



# The Bugle

## Central Virginia Chapter



Volume 53, Issue 5

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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.

## Jim Carpenter Highlights Central Virginia's Unique Tribute to Veterans: The Charlottesville Dogwood Vietnam Memorial

Jim Carpenter was born and raised in the city of Charlottesville. He is a veteran of the U.S. Army Reserves, serving as an active-duty guard member for 20 years and retiring as a Master Sergeant in 1988. Since 1987, Jim has owned and operated his own photography studio and remains a lifelong photojournalist. He is a two-time President of the Charlottesville Dogwood Festival and is most proud of his current position as a Board Member for the Dogwood Vietnam Memorial Foundation. His photographs grace the pages of the full-color brochure titled "The Hill that Heals." He shared the story of *The Memorial* with 50 CVC MOAA members and guests at the April Luncheon.

Dedicated on April 20, 1966, the Charlottesville Dogwood Vietnam Memorial is the first public-civic memorial in the United States of America to honor all members of the United States Military who served and those who gave their lives in the war in Vietnam and South-east Asia. Each year since, there has been an annual re-dedication of the Memorial.

The Dogwood Vietnam Memorial had its origins on a fall day in 1965 when Ken Staples, the owner of Staples Barber Shop in Charlottesville, found himself in conversation with two friends, local real estate agent Bill Gentry and engineer Jim Shisler. The national news was dominated by President Lyndon Johnson's recent decision to send the first U.S. combat troops to Vietnam, but the conversation in the barbershop had turned local: the tragic death of 18-year-old Army soldier Champ Lawson. Champ, who had recently become a father, was killed in a mid-air helicopter collision over South Vietnam, making him the first local casualty of the war.

Moved by this loss and the certainty that more would follow, the trio resolved to create a memorial dedicated to the memory of Charlottesville's fallen sons. Within days, they selected a grassy slope at the edge of McIntire Park overlooking Route 250 as the site for their tribute. By January 1966, the Dogwood Vietnam Memorial was completed. It became the first civic memorial in the country dedicated to the soldiers of the Vietnam War, created 16 years before the national memorial in Washington, D.C. See the full story of this continuing tribute to local courage and sacrifice and how to donate at <https://www.dogwoodvietnammemorial.org/>



Jim Carpenter, speaker for the CVC MOAA April Luncheon, talks with Tad Oelstrom, Chapter Director for Programs and long-time member, James O'Kelley who read "A Time for Prayer," a poem by Rudyard Kipling as a fitting end to Jim's presentation.



CVC MOAA members and guests wait for the first course to be served at the April Luncheon. Left to right: Derry Miller, Mark Zanin, Mark Moranville, Candy Wagner, Terry Brock and Margie Davenport.



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## The Bugle

*2024 Col Marvin J. Harris 5-Star  
Communications Award Winner*

**Editor:** Brion C. Smith

**Contributors:**

John Warnecke – Printing & Distribution



## Patrick A. Schroeder, Historian of Appomattox Court House National Historical Park



Civil War Author/Historian Patrick A. Schroeder was born in 1968, at Fort Belvoir, VA. Patrick attended Stuarts Draft High School in Augusta County, VA. In the spring of 1990, he graduated Cum Laude with a B.S. in Historical Park Administration from Shepherd College, Shepherdstown, WV. He has an M.A. in Civil War History from Virginia Tech. From the summer of 1986-1993, Patrick worked as a seasonal living history interpreter at Appomattox Court House National Historical Park. In 1993, he wrote "Thirty Myths About Lee's Surrender," which is currently in its twelfth printing. From 1994 – 1999, the author worked at Red Hill, the Patrick Henry National Memorial. He is now the full-time Historian of Appomattox Court House National Historical Park and will speak about "Ending the Civil War."

## Community Calendar

**Wednesday, May 21:** 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 Kelan Sisk is a retired civil service employee speaking on the The Patuxent River Naval Air Museum (PRNAM) in Lexington Park.

**Thursday, 22 May:** 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 Author & Historian Patrick A. Schroeder speaking on "Ending the Civil War" (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)

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# National MOAA Corner: What Budget Constraints Could Mean for Your Earned Benefits

By: Brenden McMahon



MOAA representatives discussed ongoing concerns in key areas during a recent meeting with professional staff from both the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, part of our work to protect service-earned benefits in the face of budget constraints and a compressed congressional calendar.

The talks covered four key areas: [unaccompanied housing](#), [military spouse employment](#), military health system (MHS) [access to care](#), and veterans [exposed to toxins while in uniform](#). Professional staff on both committees characterized the year ahead as primarily defensive, with limited opportunity for advancing new legislative priorities.

They expressed the greatest openness to efforts reinforcing or improving existing policies — particularly in areas related to DoD health care. Other issues, such as unaccompanied housing and military spouse employment, were met with interest and constructive discussion, though committee staff acknowledged constraints that may limit broader legislative action this year. Here's a look at what was discussed in the March session, and how you can keep up with progress on these critical issues.

## Unaccompanied Housing

MOAA and committee staff discussed the potential impacts of the [continuing resolution](#) on planned unaccompanied housing improvements. Committee staff acknowledged the issue but noted that funding limitations and competing priorities may constrain options in the near term. While broader legislative movement on this issue may prove challenging this year, it remains a critical area in need of oversight.

## Military Spouse Employment

MOAA highlighted ongoing challenges facing military spouses in the federal workforce, including barriers related to licensure portability and other employment obstacles. Committee staff expressed support and encouraged continued focus on the issue, noting potential opportunities to push forward bills like the Resilient Employment and Authorization Determination to Increase the National Employment of Serving Spouses (READINESS) Act. MOAA continues its work in support of the Military Spouse Hiring Act, which would award a tax credit to businesses hiring military spouses. However, because this bill would involve changes to the tax code, it would fall under a different committee jurisdiction.

## Military Health System: Access to Care

Committee staffers encouraged MOAA to continue advocating for reliable MHS funding amid concerns that DoD is redirecting resources away from health care, impacting both readiness and the benefit itself by undercutting the direct care system. Committee staff requested feedback on recent MHS stabilization testimony and other legislative proposals. MOAA was also asked to provide draft legislative language for a digital access assistance platform, which is one of our Tier 1 priorities, and help clarify how much was saved through the [TRICARE pharmacy network reductions](#).

## Toxic Exposure

MOAA discussed recommendations from its [Ending the Wait initiative](#) and raised concerns about ongoing challenges to access service-earned care and benefits. Committee staff asked what specific problems remain unresolved and whether DoD is still failing to acknowledge certain exposure-related conditions. MOAA and committee staff agreed it is critical to clearly identify what is still not working in these processes and what gaps may remain.

## A Steady Voice

As Congress faces a compressed legislative calendar and ongoing budget uncertainty, MOAA remains committed to engaging with lawmakers and staff to advance practical, achievable improvements for the uniformed services and veteran communities. Even in a constrained environment, opportunities remain — and MOAA will continue to serve as a trusted voice, providing thoughtful policy recommendations and amplifying the concerns of those who serve and have served.

To stay informed and support these efforts, visit [MOAA's Legislative Action Center](#).

## Surviving Spouse Corner

### Improve Your Mental Skills With These Brain Exercises

By: Pat Green

Most of us have noticed a mental decline in a close friend or family member. Perhaps they don't seem as sharp, witty, or speedy as they once were. You might wonder whether others are noticing this with you as well. Mental decline is not just a phenomenon of aging. Stress, emotions, and poor diet and sleep reduce cognitive skills and affect all ages. If you have had a stroke or a brain injury, or if you are concerned about a perceived mental decline, speak to your family doctor. If the doctor recognizes an issue, a neurologist can provide a detailed cognitive skills evaluation. Physical health and emotional health correlate with mental health. If you are consumed with grief or anxiety or dealing with a disease, deal with that first. If serious grieving extends more than two years, seek grief counseling for help. Complicated grief is seen in 9% of widows ages 60 to 75. A smaller percentage of men are affected.

If you want to improve your mental skills, try adding mental strengthening exercises into daily activities, such as:

**Recall.** Practice memorizing names, phone numbers, vocabulary words, baseball standings, NCAA March Madness lineups, or TV program schedules. Look at a magazine photo for a few seconds, close your eyes, and try to recall items in the photo.

**Analysis.** Read a newspaper article. Set it aside, then try to write a recap or summary of the article. Try to remember the *o*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why*.

**Spatial.** Rearrange a linen closet, pantry, or garage. Look for the most pragmatic and yet economical use of space. Do the same exercise with drawers in kitchen, bed, or bath. While you're at it, set aside some donation items and throw out expired items.

**Social.** Have a conversation every day. If you live alone, this might be a challenge. Practice small talk at the check-out line of stores. Initiate a phone call or an invitation. This is a must. Accept any invitations you receive. Try to remember a joke you can tell at your next social event.

**Focus.** Stay focused on whatever activity you are engaged. It might be a conversation, gardening, dancing, chores, or workouts at the gym. Focus on listening, strength, the number of repetitions, muscles involved, posture, and breathing. Be in one with your thoughts. Meditation and prayer are very good options of mental focus.

**Fun and games.** This can be all manner of social get-togethers. But there are some good solitary options. Jigsaw puzzles provide color and form discernment. Manipulation of the pieces is also good hand-eye coordination practice. Sudoku uses number grids, but it is not a math game. It is a logic exercise. Start with easy grids, and progress to expert status. Using computer sites, you can play Bridge, Gin Rummy, or Hearts with robots. These games require a memory of cards played and the counted.



# 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.

The state's Joint Leadership Council (JLC) recently convened its Legislative Committee on April 23<sup>rd</sup> with the purpose of identifying potential initiatives for the 2026 General Assembly. The following is a readout from our MOAA representative to the JLC, John Down, on the April 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting:

Chuck Zingler, Commissioner of the State's Department of Veteran Affairs, is working with the Virginia Chamber of Commerce to prioritize legislation to incentivize veterans to retire and remain in Virginia. Possible initiatives include low-cost housing for veterans and childcare for single-parent families.

With inputs from the 25 Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs), the JLC is evaluating its top priorities for the 2026 legislative session. Currently, those include the following for Virginia residents:

- Eliminating state income tax for active duty members.
- Removing the \$40K cap on military retirement pay.
- Eliminating state income tax on military retirement or active duty pay.
- Complimentary registration of all privately owned vehicles for active duty members.
- Increase National Guard tuition grants from \$50K to \$250K annually.
- Increase appropriation for National Guard referral enlistment program from \$50K to \$250K annually.
- Provide an education program for transitioning service members to support civilian academic and employment opportunities. Virginia is one of only nine states that do not have such a program.

- Provide National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Public Health Service (PHS) personnel state income tax exclusion benefits.

- A \$1,500 annual state income tax credit to all veterans, including the National Guard and Reserves, beginning in FY 2027. This benefit would exclude those retirees who have already received the first \$40K of their income tax exclusion benefit.

- Stop claim-sharks—unscrupulous firms—from exploiting veterans who are trying to obtain VA benefits for the first time.

The JLC is expected to select 5-6 of these for their 2026 initiatives.

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On the federal level, House and Senate members have reintroduced *The Major Richard Star Act*, an enduring MOAA legislative priority. This initiative aims to correct an injustice in retirement benefits withheld from those veterans with a combat-related disability but fewer than 20 years' service. The bill would allow these veterans to receive retirement pay and disability compensation without a reduction.

Additionally, MOAA has identified 5 key legislative priorities at the federal level: 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. You can help support these efforts by: 1. Registering online to join MOAA's virtual advocacy committee at <https://moaa.quorum.us/yourofficials>, 2. Learning more about MOAA's advocacy campaigns at <https://moaa.quorum.us/home2/>, and 3. Reaching 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 these initiatives.

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

Best,  
Dan



# CVC MOAA Support to the Local Community

## Honoring Past Presidents and Future Officers in April 2025



The UVA ROTC Awards Ceremony was held at McLeod Hall, University of Virginia. The annual CVC MOAA Awards were presented by our Chapter Board of Directors Tad Oelstrom (Director for Programs) and Steve Hiss (Director for ROTC Affairs). Carolyn Still (Director for Membership) attended as well and took photographs. She is a long-standing supporter of ROTC and JROTC Programs in Central Virginia. The awardees included Army Cadets Garrett Neff (UVA) and Kyle Fetcho (Liberty University), Air Force Cadet Benjamin Dries, Space Force Cadet Carson Ackermann, Navy Midshipmen Tomas Rustia and Connor Pastino (Marine Option) - not all are pictured.



Five Cadets and Midshipmen each received \$1000 checks from the *Southside MOAA Legacy Scholarship Fund*. They were Julia McCormack (Army), Derek Liu (Navy), Kyle Nguyen (Marine Corps), Regan Powell (Air Force) and Caleb Jay (Space Force). They are flanked by two of the chapters' most dynamic board members. On the left, Tad Oelstrom is a retired USAF Lieutenant General and is nationally recognized for his academic, military leadership, and geo-political and strategic defense policy experience. On the right, Steve Hiss is a retired USAF Colonel and recently assumed the duties of the CVC MOAA Director for ROTC Liaison. His volunteering to fill this role was particularly fortuitous for the chapter given his previous experience as Commander of the UVA USAF ROTC Detachment.



Chapter President John Warnecke places the MOAA Wreath on the grave of President Thomas Jefferson at Monticello in the chapter's hometown of Charlottesville. John is a retired USN Captain and has served CVC MOAA in multiple capacities over many years, but plans to take a well-deserved break from his current role as president in January 2026.

**LUNCHEON MEETING RESERVATION FORM**  
**Thursday, 22 May 2025**

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

**Patrick A. Schroeder,**  
**Historian of Appomattox Court House National Historical Park**

*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**

Chilled Cucumber Soup

**Choice of entrée:**

- A. Blackened Mahi  
or
  - B. Grilled Flank Steak  
or
  - C. Eggplant Parmesan  
\*
- Twice Baked Potato  
Sautéed Spinach  
\*
- Key Lime Pie



**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, 16 May 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 16 May 2025 via email ([warnecke@comcast.net](mailto:warnecke@comcast.net)) or phone (434) 981-8554.**



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