



# The Bugle

## Central Virginia Chapter



Volume 53, Issue 4

April 2025

MOAA, including the Central Virginia Chapter, is a nonprofit nonpartisan veterans' association dedicated to maintaining a strong national defense and to preserving the earned entitlements of 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 U.S. Army, USMC, USN, USAF, USCG, USPHS, USSF or NOAA and their surviving spouse.

## Dr. Gray Heppner Reveals the Apolitical Truth About the Last Pandemic and the Daunting Challenges of the Next

A nationally recognized expert in infectious diseases and a U.S. Army Veteran himself, Dr. Gray Heppner addressed attendees at the March luncheon. Forty-seven members and guests gathered in the Club at Glenmoore dining room to hear him provide an unvarnished appraisal of the nation's management of the COVID-19 Pandemic and his conclusions on how the next one might be handled differently.

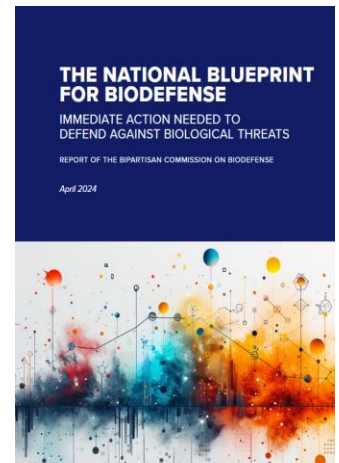
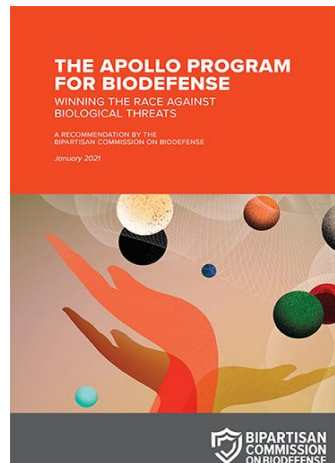
He shared his science-based opinions without reservation, reflecting the seriousness of the topic. He believes that the COVID-19 virus was most likely due to an unintentional laboratory leak in Wuhan China and that their reluctance to share the necessary genetic data to support the global development of countermeasures, as well as the WHO-delayed declaration of a Public Health Emergency of International Concern, exacerbated the tragic outcome. He also criticized the U.S. performance, citing lack of preparedness, politicization of the public health response, press malfeasance, poor communications and the inadequate National Strategic Stockpile of medical materiel. He finished with an overview of the work by the *Bipartisan Commission of Biodefense* and their recommendations for policy and technical preparations - starting now for the next pandemic which will certainly come. (See additional slides from his presentation on page 3)



Dr. Heppner took time in his presentation to debunk ten "COVID-19 Vaccine Myths" which he believes contributed to widespread miscommunications and poor compliance with vaccination recommendations.



CVC MOAA members and guests wait for the first course to be served at the March Luncheon



Dr. Heppner highlighted both of these references as examples of our nation's effort to capture "lessons learned" from past biological threats and prepare for the next one.



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## The Bugle

*2023 Col Marvin J. Harris 5-Star  
Communications Award Winner*

**Editor:** Brion C. Smith

**Contributors:**

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### Brigadier General Terri Erisman, Commander, Judge Advocates School and Legal Center



Brigadier General Terri Erisman began her career receiving a direct commission in 1998. She has served with distinction as a Staff Judge Advocate on three occasions, starting with 1st Special Forces Command (Airborne), Fort Bragg, followed by the Staff Judge Advocate for 25th Infantry Division, and most recently as the Staff Judge Advocate for III Armored Corps,

Her civilian education includes a Bachelor of Arts in Business Management from Seton Hill College (summa cum laude), and a Juris Doctor from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (with honors). She holds a Master of Laws in Military Law from The Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School, and a Master of Science in Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College.

General Erisman's awards include: the Legion of Merit with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Bronze Star Medal and the Defense Meritorious Service Medal. She is authorized to wear the Army Staff Identification Badge, and the Parachutist Badge. She is married to Kerry Erisman, and they have two sons, Dominick and Nathan. She will speak on the mission and scope of the legal support and challenges of her unique command in Charlottesville.

## Community Calendar

**Wednesday, April 16:** CALCLUB Informal Luncheon Buffet. The Charlottesville Aviation Luncheon Club (CALClub), open to all, will meet at the Blue Ridge Café, Ruckersville. Doors open at 11:00 and buffet lunch will begin at noon \$20.00 cash per person. Make reservations by April 12 with Bill Mitchell [whmitchell6@gmail.com](mailto:whmitchell6@gmail.com) or 703.915.6230. Speaker will be COL Steve Hiss, USAF (ret) speaking on the B-1 Bomber.

**Thursday, 24 April:** CVC MOAA Luncheon at The Club at Glenmore, Social hour starts at 11:00 and seating at 12:00 noon. Lunch will be followed by Brigadier General Terri Erisman speaking on the JAG School and Legal Center (Reservation form on page 7)

**Wednesday, 7 May:** Board of Directors Meeting at 13:00 with optional lunch at 12:00 noon at the Club at Glenmore

## Join MOAA's Central Virginia Chapter

To learn more about the nationally recognized



**Central Virginia Chapter  
contact**

**Membership Director  
Carolyn Still**

Email: [carolynmassie@hotmail.com](mailto:carolynmassie@hotmail.com)

Phone: 540-221-0015



# National MOAA Corner: TRICARE Improves Coverage of Early Alzheimer's Treatment

By: Karen Ruedisueli March 25, 2025



TRICARE addressed a critical coverage gap by approving provisional coverage of a new type of drug for the treatment of early stage Alzheimer's disease – a move [supported by MOAA](#) and fellow key military and veterans groups. For up to the next five years, TRICARE will cover Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved monoclonal antibodies (MABs) lecanemab (brand name Leqembi) and donanemab (brand name Kisunla), for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease in patients with mild cognitive impairment or in the mild dementia stage of the disease. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs approved the change last October. MOAA has worked to fix this coverage gap since the 118th Congress alongside stakeholders like The Military Coalition (TMC) – a group of military and veterans service organizations representing nearly 5.5 million members combined.

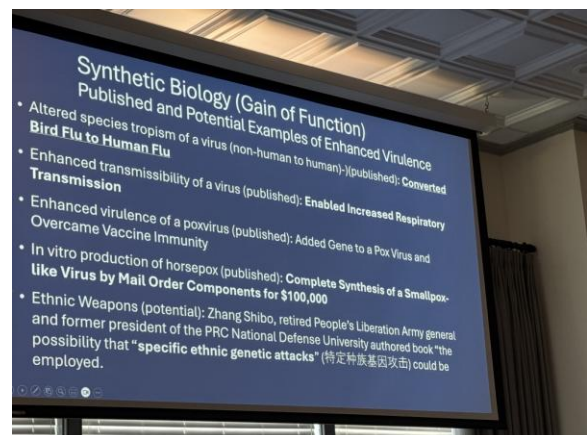
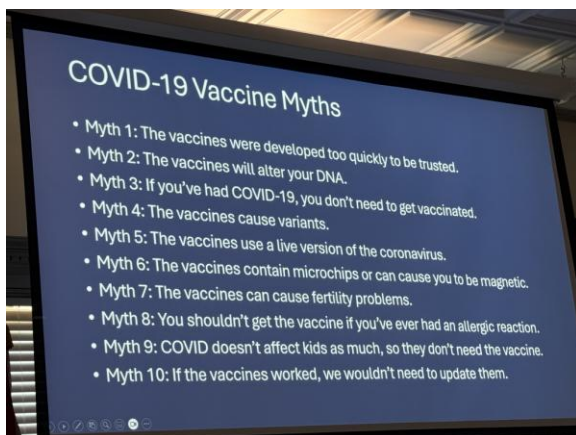
## Reimbursement Options

MOAA has confirmed reimbursements for Leqembi and Kisunla are in effect. Beneficiaries whose claims were paid by Medicare but denied by TRICARE should contact the WPS customer service team for assistance in ensuring those claims are now processed under TRICARE For Life. There is no need to submit a corrected claim – simply reach out with details on the affected claims for reconsideration. You can contact the WPS customer service team through the [TRICARE4u.com](https://www.tricare4u.com) portal or by calling (866) 773-0404. Coverage is retroactive to Oct. 23, 2024, the provisional decision approval date.

## Filling the Gap

Several impacted MOAA members initially alerted MOAA to this coverage gap; we appreciate their outreach, along with the support of members who reached out to their lawmakers on this issue via our [Legislative Action Center](#). Before the provisional coverage decision, TRICARE's outdated policy excluded coverage of MABs, including Leqembi, even though the drug has had full FDA approval since July 6, 2023. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) approved Medicare coverage for Leqembi, and federal employees have had access to Leqembi under the BlueCross BlueShield Federal Employee Program, a key benchmark plan for evaluating TRICARE coverage.

Treatment for Alzheimer's disease is most effective when administered early – delays can result in irreversible disease progression – which made this prolonged TRICARE coverage gap particularly egregious. MOAA will continue its work to ensure TRICARE coverage keeps pace with plans offered in the federal and civilian sectors, protecting the value of your earned benefit and preserving your access to world-class care.



(From page 1) Two slides from Dr. Heppner's presentation address COVID-19 Myths and Gain of Function Research

## Surviving Spouse Corner: Why It's Not 'Happy' Memorial Day

By: Nancy Mullen

This time of year, we are all inundated with advertisements on TV, in our email, on social media, or even in stores that say, "Happy Memorial Day" or promote Memorial Day sales. I get it — for most, it is a well-earned day off work. It often signals the beginning of the summer beach season. And yes, it is a long weekend with friends and family spent by the pool or grilling in the backyard. It is easy to forget the true meaning behind the holiday.

So, what is Memorial Day? Memorial Day, formerly known as Decoration Day, is the one day a year our country sets aside to recognize, remember and mourn our U.S. servicemembers who have died while serving our great country. It is also a day to remember our Gold Star Families, those who have lost a servicemember on active duty. This day can be especially hard on these families and those who have lost loved ones, as emotions are often elevated. For this reason, although I don't take offense, I always encourage people to not say "Happy Memorial Day." Think of it this way: Would you say, "Happy funeral"? That helps it to sink in a bit more, doesn't it?

Given that we have an all-volunteer force, fewer and fewer people have lost someone in the service or even know someone who served after the Vietnam War era. Many do not realize we still have servicemembers in harm's way, and each year we continue to have families back home who are getting that dreaded knock on the door to inform them their loved one has been lost. To some, it seems as though Memorial Day has become just another fun holiday for which the meaning has been lost. And to that I would say CELEBRATE!

Really? Yes, really! I am the Gold Star wife of [WO1 Sean Mullen](#), 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), who was killed in action in Afghanistan in June 2013. Sean loved this country and felt it was his honor and duty to serve. He would want you to go shopping, throw a neighborhood barbecue, take that beach trip, go camping with your kids — after all, he fought and died for the freedom we have to do those things. All we ask is that at some point during that celebration, you join me by lifting up your drink for a toast or say a silent prayer for those who died for our freedom and that you live a life worthy of such sacrifice.

As George S. Patton Jr. said: "It is foolish and wrong to mourn the men who died. Rather, we should thank God that such men lived."



### **\*\*ALL MEMBERS PLEASE READ\*\***

#### **Succession Planning Emergency**

**At the end of 2025, the current Chapter Officers filling the roles of CVC MOAA President, Vice-President and Director of Programs will rotate out. The hard truth is that if members do not step into these roles by January 2026, the Chapter will be forced to begin closing procedures. The Board is seeking potential candidates starting immediately. If you wish to volunteer yourself or wish to nominate someone else, please contact any board member directly.**

# Legislative Review...



*The Chapter's Legislative Committee  
is chaired by  
Dan Moy*

For up-to-date information about legislative issues that affect you, go to the MOAA website <http://www.moaa.org/takeaction>

Greetings fellow members.

With the 2025 General Assembly behind us, this is the season to begin laying the groundwork for the next year's legislative season—but also to look at what is happening at the federal level and MOAA's nation-wide advocacy efforts.

The Joint Leadership Council (JLC) meets later this month in Richmond to discuss and prepare for drafting legislative initiatives for 2026. One objective is simply to get the process started earlier this cycle to better align our advocacy efforts alongside the host of other lobbying efforts that start vying for member's support well before the fall season.

This is a busy political year in the commonwealth with every seat in the House of Delegates up for reelection in November. Virginia is also electing a new governor, and the contest between the leading candidates, former Democratic US Representative Abigail Spanberger and Republican Lieutenant Governor Winsome Sears, is sure to draw national attention. Notably, both gubernatorial candidates have national security and military credentials—Spanberger, a former CIA officer, and Sears, a Marine veteran.

On the federal level, MOAA's priorities center around the annual Advocacy in Action campaign and you can help support that effort (see [www.moaa.org/advocacy-news](http://www.moaa.org/advocacy-news) for more detailed information). Hundreds of MOAA members are gathering in Washington DC on 9 April to meet with congressional members, but the campaign continues throughout the year. This year, MOAA has identified 5 key legislative areas: 1. Improving access to veteran health care, 2. Supporting family veteran caregivers, 3. Expediting care for veterans exposed to service-related toxins, 4. Improving

military housing, and 5. Promoting military spouse employment.

What you can do to get involved: 1. Register online to join MOAA's virtual advocacy committee at <https://moaa.quorum.us/yourofficials>, 2. Learn more about MOAA's advocacy campaigns at <https://moaa.quorum.us/home2/>, and 3. Reach out to our 5<sup>th</sup> District Congressman John McGuire at <https://mcguire.house.gov/contact/email-me> to let him know of your support for MOAA's legislative priorities.

As always, please feel free to reach out to me at any time for questions concerning MOAA's legislative engagement efforts. You can contact me at [danmoy@mac.com](mailto:danmoy@mac.com).

Best,

Dan



**Joint Leadership Council Meeting in March: From left to right, Bill Aramony, Chair of JLC, DVS Commissioner Chuck Zingler, and John Down, CVC MOAA JLC Representative**





On Sunday, 16 March, 2025, Ruth McWilliams, Chapter VCOC Representative, accompanied by her husband, David McWilliams, represented CVC MOAA at the annual birthday commemoration of President James Madison at Montpelier. Presentation of the Presidential Wreath and remarks were made by Major General Anthony Henderson, USMC. CVC MOAA was one of 26 organizations that presented commemorative wreaths to mark the occasion.



Steve Hiss, CVC MOAA Director for ROTC Liaison, presents the JROTC MOAA Award to Cadet Tommy Carmody at Orange County High School on 1 March 2025

## April Community Activities - all are welcome to attend

13 April 2025, Sunday, 13:00-14:00: The 282nd Annual Birthday Commemoration of President Thomas Jefferson and Wreath Presentation by CVC MOAA President John Warnecke at Monticello - West Lawn

15 April 2025, Tuesday 15:00-17:00: Virginia Council of Chapters Meeting by Zoom. Chapter VCOC Representative Ruth McWilliams will attend and has additional information for those interested

22 April 2025, Friday 16:00: UVA ROTC Awards Ceremony at McLeod Hall, University of Virginia. Presentations by CVC MOAA representatives Tad Oelstrom and Steve Hiss



**LUNCHEON MEETING RESERVATION FORM**  
**Thursday, 24 April 2025**

**11:00 a.m. social hour. 12:00 noon lunch**  
**The Club at Glenmore**

**Brigadier General Terri Erisman, Commander,**  
**Judge Advocates School and Legal Center**

*Directions from Charlottesville: Route 250 East. One mile past Shadwell turn right into Glenmore. Turn right on Piper Way. If you are not a resident, please tell the gate guard that you are attending the MOAA luncheon. Proceed on Piper Way. The Club is on the right just past the tennis courts. Attire for men is suit/sport coat and tie or military uniform.*



**Menu Selections**

Corn Chowder

**Choice of entrée:**

**A. Shrimp Cakes**

**or**

**B. Chicken Breast Picatta**

**or**

**C. Vegetable Stroganoff**

**\***

Brown Rice Pilaf

Vegetable Medley

**\***

Carrot Cake



**Please Circle Entrée Selection**

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_ **A B C**

Guest Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ **A B C**

\_\_\_\_\_ **A B C**

\_\_\_\_\_ **A B C**

**Please make reservations for \_\_\_\_ @ \$35.00 each.**

My current email address (if changed) is: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please remit with check payable to CVC MOAA. Reservations must be received**  
**NO LATER THAN Friday, 18 April 2025.**

**CVC MOAA**  
**P.O. Box 6455**  
**Charlottesville, VA 22906-6455**

**Due to mail uncertainties and a need to ensure a timely head count, please confirm your attendance numbers and meal selection with John Warnecke by 18 April 2025**  
**via email ([warnecke@comcast.net](mailto:warnecke@comcast.net)) or phone (434) 981-8554.**



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