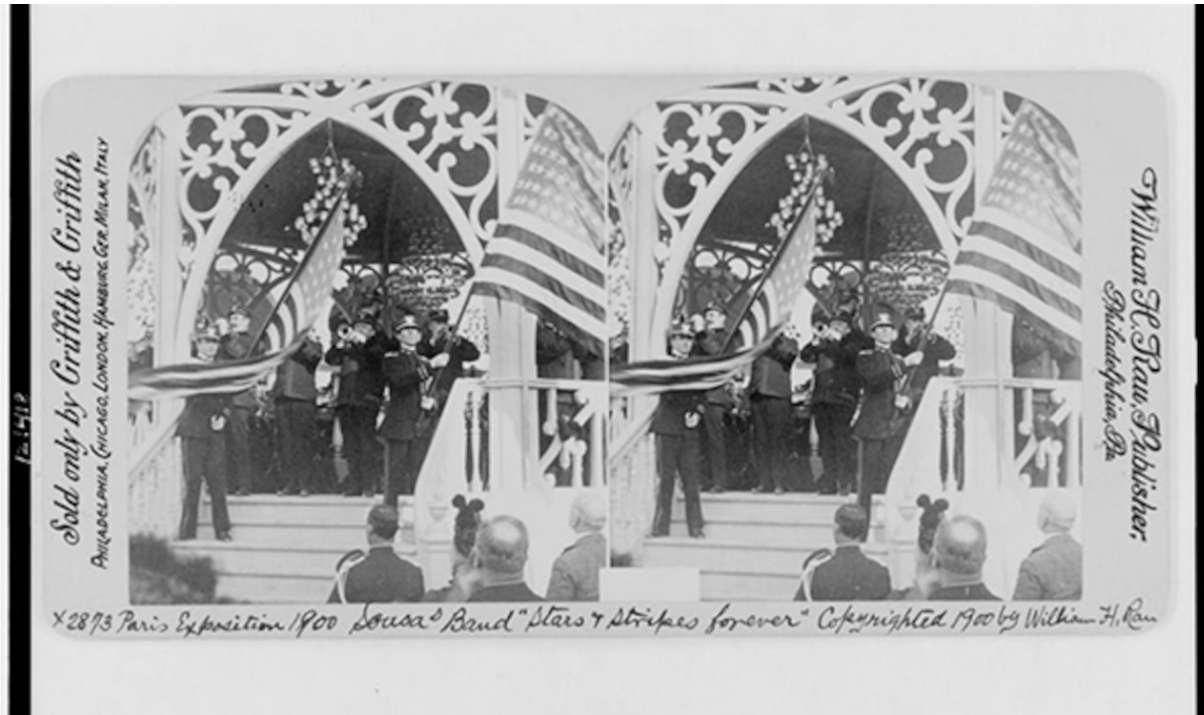
In 11 days, Linebacker II dropped 15,000 tons of bombs via 729 U.S. Air Force sorties involving about 12,000 airmen. Defense Department records show the raids destroyed or damaged 1,600 structures, 500 rail targets, 10 airfields and 80 percent of North Vietnam's electric-generating capacity. Fifteen U.S. B-52s were also destroyed in the process, killing 35 men and leading to the capture of nearly 40 American prisoners of war.

The resumed peace talks that came from the campaign led to the Paris Peace Accords in January 1973. The U.S. ended its involvement in the war soon after, but the last American troops wouldn't leave the country for another two years.

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## 1896 - "STARS AND STRIPES FOREVER" IS WRITTEN



While this wasn't exactly a military action, it's definitely a symbol of America's military might. John Philip Sousa, who grew up during the Civil War, was a talented musician who became a long-time director of the U.S. Marine Band. Known as the "March King," he was a rock star of his time, eventually starting his own band in 1892.

On Christmas Day 1896, while crossing the Atlantic on his way home from a European vacation, Sousa's lasting legacy came to him. He said the notes for "**Stars and Stripes Forever**" were born out of homesickness and fond memories of his time as the Marine Band's leader.



So this holiday season, while you're enjoying leave, family, friends and feasts, think of some of your fellow troops, past and present, who had to forgo their holidays for the greater good of the country. While you're at it, you might even want to put on "**Stars and Stripes Forever**" in their honor. Have a great holiday season, everybody! The iconic song officially became America's national march in 1987.

## LOCAL OFFICE ON AGING

On Thursday 17 October 2024 Mr. Robbie A. Boyd Director of Operations, Local Office on Aging, Inc presented a program on the many and diverse programs and services available to residents and veterans in the community. The **Local Office on Aging** is a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization dedicated to helping older persons remain independent for as long as possible administering over 25 community services that provide nutrition, education, advocacy and socialization.

### The Older Americans Act

The Older Americans Act was passed in 1965, LOA receives the bulk of its funds through this legislation which declared that older Americans are entitled to:

- adequate income in retirement
- the best possible physical and mental health
- suitable housing
- opportunity for employment
- retirement in health, honor and dignity
- pursuit of meaningful civic, cultural and recreational activity
- efficient community services
- low cost transportation
- freedom, independence and the free exercise of individual initiative



Amendments to the Act in 1973 introduced the concept of a network of aging agencies. The Act called for each Governor to designate a “state unit on aging” to receive and administer Older Americans Act funds. The Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) designates “area agencies on aging” to receive these funds. LOA is one of 25 in the Commonwealth to be so designated.

### Mission Statement

“We are dedicated to our mission of helping older persons remain independent for as long as possible.” Since 1972, Local Office on Aging (LOA) has served as the designated Area Agency on Aging for the Fifth Planning District providing community-based programs to help aging residents remain independent for as long as possible. LOA is a member of a statewide network of 25 Area Agencies on Aging and a member of US Aging, a network of over 622 Area Agencies on Aging throughout the United States. To effectively carry out our mission, LOA administers more than 30 community services providing nutrition, education, advocacy, and socialization on our mission to:

- Enhance quality of life in the home.
- Encourage aging in place to avoid early institutionalization.
- Provide caregiver support.
- Advocate for quality services, medical care, and housing for the elderly.

LOA is a non-profit, 501(c)3 governed by a Board of Directors. In addition, LOA has an Advisory Council that advises LOA on all matters relating to the development of the area plan, the administration of the plan, and operations conducted under the plan. LOA is funded by federal, state, and local governments, corporate and private foundations, United Way, Foundation for Roanoke Valley, donations, and fundraising. Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services is responsible for financial and programmatic monitoring of federal and state funds received by LOA. LOA falls under the Single Audit Act of 1996 and therefore is subject to a high-level audit annually.

### Service Areas

The LOA serves persons 60 and older and their families in the Fifth Planning District of Virginia, including:

Alleghany County,  
Botetourt County  
Craig County  
Roanoke County  
Covington  
Roanoke City and Salem



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### SERVICES PROVIDED BY LOA

**Health & Wellness** - LOA provides life-enhancing activities to our clients.

- **VICAP** - Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program
- **HOME SERVICES** - Learn about our services for aging in place
- **CARE TRANSITIONS** - Helping clients with a smooth transition from hospital to home
- **SOCIALIZATION** - informational and fun programs
- **BALANCE PROGRAMS** - programs to help older adults reduce the fear of falling and increase physical activity.
- **THE CENTER** - LOA's Center for Health & Wellness offers healthy aging activities and events

**Nutrition** - We provide In-Home services to individuals over 60.

- **MEALS ON WHEELS** - Volunteers deliver a hot, nutritious lunch Monday through Friday to homebound seniors citizens.
- **SENIOR FOOD BOXES** - Senior Food Boxes improve the health of low-income seniors over 60 by supplementing their diets with nutritious USDA Foods.
- **FARM MARKET FRESH** - Fresh produce from local farmers markets for seniors

**Legal** - Legal & Advocacy Programs serve clients age 60 and over, who live in the 5th Planning District of Virginia, and are unable to qualify for Legal Aid Services or afford a private attorney.

- **ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS** - There is no charge for these services. To find out more about these services, call LOA at (540) 345-0451.
- **LEGAL ASSISTANCE** - The mission of the LOA Ombudsman Program is to serve as an advocate for older persons who receive long-term care services.

**Essential Needs** - Offering assistance for a multitude of essential needs

- **TRANSPORTATION** - Assisted Transportation is provided to seniors 60 and older who need to be accompanied by someone to medical appointments.
- **FOOD** - Emergency Food Assistance
- **MEDICAL** - Donated Medical Care & Equipment
- **PARTNER SERVICES** - Partnerships that benefit seniors

**Caregiver Resources** - LOA provides many services and resources to the elderly that caregivers can benefit from, giving respite and peace of mind. These services enable caregivers to run errands or handle other business while their elderly relatives are cared for during the day.

- **HOMEMAKER** - Homemaker Services include routine housekeeping and home management tasks .
- **PERSONAL CARE** - Certified nurse aides and homecare aides help those with activities of daily living

The following PowerPoint presentation slides were shown to “**spotlight**” the many and varied programs and services available to the community and veterans.

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# PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

ROBBIE BOYD  
DIRECTOR OF ELDER RIGHTS & IT

## LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN

- 1 FULL TIME
- 1 PART TIME
- 1 SUPERVISOR

## OMBUDSMAN



- Helps residents of nursing homes, adult care facilities, and residents of in-home services resolve complaints or questions.
- Advocates for and on behalf of residents of facilities for quality care.
- Provides information about nursing homes, adult care residences, and home care programs.
- Investigates and resolves complaints about long-term care services.
- Assists residents in exercising their rights.
- Mediates concerns between residents, staff, families, and the facility staff.
- Provides residents and their families with information about residents' rights, government benefits, and other agencies who can help.

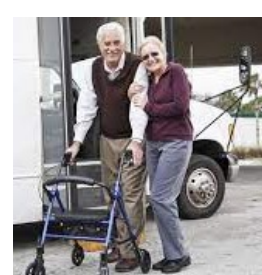
## LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN

- CLOSE TO 5,000 BEDS IN PSA 5
- YTD: 76 COMPLAINTS, 1163 INFORMATION ASSISTS, 46 PRESENTATIONS (Includes staff trainings, resident council meetings, Dementia training, and EJA)
- EVERY FACILITY IS VISITED QUARTERLY

## LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN


- Provides Resident Rights training to facilities
- Participates and assist with setting up Resident Councils
- Dementia Champion training

## VITAL TRANSPORTATION




- Eligibility based on income and must have no other means of transportation.
- 4 rides per month total
- Can be used for Medical, Dental, Pharmacy or Vision appointments
- Can be used for grocery

## VITAL TRANSPORTATION



- RADAR is used only for 1 dialysis patients and 1 powered wheelchair user.
- LOA is providing all transportation for PSA 5 except for Allegheny currently, 2 drivers and 3 LOA vans.

## VITAL TRANSPORTATION





- Hours are Monday thru Friday 8am to 2pm.
- Plans to hire a substitute driver.
- Data being tracked to expand transportation.
- YTD RIDES: 1827 ONE WAY TRIPS



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## FALLS PREVENTION

## FALLS PREVENTION

- 2 MASTER TRAINERS FOR MATTER OF BALANCE
- MOB 10 COACHES
- BINGOCIZE 4 COACHES

### Matter of Balance


- The workshops are facilitated by two trained coaches and are interactive. Classes are offered once a week for eight weeks and each class is two hours long. Most classes have from 8-16 members who engage in group discussion, problem-solving, brainstorming, sharing and participating in A Matter of Balance exercises. Each participant receives a manual to use during the workshop which contains the class activities and homework. A Matter of Balance exercises are also in the manual. It's not a full two-hour exercise program, but exercises are a big component of the program and are introduced during the third session. A physical or occupational therapist also attends one of the classes to show how to safely get up from a fall and answer questions from the group.

### BINGOCIZE

- Currently have 1 class in session at the Gainsboro YMCA
- The Local Office on Aging is delivering the falls prevention curriculum of Bingocize®! Bingocize® is a 10-week, evidence-based health program approved through both SNAP-Ed and The National Council on Aging (NCOA). It combines exercise and health information with the familiar game of bingo, which has shown to be a great, fun way to get seniors moving and socializing. It's meant to be played twice a week on nonconsecutive days, and each session lasts 45-60 minutes. Bingocize® can be implemented remotely or in a traditional face-to-face setting.

### COOLING ASSISTANCE

- Program is based on donations
- AC requires they must be a homeowner and no other form of AC in the home.
- Fans given out based on need
- YTD ROANOKE/SALEM/BOTETOURT
- 21 FANS 16 AC
- YTD ALLEGHANY-DOMINION POWER GRANT
- 8 FANS 4 AC



### COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER





- Liaison to VDH and CDC for LOA and seniors in PSA 5
- Provide updated information concerning any health risks
- Presentations and referrals for health services and services to remain in home (electric, bills, cooling, heating, homelessness)
- Coordinates vaccination clinics



## LUNCH & LEARNS





- Funded by US Aging and Disability Grant
- Held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of every month at the CHW Center
- 6 lunch and learns have taken place with a total of 156 people attending
- 726 COVID Test Kits have been dispersed

## LUNCH & LEARNS

-  Goal is to bring in health professionals to discuss topics related to health.
-  Topics have been Heart Health, Stroke Awareness, Fall Preventions, Medication Awareness, and Medicare.
-  Partners through HCA Lewis Gale, Carilion, Radford, and Jefferson Health.
-  Spots are limited to 30 participants and a free lunch is provided.

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### LEGAL SERVICES

-  Living Wills
-  Power of Attorney
-  Advance Medical Directive
-  Based on income for eligibility and can only have this service 1 time per year.



### VICAP COUNSELING ASSISTANCE

- Medicare enrollment
- Part D and Medicare Advantage change and comparison
- Extra Help applications
- Medigap
- Social Security
- Pharmaceutical help

### SENIOR MEDICARE PATROL

- MEDICARE FRAUD
- ABUSE
- EXPLOITATION
- Assist with referring cases concerning billing, stolen Medicare identity, and other Medicare issues

### CARE TRANSITIONS

- Referrals from United Health Care through Bay Aging
- Provide a 30 day health coaching plan to reduce rapid readmissions.
- Can order home delivered meals, referrals to PCP, and provide medication management/education



Mr. Robbie Boyd Director of Operations, Local Office on Aging, discussing the many and diverse programs and services available to residents and veterans in the community.



Chapter President CAPT Gary Powers presenting the SWVC “Cup” in appreciation to Mr. Robbie Boyd for his excellent presentation on the LOA Programs



## THE MOAA SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER PARTICIPATES WITH ROANOKE CITY RENOVATION ALLIANCE

On Tuesday 24 September 2024 and Saturday 5 October 2024 veterans from the Southwest Virginia Chapter of MOAA, the West Point Society and the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) volunteered to work on a Community Renovation Day project to replace 18 windows on the home of Steven Kelly an Army veteran recovering from PTS and his wife Kasey and their two children. On Tuesday 24 September volunteers replaced 9 of the 18 windows and on Saturday 5 October 2021, the official "Roanoke Community Renovation Day", the remaining 9 windows were replaced. It was an amazing project and everyone pitched in no matter how big or small the task was. The Kelly family were overwhelmed with joy and so thankful for the work that was done to improve their home. What joy just to see the face of their son as he passed out hand written "thank you" notes to each of us. A film crew was on hand to interview the family and get their thoughts on having this project completed on their home and what it meant to them.



Veteran volunteers that replaced 18 windows in Army veteran Steven Kelly and his wife Kasey and their two children on the porch of their home. Steven and Kasey Kelly are in front in the black shirts.



## Military Pay, TRICARE Upgrades on Tap When Congress Returns to Work

By: April Vogel 29 October 2024



A busy agenda awaits members of Congress when they return to Washington, D.C., after the election, with the FY 2025 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) taking center stage. This year's NDAA has faced significant delays as lawmakers negotiate disagreements on a multitude of military policies. As they navigate a challenging political and legislative landscape, MOAA remains closely involved with several initiatives that could have an impact on the well-being and support of the military community. Here's a look at some of the provisions in the House and Senate NDAA versions, which include key MOAA priorities.

**Military Pay Raise and Junior Enlisted Pay Increase:** The House version of the NDAA calls for a significant 15% increase for junior enlisted service members (E-1 to E-4) in addition to a standard 4.5% raise for all ranks. This proposal faces strong opposition from the White House and some in the Pentagon, and lacks corresponding provisions in the Senate's version, which only suggests a 1% additional raise for fewer junior enlisted members (E-1 to E-3).

**[TAKE ACTION:** Urge Congress to Support a Substantial Pay Raise for Our Junior Enlisted Troops]

**Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH):** Another critical element of the House NDAA is the effort to restore BAH to cover 100% of housing costs, a measure vital for supporting service members and their families. This initiative lacks Senate support and was not funded by the House Appropriations Committee, highlighting the challenges of securing adequate resources for military families.

**Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS):** The House NDAA mandates a comprehensive review of BAS rates by DoD. This review would consider various factors such as family size, food accessibility, and local costs, ensuring allowances accurately reflect the needs of service members and their dependents. Furthermore, the legislation proposes raising Basic Needs Allowance (BNA) eligibility to 200% of federal poverty guidelines, a move that could significantly expand support for those in need.

**Military Family Support:** The House version of the NDAA includes several important provisions aimed at enhancing support for military families and improving the welfare of service members:

**Expanded In-Home Child Care Pilot:** The proposed expansion would include installations such as New York's Fort Drum, New Mexico's Holloman Air Force Base, and Naval Air Station Lemoore and Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center Twenty-nine Palms in California. The move would increase access to essential child care services for military families.

**Incentives for Child Care Providers:** Last year, DoD mandated that services implement policies to encourage more individuals to become child care providers, offering a 50% discount on care for their first child. The Air Force has set a higher standard by providing a 100% discount for the first child and additional discounts for subsequent children. The House version of the NDAA aims to establish this 100% discount across all services, ensure competitive pay for child care personnel, and facilitate easier transfers between installations.

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**Flexibility for Federally Employed Military Spouses:** The House version of the NDAA requires federal agencies to offer flexibility for military spouses upon receipt of PCS orders. Options include remote work, reassignment within the commuting area of the new duty station, authorization to perform duties in an equal position, or leave without pay for up to six months, allowing agencies to backfill positions.

**[LEARN MORE: What the House NDAA Would Mean for Military Families]**

**Transition Assistance Program for Guard and Reserve:** The House NDAA includes a tailored transition assistance program for Guard and Reserve members, better aligning support with their unique needs. It also would establish parental leave parity for the Coast Guard Reserve, bringing the service’s policies in line with DoD procedures.

**Military Unaccompanied Housing:** The House NDAA calls for increased funding and visibility of Facilities Sustainment, Restoration and Modernization (FSRM) funds to address decades of deferred maintenance, estimated at \$137 billion. The proposal also includes provisions allowing junior enlisted Navy personnel on sea duty to receive BAH in response to extended ship maintenance periods.

**[RELATED: Members of MOAA’s Currently Serving Councils Weigh in on Military Moves]**

**TRICARE:** Both the House and Senate NDAA versions include key provisions that would improve the military health care benefit by:

***Eliminating Contraception Co pays to Align TRICARE With Affordable Care Act Requirements:*** To avoid direct spending barriers, the House version limits this change to one year while the Senate version delays implementation until 2034.

***Expanding TRICARE Coverage of Assisted Reproductive Technology, Including IVF:*** Both versions exclude certain beneficiaries, including retirees, to avoid mandatory spending increases. MOAA has urged Congress to include all beneficiaries in this parity fix.

**Including Pregnancy as a Qualifying Life Event (QLE):** The House version includes a pilot that would make this change as part of a five-year program. Greater flexibility in switching between TRICARE Prime and Select will help ensure access to vital prenatal care.

**Offering More Mental Health Options:** A provision in the Senate version would allow active duty service members and their families to use TRICARE network mental health providers licensed in another state. This would help address mental health access and continuity of care challenges for mobile military families.

These provisions underscore the commitment to supporting military families and ensuring the well-being of service members. As lawmakers consider the NDAA, it is essential they include critical measures in the final legislation to strengthen and support the military community.

## SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER PARTICIPATES IN THE 15th ANNUAL VETERANS DAY-PARADE, ROANOKE VIRGINIA, SATURDAY, 9 NOVEMBER 2024

A sunny, cool morning brought crowds to Jefferson Street and Campbell Avenue on Saturday 9 November 2024 for the 2024 edition of the annual Virginia Veterans Day Parade. The Southwest Virginia Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America participated in this the 15th Annual Veterans Day parade in downtown Roanoke Virginia. The Virginia's Veterans Parade celebrates and recognizes those who have served with a public procession featuring floats, music, and other entertainment organized by The Roanoke Valley Veterans Council to show support from the community and to recognize veterans of all the armed services and all conflicts, as well as honoring those who currently serve this great nation. The parade route was lined with enthusiastic supporters and watched by folks at home on television. Children cheering from curbs clamored for candy thrown by waving military veterans driving muscle cars, lifted trucks and rumbling motorcycles. High School and college marching bands rattled off renditions of their favorite music. Camouflage-clad and navy-uniformed junior ROTC cadets trudged along, belting out chants. Other youths stood at street corners, handing out small America stick flags to passersby. Those flags were waved aplenty by parade attendees and participants alike. Spectators clapped and hollered as fire trucks, police cars, ambulances and dented old military Jeeps tooted their horns while rolling along in the procession.



Riding in a vintage 1947 Navy Shore Patrol Jeep and responding to the crowd waving flags were Southwest Virginia Chapter members CAPT Gary Powers, USN (Ret), COL Thomas Dalzell, USMC (Ret) and CDR Lee Ensley, USN (Ret).

Inside the Market Building veterans and guests mingled to greet each other and share stories and enjoy coffee and doughnuts provided by volunteers dressed as "Donut Dollies" the popular term used to refer to the **American Red Cross women** who volunteered to work overseas in mobile service clubs called club mobiles.



Outside in the cool but sunlit day, thousands of people flooded the sidewalks of Downtown Roanoke to watch the annual Veterans' Day parade and cheering on our nation's heroes. It is a beautiful moment where the community can come together as a family and remember those who have sacrificed for our freedom. We have Memorial Day to honor those who have fallen. Veterans Day is to honor the living. That's what's so important about celebrating veterans who have sacrificed so much and have given up their freedoms, so we



can keep ours. In this small way we express our gratitude for everything they've done for us. The Veterans Day parade is a celebration of their sacrifice and a way to show gratitude from the community. Community members came together to celebrate and honor those who have fought for our freedom at the 15th annual Veterans Day Parade in Downtown Roanoke Saturday afternoon. A veteran about what serving this country meant to him. "That was the greatest opportunity that I ever had in my life. I loved every minute of it. He served in the United States Air Force from 1980 to 1984. He said he's very proud to be a veteran who has fought for this country, and it's made him more humble. "It's just such a great thing to be a veteran here in Roanoke Valley, especially because there's such an appreciation for veterans in a proud community, and just to be a part of that and to be a part of this parade every year is really special," he described. Miss Roanoke Valley said this was her first year walking in the parade. She said it was such an honor to participate and celebrate veterans with the community. "Veterans' Day is just a day of appreciation for all the people who have served our country to give us the rights that we have in this wonderful nation." She said we should spend more time appreciating our veterans. "It needs to be constantly remembering and appreciating those who have fought and served for our country and should be more than just a day." Parade organizer Bruce Bryan said there were four World War II veterans participating in the parade, something that makes this year's event extra special. And he said there were around 60 entrants in this year's parade. This day is so special because the veterans get the recognition that they deserve, and people get to join together and celebrate."



COL Bob Brown, USA and wife Jackie, COL Tom Dalzell, USMC and CDR Lee Ensley, USN outside the Roanoke Market building prior to the parade.

COL Tom Dalzell, USMC (Ret), COL BOB Brown, USA (Ret) and CDR Lee Ensley, USN (Ret) inside the Roanoke Market building with the MOAA information display table.

# Sports Nutrition Program For Athletes At Virginia Tech

On Thursday 21 November 2024 Mr. Clint Wattenberg, Associate Athletics Director / Sports Nutrition and Ms. Savannah Gustafson, Olympic Sports Nutrition Fellow, presented a program to the chapter membership on the "Sports Nutrition Program For Athletes At Virginia Tech". Mr. Wattenberg oversees all nutrition and performance matters of Virginia Tech student-athletes. His responsibilities include integrating performance nutrition into Virginia Tech's comprehensive performance services, which includes providing nutrition education, individual counseling, menu development, body composition analysis and teaching student-athletes nutrition for life after sport. Additionally, he will manage the Student-Athlete Performance Center, a state-of-the-art dining facility for student-athletes. Ms. Gustafson as an Olympic Sports Nutrition Fellow oversees a number of the Virginia Tech sports teams including Softball, Men's Basketball, Spirit, Men's & Women's Tennis, and Field Events.



Clint Wattenberg and Savannah Gustafson



Clint Wattenberg and Savannah Gustafson presenting a program on the Sports Nutrition Program For Athletes At Virginia Tech.

## AGENDA

- INTRODUCTIONS
- DIETITIAN EXPLAINED
- ROLE OF A COLLEGIATE SPORTS RD
- FUELING OPPORTUNITIES
- MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH
- POLICY & SCREENING TOOL EXAMPLES
- SPORT FOODS: WHAT DO THEY DO?



## VIRGINIA TECH SPORTS NUTRITION

Virginia Tech Sports Nutrition is committed to empowering student athletes on and off the competitive stage through excellence in fueling, educating, collaborating and applying the latest evidence based sports nutrition research. We will serve as an important piece of the multi-disciplinary, sports science team to best support student athlete performance, health and well-being, and life after sport.





Continued from Page 16 "Sports Nutrition Program at VT"

## FIRST AND FOREMOST... WHAT IS A DIETITIAN?

- REGISTERED DIETITIAN VS. NUTRITIONIST
- DIETETIC INTERNSHIP
- MASTERS DEGREE
- CSSD: BOARD CERTIFIED SPECIALIST IN SPORTS DIETETICS
- MOST POWER 5 UNIVERSITIES HAVE AT LEAST 1 RD ON STAFF
- OUR GOAL IS TO FUEL, EDUCATE & APPLY SPORT SCIENCE
- WE ARE NOT THE FOOD POLICE!!!!
- OUR STAFF



## What can HOKIEFUEL do for Athletes?

### FUELING - EDUCATING - APPLYING SPORT SCIENCE RESEARCH

- |                                |                             |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Increase Energy Levels         | Food Allergies/Intolerances |
| Enhance Recovery               | Digestive Issues            |
| Improve Performance            | Diabetes Management         |
| Decrease Injury                | Nutrient Deficiencies       |
| Improve Body Composition       | Bone Mineral Disturbances   |
| Individualized Nutrition Plans | Disordered Eating           |
| Performance Plate Coaching     | Supplement Evaluation       |



### 1 ON 1 COUNSELING

### TEAM TALKS

### COOKING CLASSES

### GROCERY STORE TOURS

### THE BODY PROJECT

### SAPC MEALS

**Nutrition & Hydration Plan**

Meal	Food	Portion	Notes
Breakfast	Whole Grain Toast, Eggs, Fruit, Yogurt	1 slice, 2 eggs, 1/2 cup, 1/2 cup	Hydrate with water
Lunch	Grilled Chicken, Rice, Beans, Veggie	4 oz, 1/2 cup, 1/2 cup, 1/2 cup	Hydrate with water
Dinner	Grilled Salmon, Quinoa, Veggie, Fruit	4 oz, 1/2 cup, 1/2 cup, 1/2 cup	Hydrate with water
Snack	Yogurt, Fruit, Nuts	1/2 cup, 1/2 cup, 1/4 cup	Hydrate with water
Hydration	Water, Electrolyte	16 oz, 16 oz	Hydrate with water
Snack	Protein Bar, Fruit, Nuts	1 bar, 1/2 cup, 1/4 cup	Hydrate with water



## STUDENT ATHLETE PERFORMANCE CENTER



**FUELING THE HOKIES**

**FOOTBALL  
GATORADE FUEL BAR**

**MEN'S BASKETBALL  
FUEL STATION**

**HOKIES**



**NUTRITION OASIS**

**Fueling Station Mon-Fri**

Booked Workouts  
High Performance Snacks  
Quick, Grab & Go  
Made to Order Smoothies  
Hydration  
Tasty Tuesdays  
Balance of Whole Foods & Convenience Products  
Imp. of Carbs, Protein & Fat  
Food Allergies



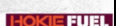
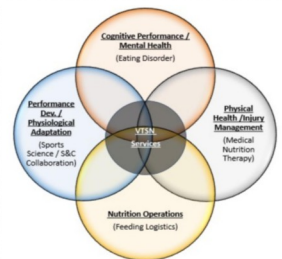
## TRAVEL NUTRITION

Basketball Example:  
Individualized travel fuel packs  
Pre-game/half-time fuel  
Recovery shakes  
Hydration helpers- Right stuff, drip drop  
Plan all meals at the hotel  
Plan post game meal at arena  
Team room fuel



## VTSN EMERGING INITIATIVES

- Eating Disorder support ecosystem
- Sport Science / High Performance Integration
- "Precision Nutrition" initiative
- SAPC continued drive for excellence
- Cross-department & campus collaborations



Continued from Page 17 Sports Nutrition Program at VT

## PERFORMANCE TEAM APPROACH

**Mission Statement**  
Virginia Tech Sports Nutrition is committed to empowering student athletes on and off the competitive stage through excellence in training, education, collaborating and applying the latest evidence based sports nutrition research. We will serve as an important piece of the multi-disciplinary sports science team to best support student athlete performance, health and well-being, and life after sport.

**FIGURE 13.1**  
**MULTIDISCIPLINARY VS INTERDISCIPLINARY**

INTRADISCIPLINARY (I.E. SINGLE FACTOR) → MULTIDISCIPLINARY (I.E. SILOED) → INTERDISCIPLINARY (I.E. COLLABORATIVE)

UFC PJ Journal, Volume 2, 2021

Strength & Conditioning

Sports Medicine

Athlete Health Well-being Performance

Sports Nutrition

Sports Psych

## COLLABORATION WITH SPORTS MED

- PERFORMANCE TEAMS, HEALTHCARE EXEC TEAM, N&P
- POLICIES
  - Supplements
  - Body composition, ED
  - Fe & vit C
  - Stress Fracture: Vit D
  - Concussion- Brain Armor
- NUTRITION & INJURY
  - Bone, ligaments, head, nutrition education
- LAB TESTING- Fe & Vit D

• Women's Sports: WBB, LAX, S/D, SOC, SB, TK, TN, VB, XC  
 • Men's Sports: MBB, SOC, TN, WR, XC  
 • MV1 1 tab daily  
 • \*\*Fe Gluconate 1 tab bid-tid on empty stomach with Vit C 500mg  
 • \*\*FeSO<sub>4</sub> 1 tab bid-tid, on empty stomach with Vit C 500mg  
 • Alternative treatment if not tolerating FeSO<sub>4</sub>

## COLLABORATION WITH SPORTS MED

- HYDRATION
  - Weights, supplements
- BOD PODS
  - Body composition assessment
- SUPPLEMENT EDUCATION
  - Permissible, impermissible, banned
- SPORT SCIENCE RESEARCH
  - Omega 3, vit C/gelatin, sleep, caffeine, etc.
- Referrals: Form
- ATHLETE WELL BEING

## VT Athletics Stress Fracture Protocol

## PRE OR INTRA FUEL

**Carbs = predominant fuel for exercise**

**Pre fuel needs = 1-4g/kg 1-4hrs pre exercise**

**Intra fuel needs = 30-60g/hr**

Honey Stinger Waffle & Chews,  
Clif Bloks energy chews, Pro Bar  
Gatorade

High Carb  
Moderate-Low Protein  
Low Fat  
Low Fiber

## RECOVERY:

### REFUEL. REPAIR. REPLENISH.

**Carbs = ~1g/kg for the first 4 hours post exercise**

**Protein = 0.4g/kg post exercise**

**Ex: 145lbs, 65g cho, 25g pro**

**Fluid = 16-24oz per lb lost during exercise**

Gatorade Nutrition Shake  
Gatorade Whey Bar  
Cheribundi: Anti-oxidants  
Beet Powder: Nitric Oxide Superfood

## HYDRATION HELPERS

Daily fluid needs = 1/2-full BW in oz

Before Exercise	During Exercise	After Exercise
1. 13-20 ounces at least 4 hours prior	Match fluid loss! Lose <2% body weight	16-24 ounces per pound lost ASAP
2. If dark or low volume of urine, drink at least 7-13 ounces more 2 hours prior	(7-10 ounces every 10 to 20 min in general re recommendation)	(at least 32 ounces ASAP is general re recommendation)
3. 7-10 ounces 10 to 20 min prior		

Product	Svg Size	Calories	Carb (g)	Pro (g)	Fat (g)	Sodium (mg)	Potassium (mg)
Gatorlytes	1 pouch	0	0	0	0	780	400 KCl
The Right Stuff	1 pouch	0	3	0	0	1780	*No value, potassium sorbate is in ingredients
Heat Guard	1 pouch (2 tablets)	*No value	*No value	*No value	*No value	326	99.1 KCl
Medi-lyte	1 pouch (2 tablets)	0.36	*No value	*No value	*No value	N/A	40 KCl
Pedialyte	12 oz	35	9	0	0	370	280 Acesulfame Potassium and Potassium Citrate

Continued from Page 18 "Sports Nutrition Program at VT"

## RELATIVE ENERGY DEFICIENCY IN SPORT (RED-S)

### WHAT IS RED-S?

A SYNDROME OF "IMPAIRED PHYSIOLOGICAL FUNCTIONING INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, METABOLIC RATE, MENSTRUAL FUNCTION, BONE HEALTH, IMMUNITY, PROTEIN SYNTHESIS, CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH CAUSED BY RELATIVE ENERGY DEFICIENCY



### A CONTINUED STATE OF RED-S WILL NEGATIVELY IMPACT AN ATHLETE'S SPORT PERFORMANCE DUE TO:

- CONCENTRATION AND FOCUS DISABILITIES
- DECREASED TRAINING RESPONSE
- INCREASED INJURY RISK
- DECREASED COORDINATION AND IMPAIRED JUDGEMENT
- DEPRESSION AND IRRITABILITY
- DECREASED GLYCOGEN STORES
- DECREASED MUSCLE STRENGTH AND ENDURANCE PERFORMANCE



### LOW ENERGY AVAILABILITY (LEA) LEADS TO ISSUES WITH:

- REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH
- CARDIOVASCULAR FUNCTION
- IMMUNE FUNCTION
- GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
- HEMATOLOGICAL, GASTROINTESTINAL, AND METABOLIC FUNCTIONING

## "Athlete Gut"

**What causes gut issues in athletes?**

**Exercise**

- Intensity
- Duration
- Modality

**Environmental conditions**

- Temperature
- Humidity
- Altitude
- Air quality

**Hydration status**

- Fluid intake
- Fluid balance
- Electrolyte balance

**Individual characteristics**

- Age
- Sex
- Genetics
- Gut microbiota
- Gut motility
- Gut permeability

**Factors:**

- Exercise
- Hydration
- Diet
- Modality
- Environmental conditions
- Temperature
- Humidity
- Altitude
- Air quality
- Individual characteristics

## "Gut Training"

### Various methods of "Training the gut" and their effects

**Methods:**

- Training with relatively large volume of fluid to "train the stomach"
- Training immediately after a meal
- Training with relatively high carbohydrate intake during exercise
- Simulate the race with a race nutrition plan
- Increased carbohydrate content of the diet

**Physiological effect:**

- Reduced bloating and reflux during exercise
- Increased gastric emptying
- Increased capacity to absorb carbohydrate
- Increased delivery of carbohydrate

**Benefit:**

- Reduced gastro-intestinal symptoms
- Improved performance

## Gut-Brain (Food-Mood) Axis

**Brain Connectome**

**Central nervous system**

**Interactions of multiple gut and microbe derived molecules**

**Microbe-derived neuroactive molecules**

**Gut-derived molecules**

- Neuronal Immune
- Neuroendocrine

**Food**

**Gut Microbiome**

**Gut-derived molecules**

**ANS modulation**

- Motility
- Secretion
- Permeability
- Microbiome

**Gut Connectome**

**Role of diet and its effects on the gut microbiome in the pathophysiology of mental disorders**

## SOCIAL MEDIA

@Hokie\_Fuel

**Cold Weather HYDRATION**

**Good Weather CAUSES**

- Increased heat exposure
- Increased activity intensity
- More time spent outdoors
- More time spent in direct sunlight
- More time spent in direct wind

**Bad Weather CAUSES**

- Increased heat exposure
- Increased activity intensity
- More time spent outdoors
- More time spent in direct sunlight
- More time spent in direct wind

**ATHLETE OF THE MONTH**

**Frank Thompson**

**Reading 3 NUTRITION LABEL**

**Nutrition Facts**

**230g**

**Calories 230**

**% Daily Value\***

**Total Carbohydrate** 230g 100%

**Total Protein** 230g 100%



Our guest speakers Clint Wattenberg and Savannah Gustafson accepting the chapter "Mug" from Chapter President CAPT Gary Powers, USN (Ret) as a token of appreciation for their excellent presentation on the "Sports Nutrition Program at Virginia Tech."



## Tax Update: Uniformed Services Retirees in These States May See Changes in 2025

By: Kevin Lilley 4 December 2024

The new year will bring new tax rules across the country, to include updates on how some states collect income taxes on military retirement pay. Here's a look at a few places where your tax bill could be changing. For full details on these tax changes and other tax rates at the state level, visit MOAA's Military State Report Card and Tax Guide.

### Delaware

**Old:** \$12,500 of military retirement pay is excluded from state tax, regardless of the recipient's age. Other Delaware retirees receive that same exclusion once they turn 60, but get a smaller one until then.

**New:** The figure won't change, but more uniformed services retirees will be eligible to receive it. SB 329, a bill supported by MOAA's Dover Chapter, defines "United States military pension" as payments received by not just DoD and Coast Guard retirees, but members of the commissioned corps of the U.S. Public Health Service and NOAA. It also clarifies that National Guard pensions fall under the exclusion. Gov. John Carney signed the bill Sept. 26.

[RELATED: [These Tax Rules Will Expire in 2025](#)]

### New Mexico

**Old:** \$30,000 of military retirement pay is exempted from state tax under a provision that had been set to expire in 2026.

**New:** That exemption will be permanent, thanks to HB 252, signed by Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham into law in March. It also will expand to include surviving spouses, who were not covered by the initial legislation. MOAA members were part of efforts to move HB 252 forward, taking part alongside other veterans groups that make up the New Mexico Military & Veterans Leadership Council.

### Montana

**Old:** A partial exemption for all types of retirement pay based on income level.

**New:** For the 2024 tax year, working military retirees will be able to exempt up to half of their military retirement income. Residency restrictions apply, and the exemption is set to expire in the 2033 tax year. Get full details at [this link](#).

[RELATED: [5 Money Moves to Make When Interest Rates Are Falling](#)]

### Virginia

**Old:** The 2023 tax year includes a \$20,000 exemption for military retirement pay.

**New:** The 2024 tax year includes a \$30,000 exemption, which will move to \$40,000 per year in 2025 and subsequent years. The change, supported by MOAA's Virginia Council of Chapters, took effect as part of the state's 2023 budget.



### CHAPTER MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN THE 12TH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS WREATH LAYING CEREMONY AT THE VIRGINIA VETERANS CEMETERY IN DUBLIN VIRGINIA

On Saturday 19 December 2024 members of the SWVA chapter participated in the 12th Annual Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin, Virginia. This event is sponsored each year by The Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery Volunteers aptly led by Chairman Ms. Judy Foster. Southwest Virginia Chapter participants included CAPT Gary Powers, USN (Ret) Master of Ceremonies, US Army Representative - COL John Miller, USA (Ret), US Navy Representative - CDR Lee Ensley, USN (Ret), US Marine Corps Representative - COL Thomas Dalzell, USMC (Ret), US Air Force Representative - LTC David MacNamee, USAF (Ret), US Coast Guard Representative - CDR Richard At Lee, USCG (Ret), US Space Force Representative LTC Robert Habermann, USA (Ret), POW-MIA Representative - LTC David Gilleran, USA (Ret), Commonwealth of Virginia Flag Representative Mr. Joseph Obenshain, 1st LT USA, Former. - Chapter members also donated funds to purchase some 1,872 Christmas wreaths put on the headstones by family members and guests.



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

L to R: COL John Miller, USA (Ret), CDR Lee Ensley, USN (Ret), COL Thomas Dalzell, USMC (Ret), LTC David MacNamee, USAF (Ret), CDR Richard At Lee, USCG (Ret), LTC Robert Habermann, USA (Ret), LTC David Gilleran, USA (Ret), Mr. Joseph Obenshain, 1st LT USA, Former, CAPT Gary Powers, USN (Ret).





Before

After



## ARMY NAVY FOOTBALL GAME

On Saturday, 14 December, the Southwest Virginia chapter held its first Army-Navy football game watch party as **Navy defeated Army 31-13**. We had a private room at the restaurant 419 West with a big screen TV and food and bar service.

The game started very much in the way the Midshipmen wanted it – a 12-play, 65-yard drive that ended in a touchdown run and ate up more than six minutes of game time. Navy's rushing attack may not have been as potent as Army's before the game but the Navy ground game cut through Army's impressive defense to pace Navy out to an early 7-0 lead after the game's first drive.

There was no hesitancy in the Navy game plan or their play calling or how they played. Army was simply unable to get much of anything going in the first quarter, with Army unable to find many holes in the Navy defensive line. The Black Knights were only able to pick up a single first down on their first possession. Their second ended in calamity after Army threw behind his intended receiver and into the waiting arms of Navy's defensive back. Two plays later, Navy put the Midshipmen on the board again, with an 18-yard touchdown pass to a wide-open receiver to put Navy up 14-0 early in the second quarter.

Army got the ball first in the second half, marching down the field bit by bit on the ground. The biggest play came on a fourth-and-one play from the Navy 49-yard line when the quarterback overthrew his receiver but the referees threw a flag for pass interference on the Navy cornerback. The penalty gave Army a first down in a dangerous position, but the Black Knights' drive eventually stalled out and nailed a 39-yard field goal to make the score 14-10 in favor of the Midshipmen.

A big return on the ensuing kickoff gave Navy the ball in favorable field position, but the Army defense looked like it was starting to clamp down as it had all year long. But on third down and four, Navy connected with the receiver at the Army 42, avoided the Army cornerback, and ran untouched into the end zone for a 52-yard score that put Navy up 21-10.

Army moved down the field – aided by another penalty on a fourth-down play, this time a roughing the passer call on Navy but once again saw its drive stall in the red zone early in the fourth quarter. The nation's top running offense increasingly turned to the pass to try and overcome a stiff Navy defense. Army missed a wide-open Casey Reynolds in the end zone, a chance that had the senior from Texas crouched over with his head in his hands. The Black Knights kicked a field goal to cut the Navy lead to eight. The stalled Army drives in the red zone were critical stands by the Navy defense.

After Navy's second interception, the runner gashed through Army's defense for a 48-yard gain that would essentially put the game out of reach for Army. Navy added a field goal to make the score **31-13** with just under four minutes to go.

The defeat to Navy puts a damper on what was a historic season for Army. After defeating Tulane for the AAC conference championship last week, the Black Knights hoped to achieve the first 12-win season in school history. They will have one more chance to achieve that in the Independence Bowl. Their planned opponent, Marshall University, pulled out of the game because so many of its players transferred after the team's head coach left for a new job. Louisiana Tech will now take Marshall's place.

Navy will play Oklahoma in the Armed Forces Bowl later this month.



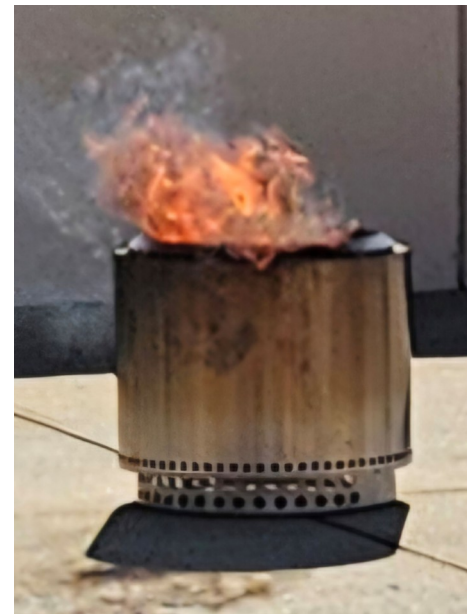
Pictured left to right: Emily (Ensley) Trapnell, Bob Habermann, Linda Habermann, Nancy Powers, Lee Ensley, Gary Powers, Evelyn Cox and her sister Edith, and John Miller.

## VETERANS DAY FLAG RETIREMENT CEREMONY

The Navy JROTC cadets of William Byrd High School celebrated the “*strength, resilience, bravery, commitment, and service*” of veterans on November 11, 2024. They honored those “who in times of war or peace, have stood ready to defend us all.” Veterans were welcomed at a breakfast in the school gym, followed by a solemn Flag Retirement Ceremony on the front portico. Veterans were asked to stand and be recognized. In attendance was MOAA Southwest Virginia Chapter President, CAPT Gary Powers, USN (Ret).

When a flag reaches such a state where it no longer presents a fitting emblem for display, it is not just an act of protocol but a gesture of deep respect to retire it from service. This action aligns with The United States Flag Code which provides clear guidance on this matter, stating, “The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem of display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.” This directive underscores the need for reverence and solemnity in the flag’s retirement process, ensuring it is accorded the honor it deserves.

In addition to the flag retirement, Navy JROTC cadets observed the National Anthem, a reading of the poem about the American flag, reading of an essay honoring veterans and the playing of taps. up. Navy JROTC cadets and the William Byrd High School also recognized the battle of one of their own has been battling bone cancer. He was presented with the flag grommets.





## Central and Southwest Virginia Honor Flight

On Thursday 19 December 2024 Mr. Martin Leamy, President and CEO, Central and Southwest Virginia Honor Flight presented a program on the Virginia “**Honor Flight Program**”. Their mission is one of gratitude for their service, sacrifice and selflessness by proudly celebrating our veterans with a day of honor in our nation's capital.



The Honor Flight Network began in 2005 to take World War II veterans to the National World War II Memorial in Washington D.C. at no cost to them. As of 2024, the network has escorted over 300,000 veterans to their memorials with some 44,000 on the waiting list. Time is of the essence for our area WWII veterans. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, an estimated 640 WWII veterans die each day. Each veteran is also accompanied by a trained volunteer guardian whose mission is to assist the veteran in any way they can—by pushing wheelchairs, carrying belongings, or simply joining in a day full of celebration and reflection.

While veterans' trip costs are paid for in full, guardians are asked to make a donation of \$400 to cover their trip costs. Guardian applications are screened and accepted on a first come first served basis.

The Central and Southwest Virginia Honor Flight Program came into being as a result of a 6 June 2014 Honor Flight Network flight that brought over 300 D-Day and World War II Veterans to the D-Day Memorial to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the Normandy invasion. At the time Martin Leamy was the Director of Facilities and Risk Management for the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, Virginia. After having seen his first visit by an Honor Flight hub to the National D-Day Memorial in October 2012 and witnessed subsequent Honor Flights from other hubs that visited the D-Day Memorial on their way home, he learned that the Virginia hubs were in the north and east regions of our state and realized there existed a huge void in the central and Southwest regions of Virginia. These visits continue to be one of the highlights of my year as these veterans share their experiences in D.C.—how many of them had never felt so honored before and how some of them, especially Korea and Vietnam veterans, had never been thanked for their service before until their Honor Flight trip.

Martin Leamy met individuals such as Jeff Miller, one of the co-founders of Honor Flight Network. At their encouragement, he attended the annual Honor Flight Summit in Baltimore to raise awareness of the D-Day Memorial. As he conversed with staff from the hubs across our nation at the summit, he learned that the Virginia hubs were in the north and east regions of our state. He realized there existed a huge void in the central and southwest regions of Virginia. This was further reinforced less than three months later when it came to his attention that veterans from our region were driving over three hours out of their way to be a part of Honor Flight trips organized by other hubs—keep in mind that it is just over three hours to get to D.C. from Bedford. Our objective was to launch the first Honor Flight trip in April 2018 to take our veterans from Bedford, Lexington, Charlottesville, Roanoke, Lynchburg, Martinsville, Danville and all throughout our region who have a desire to visit the national memorials that were created in their honor. These trips to the memorials are completely free of charge to our veterans.

The Sole Purpose of Honor Flights is straightforward and pure spirited: To safely transport our Veterans to Washington, DC, to be honored at their memorials and receive the welcome home they deserve. The trips are overnight bus trips to Washington, D.C. They begin in Bedford, Virginia at the National D-Day Memorial and stops may include but are not limited to the Air Force Memorial, Arlington Cemetery, the Korean War Memorial, the Lincoln Memorial, the Marine Corps Memorial, the World War II Memorial and the Vietnam War Memorial. Each veteran is accompanied by a trained volunteer guardian whose mission is to assist the veteran in any way they can by pushing wheelchairs, carrying belongings or simply joining in a day full of celebration and reflection. The cost is FREE to the veteran. The veteran need not to bring any money, unless you intend to purchase souvenirs. Veterans are chosen based on when they served in the US Military. Currently first priority is given to WWII veterans, followed by Korea War veterans. Veterans within the same war era are prioritized by the date that the application is received. Spouses and significant others are not eligible to be your guardian. Exceptions for this can be made if there is a medical necessity that can only be filled by a spouse or significant other. Any veteran who served in a branch of the U.S. military during WWII, the Korean War or Vietnam, or a veteran from any service era who is currently terminally ill, is currently eligible to go on an Honor Flight trip as an honored veteran free of charge. While trip costs for our veterans are paid for in full, guardians are asked to make a donation of \$400 to cover trip costs. Guardian applications are screened and accepted on a first come first served basis.



*Continued on Page 26 “Honor Flight”*

Continued from Page 26 "Honor Flight"



Continued on Page 27 "Honor Flight"

For information contact Central and Southwest Virginia Honor Flight at (540) 589-0014 or [info@cswwirginiahonorflight.org](mailto:info@cswwirginiahonorflight.org) P.O. Box 1499, Bedford, VA 24523

Continued from Page 26 "Honor Flight"



Chapter President CAPT Gary Powers, USN (Ret) presenting the SWVC "Cup" to Martin Leamy and Tracy Concha as a token of appreciation for their excellent presentation on the "Honor Flight" program.

## MOAA'S LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR THE 118TH CONGRESS

As the legislative slate is wiped clean for the 118th Congress, grassroots support becomes even more vital to achieving MOAA's advocacy objectives. MOAA needs your help to keep momentum for existing priorities such as the Major Richard Star Act, which would benefit tens of thousands of combat-injured veterans and had the support of two-thirds of Congress at the end of last session. We also need your work on behalf of new objectives and emergent issues, often via immediate action to keep up with the stop-and-go pace of legislation. To keep connected, ensure you are signed up for [The MOAA Newsletter](#) and [register as an advocate](#) at our Legislative Action Center.

Here is a look at MOAA's priorities, in support of the 50th anniversary of our all-volunteer force and to address the challenges facing our uniformed community. Note: Our advocacy team remains active on many other issues not listed here; our priorities will be shaped throughout the year depending on concurrent successes or emerging issues that warrant an all-hands approach. Additionally, we share many interests with The Military Coalition and other stakeholder groups, and leverage those relationships to expand our reach on Capitol Hill.

- 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.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2024-news-articles/advocacy/tricare-for-life,-star-act,-housing-help-will-anchor-moaas-spring-advocacy-push/>**

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## VIRGINIA COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS/JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL 2024 INITIATIVES (Adopted at the September 20 and December 14, 2023 JLC meetings)

- JLC 2024-01 Expand Tax Relief for Surviving Spouses of Military Services Members "Killed in Action" to also include "Died on Active Duty".
- JLC 2024-02 Stop Unscrupulous Firms from Exploiting Veterans
- JLC 2024-03 Virginia National Guard Tuition Assistance Waiver
- JLC 2024-04 Enhanced Emergency Response Medical Protections

A summary of the approved 2024 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>



## 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.

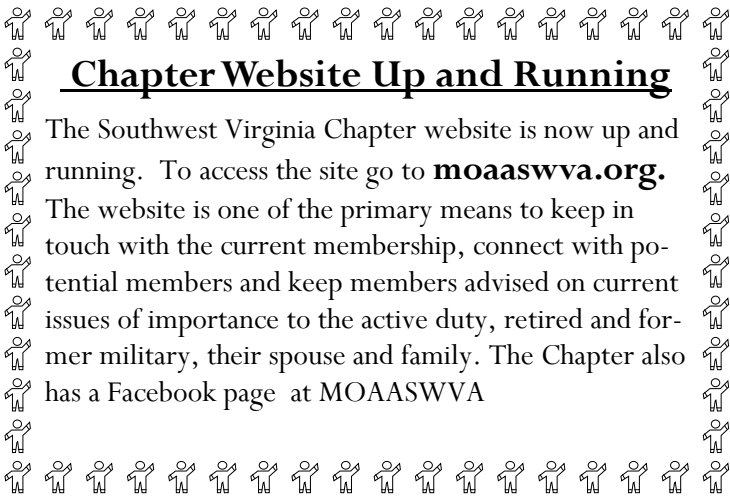
Did you also know that the Southwest Virginia Chapter of MOAA has established two Leadership Awards presented to ROTC Cadets/Midshipmen at Virginia Tech and Radford University during each academic year? Recipients are to be juniors or who will be starting their final year in the coming fall of the academic 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 was a strong supporter of the Military Family Support Center. However, the Military Family Support Center has gone out of operation. The Southwest Virginia Chapter looked into new 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 2024 the chapter signed a partnership agreement with VFF to be able to provide food assistance in the form of credit cards to needy military families. In 2024 the SWVC received a \$2,000 grant from MOAA and \$250 in personal donations to support the VFF program.

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**  
**Webpage: 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**

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

**16 January 2025.** Ms. Natalie Elliott Handy, CEO and Co-Founder CareForward, Inc. Their mission is the harnessing the power of technology as "CareForward" connects those in need with community members who donate time, talent, or resources because every act of generosity becomes a lifeline, making a positive impact in the lives of others.

**20 February 2025.** Dr. Brian K. Unwin, MD, Chief of Geriatrics & Palliative Medicine, Carilion on "The Cost of Aging". The cost of aging can be significant, including the cost of long-term care, basic expenses, and healthcare in retirement. Long-term care: The HHS estimates that Americans turning 65 in 2022 will incur an average of \$120,900 in long-term care costs. Families are expected to pay nearly 40% of these costs out-of-pocket. Basic expenses: The Elder Index estimates that a single older adult in good health needed \$27,096 for basic expenses in 2021, which is \$14,100 more than the federal poverty threshold. Healthcare in retirement. Fidelity Investments estimates that a 65-year-old retiring in 2023 should expect to spend an average of \$157,500 for health and medical expenses throughout retirement. Support services. The median monthly cost of adult day services is \$1,690, while a home health aide costs \$5,148 per month.

**20 March 2025.** COL Claude Shmid, USA (Ret) on the "Last Patrol". The Last Patrol connects veteran volunteers to veterans in hospice. They cooperate with medical providers of hospice care to connect volunteers to the patients so that their last patrol isn't alone. It's hard to overestimate the importance of friendship during end-of-life care. Last Patrol brings new friendships when friendship matters most. When America's veterans go into hospice care they often lose contact with family, friends, and with the military community. Some are alone. Some sit quietly in nursing homes. Many families are loving and attentive to their hospice patient, but appreciate getting the support, connection, and information that a friend from the military community can provide. Last Patrol helps provide that support. At one time there was a similar program here in Roanoke, Affinity Care of Virginia, a hospice organization operating out of the Roanoke area. The Southwest Virginia Chapter was requested to participate in the "We Honor Veterans Program", a partnership between the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) and the

Department of Veterans Affairs. The program offers care for veteran-specific physical or emotional issues that may arise near the end of life. In January 2023 Affinity Care of Virginia approached the Southwest Virginia Chapter to participate in a large "Pinning Ceremony" at Richfield Living-The Health Center-Salem Campus. They had 7 veterans who they were honoring, representing the Air Force, Army, and National Guard. I do not know if that program is still in existence. There is also here in Southwest Virginia a program, "Honor Flight", that takes veterans for a day of honor in our nation's capital.

**17 April 2025.** TBD

**15 May 2025.** BBQ lunch meeting the American Legion Post 3 picnic shelter on Apperson Drive in Salem, VA.

Other Programs Being Considered.

Mr. Larry Johnson, CAPT USA (former), Vietnam veteran helicopter pilot on **"Helicopters In The Vietnam War—A Personal Perspective"**.

CAPT Gary Powers, USN (Ret) on **"The Role of Naval Intelligence During the Cold War"**.

### **SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER OF MOAA SUB-CHAPTER FOR SPOUSES**

We are exploring the formation of a sub-chapter for spouses of members from the Southwest Virginia Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America. The sub-chapter would meet along side of surviving spouses and form into a group of like-minded ladies. A spouse sub-chapter could provide opportunities for spouses to become more involved in Chapter activities, become involved in local civic projects as well as to provide a social outlet at coffees, lunches and other gatherings. Their only constraint is that as not being members of MOAA, the sub-chapter members would not have voting privileges, but can certainly make valuable contributions and suggestions.

As a sub-chapter, members would be able to attend all Chapter activities, including programs and board meetings, even filling some of the board positions. Spouses can also be involved in Chapter operations: Secretary, newsletter editor, treasurer, programs, etc. Also, organizing of community events can provide great benefits for the chapter & community.

There are other MOAA spouse sub-chapters throughout the nation that have had good results by organizing separate luncheons on a regular basis for spouses and surviving spouses. Some have organized community events for Veterans Day & Memorial Day. For example, one group organized a "**Message in a Bottle**" activity over Veterans Day during a wine walk event. They put sand in a wine bottle, had paper slips available for people to write a note of "**Thanks**" on and a flag to put in the bottle, then they lined the courthouse square with almost 400 bottles. Later, a veterans group took the bottles to veterans in nursing homes, hospitals, at home. Another group organized an education program for elementary students and presented programs on the importance of the flag.

How the sub-chapter would organize formally is something still to be further discussed. It is envisioned this as a social as well as a service group. But for now, we would like to see if there is interest in forming such a group. If so, please contact Mrs. Mary Lou Summers by email at [marysummers496@gmail.com](mailto:marysummers496@gmail.com) with your thoughts, ideas and comments.



**CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP  
as of 31 Dec 2024**

Regular Members 73  
 Surviving Spouses 6  
 Total Members 79  
 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 **rbrown68@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 March 2025.

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



**NEVER STOP SERVING!**

*Featured in This Issuer*  
 Presidents Corner  
 4 Major Military Events That Happened On Christmas  
 Local Office On Aging (LOA)  
 Renovation Alliance Project  
 Veterans Day Parade  
 Sports Nutrition Program For Athletes At Virginia Tech".  
 Honor Flight Program  
 Christmas Wreath Laying Program  
 Flag Retirement Ceremony



Military Officers Association of America  
 Southwest Virginia Chapter  
 P.O. Box 3090  
 Roanoke, VA 24015-1090

