

# The Patriot



Richmond Area Chapter - Military Officers Association of America - March 2019



## The President's Corner by CAPT Mary Lou Wassel

Greetings to All. Our first Sunday Brunch Meeting on February 3<sup>rd</sup> netted a record registration of 96 individuals, the largest meeting attendance for the past couple years. Our speaker, CPT Matt Pinsker, US Army Reserve JAG Corps, delivered a very informative session highlighting lessons learned from his recent six-month mobilization assignment attached to the Department of Justice working as a federal special prosecutor on southern border crimes and illegal immigration.

At this meeting we also honored and celebrated the lives of 13 departed friends and comrades concluding with a very special memorial service and taps. Special thanks are extended to LTCs Owen Waltman, and Ken Ruppert for all their efforts in coordinating the many details and arrangements. Thank you to all who attended.

Based on the positive feedback from many regarding the daytime-weekend timeframe, our next meeting has been scheduled again for Sunday Brunch at Meadowbrook Country Club on March 31<sup>st</sup> beginning at 12:30 PM. COL Mark Rich, USA (Ret), and former zoologist at the San Diego Zoo, will guide us on a China Expedition. For more information see Page 3.

Please be advised this will be the final issue of the Newsletter sent to any individual with unpaid membership dues as of the final deadline of March 31<sup>st</sup>. The website at [www.racmoaa.org](http://www.racmoaa.org) can be used to assist individuals with updating their member profiles, paying dues, registering for events, and making donations.

The Virginia General Assembly will conclude this year's short session on February 23<sup>rd</sup>. Please see the Legislative Update on Page 2. On the National Level, please take the time to complete and return postcards to your national legislators included in our MOAA magazine, *Military Officer*.

If you have never attended the VCOA Congressional Appreciation Luncheon, please consider joining your RAC-MOAA colleagues this year. The luncheon will be from 1100 to 1400 at the Capitol Hill Club in Washington DC, on 30 April 2019. Costs are offset with sponsor support from Patriots Colony. (See the Registration Form on Page 3).

Our chapter continues to seek the services of a volunteer willing to assist as our webmaster (see enclosed ad for details). Additionally, we are looking for members willing to assist with presentations of JROTC Leadership Medals at our local Richmond high schools. Contact LTC Ruppert or any Board member to express your interest. There are also vacancies on our Board of Directors. If you would like to attend a Board meeting, please contact me or LTC Terry Moore, our Secretary.

I welcome your comments and feedback anytime. Thanks for your continued support.

## Last Chance to Renew Membership for 2019

As mentioned above by the chapter president, RAC-MOAA members who have not renewed membership in the chapter for 2019 will cease to be chapter members after 31 March 2019.

If you have not as yet renewed your chapter membership for 2019, you will be sent either an e-mail renewal reminder (if we have your e-mail address on file) or a hard-copy renewal reminder by postal mail

Unless you receive either of these renewal notifications, you do not need to take any action, as your dues have already been paid for 2019 and beyond. For those members who receive a dues notice, please renew membership by 31 March 2019. Thanks.

## Sunday Brunch

31 March 2019

12:30 PM

Meadowbrook Country Club

### Menu

Omelet Station  
Waffle Station  
Carved Ham  
Fried Chicken & More  
Fruit Tray  
Assorted Desserts

**\$25.00 Per Person**  
(Dress: Business Casual)

### Program

COL Mark Rich  
"China Expedition"

(Reservation form on Page 6)

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## Legislative Update by LTC Craig Pinsker

Because of construction of the new General Assembly building, we were unable to secure space for our usual "Storming the Hill" at the General Assembly, just like last year, but MOAA members have been advocating individually and attending the weekly Military and Veteran Caucus. These meetings are open to all of us. It is nice to see our elected officials working together on our non-partisan issues (anyone interested in these meetings should contact me at [cpinsker@gmail.com](mailto:cpinsker@gmail.com) or call 804-301-1222).

Although nothing is final until bills are passed by both houses and signed by the Governor, there is reason for some optimism. There were 7 initiatives of the JLC (Joint Legislative Council). Here is the situation as of 22 February 2019:

Five initiatives will most likely not become law. Things can change over the next month but these require funding making passage extremely unlikely. The following are the 2 items we expect to pass:

JLC - 6 States that a veteran's 90% permanent disability need not be combat related to get certain benefits for the spouse and children. The new feature is eliminating the requirement that it be combat related. This has been sent to the governor who is expected to sign it.

JLC - 4 Will exempt payment of property tax on one car for 100%, service connected, permanently disabled veterans. This is a state constitutional change, so it must be passed for 2 more years before it takes effect.

Unfortunately we were again unable to get electronic return of ballots from our troops overseas. The excuse was the cost for pilot program of \$282,600. Financial support will continue on an earlier JLC initiative for skilled medical personnel to transition into the civilian workforce.

There were many other bills related to the military community that were passed. Many are related to state infrastructure to make better use of existing military facilities, and more attractive to the DoD. From the state's point of view, this will bring more federal money flowing into the state, as they find that Virginia is a great place to work.

This year we will again participate in the VCOC Congressional Appreciation Luncheon on Tuesday, 30 April 2019, at the Capital Hill Club in Washington. The event is subsidized by our sponsor Patriots Colony, so the cost is only \$20 for RAC-MOAA Members. Contact any board member for more information. A registration form is on Page 3. A limited number of spaces are still open.

National MOAA has ten issues that we can summarize as follows: (1) Ensure any Tricare reform sustains access to top-quality care. (2) Prevent disproportional Tricare fee increases. (3) Sustain military pay comparability with the private sector. (4) Stop erosion of compensation and non-pay quality-of-life benefits. (5) End financial penalties for military survivors. (6) End concurrent receipt penalties for military retirees. (7) Achieve equity of benefits for Guard and Reserve members with their active duty counterparts. (8) Strengthen DoD-VA collaboration and services to support wounded warriors and an expanding population of women veterans. (9) Ensure timely access to service-earned VA benefits. (10) Protect military and veteran family support programs and policies. If you are concerned about the future for our children and grandchildren, get involved in advocacy. I think you would find it as interesting as I do.



### Sunday Brunch Highlights

The photo at left shows our members enjoying the 3 February brunch. At right, LTC Ken Ruppert conducts the Memorial Service, which also featured a "Missing Man" table. A nice job by all.



### Treasurer's Report

Balance on Hand 1 January 2019:	\$ 22,414.00
Receipts:	<u>6,311.00</u>
Cash balance:	\$ 28,725.00
Expenditures:	<u>    213.00</u>
Balance on Hand 20 February 2019:	\$ 28,512.00
Less reserves and payables:	<u>-14,409.00</u>
Unencumbered balance:	\$ 14,103.00

### The Patriot

A non-partisan publication issued five times each year in January, March, May, September and November

Send articles or comments to:

Richmond Area Chapter - MOAA  
ATTN: Newsletter Editor

P. O. Box 72604, Richmond, VA 23235-8017



Please join RAC-MOAA members and guests for another Brunch meeting on Sunday, March 31st, at Meadowbrook Country Club beginning at 1230. Based on the rave reviews and positive feedback from last month's meeting, we have decided to again host a daytime and weekend brunch meeting.

The meeting will feature a special **China Expedition** with our speaker, COL Mark Rich (USA Ret). Mark's early civilian career as zoologist (BA & MS in Zoology) included ten years as the Curator of Mammals at the San Diego Zoo. He enjoyed many unique animal journeys and currently teaches a course on expeditions at the at the University of Richmond. This presentation will feature his adventure to Guangzhou China to deliver a baby orangutan and baby hippopotamus.

The Sunday Brunch menu will include omelet bar, waffle bar, ham carving station, fried chicken, vegetables, fruit tray, assorted desserts, coffee and tea. The cost for the brunch is \$25 per person including taxes and gratuities. Please consider registering and paying for the meeting on our website ([www.racmoaa.org](http://www.racmoaa.org)), or if you prefer, you may register and pay by using the mail-back form in the hard-copy newsletter. The registration deadline is March 27<sup>th</sup>.

All guests are welcome to attend. Dress for this meeting will be business casual. Don't miss this opportunity for great food, camaraderie with friends and an expedition to China! A reservation form for your use is on Page 6.

**VCOC CONGRESSIONAL APPRECIATION LUNCHEON**  
**Tuesday, 30 April, 2019**  
**CAPITOL HILL CLUB, WASHINGTON D.C. 20003**  
**(202) 484-4590**

ATTENDEE NAME AND RANK: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS AND PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CHAPTER AFFILIATION: \_\_\_\_\_

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: This completed reservation form, along with a \$20 check (\$25 for non-Chapter MOAA members/guests) payable to "VCOC-MOAA" **must be received** NLT 22 April 2019.

**Send to the VCOC Treasurer at:**  
**LtCol Jim Stephan USAF (ret)**  
**1707 Beach Rd**  
**Hampton, VA 23664**

Refund requests (to Jim) will be honored through 15 April at which time your reservation becomes non-refundable. If you are unsure of your congressional district, visit <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/findyourreps.xpd?state=VA>. Every effort will be made to seat you with your Congressman.

## A Letter of Thanks

Thank you all so much for including my mother, Bettie W. Weaver, in your Memorial Ceremony at the Meadowbrook Country Club on Sunday, February 3rd. Your RAC-MOAA membership is comprised of many talented and accomplished people, and my late mother and father enjoyed their chapter membership and benefited greatly from the camaraderie among so many friends.

The memorial ceremony was dignified, honorable and deliberate, and I was moved to tears thinking of all the bright lights of duty, honor and country, and the actions that each speaker addressed. Each of the honorees remembered - and every MOAA member - have set aside their personal hopes and aspirations to add to the greater good. I enjoyed sitting with Owen and Betty Waltman and getting to know them better.

From my vantage point, so close to the table set for the missing members of the Armed Forces, the talk at the tables around me and the silence that emanated from that square table beside me, really focused my mind on the occasion - a gathering of the present, set to honor the past, and a dedication to securing the future.

Thank you again for including the memory of my mother among those remembered at the ceremony.

Sincerely,

*Betsy Brandt, daughter of LTC Albert and Bettie Weaver*

## Critical Need for Webmaster

Our chapter is seeking a webmaster for our updated website launched in November 2018. Our site is now hosted through an external vendor who also hosts several other MOAA chapters and many other military non-profit groups. The webmaster does not need to serve as a Board member, and the position can be filled by a member or acquaintance of a member. Individuals with recent basic computer skills are highly desirable. This volunteer position is very flexible and can be performed around the schedule of a busy working or non-working person. Basic training for the new webmaster will be provided by the current webmaster and the President.

Duties for our webmaster include: serving as a key member of the Website Administrative Team along with other key Board members; responding to member general inquiries received through the website; acting as the chapter point of contact for queries with our vendor on needed updates that may require programming changes by the vendor; and assisting in the running of reports and member e-mails requested by the President and other members of the board. To express your interest, offer suggestions for candidates, or obtain more information, please contact Mary Lou Wassel at [marylouwassel@me.com](mailto:marylouwassel@me.com) or 804-551-1878

### Chapter Membership Report

	Regular	Auxiliary	Honorary	Total
January 2019:	439	78	9	526
Gains:	2	4	0	6
Losses:	5	1	0	6
March 2019:	436	81	9	526

### In Memoriam

**Col Thomas Fiden**  
*United States Air Force*

**Capt Robert Colby**  
*United States Air Force*

**LtCol Randolph Brunell**  
*United States Marine Corps*

**Mrs Kay Simmons**  
*Auxiliary Member*

**LtCol L. Edward Labin**  
*United States Marine Corps*

*Our sincere condolences to the family and friends of these esteemed patriots of our chapter*

## Have a Happy Easter

### Chapter Contacts - 2018 thru 2019

#### Elected Officers & Directors

President	CAPT Mary Lou Wassel	804-551-1878
1st Vice-President	COL Mark Rich	804-706-6650
2nd Vice-president	LTC Craig Pinsker	804-301-1222
Past President	CAPT Hardy Josephson	804-641-9578
Secretary	LTC Terry Moore	804-739-8112
Treasurer	LTC Owen Waltman	804-796-1113
Director-at-Large	COL Don Kaiserman	804-338-3423
Director-at-Large	COL Mark Rich	804-706-6650
Director-at-Large	MAJ Mariah White	804-350-0189
Director-at-Large	MAJ Paul Willard	540-793-0153

#### Appointed Directors

Member Services	CDR John Baumgarten	804-379-7586
Legislative Affairs	MAJ Mariah White	804-350-0189
Youth Programs	LTC Ken Ruppard	804-639-0179
Personal Affairs	COL Jim Rose	804-276-6775
Transition Services	Vacant	
Publicity	COL Jim Rose	804-276-6775
Auxiliary Affairs	Mrs Rosemary Salcedo	804-938-9945
Hospitality	Vacant	
Trips & Tours	LTC Owen Waltman	804-796-1113
Chaplain	LTC Ken Ruppard	804-639-0179

## More Chapter News

### We Need Your Support for ROTC/JROTC Awards

Each year our chapter supports ROTC and Junior ROTC programs in twenty-five area high schools and the University of Richmond. Many of you know about the COL Mel Drisko Leader-Scholar awards program, which provides scholarships to deserving seniors who intend to pursue collegiate careers as military officers. Many of you have attended our May dinner meeting where the students are our guests for dinner and these scholarships are awarded.

In addition to this scholarship program, RAC-MOAA provides a MOAA ROTC or Junior ROTC award to outstanding junior-year cadets. Senior instructors are asked to nominate a deserving junior who demonstrates academic achievement and leadership skills. These medals and an accompanying certificate are presented to the cadet at an appropriate school awards ceremony. Members of RAC-MOAA are encouraged to attend a ceremony and make the award personally.

Traditionally these award presentations are done by members of our Board of Directors. We are looking for additional members of our great chapter who might be interested in making these medal presentations. It is a joy to participate in this way and meet these amazing young leaders - our military leaders of tomorrow.

If you would like to share in this program and make a presentation or two, please contact any member of the RAC-MOAA board or contact Chaplain LTC Ken Ruppap directly at [kmruppap@gmail.com](mailto:kmruppap@gmail.com). If you have a school preference we will try to schedule you for that presentation.

### MCAP - What is It and Why Do We Have It

Our chapter has a history of reaching out to local organizations that serve the military and veteran communities. In 2008, the chapter started a program called the Military Community Assistance Program known simply as MCAP.

Donations received for this program go 100% to one or more organizations each year. Some years we are fortunate enough to share \$6,000 to \$8,000 with these organizations. More recently we have been able to do much less due to reduced donations from our chapter members.

Organizations we have helped include the Fisher House at the VA Hospital, the USO at the Richmond airport, the Spinal Cord Injury unit at the VA Hospital, the Sitter-Barfoot Veterans Care Center at the VA hospital, the Families of the Wounded Fund, which supports families with costs of staying in Richmond to assist in the healing of injured relatives, the Virginia National Guard Foundation, which provides emergency assistance to the families of deployed Guard soldiers, and Tech 4 Troops, which assists veterans develop computer skills while disassembling and recycling old electronic devices.

Those listed above include some of the organizations in the Richmond area we are fortunate to assist as funds allow - but we could do even more with your support.

Chapter members are not always able physically to volunteer time to assist other organizations with hands-on assistance, but often are able to provide some financial assistance. By contributing to our MCAP program even a few dollars can join other donations and allow your chapter to provide even greater assistance.

Please consider contributing to our chapter's Military Community Assistance Program (MCAP) fund by either using the form on Page 6 of this newsletter or donate on-line at our website at [racmoaa-org.vps-vetventures-org.vps.ezhostingserver.com/Donations](http://racmoaa-org.vps-vetventures-org.vps.ezhostingserver.com/Donations).

Contact Chaplain LTC Ken Ruppap at [kmruppap@gmail.com](mailto:kmruppap@gmail.com) if you need further information or assistance in making your much-needed donation. Thanks.

# WANTED!

**Willing Volunteers  
to assist with these  
chapter committees:**

- **Membership**
- **Communications**
- **Community Outreach**
- **Legislation**

Contact: [marylouwassel@me.com](mailto:marylouwassel@me.com)

SERVICE WILL BE YOUR

# ◆ REWARD ◆

### Welcome 6 New Members

Col Arthur Broussard, USAF

Loretta Brunell, Auxiliary

Col Joe Wadle, USMC

Virginia Fiden, Auxiliary

Jean Colby, Auxilliary

Betty Labin, Auxiliary

## Forms & Reservations

To reply, use the envelope enclosed. If the envelope is missing, or you read our newsletter via e-mail or on our website, send correspondence to:

**Richmond Area Chapter  
MOAA  
P. O. Box 72604  
Richmond, VA 23235-8017**

## Chapter Database or E-mail Address Corrections

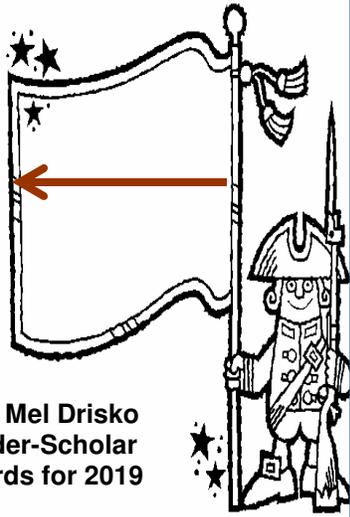
Please make the following changes to the RAC-MOAA Membership Database and/or my e-mail address:

Request you add ZipCode Plus 4, if this is not already on your address label, or of this is a change of address. The Plus 4 gives you much faster mail delivery service. Thank you. Keeping us informed of address changes saves money.

## Help Recognize America's Future Officers

Why not take this opportunity to help RAC-MOAA reach its Year 2019 program goal of \$5,000 for the chapter's *COL Mel Drisko Memorial Leader-Scholar Fund*. As shown by the flag on the left, some chapter members have already helped us make progress toward our goal. Join this philanthropic group today by making your personal contribution to the Leader-Scholar Fund.

\$5,000  
\$4,000  
\$3,000  
\$2,000  
\$1,000  
\$ 0



**COL Mel Drisko  
Leader-Scholar  
Awards for 2019**

## COL Mel Drisko Leader-Scholar Awards Contribution

I wish to contribute \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to support the *COL Mel Drisko Memorial Leader-Scholar Awards Fund*. This fund provides monetary awards for senior-year JROTC cadets who have demonstrated the leadership and scholastic ability to pursue collegiate careers as military officers. *All contributions are tax-deductible.*

Printed Name and Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

## Military Community Assistance Program (MCAP) Contribution

I wish to contribute \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to support the Military Community Assistance Program (MCAP). This fund provides money to support one or more of the following initiatives: support for wounded warriors and their families; memorials for troops killed-in-action; and other means of necessary and worthwhile support for the military and veterans communities of Virginia. *All contributions are tax-deductible.*

Printed Name and Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

## March 2019 Brunch Meeting Reservation

Please make reservations for \_\_\_\_\_ persons for the brunch meeting on **Sunday, 31 March 2019 at 12:30 PM** at the Meadowbrook Country Club. My check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (**\$25.00 per person**) payable to "**RAC-MOAA**" is enclosed.

Rank and name: \_\_\_\_\_

Guest(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Buffet Menu

**Omelet Station  
Waffle Station  
Carved Ham  
Fried Chicken  
Potatoes & Vegetables  
Assorted Desserts  
Beverages**

Are you attending a Chapter meeting for the first time? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Check here if you need a ride to the meeting



**Deadline for reservations or cancellations**

**Wednesday, 27 March**