

**Central Virginia Chapter, VCOC – MOAA
1st Quarter Report from CVC/MOAA
1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021**

<u>I. Membership:</u>	<u>Regular</u>	<u>Surviving Spouses</u>	<u>Honorary</u>	<u>Total</u>
As of 31 Dec:	159	19	4	182
Gains:	0	1	0	0
Losses:	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
As of 31 Mar:	158	20	4	182

Gains: None

Deaths: 1 Maj Leo Still (USMC)

Resignations: None

Moved: None

Surviving Spouses Gains: Carolyn Still

II. Legislative Affairs:

- A. Attended the VCOC 1st Qtr Leg Com meeting on 12 Jan via ZOOM. Dan Moy, John Down, Trish Sifka, and Wes Loffert attended. Delegate Nick Freitas opened the meeting with a run down on the upcoming Virginia Legislative session. He confirmed that the Virginia military and veteran caucus has receipt of all the JLC initiatives. The legislative session remained virtual due to COVID with limited face time with other Congressional members and no in person joint meetings of the sub-committees. The Virginia legislature was in session for 30 days. John Down requested clarity on last years absentee ballot initiative as there seems to be uncertainty regarding the status of its passing based on this yeas docket – Delegate Freitas acknowledged and will follow up.

- B. Don Wolfinger, LTC, USA (Ret) and co-chair of MOAA National’s Legislative Affairs Forum encouraged continued VCOC participation in this activity as a means of sharing and assimilating best practices for Legislative engagement. He then covered MOAA’s Defense State Liaison Office (DSLO) 2021 priorities: Enhanced military spouse license portability, Military spouse occupational license accesses, License compacts, Military spouse teacher certification, Purple star school programs, Advanced enrollment, Virtual school enrollment, In-State tuition, Child abuse and neglect ID and reporting, and the Ask the question campaign.

- C. Results of the recent General Assembly (January—February) fell short of MOAA’s targeted priorities for Virginia’s military veterans. Prior to the 2021 legislative session, MOAA, in conjunction with the governor’s Joint Leadership Council (JLC), identified eight key initiatives. The top items on that list represented substantive financial benefits

to veterans and their families, including an income tax subtraction for low-income and disabled veterans, incentives for small to medium-sized Virginia employers to hire members of the Virginia National Guard and Reserve, and a property tax exemption for surviving spouses of service members killed in action or in connection with a service-related injury. Although each of these initiatives became sponsored bills, all three were unfortunately deferred (left in finance and appropriations).

D. Out of 33 military-related sponsored bills this session, 19 were approved, representing a host of lower-cost initiatives and policy adjustments, including family education, absentee voting, spouse employment protection, and special recognition license plates. To review the complete list, please visit the Virginia Department of Veterans webpage at <https://www.dvs.virginia.gov>.

E. **Upcoming soon:**

1. Next JLC Meeting 14 May 2021; initiation of topics for 2022 (John Down to attend)
2. Setting up virtual conference calls in May with Congressman Good and Spanberger to solicit their support for the MOAA National Initiatives
3. Develop CVC LegCom timeline continuity file.

III. Public Affairs:

A. A Public Affairs Officer has been appointed, CAPT David Hilty, USN (Ret). Dave is establishing a joint Personnel Affairs/Surviving Spouses committee.

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

A. 5 Star.

B. Self-evaluation, 5 Star.

C. 5 Star for Marvin J. Harris Communications Award for printed newsletter and website.

V. Most Significant Chapter Events of the Quarter:

A. Chapter Legislative Committee provided virtual support for VCOC virtual meetings with Virginia State legislators to obtain their support for Joint Leadership Council (JLC) initiatives for 2021. Chapter President participated in the State Legislative Forum virtually in January.

B. The Chapter effected a smooth transition to its four new Officers/Directors in January: Secretary, Treasurer, Legislative Chair, and Membership Chair.

C. The Chapter continues to publish its newsletter, *The Bugle*, during the pandemic despite the cancellation of Chapter social functions and community activities. The newsletter, normally printed and mailed to all Chapter members, is being distributed via email and

paper copies are being sent via USPS to those few members who do not have email. The Chapter's Board of Directors believes that *The Bugle* plays an important role in keeping the Chapter members "connected" even though we cannot meet in person.

- D. Chapter Secretary submitted the 2020 Col. Marvin E. Harris Award nomination in January to MOAA Headquarters.
- E. While the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact all chapter in-person activities, we continue to conduct our monthly Board meetings via teleconferencing

Submitted by responsible submitting officer:

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