

## HESSIANS AUXILIARIES

What was the Role of Hessians in the British Army?



In 1776 the British hired German troops to help supplement their army in the war against America. At this time though, Germany was not a unified nation. Instead, it was divided into numerous different principalities that operated independently. With warfare constantly occurring around the globe in the eighteenth century, the princes of many of these nation-states would offer their soldiers and armies to fight in return for monetary compensation. The troops would serve as auxiliary troops to the British Army and were not mercenaries in the strict sense of the term. They fought in their own units, commanded by their own officers, with their own flags and uniforms, and were loyal to their individual princes. They were professional soldiers and were paid for their service and would reap additional profit from looting and plundering the American countryside.

The German states made for natural allies for the British Army. There were numerous familial ties between Great Britain and the German states. In fact, the king of Great Britain, George III, was part of the House of Hanover and his grandfather had been born in Germany and his wife was also from Germany. The renting of armies by the German states was a large source of revenue for their principalities. Their armies were known across the world to be among the best and most disciplined. Once in the German armies, discipline was extraordinarily harsh and difficult, but in many cases, they came to take immense pride in their units and fellow soldiers.

The British ended up using more than 30,000 German troops during the Revolutionary War, and these made up about a quarter of all the troops in the British Army. German soldiers fought in Revolutionary battles all across the American continent. These German auxiliaries were known throughout the conflict commonly as Hessians. This term is derived from the fact that the majority of the German troops came from the states of Hesse-Cassel and Hesse-Hanau. However, there were also German troops that came from the states of Brunswick, Anspach-Bayreuth, Waldeck, and Anhalt-Zerbst. The first Hessians arrived in America in New York in August of 1776. Of the 32,000 men in that British expeditionary force, nearly 8,000 of them were Hessians.

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## President's Corner

The saying is that time flies when you are having fun. That is certainly

true in my case. It truly has been both fun and a privilege to serve as your President these past two years.



Looking back at my first President's Message and Board meeting, I proposed an initiative I called "**OPERATION OUTREACH**" with the intent of concentrating our priorities in three areas:

First: **OUTREACH** within our Chapter focusing on ways to recognize the efforts of existing members while increasing participation.

Second: **OUTREACH** in our community supporting activities in the region, recognizing our future leaders, being visible at community events and participation with other veterans organizations.

Third: **OUTREACH** at the State and National level through meaningful communication with elected officials towards preserving and protecting veteran's benefits.

As a chapter, we have accomplished much together. Our membership numbers have grown and remained strong, we have a healthy budget, we moved to a new meeting venue, we have experienced some fantastic programs, we have continued to recognize our future leaders with awards

Presidents Corner Cont'd on page 2

**2025 OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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

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Ms. Evelyn Cox

and scholarships, we have contributed to veterans programs, including feeding hungry veterans, we have voiced our opinions to our legislators, we have continued to receive 5-star awards for our chapter, newsletter and website, and we participated and have been visible in numerous veteran and community events all while having fun and sharing camaraderie together.

So many highlights come to mind: our Leadership Program continues to award outstanding ROTC and JROTC students at Virginia Tech, Radford University and 14 local high schools; we have actively participated in numerous patriotic events, including Memorial Day and Veterans Day Commemorations and the Military Appreciation Day at the Salem Red Sox ball park; we have supported Brain Injury Awareness fundraisers and the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery events, including the recent Annual Wreath laying Ceremony; we now sponsor, sit on the board and actively participate with Vittles For Vets; we are a crowd favorite (in my very biased opinion) in the annual Veterans Day Parade in the Navy Shore Patrol Jeep; we have hosted our local and state legislators at our annual picnic; we continue to have a presence in other local Veteran Service Organizations, including the Roanoke Valley Veterans Council; and we actively contribute and participate in the MOAA Virginia Council of Chapters.

Our chapter offers so many opportunities for each of us to continue serving. Currently, our support to MOAA and veterans could not be more critical as legislators seek ways to slash spending. Make your voice heard through our Legislative Action Center – your engagement helps MOAA make a difference. Our chapter offers more opportunities to serve, as well. If you are not already, consider joining as a member on our Board of Directors. We are always seeking more ideas and ways to support our mission. You can make a difference.

As our newly elected President, LTC Bob Habermann, USA (Ret) takes the gavel, I am excited for our future. Bob has been a long-time member of the chapter, a member of our board and has done a superior job in growing and leading our awards program. He has a wealth of experience and knowledge and we are fortunate to have his leadership. He is also a great friend.

As the year ends, take time to celebrate with family and friends as well as taking time to remember those we lost this year. Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, Happy Hanukkah, however you celebrate. And take some time for yourself. My sincere appreciation to each and everyone of you for your support, your service and your friendship. God Bless you all.

Never Stop Serving.

CAPT Gary Powers, USN (Ret)

“Non sibi sed patriae” (Not for self but for country)

**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 "Hessians Auxiliaries"*

The Americans were outraged at the idea of King George III hiring foreign troops to subdue them and specifically called this practice out in the Declaration of Independence. Among the grievances leveled at King George III in that document was that: "he is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation."

While the Americans often painted the Hessians as bloodthirsty mercenaries, in reality, many of the Hessians were forced into the army against their will. Many men in these states were forced to join the army, or their livelihoods depended on it. These Hessians fought exceptionally well in the New York Campaign during the late summer and early fall of 1776. Unlike the red-coated British soldiers, the Hessians typically wore coats of blue or green. The grenadiers wore tall gold miter caps that made them appear taller than they already were. After the initial fighting on Long Island, rumors quickly spread across the continent of their ferocity and savagery. Stories abounded in American camps that the Hessians gave no quarter to surrendering soldiers. American riflemen were found on Long Island impaled to trees by Hessian bayonets and a British officer noted how: "The Hessians and our brave Highlanders gave no quarters, and it was a fine sight to see with what alacrity they dispatched rebels with their bayonets, after we had surrounded them so that they could not resist."

Occasionally though, their British allies looked with derision and suspicion on the Hessians. Part of this was the language and cultural barriers and the desire by both armies to distinguish themselves and attain glory.

On November 16, 1776, thousands of Hessian soldiers charged at Fort Washington and took the fort at the point of the bayonet. Perhaps the most famous action though, that involved Hessian soldiers was the Battle of Trenton, which occurred on December 26, 1776. A brigade of Hessians under the command of Colonel Johann Rall was stationed at Trenton following the successful New York campaign. While overconfident and underprepared, contrary to popular belief Rall and his men were not drunk or hungover from a Christmas celebration when the fighting started on December 26. On that day nearly a hundred Hessians were killed or wounded, including Rall, and 900 were taken prisoner in a battle that ultimately changed the course of the war.

The British blamed the Hessians for this ignominious defeat. It was here that the first stories of them being drunkards began to appear. The British attempted to blame this fluke on the idea that the Hessians were not as good soldiers, however, the Continentals then defeated the British at the Second Battle of Trenton and the Battle of Princeton.

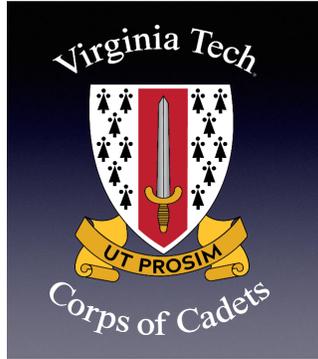
After the battle of Trenton, the Hessian prisoners were marched through the American capital in Philadelphia, where residents eagerly looked at the soldiers they had heard so much about. Hessians captured at Trenton and other battles were sent to prisoner of war camps in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia.

The western parts of those states actually had a large German immigrant population already, and many Hessians actually found that they preferred life in the Americas. Away from the harsh discipline of military life and with people who spoke a similar language and had a similar culture, many Hessians would desert and stay in America following the war. By the end of the war, tens of thousands of Hessians ended up staying in America.

Perpetuating the myths of the Hessians, they are still often remembered as drunks and mercenaries in popular stories. Perhaps the most popular story of a Hessian was written forty years after the war by Washington Irving in "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." The Headless Horseman story follows "the ghost of a Hessian trooper, whose head had been carried away by a cannonball." While the Hessians still live with us in popular culture, maybe their greatest legacy is the thousands of Americans who, perhaps unknowingly, are descended from these men who came across the ocean to help in subduing the Revolution and ended up becoming American citizens.



## VIRGINIA TECH CORPS OF CADETS



On **Thursday 16 October 2025** Brigadier General Craig Alia, USA (Ret), Vice Commandant, Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets accompanied by Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Lauren Witzky and Cadet Major Aiden Smallwood presented to the chapter membership the current status of the Corps of Cadets and the vision for the future including the Virginia Tech Leadership Institute for Leadership in Technology for professionals and programs within academic departments like Community and Leadership Development (CLD) Leadership Program.

The Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets is one of only six senior military colleges outside the five federal military academies. Virginia Tech is one of only two large, public universities in the nation that maintains a full time Corps of Cadets. The other is Texas A&M. Today, this group of 1,400+ students live together in corps residence halls and participate in the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets' 24/7 leader development program. Cadets choose one of two tracks: Military-Leader Track (Air Force ROTC, Army ROTC, or Naval ROTC) or Citizen-Leader Track, for students who aren't seeking a military career. All cadets, regardless of track, prepare to be leaders of character for the nation and the world.



Chapter President CAPT Gary Powers welcomes chapter members, guests and presenters BGEN Craig Alia, USA (Ret), Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Lauren Witzky and Cadet Major Aiden Smallwood .



BGEN Craig Alia, USA (Ret), Vice Commandant, Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets, addresses the SWVC members and guests on the current status of the Corps of Cadets

Continued from Page 4. **“The Corps of Cadets”**

**Corps Growth: the numbers**

~ 1,400 full regiment

**Class of 29:**  
515 report on M-Day  
49 Highy-Tighties




**Largest Corps since 1965 (1,330)**



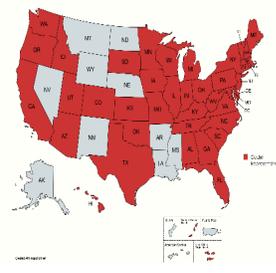


**Composition in AY 25/26:**

**58% In-State**  
**42% Out of State**

Countries: Bahrain, Brazil, China, Germany, Italy, Lebanon, Portugal, South Korea, United Arab Emirates

**76% Male**  
**24% Female**



**Academic Excellence:**

**3.0 + GPA last 12 years**  
**3.29 GPA Corps average Spring 2025**  
**3.19 GPA Freshmen Spring 2025**

**Corps Status**

10 year percentage increase is 29%

5 year percentage increase is 18%

First year cadet stats

71% Male 29% female

All colleges represented

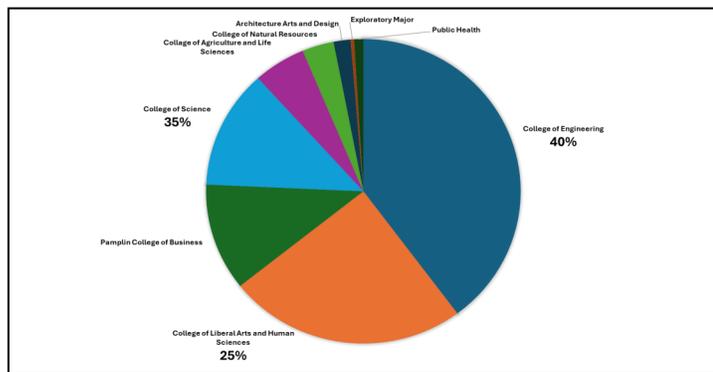
82% Military Track

18% Citizen-Leader Track

Average SAT over 1300 average Gpa is 3.97

60% varsity athletes

40 out of 50 states  
7- dual citizen  
7- on Visa



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**Corps of Cadets Academic Partners**

  - ✓ VT National Security Institute (NSI)/Hume Center
    - Collaboration on DCTC initiation
    - Funding 50% of Rice Center Deputy Director
    - Support to Wargaming initiatives
    - VT SMC Cyber Institute
    - Hacking 4 Defense Course
  - University Committee on International Affairs (UCIA)/Global Education Office (GEO)
    - Rice Director is a committee member
    - International Education Week
    - Support for Global Scholars
  - Pamplin College of Business Management Department
    - Accreditation of Corps Leadership Course and Minor
  - College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
  - College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences
    - Model NATO
    - Model UN
    - Cadet Ethics Team
  - University Advising

**College Representation**

College of Engineering 549 40%

College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences 338 25%

College of Science 174 13%

Pamplin College of Business 157 11%

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences 74

College of Natural Resources 45

Architecture Arts and Design 24

Exploratory Major 5

Public Health 13

One of our goals with Major General Seely, our staff and most importantly our cadets is to get off upper quad and integrate with the larger university. We want to have an outsized impact...on a university of 30,000 our 1400 have a significant and positive impact with the university. People often see uniforms and steer away...we want to be proactive and engaged across campus. Our cadets are incredible ambassadors and the more interaction we can encourage the better it is for the corps and the university.

Continued from Page 5 “The Corps of Cadets”

Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets

79% ROTC Program

- 32% Army
- 24% Air Force/Space Force
- 18% Navy
- 5% Marines

21% Citizen-Leader Track

Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets

Corps Leadership and Military Science Building (CLMS)

- Commandant's staff
- All ROTCs
- Classrooms
- Wargaming facility

Our Citizen Leader track is the only one of its kind in the nation. We have our fellow Senior Military colleges looking at our VPI program. We see our Citizen Leader track as a key to our growth over the long term.

This our new CLMS – first class facility that houses all the departments together. Improved coordination, integration, and cooperation. We are at the tip of the iceberg in terms of utilizing its full capacity. It has been a game-changer for us.

Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets

3 “New” Dorms

- Approx 1400 cadets
- ROTC/VPI mixed in Corps’ Companies
- Corps and ROTC Leader development Integrated
- Immersive Leadership Experience
- “Prepared to Lead. Trusted to Serve”



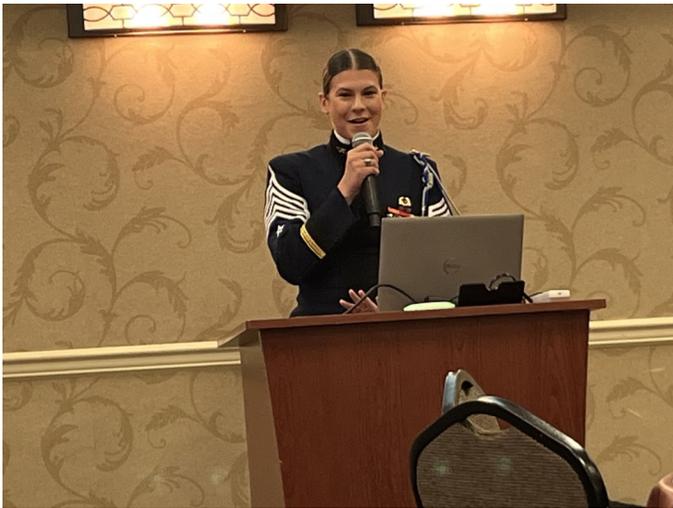
Seamless joint acculturation makes us successful now  
Experiential learning – in all aspects of Leadership and Professional development

BGEN Craig Alia, USA (Ret) addresses the SWVC members and guests on the Corps of Cadets Academic Partners



LEFT: Brigadier General Craig Alia, Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Lauren Witzky and Cadet Major Aiden Smallwood respond to questions from the membership.

Continued from Page 6 **“The Corps of Cadets”**



Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Lauren Witzky spoke about her attending Virginia Tech from Cleveland, Ohio, what she learned and loves about the Corps of Cadets, majoring in Neuroscience and her position as the Chief Justice of the Corps of Cadets Honor Court. Upon graduation she will be commissioned as a Surface Warfare Officer in the U.S. Navy.



Cadet Major Aiden Smallwood spoke about his attending Virginia Tech from Tampa, Florida and the leadership qualities and traits he developed as a member of the Corps and as a Battalion Operations Officer. Majoring in Industrial & Systems Engineering he will graduate in the Leadership Tract and will work for Boeing Aircraft in South Carolina.



Cadet Major Aiden Smallwood at the table with L to R: SWVC chapter members COL Bob Brown, USA (Ret), COL Hobart B Pillsbury Jr, USA (Ret) and Mrs. Rita Pillsbury.



Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Lauren Witzky at the table with SWVC chapter member CAPT James Karlin, USN (Ret)

Continued from Page 7 “The Corps of Cadets”



Kendra and Major Tom Miller, USA enjoying the presentation. Major Miller is a Chaplain with the 82nd Airborne Division.



Brigadier General Craig Alia, Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Lauren Witzky and Cadet Major Aiden Smallwood were presented with the SWVC Chapter “Cup” for their outstanding presentation on “The Corps of Cadets”. Presented by chapter President CAPT Gary Powers.



**THANK YOU!!**

Brigadier General Craig Alia, Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Lauren Witzky and Cadet Major Aiden Smallwood

## A BOLD CIVIC RENAISSANCE FOR AMERICA'S 250th



An opinion by Lindsay Chervinsky and Julie Silverbrook 13 September 2025 FULCRUM project 2025

Every September 17, Americans mark Constitution Day—the anniversary of the signing of our nation’s foundational charter in 1787. The day is often commemorated with classroom lessons and speaking events, but it is more than a ceremonial anniversary. It is an invitation to ask: What does it mean to live under a constitution that was designed as a charge for each generation to study, debate, and uphold its principles? This year, as we look toward the semiquincentennial of our nation in 2026, the question feels especially urgent.

The decade between 1776 and 1787 was defined by a period of bold and intentional nation and national identity building. In that time, the United States declared independence, crafted its first national government, won a war to make their independence a reality, threw out the first government when it failed, and forged a new federal government to lead the nation. We stand at a similar inflection point. The coming decade, from the nation’s semiquincentennial in 2026 to the Constitution’s in 2037, offers a parallel opportunity to reimagine and reinvigorate our American civic culture. Amid the challenges we face today, there’s an opportunity to study, reflect, and prepare to write the next chapters in our American story—it is as much about the past 250 years, as it is about the next 250 years. It will require the same kind of audacious commitment to building for the future that was present at the nation’s outset.

The real founding legacy is one of innovation and improvisation. The Articles of Confederation, the country’s first governance charter, went into effect in 1781. Just six years later, delegates gathered in Philadelphia for a Constitutional Convention. They threw out the Articles, drafted a new constitution, and sent it to the states for ratification. In 1789, less than twelve months after the Constitution was ratified, Congress passed the Bill of Rights, adding ten amendments to the original document. The states approved several additional amendments over the coming decades to close loopholes in the original text or clarify ambiguous language.

The framers never believed they were creating a perfect union, but a more perfect one. They expected future generations to take up the mantle of improvement. Many generations embraced the challenge. The post-Civil War amendments abolished slavery, the 19th Amendment extended suffrage to white women, and the Civil Rights Acts of the 1960s extended suffrage to people of color. The true founding legacy—that every generation has the obligation to make the nation more perfect for subsequent generations—is one that both expects and invites thoughtful, informed participation.

As we prepare to mark these uniquely American milestones, we must not treat them as nostalgic, ceremonial mile-markers, but as civic catalysts.

*Continued on Page 10 “A Bold Civic Renaissance for America’s 250th”*

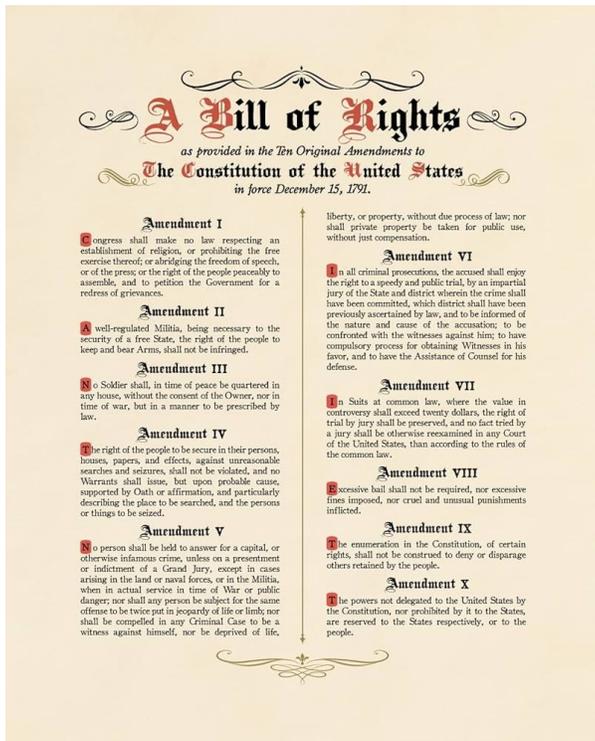
Continued from page 9 “A Bold Civic Renaissance for America’s

If we treat the semiquincentennial as a season of civic renewal—an American “civic renaissance”—we can make civic learning as fundamental as literacy and math. Without it, democracy withers. Just as we teach every child to read, we must teach every child to lead. As U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis famously wrote, “the most important political office is that of the private citizen.” To claim that mantle, Americans of all ages must see their role as citizen as central to their daily lives. Civics needs to feel real and alive, and relevant at all phases of a person’s life—from pre-K to grey. It is not only the essential work of our nation’s schools, but also of parents, grandparents, and caregivers to instill civic knowledge and virtue in our nation’s young people. We must also make constitutional engagement a valued public ritual, model civil discourse, invest in civic educators inside and outside the classroom, and protect and celebrate civic spaces like museums, libraries, and historical sites. Reviving constitutional culture means teaching it, practicing it, celebrating it, and modeling it—together, across divides, and for our entire lifespans.

Our organizations, the National Constitution Center and Mount Vernon, as well as other museums, historic sites, and civic education groups, through innovative digital resources, public programs, and even bolder interventions, are leading the charge to redefine for millions of Americans what it means to be a thoughtful, engaged citizen.

As we prepare to celebrate 250 years of independence, the question is not only how we will honor the past, but how we will write our next chapters together?

Lindsay Chervinsky is the presidential historian and Executive Director of the George Washington Presidential Library at Mount Vernon. Julie Silverbrook is Vice President of Civic Education at the National Constitution Center.



## NEW VCOC OFFICERS FOR 2026-2027

The new Virginia Council of Chapters Officers for 2026-2027 were inducted on 14 October 2025 at the Virginia Veterans Memorial in Richmond, Virginia.



(Left to right: CAPT Gary Powers, USN (Ret), 1st Vice President, Communications; LTC John Huber, USAF(Ret), Secretary; COL Monti Zimmerman, USA (Ret), 3rd Vice President, Legislative Chair; CAPT Mary Lou Wassel, USN (Ret) President; MAJ Sherry Ferki, USA (Ret), Treasurer; COL Diana Kupchella, USAF (Ret), Past President. Not pictured - CDR John Prevar, USN (Ret) 2nd Vice President and Membership Chair)

The Virginia Council of Chapters (VCOC) is a non-partisan, non-profit organization, chartered to better the overall well being of its member chapters. VCOC supports and serves 16 member chapters, advocating legislative affairs pertaining to active duty, retired and former military members. VCOC enhances the image of America's uniformed services in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is a non-profit organization headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia. MOAA is the nation's largest and most influential association of military officers.

Independent, nonprofit, politically nonpartisan, MOAA is one powerful voice speaking for a strong national defense, representing the interests of military officers at all stages of a military career.

**SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER PARTICIPATES IN THE 16th ANNUAL VETERANS DAY-PARADE, ROANOKE VIRGINIA, SATURDAY, 8 NOVEMBER 2025**

A sunny, cool morning brought crowds to Jefferson Street and Campbell Avenue on Saturday 8 November 2025 for the 2025 edition of the annual Virginia Veterans Day Parade. The Southwest Virginia Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America participated in this the 16th 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), and CDR Lee Ensley, USN (Ret).**



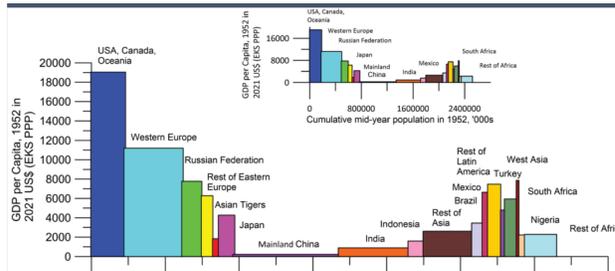
Inside the Market Building veterans and guests mingled to greet each other and share stories and enjoy coffee and doughnuts provided by volunteers dressed as “Donut Dollies” the popular term used to refer to the American Red Cross women who volunteered to work overseas in mobile service clubs called 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 16th annual Veterans Day Parade in Downtown Roanoke Saturday afternoon.

SWVC members COL Bob Brown, CAPT Gary Powers and CDR Lee Ensley

## “THE CHINESE REVOLUTIONIST AGENDA THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA’S MILITARY-CIVIL FUSION THREAT”.

On Thursday 20 November 2025, Mr. Jeff Vick, professor of Political Science at Roanoke College, presented a program on **"The Chinese Revolutionist Agenda, The Pople's Republic of China's Military-Civil Fusion Threat"**.

The Military-Civil Fusion (MCF) is a national strategy of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to develop the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) into a **“world-class military”** by 2049. Under MCF, the CCP is acquiring the intellectual property, key research, and technological advances of the world’s citizens, researchers, scholars, and private industry to advance the CCP’s military aims. The CCP is systematically reorganizing the Chinese science and technology enterprise to ensure that new innovations simultaneously advance economic and military development. PRC President and CCP General Secretary Xi Jinping personally oversees the strategy’s implementation. He chairs the CCP’s Central Military Commission and the Central Commission for Military-Civil Fusion Development. Following the Second World War , China was extremely poor. The revolutionary government of Mao Zedong emerged after fighting off the Imperial Japanese Army and winning a struggle with Nationalist Forces. They had an almost blank slate upon which Mao found a new government .



### Developmental Stages

The first unification under the Qin Dynasty dates back to the year 221 bc. The Republic of China was established in 1912 after the Qing Dynasty had been overthrown, but no political stability was achieved.

Between 1927 and 1950 the Kuomintang (or Nationalist Party) opposed the Chinese Communist Party in a civil war. The PRC was established under the leader of the latter, Mao Zedong, in 1949.

Constitution entered into force in 1982; amended several times, last in 2018.

**Post WWII Development**

1. Socialist Revolution and Modernization 1949 - 1978
2. U.S. – China Rapprochement and Opening – 1978 – 1993
  - i. Decentralization and Autonomy
  - ii. Fiscal Reform, Privatization, Market
3. **New Normal**

### Developmental History

China’s path is conceived as a transition from an economically underdeveloped and semi colonial country of the Global South into a modern socialist country in a multipolar world where successive steps (modes of regulation) were shaped by China’s external environment (uneven and combined development) and a succession of contradictions and crises encountered along the way.\*

\*Michael Durnford

Three phases of development:

1. Socialist construction in a context of capital shortage and US embargoes;
2. Reform and opening up in an era of neoliberal globalisation, whose early roots lay in the early 1970s’ rapprochement with the US;
3. New Era dating from 2017.

In each phase, crises and contradictions saw waves of reform, involving successive joint transformations of economic structures and institutions..



Continued from page 13 “The Chinese Revolutionist Agenda”



### China at Center Stage

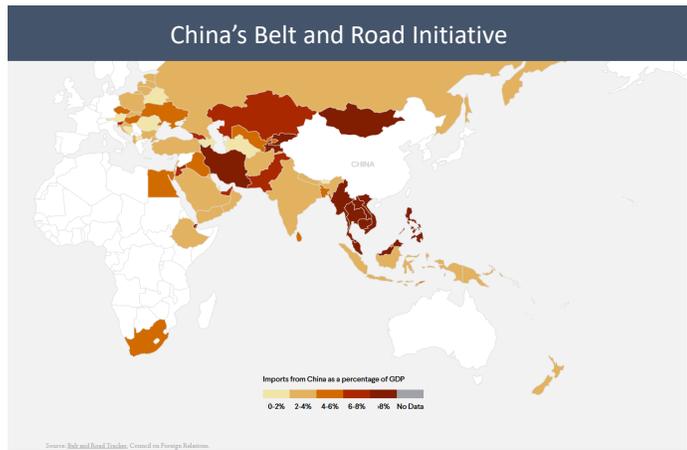
What Beijing promotes in global governance appear to be defensive. The priorities reflect Chinese aims.

China also seeks to shape the global governance system more offensively (actively), to advance its model of political and economic development.

China is gaining increased influence in international organizations that have been led previously by Western countries.

Beijing also is building its own, China-centered institutions. See the Belt and Road Initiative.\*

\*CRI



### China’s 15th Five Year Plan

#### Highlights of 15th FYP

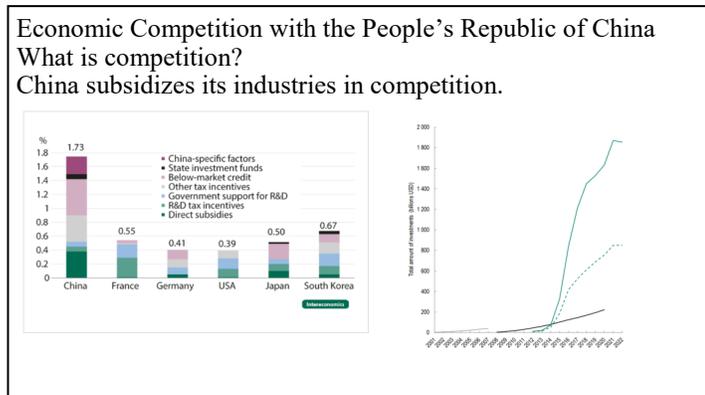
- Modernization through Innovation
  - Highlighting technology-driven growth and sustainable practices
  - Balance economic expansion with environmental protection, aligning with China’s dual carbon goals.
- Open Markets Global Partnerships
  - High-standard opening up remains crucial for shared prosperity
- Quality over Quantity – Change in mindset – see the Electric Vehicle Market

### Revisionism

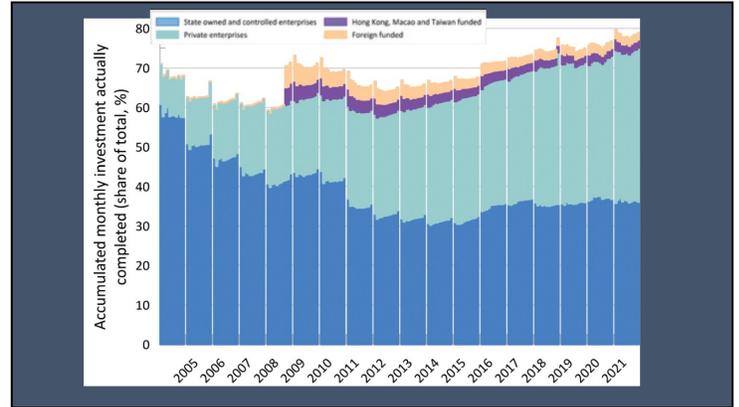
Revisionist powers are states that seek to change or disrupt the existing international order, often challenging established rules and norms. Examples include Russia, China, and, more recently, the United States under certain administrations, as they pursue policies that aim to alter their positions in global politics.

The Chinese strategic plan sees a unified China working toward a bipolar situation with the United States, or better a single unipolar situation.

China is the „Middle Kingdom“ or „Zhongguo“. Xi „Lead the reform of the global governance system.“



Continued from Page 14 “The Chinese Revisionist Agenda”



### China's 15th Five Year Plan

#### Highlights of 15th FYP

- Modernization through Innovation
  - Highlighting technology-driven growth and sustainable practices
  - Balance economic expansion with environmental protection, aligning with China's dual carbon goals.
- Open Markets Global Partnerships
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### Revisionism

Revisionist powers are states that seek to change or disrupt the existing international order, often challenging established rules and norms. Examples include Russia, China, and, more recently, the United States under certain administrations, as they pursue policies that aim to alter their positions in global politics.

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China is the „Middle Kingdom“ or „Zhongguo“. Xi „Lead the reform of the global governance system.“

### Economic Competition with the People's Republic of China

#### What is competition?

China subsidizes its industries in competition.

Country	% of GDP
China	1.73
France	0.55
Germany	0.41
USA	0.39
Japan	0.50
South Korea	0.67

**Total amount of investments in R&D (USD)**



### The Chinese Revisionist Agenda

**Goals/Features of the Revisionist Agenda**

- Comprehensive National Power
- Innovation-Driven Economic Growth Model
- Military Modernization
- Next Generation Warfare

The agenda includes many programs and initiatives that are not part of Military-Civil Fusion

Three main sets of challengers—the revisionist powers of China - are actively competing against the United States and our allies and partners. - National Security Strategy

### The CCP intends to develop the PLA into an unrivaled, technologically advanced military force.

**PLA - 2049**

New Energy	Big Data		
Autonomous Vehicles	Nuclear Technology		
Additive Manufacturing	Quantum Computing	Biotech	Artificial Intelligence
Advanced Materials	Aviation Technology	Military Electronics	Semiconductors

“...we will focus on developing forward-looking, pioneering, exploratory and disruptive technologies to seize the commanding heights of international competition. Exploring the innovation of the management system and mechanism, promoting military application of advanced civilian science and technology, and accelerating the transformation of cutting-edge technology into real combat capability and the evolution of the national economy.” 13<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan for Military-Civil Fusion Development

Continued from Page 15 “The Chinese Revolutionist Agenda”



## Chinese University Participation in Military-Civil Fusion

### Four Key Roles of Universities in MCF:

- Research and Development (R&D)
- R&D in Co-located National Laboratories
- Talent Development
- Military-Civil Fusion Industrial Alliances

It is an ‘inescapable’ responsibility of the universities to vigorously implement the strategy of Military-Civil Fusion Development—Universities provide a strong guarantee of talent development, intellectual support and technical support to promote MCF Development, making new and great contributions to the realization of the “China Dream” and “Strong Army Dream” – Chinese Ministry of Education



## Chinese University Participation in Military-Civil Fusion

**The Domestic Cadre**

- Project 211
- 986 Program
- Thousand Talents
- “Double World Class” Universities

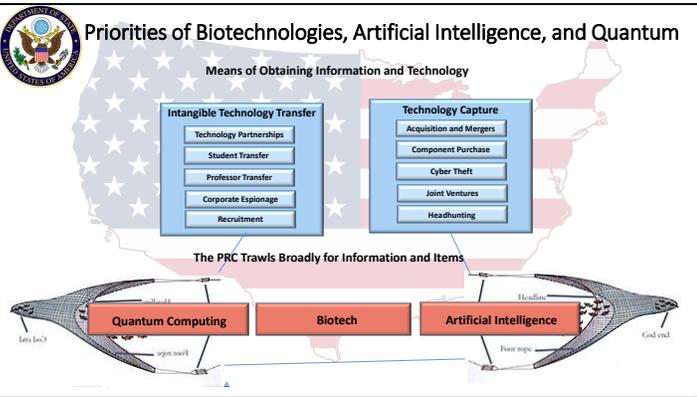
**Foreign Recruitment**

- Thousand Talents
- “Double World Class” Universities
- World class labs
- Competitive salaries to recruit foreign talent

**Strategic Innovation**

- Shanxi University MCF Technology Innovation Alliance (14 Universities)
- Sichuan MCF High Technology Equipment Advanced Material Industry Alliance (5 Universities)
- MCF Big Data Innovation Team (5 Universities)
- National Defense Industry MCF Alliance (5 universities)
- Guangzhou MCF Industry Alliance (3 universities)

“strengthen the introduction of high-level talents at home and abroad, gather high-end talents engaged in cutting-edge S&T research, and cultivate a team of experts who integrate military and civilian technology innovation.”  
—13th Five Year Plan for Military-Civilian Fusion Development



- ### Challenges to the PRC’s FYP Plans
- **Internal**
    - Demographic – A declining and aging population, shrinking workforce, increased pressure on social services, and potential economic difficulties as the number of elderly citizens grows while the birth rate continues to fall. Basic pension fund could fail by 2035.
    - Corruption in the Military
  - **Economic –**
    - Official reports indicate a 5% GDP growth in 2024, but experts suggest the actual rate may be between 2% and 3%.
    - There is an imbalance in the economy, with supply exceeding domestic demand.
  - **Debt and Investment –**
    - The government is focused on reducing debt while boosting growth through investments in innovation and technology.
    - State-led industrial policies may distort markets and lead to overproduction.
  - **Geo-Political Competition –**
    - The PRC faces significant competition from the U.S., which promotes a rules-based international order.
    - China’s ambitions for a new world order challenge existing global norms.
    - The PRC is dealing with increasing external uncertainties and pressures from other nations countering its industrial policies and growth strategies.



PRC President and CCP General Secretary Xi Jinping personally oversees the strategy’s implementation. He chairs the CCP’s Central Military Commission and the Central Commission for Military-Civil Fusion Development. Its goal is to enable the PRC to develop the most technologically advanced military in the world. As the name suggests, a key part of MCF is the elimination of barriers between China’s civilian research and commercial sectors, and its military and defense industrial sectors. The CCP is implementing this strategy, not just through its own research and development efforts, but also by acquiring and diverting the world’s cutting-edge technologies – including through theft – in order to achieve military dominance. Key aspects of the MCF threat include: Technology Acquisition: The CCP acquires foreign intellectual property, key research, and advanced technologies (such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing, aviation, aerospace, and big data applications) through overt and clandestine means, including corporate acquisitions, joint ventures, and academic collaboration, often without the knowledge or consent of the original innovators. (Continued on page 17)

Continued on Page 17 “The Chinese Revolutionist Agenda”

*Continued from Page 16* “The Chinese Revolutionist Agenda”

**Whole-of-System Approach:** The strategy compels civilian Chinese companies and academic institutions to support military and intelligence activities, blurring the lines between ostensibly private entities and the state's security apparatus.

**National Security Risk:** U.S. government officials, including the Department of State and the FBI, have identified MCF as a grave threat to U.S. economic well-being, democratic values, and national security, as it can embed vulnerabilities in global supply chains and potentially disrupt critical systems in a crisis.

**Geopolitical Ambition:** MCF is central to China's "Strong Military Dream" and its broader "Chinese Dream of a great renaissance," which aims for China to become a leading global power.



Chapter President CAPT Gary Powers presenting Mr. Jeff Vick with the SWVC Chapter “Cup” for his outstanding presentation on **“The Chinese Revolutionist Agenda, The People's Republic of China's Military-Civil Fusion Threat”**.



## REFLECTING ON WASHINGTON'S 1783 FAREWELL ADDRESS TO THE ARMY

On 2 November the United States commemorates a pivotal moment in American history: George Washington's Farewell Orders to the Armies of the United States, issued on November 2, 1783, from Rocky Hill, New Jersey.

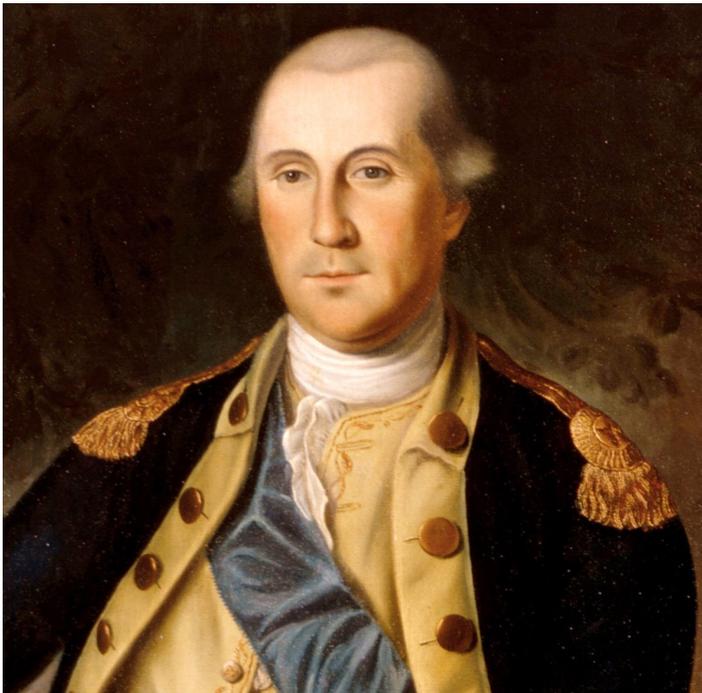
As the War for Independence drew to a close, Washington addressed his troops one final time before their discharge, reflecting on their sacrifices and the nation's future.

This heartfelt message captures the humility and faith of our first commander-in-chief. Washington marveled at the "**singular interpositions of Providence**" that guided the nation through eight years of hardship, calling the army's perseverance "**little short of a standing Miracle.**" He praised the soldiers for becoming "**one patriotic band of Brothers,**" urging them to return to civilian life embodying good virtues.

Washington emphasized the importance of supporting the federal union, warning that without it, the nation's "**honor, dignity, and justice**" would be lost. He concluded with a benediction:

*May the choicest of Heaven's favors, both here and hereafter, attend those, who under the divine auspices have secured innumerable blessings for others.*

This farewell underscores the Godly heritage of our Founding Fathers. It demonstrates Washington's reliance on Divine guidance amid trials.



*Continued from Page 18 “Washington’s Farewell Address”*

## **WASHINGTON’S FAREWELL ADDRESS TO THE ARMY 2 NOVEMBER 1783**

General Washington’s Farewell Orders issued to the Armies of the United States of America the 2d day of November 1783 Rocky Hill, near Princeton.

The United States in Congress assembled, after giving the most honorable testimony to the Merits of the Federal Armies, and presenting them with the thanks of their Country for their long, eminent and faithful Services, having thought proper, by their Proclamation bearing date the 18th day of October last, to discharge such part of the Troops as were engaged for the War, and to permit the Officers on Furlough to retire from Service from and after tomorrow, which Proclamation having been communicated in the public papers for the information and government of all concerned. it only remains for the Commander in Chief to address himself once more, and that for the last time, to the Armies of the United States (however widely dispersed the Individuals who composed them may be) and to bid them an affectionate—a long farewell.

But before the Commander in Chief takes his final leave of those he holds most dear, he wishes to indulge himself a few moments in calling to mind a slight review of the past—He will then take the liberty of exploring with his Military friends their future prospects, of advising the general line of conduct which in his opinion ought to be persued, and he will conclude the Address, by expressing the obligations he feels himself under for the spirited and able assistance he has experienced from them, in the performance of an arduous office.

A contemplation of the complete attainment (at a period earlier than could have been expected) of the object for which we contended, against so formidable a power, cannot but inspire us with astonishment and gratitude—The disadvantageous circumstances on our part, under which the War was undertaken, can never be forgotten—The singular interpositions of Providence in our feeble condition were such, as could scarcely escape the attention of the most unobserving, while the unparalleled perseverance of the Armies of the United States, through almost every possible suffering and discouragement, for the space of eight long years, was little short of a standing Miracle.

It is not the meaning nor within the compass of this Address, to detail the hardships peculiarly incident to our Service, or to describe the distresses which in several instances have resulted from the extremes of hunger and nakedness, combined with the rigors of an inclement season. Nor is it necessary to dwell on the dark side of our past affairs. Every American Officer and Soldier must now console himself for any unpleasant circumstances which may have occurred, by a recollection of the uncommon scenes in which he has been called to act, no inglorious part; and the astonishing Events of which he has been a witness—Events which have seldom, if ever before, taken place on the stage of human action, nor can they probably ever happen again. For who has before seen a disciplined Army formed at once from such raw materials? Who that was not a witness could imagine, that the most violent local prejudices would cease so soon, and that Men who came from the different parts of the Continent, strongly disposed by the habits of education, to despise and quarrel with each other, would instantly become but one patriotic band of Brothers? Or who that was not on the spot can trace the steps by which such a wonderful Revolution has been effected, and such a glorious period put to all our War-like toils?

It is universally acknowledged that the enlarged prospect of happiness, opened by the confirmation of our Independence and Sovereignty, almost exceeds the power of description. And shall not the brave Men who have contributed so essentially to these inestimable acquisitions, retiring victorious from the Field of War, to the Field of Agriculture, participate in all the blessings which have been obtained? In such a Republic, who will exclude them from the rights of Citizens and the fruits of their labours? In such a Country so happily circumstanced, the pursuits of Commerce and the cultivation of the Soil, will unfold to industry the certain road to competence. To those hardy Soldiers, who are actuated by the spirit of adventure, the Fisheries will afford ample and profitable employment, and the extensive and fertile Regions of the West, will yield a most happy Asylum to those, who fond of domestic enjoyment, are seeking for personal independence

*Continued on Page 20 “Washington’s Farewell Address”*

*Continued from Page 19 "Washington's Farewell Address"*

Nor is it possible to conceive that any one of the United States will prefer a National Bankruptcy and a dissolution of the Union, to a compliance with the requisitions of Congress and the payment of its just debts—so that the Officers and Soldiers may expect considerable assistance in recommending their civil occupations, from the sums due to these from the Public, which must and will most inevitably be paid.

In order to effect this desirable purpose, and to remove the prejudices which may have taken possession of the Minds of any of the good People of the States, it is earnestly recommended to all the Troops that with strong attachments to the Union, they should carry with them into civil Society the most conciliating dispositions; and that they should prove themselves not less virtuous and useful as Citizens, than they have been persevering and victorious as Soldiers. What tho' there should be some envious Individuals who are unwilling to pay the Debt the public has contracted, or to yield the tribute due to Merit, yet let such unworthy treatment produce no invective, or any instance of intemperate conduct, let it be remembered that the unbiased voice of the Free Citizens of the United States has promised the just reward, and given the merited applause; let it be known and remembered that the reputation of the Federal Armies is established beyond the reach of Malevolence, and let a consciousness of their achievements and fame, still incite the Men who composed them to honorable Actions; under the persuasion that the private virtues of economy, prudence and industry, will not be less amiable in civil life, than the more splendid qualities of valour, perseverance and enterprise, were in the Field: Every one may rest assured that much, very much of the future happiness of the Officers and Men, will depend upon the wise and manly conduct which shall be adopted by these, when they are mingled with the great body of the Community. And although', the General has so frequently given it as his opinion in the most public and explicit manner, that unless the principles of the Federal Government were properly supported, and the Powers of the Union increased, the honor, dignity, and justice of the Nation would be lost for ever; yet he cannot help repeating on this occasion, so interesting a sentiment, and leaving it as his last injunction to every Officer and every Soldier, who may view the subject in the same serious point of light, to add his best endeavors to those of his worthy fellow Citizens towards effecting their great and valuable purposes, on which our very existence as a Nation so materially depends.

The Commander in Chief conceives little is now wanting to enable the Soldier to change the Military character into that of the Citizen, but that steady and decent tenor of behavior which has generally distinguished, not only the Army under his immediate Command, but the different Detachments and separate Armies, through the course of the War; from their good sense and prudence he anticipates the happiest consequences; And while he congratulates them on the glorious occasion which renders their Services in the Field no longer necessary, he wishes to express the strong obligations he feels himself under, for the assistance he has received from every Class—and in every instance. He presents his thanks in the most serious and affectionate manner to the General Officers, as well for their Counsel on many interesting occasions, as for their ardor in promoting the success of the plans he had adopted—To the Commandants of Regiments and Corps, and to the other Officers for their great Zeal and attention in carrying his orders promptly into execution—To the Staff for their alacrity and exactness in performing the duties of their several Departments—And to the Non-commissioned Officers and private Soldiers, for their extraordinary patience in suffering, as well as their invincible fortitude in Action—To the various branches of the Army, the General takes this last and solemn opportunity of professing his inviolable attachment & friendship—He wishes more than bare professions were in his power, that he was really able to be useful to them all in future life; He flatters himself however, they will do him the justice to believe, that whatever could with propriety be attempted by him, has been done. And being now to conclude these his last public Orders, to take his ultimate leave, in a short time, of the Military Character, and to bid a final adieu to the Armies he has so long had the honor to Command—he can only again offer in their behalf his recommendations to their grateful Country, and his prayers to the God of Armies. May ample justice be done them here; and may the choicest of Heaven's favors both here and hereafter attend those, who under the divine auspices have secured innumerable blessings for others: With these Wishes, and this benediction, the Commander in Chief is about to retire from service—The Curtain of separation will soon be drawn—and the Military Scene to him will be closed for ever.

*DLC: Papers of George Washington. National Archives Founders Online Wall Builders,. This Day In History*

## REMEMBERING JOAN BAKER WASHBURN

Joan Strickler Baker Washburn passed away peacefully on July 6, 2025, in Roanoke, Virginia. Joan was born on September 24, 1939, in College Park, Maryland. She lived most of her life in Roanoke where she raised her children. Joan was a long-devoted Democratic fundraiser and campaign manager who remained committed to her political work until the very end. Her tireless efforts helped support countless campaigns and candidates. Known for her impeccable style, Joan was always a snappy dresser who carried herself with grace and confidence. She found joy in life's simple pleasures, particularly her beloved cat, Oscar, who was her constant companion. Joan's greatest pride was her family.



In her adult life, Joan served as President of the Virginia Federation of Democratic Women and President of the Roanoke Valley Democratic Women (RVDW). She was a campaign manager and event planner for esteemed politicians such as Senator John Edwards, Roanoke City Mayor David Bowers, and Vice Mayor David Trinkle. During the course of her career, Joan led fundraising efforts resulting in substantial financial support for Democratic candidates. Along with her political engagement, **she served as a coordinator for the Wounded Warrior Project and was an Auxiliary Advisory Committee member of the National Military Officers Association of America (MOAA).**

She was preceded in death by her parents Cecile and Paul Strickler, her husband John Washburn, her sisters Winnie Daniels and Jackie Vandermellen, and her brother Paul Strickler, Jr.

Joan is survived by her sons Steven Baker and Michael Baker, her daughter Lisa Green (Dan), and five grandchildren, Sidney Green, Jack Green, Kaden Baker, Holt Baker, and Cale Baker who brought endless joy to her life. Her love for her family was evident in everything she did, and she leaves behind a legacy of strength, compassion, and unwavering dedication.

**Joan's legacy with the Surviving Spouse Advisory Council.** The Surviving Spouse Advisory Council remains at the forefront of leadership in MOAA for all surviving spouses. Through their dedication and hard work, they implemented the training module for surviving spouse liaisons for MOAA's regional leadership conferences, contribute monthly columns to The MOAA Newsletter, chartered the Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter, advocated for the successful elimination the SBP/DIC offset, established the annual Surviving Spouse Liaison Excellence Award, and conducted the first Spouses and Surviving Spouse Summit at MOAA's 2021 annual meeting. The Surviving Spouse Advisory Council also has expanded focus from advocacy only to a comprehensive development of services benefiting the spouse and surviving spouse community within MOAA.



**MOAA SWVC CHAPTER MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN THE THIRTEENTH ANNUAL SOUTH-WEST VIRGINIA VETERANS CEMETERY WREATH LAYING CEREMONY**

SWVC chapter members (Left to R) LTC Bob Habermann USA (Ret), COL John Miller USA (Ret), COL John Rogers USAF, COL Tom Dalzell USMC (Ret), CAPT Gary Powers USN (Ret), CDR Lee Ensley USN (Ret), CDR Richard At Lee USCG (Ret), and LTC David Gilleran USA (Ret) participated in the 13th annual wreath laying ceremony at the Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Dublin, VA on Saturday 13 December 2025 as Special Wreath Placement volunteers. Over 2,052 wreaths were

placed by families and members of the public. The program included music by the 29th Division Band, Virginia Army National Guard, the Virginia State Police Color Guard, the Montgomery County Sheriff's Department Rifle Team for the Ceremonial Rifle Salute, the Pledge of Allegiance by the Civil Air Patrol Roanoke Battalion, Christiansburg High School Air Force JROTC, Franklin County High School Air Force JROTC and Pulaski High School students and Bagpiper Andrew Shields Meeks. The Guest Speaker was Chris Obenshain, Virginia Delegate 41st District.



## FACE OF THE DOLLAR: THE STORY OF PETER THE MINT EAGLE

by Alexandru Micu August 7, 2024 in Economics, ZME Science

Back in the 1830s, one bird's nonchalant attitude won it the affection of the US Mint.



The bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) stands today as the United States' national bird and the centerpiece of its seal. As such, this raptor has a long and rich tradition of appearing soaring or in-flight on the country's legal tender, the U.S. dollar, and its denominations. But a little-known fact is that most dollar designs don't simply depict a bald eagle — but the same bald eagle, named Peter. Its story began at the U.S. Mint on Philadelphia's 7th Street, Pennsylvania, almost two centuries ago, and continues on coinage minted in the country.

But first, let's start by asking: Why is the bald eagle the United States' national bird?

In 1776, the United States declared independence from British rule. It was in the middle of fighting a war to protect that independence and getting to grips with governing its own territories simultaneously. But it was finding itself without an official seal. Symbols are important for any country to rally around, especially young countries, and the US wanted one of its own, to represent its government in Pennsylvania and the will of its people. So, the Continental Congress, the country's burgeoning administrative body, tasked Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and John Adams to design this Great Seal.

It did not go as swimmingly as intended. The three could not come up with a design that would win the approval of Congress; neither did two subsequent committees.

It was now June of 1782. Charles Thomson, the secretary of Congress, has handed in all the work submitted by the three committees, and he was asked to come up with the final design. Thomson picked and chose from these designs individual elements that he felt were most appropriate and collated them into a single seal. Among some of the changes that he made to the design was taking the eagle, which was submitted in a design by Pennsylvania lawyer William Barton, and making it more prominent. When the design was presented to Congress, Thomson further recommended that this eagle — a white heraldic eagle — be replaced with an American bald eagle. This design, complete with the recommended modification, was adopted on June 20th, 1782.

Over time, as this design was applied to official documents, chiseled on public buildings, and government-related items such as flags and currency, the bald eagle imposed itself as an American icon

**This is the backdrop against which Peter's story will unfold.**

*Continued on Page 24 "Face of the Dollar: The Story of Peter The Mint Eagle"*

*Continued from Page 23 “Face of the Dollar: The Story of Peter The Mint Eagle”*

### The Mint Eagle



**First Philadelphia Mint, built in 1792 and since demolished. Photo taken in 1908.**

The first mint of the newborn country was built on Pennsylvania’s 7th Street, following the passage of the Coinage Act of 1792. Among other things, the act set down regulations on the denomination system the country’s coins were to use — a system based on the dollar — but, more relevant to our story today, required each United States coin to feature **“an impression emblematic of liberty.”**

By this time, the soaring bald eagle was already a mainstay of the seal. Pennsylvania, even to this day, is a state rich in forests and waterways; Philadelphia itself is a great spot to spot eagles, as the city’s proximity to the Delaware River attracts many birds to roost around the city.

Even so, workers at the mill were definitely surprised when a bald eagle took residence inside the mint around 1830. But they took it as a good omen and left the bird to its own devices at first.

Every night, as the workers finished their shift, they would shoo Peter out to lock down the mint. The eagle would go on a few nighttime soars over the city and return first thing in the morning. Workers at the time noted that Peter would be at the mint each morning before they themselves got there, waiting patiently for them to open the doors and let him back inside

It would stay indoors, perching and flying inside the mint during the day. By all accounts, he was quite docile and didn’t mind being near people, keeping to himself most of the time but content not to mind if people got too close to him. The bird became a sweetheart of the city as word spread of his attachment to the mint, tolerance of humans, and as people recognized him during his regular flights over the city.

Sadly, the mint would also become Peter’s resting place. One day in 1836, the bird was perched — either on a flywheel or on a coining press, it is not exactly clear — as the machine turned on. Although workers rushed to shut it off, Peter’s wing was caught in the mechanisms and was badly injured. Despite the best efforts of everyone at the mint, Peter lost the ability to fly and, on account of the wounds to his wing, passed away a few days after the incident.

*Continued on Page 25 “Face of the Dollar: The Story of Peter The Mint Eagle”*

Continued on Page 24 “**Face of the Dollar: The Story of Peter The Mint Eagle**”

As a way to honor the eagle’s memory — and to keep Peter, who had become a mainstay of the Mint and something of an unofficial mascot for the institution — the workers employed the services of a taxidermist and placed Peter out at the main entrance of the Mint. There, he has been on display for over 150 years. Peter’s stuffed body served as a model for the soaring eagle of coins designed by James Longacre, including the silver dollar which would be released the following year, and the Flying Eagle Cent.



**Although the Great Seal showed a bald eagle for a long time before an eagle moved into the mint, Peter the Mint Eagle would become Eagle its official mascot after its death.**

### **The Bald Eagle on a U.S. Coin**

The first American bald eagle on a U.S. coin appeared on the reverse of gold coins like the Quarter Eagle, Half Eagle, and Eagle starting in the late 1790s, inspired by the eagle on the Great Seal of the United States. Early depictions, like those by Robert Scot, showed a scrawny bird reflecting the young nation's status, while later designs like the Flying Eagle Cent (1856-1858) and Gobrecht Dollar (1836-1839) featured a more dynamic, flying eagle, possibly modeled after a real Mint eagle named Peter.

### **The Bald Eagle as America's National Bird**

The bald eagle became America's national bird over the turkey because the eagle, a traditional symbol of imperial power and strength, was seen as a majestic emblem of the new republic's freedom, while the turkey, despite Benjamin Franklin's humorous praise for its "**courage**," was deemed less dignified and had a less imposing heraldic image for the Great Seal, even though Franklin noted the eagle looked like a turkey. The eagle represented power and liberty, fitting the nation's ideals, while the turkey, though native, was considered less noble by the founders for official use.

### **Did you know? Bald eagles are no longer endangered.**

As one of the United States’ most prized national symbols, the bald eagle is afforded certain privileges and protections — or at least it has been since habitat loss and DDT left the species teetering on the verge of extinction, with only 417 pairs remaining in 1963. Numbers began to rebound when DDT was banned and the Endangered Species Act was passed in 1973, and eagles were removed from the endangered species list in 2007 — making them one of the act’s greatest success stories. You can hardly look at one the wrong way without breaking the law, as the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act made it illegal to “take, possess, sell, purchase, barter, offer to sell, purchase or barter, transport, export or import, at any time or any manner, any bald eagle ... [or any golden eagle], alive or dead, or any part (including feathers), nest, or egg thereof” without a permit, which isn’t exactly given out freely.

**CHAPTER OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS SWORN IN FOR 2026**

On Thursday 18 December 2025 Ms. Dena Kilgore, CAE, Program Director, Affiliated Councils & Chapters administered the oath of office to the Southwest Virginia Chapter Officers and Board of Directors for 2026 and provided an update on MOAA. Shown are the list of Chapter Officers and the office they were appointed to and the list of the Board of Directors.



Southwest Virginia Officers taking the Oath of Office for 2026 administered by Ms. Dena Kilgore



Incoming Chapter President LTC Robert Habermann, USA (Ret) (left), exchanging congratulations to outgoing Chapter President CAPT Gary Powers, USN (Ret) (right).



**SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER OFFICERS 2026**

- PRESIDENT - LTC Robert Habermann, USA (Ret)
- FIRST VP - TBD
- SECOND VP - TBD
- SECRETARY - LTC Steve Jamison, USA (Ret)
- TREASURER - COL Robert Brown USA (Ret)
- PROGRAMS - COL Thomas Dalzell, USMC (Ret)
- CHAPLAIN - LTC Dave Gilleran, USA (Ret)
- MEMBERSHIP CHAIR - COL Robert Brown USA (Ret)
- VCOC REPRESENTATIVE - CAPT Matthew Haag USN (Ret)
- LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS REP - PERSONAL AFFAIRS REP - LTC Steve Jamison, USA (Ret)
- NEWSLETTER EDITOR - COL Thomas Dalzell, USMC (Ret)
- FACEBOOK EDITOR - CDR Lee Ensley, USN (Ret)
- WEBMASTER - CAPT Gary Powers, USN (Ret)
- PUBLIC AFFAIRS - LT. Gary Sayre, USN (Ret)
- AWARDS CHAIR - LTC David King, USA (Ret)
- SERGEANT-AT-ARMS - CAPT Larry Johnson USAR (Former)
- BEREAVEMENT COMMITTEE - LTC Dave Gilleran, USA (Ret)
- TRANSITION TEAM REP - TBD
- COMMUNITY SERV VOL REP - LTC Dave Gilleran, USA (Ret)
- PAST PRESIDENT - CAPT Gary Powers, USN (Ret)
- SURVIVING SPOUSE REP - Mrs. Mary Lou Summers

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR 2026**

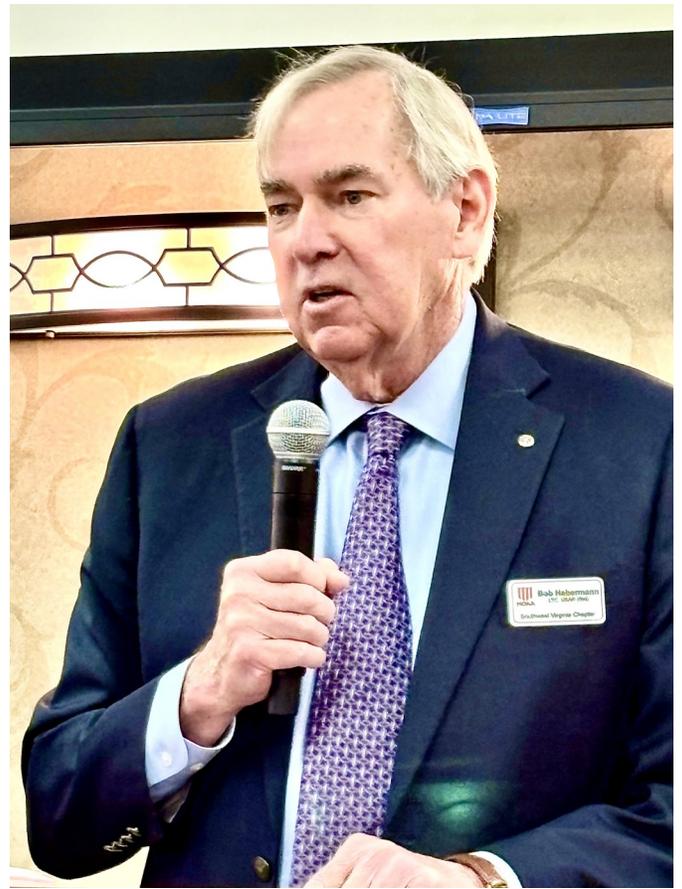
- COL Robert Brown USA (Ret)
- CAPT Roger Burnett, USN (Ret)
- CAPT Richard Cochrane, USN (Ret)
- 1LT Evelyn Cox, USAR (former)
- COL Thomas Dalzell, USMC (Ret)
- CDR Lee Ensley, USN (Ret)
- LTC Dave Gilleran, USA (Ret)
- CAPT Matthew Haag USN (Ret)
- LTC Robert Habermann, USA (Ret)
- LTC Steve Jamison, USA (Ret)
- CPT Larry Johnson, USAR (former)
- COL John Miller, USA (Ret)
- CAPT Gary Powers, USN (Ret)

LEFT: Ms. Dena Kilgore addresses the membership on issues and initiatives being pursued by MOAA National. Veterans Health Care; New privacy policy; Richard Starr Act; Total Force Plus; Committee Module; Status of COLA; 250th Anniversary Programs; future MOAA work shops virtual and on site.

Continued from Page 26 “Chapter Officers Sworn In ”



Incoming Chapter President LTC Robert Habermann, USA (Ret) is congratulated by outgoing President CAPT Gary Powers, USN (Ret) upon assuming president of the Southwest Virginia Chapter of MOAA



Chapter President LTC Robert Habermann addresses the membership upon assuming the presidency of the Southwest Virginia Chapter .



Chapter President LTC Robert Habermann presents past president CAPT Gary Powers with a “**Shore Patrol Jeep**” model as a recognition for his leadership as President of the chapter for the past two years. Ms. Dena Kilgore guest speaker looks on.



“**Shore Patrol Jeep**” model presented to Past President CAPT Gary Powers in recognition of his outstanding leadership of the Southwest Virginia Chapter the past two years.



Continued from Page 27 “Chapter Officers Sworn In”



Ms. Dena Kilgore, CAE, Program Director, Affiliated Councils & Chapters accepts the Southwest Virginia Chapter “Mug” in appreciation for her outstanding presentation on MOAA and for the installation of the Chapter Officers for 2026.



Ms. Dena Kilgore, CAE, Program Director, Affiliated Councils & Chapters addresses the membership on issues and initiatives being pursued by MOAA National. Veterans Health Care; New privacy policy; Richard Starr Act; Total Force Plus; Committee Module; Status of COLA; 250th Anniversary Programs; future MOAA work shops virtual and on site.



L to R: Chapter President LTC Robert Habermann, Past President CAPT Gary Powers and Ms. Dena Kilgore

## 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

## 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.

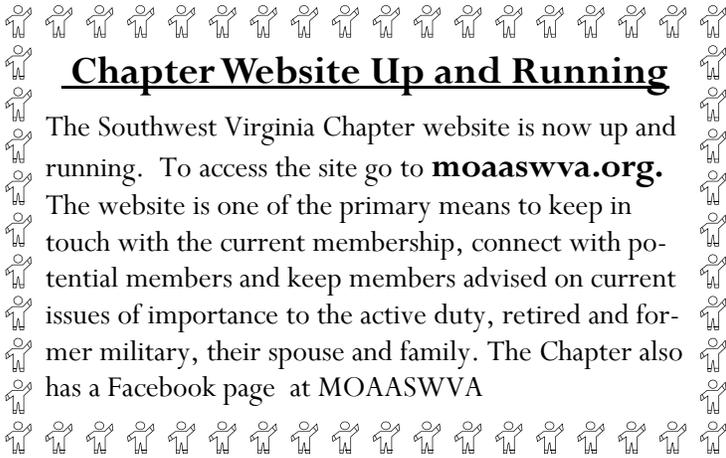
Did you also know that the Southwest Virginia Chapter of MOAA has established two Leadership Awards presented to ROTC Cadets/Midshipmen at Virginia Tech and Radford University during each academic year? Recipients are to be juniors or who will be starting their final year in the coming fall of the academic 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 and 2025 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 **moaswva.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@moaswva.org](mailto:info@moaswva.org)**  
**Webpage: [www.moaswva.org](http://www.moaswva.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**

**15 January 2026** Mrs. Bethany Butcher on **"The New Mercy Care Center Foundation; A Safari to Kenya and Tanzania and making a difference in the lives of children in Africa."**

**19 February 2026**. Mr. Larry Johnson, CAPT USA (former), Vietnam veteran helicopter pilot on **"Helicopters in The Vietnam War—A Personal Perspective"**.

**19 March 2026**. Ms. Carol Young, the CEO of Healing Strides located in Boones Mill, Virginia. Healing Strides of VA (HSVA) is a non-profit organization established in 1991. Their mission is to promote wellness for people with personal challenges who can benefit from equine assisted activities and therapies in a safe and supportive environment. Their staff is professionally licensed, certified, or trained in their various expertise to serve the community! The program will include a tour of their facilities and will include a lunch provided by Mission BBQ.

**16 April 2026** TBD

**14 May 2026** Chapter Membership BBQ meeting at the American Legion Post 3 shelter facility in Salem, Virginia catered by Mission BBQ in Roanoke. Program Music by Marc Baskind. Legislators invited.

## **MOAA'S LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR THE 119TH CONGRESS**

As the legislative slate is wiped clean for the 119th 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 2025 INITIATIVES** **(Adopted at the September and December 2024 JLC meetings)**

- **JLC Initiative 2025-01** - Verification of Veteran Status – Arrest, Jails, and Prison
- **JLC Initiative 2025-02** - Stop Unscrupulous Firms from Exploiting Veterans
- **JLC Initiative 2025-03** -Virginia National Guard Tuition
- **JLC Initiative 2025-04** - Suffolk State Veterans Cemetery Expansion
- **JLC Initiative 2025-05** -Women Veterans Day

A summary of the approved 2025 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>





**CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP**  
as of **31 DEC 2025**

Regular Members	73
Surviving Spouses	1
Total Members	74

Talk to a fellow officer about joining the Southwest Virginia

**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](http://moaswva.org) or on face book at [moaswva](https://www.facebook.com/moaswva) then Contact COL Bob Brown, USA (Ret), Chapter Membership Chair at (540) 904-2810



**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 2026.

**NEVER STOP SERVING!**

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

*Featured in This Issuer*

- Presidents Corner
- A Bold Civic Renaissance For America's 250th
- New VCOC Officers For 2026-2027
- Reflecting On Washington's 1783 Farewell Address To The Army
- The Chinese Revolutionist Agenda
- The Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets
- Remembering Joan Baker Washington
- Face Of The Dollar: The Story Of Peter The Mint Eagle

