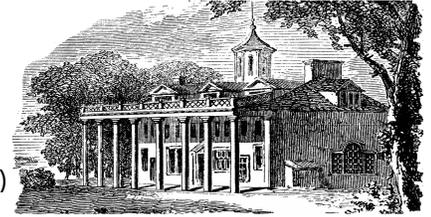


Dedicated to the memory of
General George Washington

The Despatch



Mount Vernon, Virginia Chapter - MOAA
www.mvmoaa.org



Mount Vernon Chapter

5 Star Level of Excellence



Awards (2003-2024)



Never Stop Serving. Be An Inspiration

MAJ Peter Chen, USA(Ret), Editor

On January 11, 2025, I lost my friend Sergeant Major David Davis (USA Ret). Born in Portsmouth, VA, on 1947, he was the son of a Navy CPO. Drafted into the Army and fought in Vietnam, he elected to stay in the Army and became a career Soldier. He became the acting Command Sergeant Major of 2-8 CAV during Operation Desert Storm. He was a retiring SGM serving as the President of Texas Military Historical Society, when I met him while I was a young Lance Corporal in the Marine Corps Reserve. As the military was going through the post-Desert Storm RIF, it became obvious that my chance of getting into Marine Corps PLC wasn't very good. Dave encouraged me to join the Army ROTC at Sam Houston State University, where I eventually was commissioned.

Years later after my time as a tank platoon leader at Ft Lewis and Transportation Corps officer in Germany, I was assigned to Ft Hood, Texas, where he retired. By this time I was married, and our wives became friends as well. Maria as a school principal was a source of knowledge for my wife. While I was deployed to Iraq, they took my wife in and treated her as their own daughter. Being a retired SGM, he was more than just a mentor in a military sense. My wife and I are both immigrants, and the world of US military was completely alien to our parents. Dave and his wife Maria became our guides in ways that our parents couldn't. In addition to what you expect a senior NCO to advise you on, Dave shared with me long forgotten knowledge like what my options were going through another RIF and my own retirement.

Eventually reassignment took us away once again, but Dave and Maria never stopped being inspirations to us. As Dave's health declined over the years, I saw how well he planned for the final days of his life, compared to most people I know. The last time I spoke to him on the phone, he said he was involved with a program that takes younger wounded veterans hunting. Dave complained that many older veterans to include himself are getting too old to take the younger vets to go hunting, and he didn't know what to do. Even in his last days, his thought was never far away from the troops and the veterans.

Among our ranks in MVC, we have no shortage of veterans with distinguished military careers who are inspirations to countless young people like my friend SGM Davis. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for being inspirations and never stop serving.

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Volume 53 Number 4
April 2025

Smash on Station



Esteemed colleagues,

We have scheduled our JROTC Candidate Scholarship Interviews on the 26th of April at the Richard Byrd Library in Springfield. If you wish to participate, please contact Marty Schaller 703-346-8347 or mandmschaller@gmail.com.

Awards – Our chapter has received a 2024 Five Star Level of Excellence Award – our 25th straight – and Col. Marvin J. Harris Communications Awards for our newsletter and website. Congratulations!

Member Spotlight – Weve had a few members who have submitted their stories in the past, and I'd like to see us start anew. Send your stories with photos to Peter Chen, John Prevar or me for inclusion in a future *Despatch*.

Final Thoughts:

In these days of divide attention and divided intentions across the Nation, I am reminded of: “I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic, that I will bear truth faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without and mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office upon which I am about to enter; SO HELP ME GOD.”

Never stop serving our great Nation.

Semper Fidelis,

Smash

NEVER STOP SERVING



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MVC MOAA Legislative Corner

Despatch Editor

MOAA Aims to Improve Unaccompanied Housing

Recently all branches of the military have seen a spike of enlistment rates. We know that importance of quality of life for the troops, and the importance of quality housing. We simply can't continue to attract and retain quality service members without addressing the issue. Although billions were spent over the years on the construction of these housing, we also know the importance of maintenance. Sadly, the current state of unaccompanied housing (UH) across the board has deteriorated to the point that it made MOAA's legislative priorities for this year.

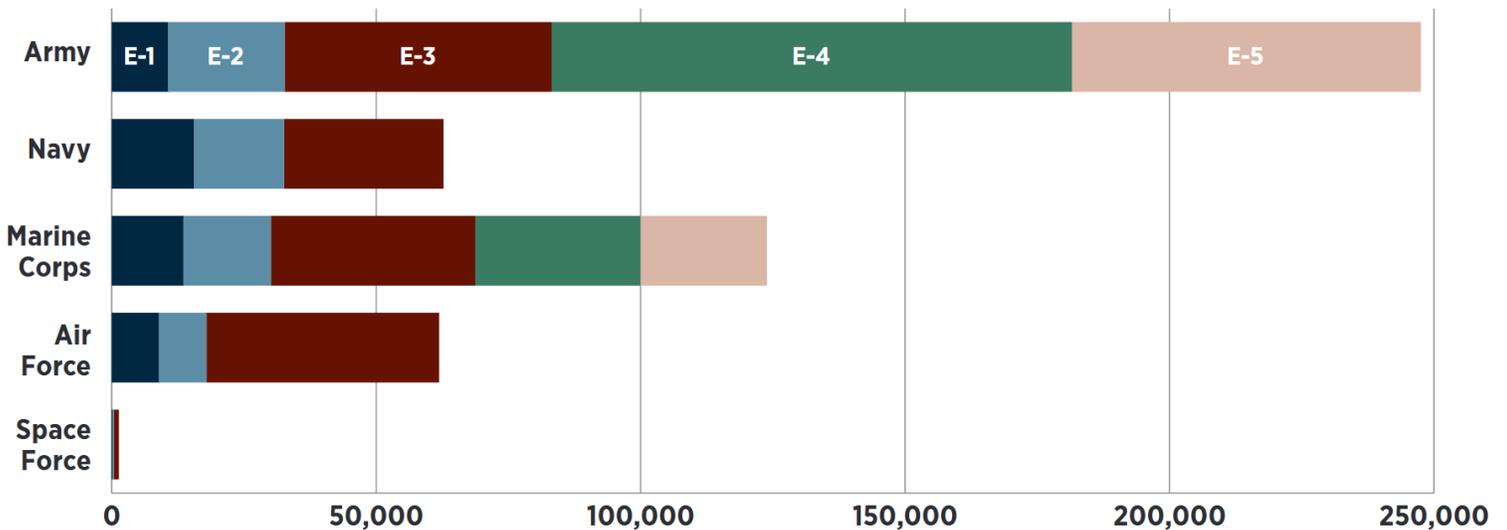
How bad is the problem? According to a MOAA's recent publication "at three of 10 installations, officials told us service members are generally responsible for pest control, or for removing hazardous material from UH, such as mold and sewage." Such unsanitary living conditions caused pest and rodent infestations, and in turn caused even more unsanitary living conditions.

What is being done. According to MOAA, FY 2025 NDAA Requirements

- Requires DoD to detail Facilities Sustainment, Restoration, and Modernization projects for UH.
- Expands housing complaint database to include UH.
- Creates a digital facilities management system for DoD to track facility conditions. Transparency is essential to solving this problem. MOAA is asking Congress to require DoD to make installation unaccompanied housing conditions publicly available (FY 2024 NDAA, Sec. 2839). These steps will support lawmaker oversight and sustain momentum to fix the \$137 billion maintenance backlog.

BY THE NUMBERS: UNACCOMPANIED HOUSING

Nearly 500,000 enlisted servicemembers meet requirements to live in unaccompanied housing. Over 70% of active duty junior enlisted servicemembers (E-1 to E-4) report being single with no children.



Note: DoD personnel data as of September 2024; marriage/children status via DoD's 2023 Demographics Profile. The services generally require enlisted members in certain ranks who are without dependents to live in unaccompanied housing. Requirements vary by service. Army and Marine Corps: E-1 to E-5. Navy: E-1 to E-3, E-4 with fewer than four years of service. Air Force and Space Force: E-1 to E-3, E-4 with fewer than three years of service.

Link to MOAA's issue paper https://www.moaa.org/uploadedfiles/content/take_action/2025-aia-participant-documents/unaccompaniedhousingimprovements_issuepaper.pdf



MVC-MOAA 2025 Events-Calendar

DATE	LOCATION	EVENT / SPEAKER / TOPIC
Sat. Apr 26 1:30pm- 3:30pm	Byrd Library	Scholarship Candidate Interviews.
Wed. May 7 7 pm-9 pm	Virtual	BOD Meeting: IRS reports due; Scholarship certificates/checks, JROTC medal presentations; 2 nd QTR VCOC Report; VA Corp. Commission fee; renew PO box rental.
Sat. May 10 11 am-1 pm	TBD	Lunch brunch. (Speaker TBD) <i>Lunch served at 11:30 am, Speaker to follow.</i>
Wed. Sep 3 7 pm-9 pm	Virtual	BOD Meeting: Appoint Nomination Cmte for Nov Officer election; need volunteers for Ft. Belvoir Retirees Activities Day in Sep; confirm speakers.
Wed. Sep 24 (Tentative) 6 pm-9 pm	TBD	Dinner. Speaker TBD. <i>Social Hour (Cash Bar) 6-7 pm. Buffet served at 7 pm, Speaker at 8 pm.</i>
Wed. Oct 1 7 pm-9 pm	Virtual	BOD Meeting. 4 th QTR VCOC report; Legislative Cmte proposes Natl objectives;
Fri. Oct 24 8 am-1pm	Wells Field House, 1814 Goethals Rd, Ft Belvoir	Fort Belvoir Annual Retiree Appreciation Day
Sat. Nov 15 11 am-1 pm	Glory Days 3141 Duke St Alexandria Commons Shopping Mall	Lunch/Brunch. Annual Business Meeting. Speaker TBD. <i>Lunch served at 11:30 am. Officer Installation and Speaker to follow.</i>
Sat. Dec 13 (Tentative) 9:30 am-3 pm	Alexandria Natl Cemetery; Social	 Wreath Laying  Holiday Social This is becoming an annual tradition for the Mount Vernon Chapter. Please join us for the annual Wreaths Across America day at Alexandria National Cemetery. We will be joining veterans from local VSOs, Boy Scouts, various military affiliated youth organizations, and numerous supporters from around the community. Following the wreath laying, we will conduct our holiday social at a place to be determined.



VCOC 2nd QUARTER MEETING
Wednesday April 15, 2025
Zoom Meeting
NOTES

President's Report

- COL Diana Kupchella, USAF (Ret) welcomed everyone. Currently there are still vacant positions including First VP, Secretary, and Chaplain for this current year. A question was asked job descriptions for officer positions, and the President reported these descriptions are on the VCOC website. New nominations for President, 1st VP, 2nd VP, 3rd VP and Treasurer positions are requested by the July 2025 Q3 Meeting for the 2026-2027 calendar years.
- President Kupchella reported that she and 3rd VP COL Monti Zimmerman attended the National MOAA Advocacy in Action Meeting last week in Washington DC. She thanked COL Zimmerman, and he has indicated his intent to step down from the 3rd VP at the end of this term/the 2025 calendar year.
- The President reported that the VA Council was well represented with 5 Star MOAA Harris Communication and Level of Excellence (LOE) Awards. Awards will be mailed to the individual chapters.

Treasurer's Report

- MAJ Sherry Ferki, USA (Ret) reviewed the distributed VCOC Q1 2025 Financial Report highlighting recent activities.
- Income: included \$997.70 in dues collected. She mentioned needing a current contact for the Potomac chapter as she has not been successful in reaching anyone at the chapter. John Down referred her to the last available VCOC Directory. Greg Frederick will provide her with a current dues contact for the George C Marshall chapter. Income also included a \$800 grant was received from National MOAA.
- Expenses: included total of \$452.88 largely for awards/mementos and travel. The annual consulting fee for the website previously paid to Network Solutions not deemed unnecessary for this year.

Membership and Chapter Affairs

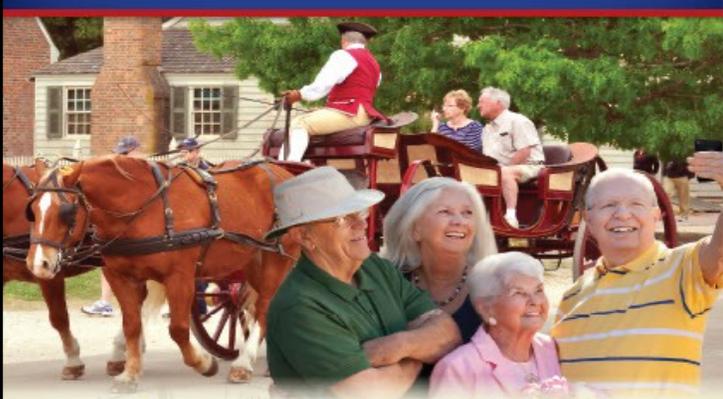
- CDR John Prevar, USN (Ret) – Reported VCOC 2024 collective chapters' membership was currently 1154 and down 363 members from last year. He urged continued member recruitment efforts and acknowledged related challenges. The bi-annual chapter reports are due the 6th of July. Please send all chapter reports to President, 2nd VP (membership), and Treasurer.

Legislative Affairs

- COL Monti Zimmerman, USA (Ret) - Reported on the busy week with Advocacy in Action in DC. MOAA's five main 2025 legislative advocacy issues include: 1) Unaccompanied Housing Improvements, 2) Ending The Wait (Toxic Exposure Coverage) Improvements, 3) Military Spouse Hiring Act, 4) Military Health System Access to Care, and 5) Veterans Caregiver Support Improvements Legislation.

New Business: Congressional Luncheon – will not be happening due to focus on Biennial Meeting and other priorities.

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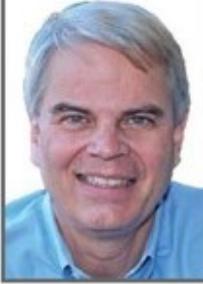
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