

**Central Virginia Chapter, VCOC – MOAA  
3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Report from CVC/MOAA  
1 July 2021 to 30 September 2021**

<b><u>I. Membership:</u></b>	<b><u>Regular</u></b>	<b><u>Surviving Spouses</u></b>	<b><u>Honorary</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
As of 30 Jun:	152	17	4	173
Gains:	0	1	0	1
Losses:	<u>15</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>17</u>
As of 30 Sep:	137	16	4	157

Gains: Carolyn Still (Surviving Spouse)  
 Deaths: None  
 Resignations: 15 Regular; 2 Surviving Spouse  
 Moved: None  
 Surviving Spouses Gains: None

**II. Legislative Affairs:**

- A. John Down and Wes Loffert attended the VCOC LegCom meeting on 13 July 21. COL (Ret) Monti Zimmerman reported on the Joint Leadership Council initiatives supported by the legislative committee and the nominees for state and federal legislator of the year. VCOC will sponsor or co-sponsor a change on the tax exemption for spouses of deceased service members. The current exemption covers those with spouses "killed on active duty." VCOC is supporting the effort to change the language to "died on duty." Additionally, VCOC will co-sponsor the proposed tax relief bill for the approximately 1,000 lowest paid (near poverty level) retirees; these are primarily E-5 or E-6 retirees with no other taxable income. They pay no more than \$400 in state taxes. Goal is to use this issue to get a "toe in the door" concerning retiree tax relief.
- B. VCOC will add an additional LegCom meeting in the Spring/Summer 2022 to synch with the Virginia Legislative Calendar. John Down recommended a more detailed and documented approach to better position VCOC to advocate effectively – synching with both the Virginia legislative calendar and the JLC calendar.
- C. Of the JLC Legislative Initiatives for 2021 only one new one was approved (no-fee license plates for Virginia National Guards members) and one from last year (the Constitutional amendment to provide a tax-free vehicle for 100% VA disabled veterans). (Ret) and Kaine (CVC volunteered our services as required). All members were asked to reach out to their District Reps at the Chapter level.

- D. At the National level CDR (Ret) Lincoln Smith quickly covered MOAA's top 3 initiatives for the year: Comprehensive Toxic Exposure Reform, TRICARE Young Adult, and Basic Needs Allowance.
- E. The MOAA Virginia Council of Chapters (VCOC) recently recognized Senator Jen Kiggans (VA 7<sup>th</sup>) as "State Legislator of the Year," and U.S. Representative Elaine Luria (VA-02) as "Federal Legislator of the Year" for their support of military veterans across the Commonwealth. Both representatives are Navy veterans. Kiggans served ten years in the Navy, piloting H-46 and H-3 helicopters with two deployments to the Persian Gulf. Luria, who is the Vice Chair of the House Armed Services Committee, served twenty years as a surface warfare officer and nuclear engineer with six overseas deployments. Of note, Kiggans (R) is vying to unseat Luria (D) for the VA-02 congressional seat in 2022.
- F. U.S. Representative Rob Wittman (VA-01), who currently serves as the Vice Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Committee and Ranking Member of the Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, deserves special recognition for his long-time advocacy of veteran's issues and the Commonwealth's defense industrial base. This month, Wittman affirmed his support for the Fiscal Year 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (FY22 NDAA), authorizing an additional \$23.9 billion for DoD's topline budget items. In the seapower category, the increase is a win for national security and Virginia's economy. The NDAA will fund an additional 6 ships and retain 3 cruisers. Production and sustainment of these warships, Wittman asserted, "will help contest China's expansionist ambitions and deter conflict in the Indo-Pacific."
- G. Our Chapter looks forward to continuing to engage with state and federal legislators like these who are working on behalf our military service and veteran community. To that end, we are gearing up for the 2022 legislative session in Virginia. The Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations (JLC) met on September 9<sup>th</sup> and identified 7 priority initiatives for 2022. The 7 issues are: 1. Suicide prevention among service members, veterans, and their families; 2. Tax relief for surviving spouses; 3. Fire arms exemption for veteran color and honor guards; 4. Support for the state's veteran cemeteries and elimination of spouse burial fees; 5. Incentivizing employment of National Guard members and reservists; 6. State Park admission for National Guardsmen; and 7. Income tax exemption for Virginia National Guardsmen. In the coming weeks, our Legislative Committee will be working in tandem with the VCOC to develop a unified strategy for engaging with our state representatives on these key priorities to press for substantive outcomes in 2022.
- H. **Upcoming soon:**
1. Next VCOC LegCom meeting 5 October 2021.

### **III. Public Affairs:**

- A. Our public affairs team featured an article from a surviving spouse who shared her many contributions and accomplishments during the pandemic - published in our Chapter's newsletter in a series titled: Never Stop Serving. In the article, she recounted how "my volunteer activities during the pandemic gave structure to my daily life and have helped me to reevaluate my priorities."
- B. Additionally, Chapter surviving spouses were provided assistance in getting appointments for Covid-19 shots. Recruiting efforts are underway to add surviving spouses to the chapter board and other leadership roles.

**IV. Levels of Excellence Award Scoring & Chapter Self-Evaluation Status:**

- A. 5 Star.
- B. Self-evaluation, 5 Star.
- C. 5 Star for Col Marvin J. Harris Communications Award for printed newsletter and website. Award date 3 May 2021

**V. Most Significant Chapter Events of the Quarter:**

- A. The Chapter held its first in-person event since February 2020 in the form of a picnic held at a member's home. The September 18th picnic was well attended. At the picnic, the Dogwood Vietnam Memorial Foundation representative presented the Chapter president with a framed appreciation certificate as a major supporter and donor of the Foundation, which is dedicated to the lasting memory of those from Charlottesville and Albemarle County who gave their lives in service during the Vietnam War.
- B. The Chapter received notification that it has been awarded the 2020 Level of Excellence Award from MOAA Headquarters. Award expected to be received at the VCOC 4th Quarter event to be held at Ford's Colony, Williamsburg, VA, on 5 October 2021.
- C. The Chapter continues to publish its newsletter, *The Bugle*, during the pandemic despite the cancellation of most Chapter social functions and community activities. The newsletter is once again being printed and mailed to all Chapter members, and is posted on the Chapter's webpage. The Chapter's Board of Directors believes that *The Bugle* plays an important role in keeping the Chapter members "connected" particularly during the challenges presented by the COVID pandemic.
- D. A Chapter Board of Directors member represented the Chapter at the 9/11 Ceremony at the American Legion Post 74 in Keswick, VA. A report of the activities of that event has been sent to the Chapter Board of Directors.

- E. A Chapter Board of Directors member attended the recent MOAA leadership workshop held virtually for chapters in our region. Information from that workshop has been disseminated to the Chapter Board of Directors.

Submitted by responsible submitting officer:

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