

**Central Virginia Chapter, VCOC – MOAA
4th Quarter Report from CVC/MOAA
1 October 2021 to 31 December 2021**

<u>I. Membership:</u>	<u>Regular</u>	<u>Surviving Spouses</u>	<u>Honorary</u>	<u>Total</u>
As of 30 Sep:	137	16	4	157
Gains:	3	0	0	3
Losses:	<u>2</u>	0	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>
 As of 31 Dec:	138	16	4	158

Gains: CAPT (DR) Gerald Brown, USPHS (Ret); COL David McWilliams, USA (Ret); CPT Ruth McWilliams, USA (former)
 Deaths: COL Edward Stephens, USA (Ret); LTC Robert Tofferi, USA (Ret)
 Resignations: None
 Moved: None
 Surviving Spouses Gains: None

II. Legislative Affairs:

- A. John Down and Wes Loffert attended the VCOC LegCom meeting on 5 October at Fords Colony, Williamsburg, VA. COL (Ret) Monti Zimmerman reported on the Joint Leadership Council initiatives supported by the legislative committee. Key provisions included sponsoring a change from “killed on active duty” to “died on duty” to more accurately expand and cover surviving spouses of Virginia veterans eligible for a tax break; the other two issues are suicide relief and granting veterans service organizations legal status to perform funeral and parade services with their firearms with out being prosecuted under existing firearm legislation.
- B. The results of the November 2nd general election present new opportunities for MOAA and its Veteran Service Organization partners to engage with the incoming administration and the members of the Virginia House who will be returning to Richmond for the 2022 legislative session. The Youngkin-Sears-Miyares ticket ran on a pro-veteran platform and should be eager to achieve quick wins that align well with MOAA’s legislative agenda. As part of our advocacy strategy, the Legislative Committee intends to work in tandem with the Joint Leadership Council (JLC) to see those campaign promises translated into substantive, meaningful legislation that supports our commonwealth’s veterans where they need it most.
- C. The governor-elect has outlined several policy proposals aimed at addressing the concerns of military service veterans. On the campaign trail, he indicated his “commitment to compete with neighboring states when it comes to veterans’ benefits and

tax treatment” and connect veterans to the services and support they deserve. Eliminating tax on military retirement pay, staffing critical positions at the Department of Veterans Services, and waiving administrative fees for small business start-ups for qualifying veterans are among his stated policy objectives. As we prepare to engage our central Virginia elected representatives in advance of the upcoming legislative session, we see significant synergies in synchronizing MOAA’s message with the JLC and the stated priorities of the new administration to make a real difference in the bills introduced and supported in 2022.

- D. The 25 Veteran Service Organizations represented in the JLC met in September to identify 7 priority initiatives for 2022 that reflect the incoming governor’s interest in delivering substantive services and support to the commonwealth’s veteran population. Among those initiatives, tax relief for surviving spouses and members of the national guard, suicide prevention, and incentivizing business owners to hire national guardsmen are likely areas for combined advocacy.
- E. In the coming weeks, your Legislative Committee will be coordinating with the MOAA Virginia Council of Chapters to develop a unified strategy for engaging with our state representatives on these key priorities and press for real outcomes in 2022.
- F. **Upcoming soon:**
 - 1. Next VCOC LegCom meeting 7 January 2022.

III. Public Affairs:

- A. Our Public Affairs chair successfully recruited our new Surviving Spouses Chair who was elected to the position at our annual holiday luncheon in December 2021.
- B. Additionally, Chapter surviving spouses are provided assistance in getting appointments for Covid-19 shots.

C. 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-door luncheon event since February 2020. At the December holiday luncheon, the Chapter President presented the Fiftieth Anniversary Recognition certificate from MOAA Headquarters. He also presented the Col Marvin J. Harris Award

certificates to the chapter newsletter and webmaster recipients for both 2020 and 2021. Finally, he presented the MOAA Leadership Awards to the immediate Past President and the past Legislative Committee Chair for their outstanding leadership in service to MOAA and the Chapter.

- B. 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.
- C. Chapter members attended/participated in several local Veteran's Day events to include the those at the University of Virginia, Monticello, and American Legion Post 74.
- D. The Chapter President attended the MOAA Council and Chapters-led Roundtable virtual events in November and December, and the Chapter Personal Affairs Officer attended the December virtual roundtable.
- E. The Chapter President was elected as Secretary of the Virginia Council of Chapters in October 2021, and he will serve a two-year term. He was also re-appointed as Alternate to the JLC for the second year. In that role, he attended the Joint Leadership Council Meeting in Richmond on December 15th.

Submitted by responsible submitting officer:

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