

Dedicated to the memory of
General George Washington



Mount Vernon Chapter

The Despatch



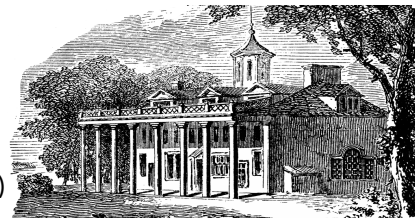
Mount Vernon, Virginia Chapter - MOAA

www.mvmoaa.org

5 Star Level of Excellence



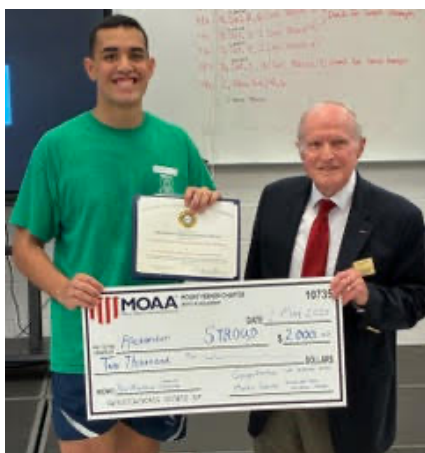
Awards (2003-2024)



CDR Rex A. Maddox Scholarship Awarded

LCDR Marty Schaller, USN (Ret), JROTC Scholarship Chairman

On 5 May, LCDR Marty Schaller presented the CDR Rex A. Maddox Scholarship Award to AFJROTC Cadet Alexander Stroud of Battlefield High School in Haymarket, Virginia. Alex is an outstanding student in all subjects and captain of the football team. He will be attending Virginia Tech on an AFROTC scholarship as a member of the Corps of Cadets. The second photo shows the rest of his flight members behind Cadet Stroud and Marty. They are all casually dressed because the cadets had just completed periodic fitness testing, led by their new Senior Air Science Instructor.



In This Issue

- 1 Announcements
- 2 Smash on Station
- 3 Chapter Officers
- 4-5 Legislative Corner
- 6 Upcoming Events
- 7 More from our Sponsors

MVC MOAA won 2024 MOAA Levels of Excellence and Col. Marvin J. Harris Communication Awards

This year, judges considered 169 LOE award and 255 Communications award nominations. We are very grateful that MOAA recognized our chapter's extraordinary accomplishments. Out of almost 400 MOAA affiliates, 168 councils and chapters, MVC once again earned the LOE award recognition this year. These councils and chapters excel at supporting and fostering programs that directly support the MOAA mission and their communities. The annual Col. Marvin J. Harris Communications Awards recognize councils and chapters that achieve excellence in communicating with their members and communities. MOAA affiliates nominated themselves in two categories: newsletters (print or electronic) and websites. Submissions were judged on design and content. For the 2024 program year, there were 225 communications awards. MVC MOAA is honored to be recognized.

Volume 53 Number 5
May 2025

Smash on Station



Esteemed Colleagues,

The Mount Vernon MOAA is in the **JROTC award presentation season!** Thank you to all the presenters who have volunteered in the past! For those who haven't done it, please consider volunteering to present an award in the future. Members of the Mount Vernon Chapter interviewed candidates for Mount Vernon MOAA Scholarships on Saturday the 26th April at the Robert E. Byrd Library in Springfield, VA. **This year's winner was AFJROTC Cadet Alexander Stroud of Battlefield High School in Haymarket, VA.** Congratulations!

May Observances – The 1st of May was **National Day of Prayer**. May is **Military Appreciation Month** and the 17th is National Armed Forces Day. A fitting end to Military Appreciation Month is Memorial Day and this year the Memorial Day Parade is back, on the 26th of May as is **Rolling to Remember in DC** on Sunday the 25th of May!

Final Thoughts:

We cherish too, the Poppy red

That grows on fields where valor led,

It seems to signal to the skies

That blood of heroes never dies. – Moina Michael



Take unto Thyself, O Lord, the souls of the valiant!

Never stop serving our great Nation.

Semper Fidelis,

Smash

NEVER STOP SERVING



Mount Vernon Chapter

Chapter Officers

President: Col Douglas Yurovich, USMC (Ret)
703-690-7113
1st VP: CDR George Wallace, USN (Ret)
703-354-4647
Secretary: LTC Elmontenal Allens, USA (Ret)
703-919-4381
Treasurer: Col Mike Broderick, USAF (Ret)
703-690-4672
Past President: LTC Cerie Kimball, USA (Ret)
703-310-4605

Standing Committees

Arrangements: LTC Cerie Kimball, USA (Ret)
Legislative: CDR John Prevar, USN (Ret)
Membership: LTC Elmontenal Allens, USA (Ret)
Personal Affairs: Vacant
Program Speakers: LTC Cerie Kimball, USA (Ret)
Public Affairs: LTC Cerie Kimball, USA (Ret)
HS JROTC Awards: Lt Col Bill Kehoe, USAF (Ret)
703-751-6416
JROTC Scholarship: LCDR Marty Schaller, USN (Ret)
Honor Flight Coordinator: LTC Carl Jurison, USA (Ret)
703-399-6602
Wreaths Across America: COL Robert Patrick, USA (Ret)
703-690-9336

Directors (2024-2025)

MAJ Peter Chen, USA (Ret)
703-402-2184
Lt Col Jeff Banks, USAF (Ret)
703-559-1957
2nd LT Abigail Staggemeier, USAR
714-794-4273

Directors (2025-2026)

LCDR Marty Schaller, USN (Ret)
703-346-8347
Lt Col Jose Harris, USAF (Ret)
402-943-9722
CDR John Prevar, USN (Ret)
703-340-9587

Other Duties

Surviving Spouse Coordinator: Vacant
TOPS Liaison: Lt Col Jose Harris, USAF (Ret)
VCOC Representative: CDR John Prevar, USN (Ret)
Chaplain: Col Arnie Porter, USAF (Ret)
703-780-4310
Despatch Editor: MAJ Peter Chen, USA (Ret)
Webmaster: Joe Leonard, 843-278-1240

ARQUILLA & POE, PLC



**Fred Arquilla &
Joyce Peters**

Ret. Army JAG Colonels

Wills, Revocable Trusts & Probate,
Family Law & Personal Injury

Free 30- Min. Initial Consultation

703-719-9292

Email: firm@aalaw.com WWW.AALAW.COM

GEORGE WALLACE

CDR USN (RET)

USSVI LIFE MEMBER***NSL SPONSOR

LIFE MEMBER MOAA***BUCKEYE FOR LIFE

CELL (415) 672-0517 GEORGEW@RMI.NET



Amazon, Kindle, Audible

PISTON2JET

Flight Training and Aviation Solutions

Doug Yurovich, PhD

Chief Test Pilot, Assistant Chief Flight Instructor, Safety Director

dyurovich@piston2jet.com | 703-361-9200 (O) | 10600 Observation Rd
www.piston2jet.com | 571-643-6019 (M) | Manassas, VA 20110

MVC MOAA Legislative Corner

MAJ Peter Chen, USA(Ret), Despatch Editor

Governor Youngkin Calls for Repeal of New Limits on College Tuition Program for Military Families

Recently Virginia's General Assembly approved changes to Virginia Military Survivors & Dependents Education Program (VMSDEP) to address growing tuition costs. The program provides tuition waivers and stipends at public schools in Virginia for children of military members missing in action or taken captive.

Supporters for military families have called for a special session of the General Assembly to repeal the changes to eligibility rules for the VMSDEP. Gov. Glenn Youngkin and General Assembly leaders are taking this course of action under consideration, but so far there doesn't appear to be a consensus on whether the issue has caused a crisis worthy of immediate reversal. The Youngkin administration has prepared draft legislation to repeal the VMSDEP changes, and the governor's office said Youngkin is hoping to work with General Assembly leaders to have them pass it by June 30.

The push to tighten eligibility for the program, which didn't require applicants to live in Virginia and allowed the benefit to be used for advanced degrees in addition to undergraduate studies, infuriated military families who say their benefits shouldn't be on the chopping block at a time when Virginia's budget seems relatively healthy. Though it's existed in some form for decades, the costs of the VMSDEP program have risen dramatically in the last five years due to a 341% increase in the number of students participating. The number of participants has grown from about 1,400 in 2019 to 6,400 by 2023, according to state officials. The program's costs over that five-year period have jumped to 444%, rising from \$11.9 million in the 2018-2019 academic year to \$64.8 million in 2022-2023. In an attempt keep the growing cost under control, the new budget imposed restrictions on the program that would require participants to live in Virginia, first seek other forms of financial aid and only allow the program to be used for undergraduate degrees. The new budget takes effect July 1.

Virginia's Joint Leadership Council of Veteran Service Organizations voted unanimously to ask state leaders to hold a special session to repeal the changes. "Much of the deliberation for these changes occurred without public input or dialogue," the council said in a written statement. "This issue is too important to decide behind closed doors." The changes to VMSDEP were approved on May 13. Opponents of the new eligibility rules say that if the state was concerned about high costs, officials could have first done a thorough study of the program and given military families more time to adjust.

A Privatized Commissary System Would Put Your Service-Earned Benefit at Risk *By: Cory Titus, MOAA Staff, MAY 06, 2025*

While recent DoD guidance suggests commissaries could be "[prioritized for privatization](#)," the need to preserve the critical service-earned benefits provided by these stores outweighs potential savings found by turning them over to a for-profit enterprise.

Such a move would risk a benefit that allows young military families to make ends meet and allows retirees, disabled veterans, and survivors to keep up with rising costs.

Just as important under the existing budget climate, commissaries have shown an impressive return on investment: A former Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) director [cited FY 2023 figures](#) showing \$1.58 billion in savings by military families provided by \$1.421 billion in funding.

MOAA has long championed the need to protect the commissary benefit. [In 2016 testimony](#) to a House Armed Services Committee panel on military personnel, we broke down the numbers: Taxpayer funding for the commissary program was equivalent to a 2% across-the-board military raise, but the monetary value of the benefit for an E-5 with eight years of service and a family of four equaled a 9% raise. Younger members would find even greater savings, and those figures don't include financial relief provided to retirees and survivors.

The DoD Directive

[An April 7 memo](#) from Deputy Defense Secretary Steve Feinberg outlined "Guiding Principles for the Department of Defense Workforce Optimization," with the goal of aligning "every part of our organization around the needs of the warfighter."

The final recommendation offered: "All functions that are not inherently governmental (e.g., retail sales and recreation) should be prioritized for privatization."

MOAA argues the retail sales associated with the commissary benefit are critical to the needs of the warfighter:

- **Financial Strength:** The financial benefit provided by these stores – by law, shoppers must save 23.7% compared with civilian outfits – is a key part of the compensation provided to those who serve. Privatization risks putting profit over the needs of these members and their families.
- **Global Presence:** The commissary offers a global network of 235 stores, all with the foremost obligation to serve those in uniform and their families. Servicemembers stationed on every corner of the globe can get a piece of home at a fair price – a key pillar of family readiness.
- **Commitment to Honoring Service:** A strong commissary system continues providing benefits well after service, helping keep the promise of taking care of all in uniform, their families, and their survivors.

These priorities can be achieved under the current system without the need to privatize. Commissary leaders are already making plans to become "a commercial grocery chain that happens to work for the Department of Defense," [DeCA director John Hall said April 22](#) at a meeting of the American Logistics Association. "By that I mean we'll offer all the [products and services](#), all those good things you see in a good commercial grocery chain, and while doing that, we're going to continue to deliver 25% savings."

Tools [like variable pricing](#) will help the agency reach this goal. MOAA looks forward to working DeCA officials in keeping the needs of the warfighter as the agency's top priority.

Lessons of Privatization

While a privatized system may result in short-term savings, past experience suggests the potential for long-term problems. Changes to military housing in the 1990s created a public-private partnership as a way to tackle an ever-growing maintenance backlog, but complaints about unsafe conditions continued, reaching a peak with a [Reuters investigation in 2019](#) that prompted congressionally mandated reforms.

[RELATED: [New Law Strengthens 'Bill of Rights' Provisions for Tenants in Military Housing](#)]

Those efforts, with MOAA support, [continue in the 119th Congress](#) – about 30 years after the privatization took shape.



DoD officials can avoid similar problems by strengthening DeCA and allowing it to continue providing much-needed, service-earned savings to commissary shoppers.

Keep up with the latest on this issue and other MOAA priorities by visiting our [advocacy news page](#).



MVC-MOAA 2025 Events-Calendar



DATE	LOCATION	EVENT / SPEAKER / TOPIC
Sat. May17 12:45pm	Arlington National Cemetery	National Memorial Day Observance Flag Bearer Rehearsal Rehearsal to take place at 1:00 p.m. EST at Arlington National Cemetery's (ANC) Memorial Amphitheater. Interested members please contact Doug Yurovich acellc918@gmail.com or George Wallace georgew@rmi.net
Mon. May26 11am	Arlington National Cemetery	National Memorial Day Observance Official event web link for general public https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Media/News/Post/14720/National-Memorial-Day-Observance-Monday-May-26-2025 Flag bearers must be at check point by 8 a.m. Check point open to general public at 9 a.m. All individuals going through security need to have a Real ID-compliant ID, which can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DoD Uniformed Services ID Cards (Military Retiree or Dependent ID) Local DoD Access Cards and Passes (i.e., Defense Biometric Identification System Card) U.S. or Foreign Passport or Passport Cards Driver's license with the Real ID
Wed. Sep3 7pm-9pm	Virtual	BOD Meeting: Appoint Nomination Cmte for Nov Officer election; need volunteers for Ft. Belvoir Retirees Activities Day in Sep; confirm speakers.
Wed. Sep24 (Tentative) 6pm-9pm	TBD	Dinner. Speaker TBD. <i>Social Hour (Cash Bar) 6-7pm. Buffet served at 7pm, Speaker at 8pm.</i>
Wed. Oct1 7pm-9pm	Virtual	BOD Meeting. 4 th QTR VCOC report; Legislative Cmte proposes Natl objectives;
Fri. Oct24 8 am-1pm	Wells Field House, 1814 Goethals Rd, Ft Belvoir	Fort Belvoir Annual Retiree Appreciation Day
Sat. Nov15 11am-1pm	Glory Days 3141 Duke St Alexandria Commons Shopping Mall	Lunch/Brunch. Annual Business Meeting. Speaker TBD. <i>Lunch served at 11:30am. Officer Installation and Speaker to follow.</i>
Sat. Dec13 (Tentative) 9:30am-3pm	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.

...and more from our much-appreciated sponsors



Picture Yourself Here.

Experience the Camaraderie at Patriots Colony with a Complimentary Two Night Stay! Call 855-258-0520 or Email us at regina.thompson@rivhs.com.

- Experience the story of America in the place where it all began, Colonial Williamsburg.
- Play at Williamsburg National Golf Club, a Jack Nicklaus designed course.
- Enjoy Virginia Capital Trail, a dedicated, paved pedestrian and bicycle trail connecting past and present capitals of Jamestown and Richmond along the Scenic Route 5 corridor.
- Explore College of William and Mary, the second oldest college in the nation.
- Savor hand-crafted cocktails, appetizers and pub fare at Archie's Tavern.
- Discover past friends and relive great memories.

PATRIOTS COLONY
At Williamsburg
www.patriotscolony.com

Patriots Colony, sponsored by Riverside Health System, is a LifeCare community exclusively for retired and former military officers retired and former federal civil employees and their spouses.



TUOMEY TURFGRASS CONSULTING, LLC

Sean Tuomey
Certified Turfgrass & Horticulture Consultant

P.O. Box 10403
Alexandria, VA 22310

info@tuomeyturfgrassconsulting.com
www.tuomeyturfgrassconsulting.com 571-212-4578

Tuomey Turfgrass Consulting

landscape industry
certified
manager & technician

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LANDSCAPE PROFESSIONALS

Soil Analysis; soil fertility, soil biology - edaphology and agronomy - to include weed control and pest control

Certified Nutrient Management Planner

Turfgrass & Horticulture Solutions For All Seasons

"Qualified - Confident - Recognized"



Indian River Colony Club
The Place Patriots Call Home
55+ Community


Call Today! 877-272-5545

3 Day / 2 Night Getaway Package!
Golf, Tennis, Fine Dining and Hotel
ONLY \$99*
*per person

- Single Family Homes
- Private Golf Course
- Private Country Club
- Maintenance Free Living


www.IndianRiverColonyClub.com/usmilitary **FOUR STAR** real estate

Indian River Colony Club • 1936 Freedom Drive • Melbourne, FL 32940





Mid Atlantic
Real Estate Professionals, LLC

Tobin Seven
REALTOR® / Veteran / Eagle Scout
Licensed in VA, DC & MD

SOLD By Seven 

Cell: 703.327.6800
Email: Tobin@SoldBySeven.com
Web: www.SoldBySeven.com

Tobin will give you 0.5% of purchase/sale price back at Settlement. This is real money to you. Licensed in Virginia, Maryland and DC. 34 years' experience and ranked in top 1% of Realtors based on volume. Life Member of MOAA.

SOLD By Seven 

TOBIN SEVEN • REALTOR®
www.SoldBySeven.com
703.327.6800





Mount Vernon Chapter
Military Officers Association of America
P.O. Box 97, Mt Vernon VA 22121-0097

Address Service Request

Comments or letters to the editor may be sent to the above address or email: peter.chen2282015@gmail.com

To join the MOAA Mount Vernon Chapter, please go to:
www.mvmoaa.org

Mount Vernon Chapter Membership

Regular Membership \$25 Surviving Spouse \$10

1. By Mail: Send your check payable to MVC-MOAA to 2025 CHAPTER Membership Dues, Mount Vernon Chapter, Military Officers Association of America, P.O. Box 97, Mount Vernon, VA 22121-0097
2. Pay online through the national MOAA website at <https://chapterdues.moaa.org/membership.aspx>
3. Pay online at the Mount Vernon website: www.mvmoaa.org
Click on "Join MVMOAA" (will require you to logon) in the lower right corner or logon first and click "Renew"

Bob's Printing

Family Owned & Operated Since 1979



Robert M. Beach
SKC, USN Retired



8403-D Richmond Highway
Alexandria, Virginia 22309

(703) 360-7284
Fax (703) 360-3825
flagbike@aol.com

**Now and Always
We'll be There.**



1-800-247-2192 • www.moaainsurance.com

The Mount Vernon Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) and national MOAA provide their advocacy in a nonpartisan manner. Any conveyance of partisanship is unintended.