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Chapter # VA10



NEWSLETTER

Volume XLX Number 2 *Published Monthly (except July)* **February 2025**



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – COL RON CORSON

January is over! A lot of things have happened in America and the world and except for the fires in California most of those happenings appear to be for the good of America. America's change of leadership was traditional and grand, the free world and our enemies have been put on notice that America is back. My "The Ohio State University" football team is this year's National Football Champion, and my Philadelphia Eagles Football Team are on their way to the Super Bowl. So, at least you know that your Chapter President is as happy as he could be.

Our January luncheon at Hampton Yacht Club was enjoyed by all those who attended and the February Luncheon is scheduled for Patriot's Colony on the 27th. I announced at the January meeting that the Board of Directors had voted to go back to our normal schedule of monthly meetings versus every other month meetings temporarily adopted in past months. I think holding meetings every month will strengthen the Chapter. While our Chapter does a lot of good things in the Peninsula Area considering our ROTC and JROTC programs, legislative actions, and community support, one of our main objectives is to be a viable and active social organization as well. I don't believe that anyone can receive the full benefits of belonging to VIPMOAA unless they actively participate in Chapter events.

In part, because of the chapter's reduced social schedule, donations were somewhat lower in 2024 than previous years. I mention this hopefully to encourage members to continue their support for our JROTC Scholarship Program, our ROTC support, and Community Support Program. VIPMOAA has been highly successful for more than a decade and a half in its Scholarship and Community Support in the peninsula area due entirely to the strong support of our members. VIPMOAA continues to be one of Virginia's largest Chapters and a MOAA National Five Star Chapter. Let's keep up the pace!

This year for the first time in a long time, VIPMOAA will host a Sunday Luncheon in July with the Hampton Roads Chapter and the Portsmouth Chapter. For a number of years our two sister Chapters have hosted the event and some VIPMOAA members have attended what was typically a Sunday Brunch. This year we have agreed to host the Sunday event. It will be held at the James River Country Club where we held our wonderful December Christmas luncheon. I mention this coming event early because VIPMOAA has not held a monthly event in July and hope that this year our members will come out for this tri-Chapter event.

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PG
President's Message	1
Legis	2
W&M Commission/Tri-Chpt Brunch/SS	3
6888 th Central Postal Directory Battalion	4
Ft Gregg-Adams/4Chaplains/K Coccio	5
VIPMOAA Website Homepage	6
Donations	7
Pictures of Jan Luncheon	8
Member Stats/TAPS	9
Executive Board	10
Feb Lunch Reservation Form	11
Calendar	12

HOOAH! RON

NEVER STOP SERVING



LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS - Col Jim Pauls

I want to discuss two significant Legislative issues affecting current and former Military members and their families that I consider especially significant: one on the National Level is the impact of President Trump’s recently announced “Funding Freeze” and the other, at the State level, is the outcome of significant changes to the State “Virginia Military Survivor Dependent & Education Program” (VMSDEP) which were made by the State Legislature during their Legislative Session this past year.

Trump “Funding Freeze “

On the weekend of January 25-26, President Trump announced he was directing a “Freeze” on “Federal grants and loans” which, as might be expected, created a “firestorm” of controversy and confusion among Federal agencies and politicians in DC! During the next couple of days, the White House and the Office and Management and Budget (OMB) issued “clarifications” about the “Freeze” including the fact that it “...would not affect military families and veterans receiving direct public assistance such as ‘food stamps’ and ‘Woman, Infants, and Children (WIC)’ vouchers, as well as Social Security benefits, Medicare and other welfare benefits going “directly” to individuals. On Tuesday, January 28, Federal District Judge Loren L. AliKahn issued a temporary “Block” on the Order until February 8th. In the meantime, OMB issued an explanation to Congress that the “Freeze” is intended to be “...expressly limited to programs, projects, and activities ...such as ending diversity programs, the “Green New Deal,” and funding non-governmental organizations that undermine the national interest.” OMB also emphasized that “...any Program that provided direct benefits to Americans is explicitly exempted by the pause and the review process.” The outcome of the “Freeze” should be very interesting but will not, in my opinion, end follow-on Legal challenges! Stay-tuned as things change daily.

The VMSDEP Program

During last year’s Virginia Legislative Session, a 2024-26 Budget was passed by the Virginia General Assembly and signed into Law by the Governor, despite some strong objections, on May 13th! The approved Budget included significant changes to the VMSDEP which was originally created to provide college tuition assistance to the children of Active-Duty military members who were either “killed-in-action” or totally/permanently disabled during their **WWI** service!!! Over the years the benefit has been expanded to include the Spouses and stepchildren, as well as dependents of Veterans killed or disabled due to ANY service-related injury! Colleges were being required to “waive” up to 8 semesters of tuition. During the deliberations leading up to the Budget proposal approved in May 2024, the Legislature significantly revised the Program to include making applicants exhaust all other types of programs offering tuition assistance and no longer provided assistance for Graduate school or “second” degrees. Following his signing, the Budget into Law, the Governor signed a “Directive” that a “VMSDEP Task Force” be established to review all the modifications to the program that were included in the new Budget. The Virginia budget is a two-year budget that begins on July 1st. In as much as the Legislature “reconvenes” for two weeks in the Summer before July 1st, there was still time to make “modifications” to the budget and the Legislators DID just that - and the Legislators, under significant “Public Pressure,” repealed the previously approved legislation, provided \$90M additional funding to provide \$130M , and directed that a “Joint Legislative Appropriations Review Committee (JLARC)” be established to review the Program. On July 18th the General Assembly agreed to repeal ALL changes previously approved and allocated an additional \$45M vice the \$90M the Senate supported. The Governor signed the Bill on July 18, 2024!

LAST NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS WHO HAVE NOT RENEWED! Please renew to keep our chapter as strong a voice as possible in championing legislation that benefits our military community. [Maria Tavenner](#) 703-407-2176.

W&M COMMISSIONING – COL LYNN DIEVENDORF

LTC Patrick Q. Billmann, W&M PMS, presided over the Commissioning Ceremony at William & Mary. VIPMOAA members CAPT Sheryll Elston USN, LTC Stephen Huebner USA, & COL Lynn Dievendorf USA presented the VIPMOAA Certificates and 2LT Bars to three Lieutenants at the W&M Commissioning on 10 January. The Newly commissioned include 2LT Wendell D. Harmer Transportation Corps CA ARNG; 2LT Johnston T. Mayo Infantry USA; & 2LT Andrew J. Sotka Infantry/Signal Corps USA. Col Neal Mayo gave an excellent Commissioning Address & swore in the new Lieutenants with the Oath of Office.

TRI-CHAPTER BRUNCH 13 JULY

VIPMOAA , Hampton Roads and Portsmouth MOAA Chapters gather in July for their annual joint chapter brunch. This year VIPMOAA is the host for the brunch to be held on 13 July at the James River Country Club. All members are invited to attend. HOLD THIS DATE ON YOUR CALENDAR. Details will be in the June Newsletter.

HONOR FLIGHT 23 APRIL LAST MINUTE REMINDER

The Old Dominion Honor Flight Chapter next Mission is April 26, 2025. The Chapter is calling all Viet Nam, Korean and World War II veterans to join their free mission trip to Washington to see your national monuments. A veteran is anyone who served in the service during the WWII, Korean or Viet Nam War period, regardless of where they were or what they were doing. See olddominionhonorflight.org for further information. VIPMOAA website contains the [applications](#). You may also contact Jack Greenhalgh, 757 478-8172, jack.greenhalgh@cox.net

UPDATE ON WEP/GPO

January 2025 President Biden signed into law the Social Security Fairness Act. This legislation repeals the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO), which previously reduced or eliminated Social Security benefits for certain government retirees. The WEP had reduced Social Security payments for individuals who received an annuity from their time working in government but also worked in a Social Security-covered job. Does this law apply to you? We have contacted Rep Rob Wittman’s office to get clarification. At this time there is considerable confusion as to whom the law applies. Social Security Administration is preparing guidance on how this law is to be implemented. More information is on our website at [Legislation/WEP-GPO](#).



Since the Surviving Spouse Liaison position is vacant, please keep up to date with MOAA’s [Surviving Spouse Corner](#).

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Please note the May luncheon is the 29th, the 5th Thurs.



27 Feb Luncheon
[Reservation Form](#)

6888th CENTRAL POSTAL DIRECTORY BATTALION

The 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion was a multi-ethnic, all-female military unit during WWII. This unit was mostly composed of Black Americans but one Puerto Rican lady and a Mexican lady were members. Their job – hand process warehouses full of undelivered mail! Where was this mail headed? To the American soldiers who longed for letters from home. Their motto was “No Mail, Low Morale.” Many times the communication with loved ones and its impact on the morale during wars are often overlooked.

War always presents a unique problem for mail delivery which has priority below food, equipment and supplies. In 1942 Congress approved a bill for a volunteer civilian women’s unit, the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC’s) intended for white women only. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and her friend, Mary McLeod Bethune exerted pressure to make the Corps 10% African American. In 1943 the unit was renamed the Women’s Army Corps (WAC), however it was segregated. In Nov 1944, a battalion of 824 enlisted African American women formed the 6888th, or Six-Triple Eight, Central Postal Directory Battalion. The unit was destined for Europe and they had to be self-sufficient for they could not use the support services for whites.

On February 3, 1945, the postal battalion set sail for Glasgow, Scotland and end up in Birmingham, England for their first assignment. They lived in a schoolhouse which was the same place as their work. Black out curtains covered the windows. They had three warehouses of bagged mail, some 17 million pieces, to sort. Gee, rodents had been in these bags looking for packages of food!



They worked three shifts round the clock. Where to send the mail? As the soldiers moved around, the information on the location of each soldier first had to be updated. Was he still in Europe, in a hospital, returned home or dead? The women developed “current information” cards for each soldier listing when they last received mail. Other complications included names like “Robert Smith”, “Tommy Jones” and other common names. There were 7,500 Robert Smiths serving in Europe! How do you figure out which letter or package goes to whom? The address for the soldier was abbreviated many times to just “Junior” or “Bob”.

V-mail were letters on microfilm which were transferred to paper when they arrived in England or France. All these were bagged and sent to the same warehouses. Each shift of the battalion processed 65,000 pieces of mail. After England the Battalion moved on to Rouen, France. Paris was their next assignment and they were housed at the Hotel Etats-Unis. By this time the soldiers were leaving the theater and heading home.

The women of the 6888th returned home without any recognition. Finally in February 2009, the Freedom Team Salute, a commendation program run by the Army recognized the Battalion at Arlington National Cemetery. Member of the 6888th in attendance were Alyce Dixon, was 101 years old, Mary Crawford Ragland was 81, and Gladys Carter was 87.

Recognition of the unit was a long time in coming. Charity Adams published her memoir “One Woman’s Army” about her service. In 2018, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas dedicated monument to the Six Triple Eight. In 2019 the unit was awarded a Meritorious Unit Commendation. In March 2022, the 855 women in the 6888th were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal. A Netflix movie titled *Six Triple Eight* is being made about the 6888th starring Kerry Washington as Lt. Col. Charity Adams, the commander of the 6888th battalion.

Ref: [6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion](#) ; Photo: Army/National Archives; [Mail Call: The Black Women Battalion of WWII](#), Northwestern Magazine, Diana Babineau, Feb 24, 2023; [Six Triple Eight](#), Netflix WWII Film; [Different Kind of Victory](#), National Museum of the Army.

FORT GREGG-ADAMS, VA



On April 27, 2023, Fort Lee, Virginia became Fort Gregg-Adams. Named for two Black officers whose struggles paved the way for a more inclusive military: Lt. Gen. Arthur Gregg and Lt. Col. Charity Adams.

Gregg was the 1st African American quartermaster officer to rise to the rank of brigadier general. He served as the Army's deputy chief of staff, logistics. Adams, of course, was the commander of the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion (see story above).

Ref: [Achieved a Different Kind of Victory](#), Cameron Thompson, CBS News, Apr 26, 2024; [Fort Lee renamed](#), Brittany Gaddy, ABC News, April 27, 2023.

FOUR CHAPLAINS DAY - 3 FEBRUARY 2025

On 3 February 1943 the USAT Dorchester was struck by a German torpedo. The four chaplains aboard helped the men into lifeboats and gave their life vests to those who didn't have them. They also calmed the panicked men. These four Army chaplains remained on the sinking ship, praying for the safety of their fellow soldiers.



The significance of this day is to reflect on the values of unity and selflessness that the chaplains exemplified. The four chaplains were Methodist minister Rev. George L. Fox, Reformed Church in America minister Rev. Clark V. Poling, Reform Rabbi Alexander D. Goode and Roman Catholic priest Father John P. Washington. The four men had met while attending Chaplains School at Harvard in Preparation for their appointments as chaplains. They were traveling on the Dorchester to their assignments in Europe when it was torpedoed off the coast of Newfoundland. The explosion knocked out the ship's electrical system thus plunging the ship into darkness with many men were trapped below decks. The water temperature was 34 degrees and the air temperature was 36 thus, hypothermia was the killer. Of the 904 men aboard only 226 were rescued.

On 19 December 1944, Congress posthumously awarded each of the chaplains the Purple heart and the Distinguished Service Cross. The Chapel of the Four Chaplains is located in the basement of Grace Baptist church in Philadelphia. President Harry Truman dedicated the Chapel on 3 February 1951.

Ref: [Four Chaplains Day](#)

FROM THE PEN OF KAREN COCCIO

Thank you for enjoying the entertainment and gifts at our festive Christmas luncheon. Some members were "puzzled" by receiving their prize in a puzzle box. No puzzles were prizes, but what was in the box WAS THE PRIZE!

I reuse boxes so no matter the box, open it up!!



I did have to laugh as the person who brought this to my attention liked the puzzle, which happened to be the hardest of all of the puzzles. I bought it because even though it was over 500 pieces, it looked easy, how wrong I was. My forte is easy puzzles around 500 pieces. My detached garage does not have a drywall finish and I did not want the insulation visible, so I covered the walls with puzzles! Hence, I had a lot of puzzle boxes to use for the gifts.

USING OUR WEBSITE – NEWSLETTERS ONLINE

The VIPMOAA website (<https://vipmoaa.org/>) has a wealth of information for our members. Every Newsletter from January 2017 to the present is available. Note the current newsletter is in red at the top of the list. If, for whatever reason, you discover that you did not receive your copy of the monthly newsletter, you may always access the website and view the Newsletter. However, please notify us that you missed a copy, because we need to discover and correct the problem. Sent an email to infor@vipmoaa.org



POP-UP WINDOW



We now have the capability to place important information in a pop-up window to be seen when a user accesses the Homepage of our VIPMOAA website. This pop-up window can be used for special alerts to our members such as membership, or key legislative information for veterans. Simply click on the X in the right corner to close the pop-up window.

SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

We do have a presence on social media. We use the generic MOAA Facebook and X (formerly Twitter). This allows us to meet the social media obligation that all MOAA chapters should have.



MILITARY COMMUNITY SERVICE/SCHOLARSHIP FUND DONATIONS

31 January 2025 - Total \$1,781 (23.7% funded)

Annual Funding Goal - \$7,500

Make a Difference!

DONATE

Please consider including a tax deductible donation when you renew your membership or pay for events.

The following organizations are considered to be recipients of our members' generous donations:

- [Fisher House at Portsmouth Naval Hospital](#)
- [Liberty Lounge, Colonial Williamsburg](#)
- [Old Dominion Honor Flight](#)
- [USO of Hampton Roads](#)
- [JROTC/ROTC](#)
- [Williamsburg C of C, Home for Holidays](#)
- [Williamsburg House of Mercy](#)

Please click on the links above to read more about these organizations.

Diamond Level (\$1000+)

Avery, Betty

Platinum Level (\$500 - \$999)

Gold Level (\$100 - \$499)

Corson, Ron
Ivey, Charles/Carol
Lindsey, Edward/Glenda

Silver Level (\$50 - \$99)

Fahrlender, Ted
Jabs, Kathleen
Wood, Betty

Bronze Level (\$25 - \$49)

Arnold, Ray/Rita
Marshall, Glenn/Judy
Pauls, Jim/Marvella
Sills, Rick/Wanda

Donations of less than \$25 are not listed.

Donations for these programs can be added to your monthly activities' reservation or a donation may be submitted at any time. All donations are tax deductible with a letter for donations of \$100+ provided for IRS information. Make checks payable to VIPMOAA and send to VIPMOAA CS/SF Mgr, Box 6463, Williamsburg VA 23188.

PICTURES FROM 23 JANUARY LUNCHEON

Kathleen Jabs, W&M Special Assistant for Military & Veteran Affairs Office, was the guest speaker for our luncheon at the Hampton Yacht Club. We welcomed 6 new members in attendance.



KATHLEEN JABS OUR GUEST SPEAKER



RON CORSON PRESENTS KATHLEEN JABS WITH THE JEFFERSON CUP



CLETA PUCKETT, PAM & JIM STEPHAN
RON CORSON, MARVELLA PAULS



NEW MEMBERS: CLETA PUCKETT, SUZANNE EVANS,
JEANNE LEO, JIM STEPHAN, PAUL FAMELI,
GLENN MARSHALL



SALLIE ALBERTS, CHUCK MCGINNIS, JACK GREENHALGH



JOAN STEINMILLER, TED FAHRLENDER, PHYLLIS MERRICK
PAUL FAMELI, INA BERKEY



WAYNE & BONNIE JEFFERSON, PAUL MIYAMASU
LYNN DIEVENDORF, KATHLEEN JABS

CURRENT MEMBERSHIP

TOTAL MEMBERS: 238 REGULAR: 178 SURVIVING SPOUSES: 60 85+: 94 LM: 10

For all membership information please contact Maria Tavenner membership@vipmoaa.org or 703-407-2176. if you have a change in address, rank, marital status, phone number, or email, as well as death of member or spouse.

MUST be a member for 5 years to qualify for a FREE membership at 85 years. Talk to Maria.

Our Chapter is always in recruiting mode and we look to each member to be an active recruiter, preferable to an officer **YOUNGER** than you! We urge you to recruit **ONE NEW MEMBER**.



NEW MEMBERS

None

TAPS

LT Mclvor "Mac" Parker, USA (Ret), 20 Jan 2025



"Any nation that does not honor its heroes will not long endure."-- Abraham Lincoln



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February 2025 VIPMOAA Newsletter
24-25 EXECUTIVE BOARD OFFICERS

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT: COL Ron Corson, USA (Ret)
jrcorson@aol.com 757-810-4155

ACTING VICE PRESIDENT: Col Jim Pauls, USAF (Ret)
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SECRETARY: COL Daniel Warren, USA (Ret) (Elaina)
dwarrenmd@cox.net 804-642-6597

TREASURER: COL Frank Tavenner, Jr., USA (Ret) (Maria)
FBTtreasurer@aol.com 703-407-6989

OFFICERS - APPOINTED

LEGAL ADVISOR: Vacant

ADVISOR: Maj Gen Wayne Jefferson, USAF (Ret)
(Bonnie) wojeff59@gmail.com 757-920-5628

SURVIVING SPOUSES LIAISON: Vacant

COMMITTEES

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

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ROTC/JROTC

CHAIRMAN: Lt Col Thomas Swanson, USAF (Ret) (Marci)
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MEMBERSHIP

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RECRUITING: All Board Members

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FUND RAISING: COL Karen Coccio, USA (Ret)
karen.coccio@gmail.com 757-652-7933

VIPMOAA BOARD MEETINGS

2nd Thursday @ 10:00 A.M.

13 Feb, 13 Mar, 10 Apr

[Rocco's Smokehouse Grill](#)

207 Bypass Road
Williamsburg, VA 23185-2920 (757) 253-8550

**Members are welcome to attend & may submit
proposed agenda items in advance to the
President.**

Our Mission Statement:

To be a champion of local and national legislation that benefits our military community. To perpetuate the traditions of the American Military by providing camaraderie among our members, providing support for veterans, and by mentoring young men and women in the community to become America's future military leaders. To be a trusted counselor for our surviving spouses.

VIPMOAA MEETING INFORMATION – 27 MARCH 2025 LUNCH

RESERVATIONS & CANCELLATIONS: Mail your “Reservation Form” and check to arrive by RSVP date. Contact the POC for additions or cancellations after that date. **Chapter pays for no-shows and late cancellations.**

VIPMOAA LUNCHEON AT FORD’S COLONY

240 Fords Colony Dr, Williamsburg, VA Phone (757) 258-4230

RSVP - by 6 pm Fri, March 21st COST: \$xx

POC: COL Jim Pauls, USAF-Ret. keydetman@aol.com 757-851-1141

DATE: 27 March 2025

TIME: 1130 Sign-in / Social (Cash Bar) 1300 Program
1200 Lunch 1400 Fifty-fifty Drawing / Adjourn

MENU: Luncheon Buffet: Pistachio Chicken Salad/ Lox & Egg Salad/ Shrimp & Arugula Salad/Mixed Baby Potato Salad/ Tortellini Salad served with a variety Warm Dinner Rolls, Sliced Fruits & Berries, and Assorted House Crafted Cookies, Water/Iced Tea/Lemonade/Regular & Decaf Coffee/ Assorted Hot Teas,

Must REGISTER & PAY for the event ([register online](#)). Please consider a donation!

RSVPS WITH PAYMENTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY RSVP DATE. NOTIFY POC FOR CHANGES TO REGISTRATION! PAYMENTS FOR CANCELLATIONS AFTER THE RSVP DATE WILL NOT BE RETURNED. RESERVATIONS MAY BE MADE ONLINE AND PAYMENT MAILED TO VIPMOAA. MEMBERS WHO MAKE A RESERVATION WITH A PROMISE TO “PAY AT THE DOOR” AND ARE A “NO SHOW” WILL BE BILLED ACCORDINGLY.



CLIP & MAIL RESERVATION FORM FOR LUNCH ON THURSDAY 27 MAR 2025

Please write name and rank/title for each person who will attend:

MEMBER _____

SPOUSE _____

GUEST (1) _____

GUEST (2) _____

TOTAL NUMBER ATTENDING _____ @ \$27.50 PER PERSON \$ _____

VIPMOAA 2025 Donations (Scholarship, ROTC, Community, Other) \$ _____

CHECK (payable to VIPMOAA) AMOUNT \$ _____

Member - first meeting please check here _____ Celebrating a special occasion? Check here/and provide details _____

Member Address _____

Member Phone _____

**Patriots Colony Residents
Use VIPMOAA mailbox, under 2323**

MAIL WITH CHECK TO: VIPMOAA HOSPITALITY–MAR, BOX 6463, WILLIAMSBURG, VA 23188

TO ARRIVE BY 21 MAR 2025. NO CONFIRMATION IS SENT. CONSIDER A DONATION WITH YOUR RESERVATION.

CHAPTER MUST PAY FOOD SERVICES FOR NO-SHOWS OR LATE CANCELLATIONS

VIPMOAA NEWSLETTER
BOX 6463
WILLIAMSBURG, VA 23188



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Please consider sharing this newsletter with a prospective member. We invite military officers to become members. Please see our [website](http://VIPMOAA.ORG) (VIPMOAA.ORG) or contact [Maria Tavenner](mailto:maria.tavener@vipmoaa.org) at 703-407-2176. Contact Maria for any changes in your address or membership.

The VIPMOAA NEWSLETTER is published by the VIPMOAA Chapter, which is an Affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). MOAA and its Affiliated Chapters and councils are non-partisan. The advertisements that appear in this publication also do not reflect an endorsement by MOAA or this Affiliate.

Meeting Schedule – Luncheon/Dinner on the 4th Thursday of the month except for Nov/Dec

Date	Location	L/D	Speaker
27 Feb 2025	Patriots Colony	Lunch	TBD
27 Mar 2025	Fords Colony	Lunch	TBD
24 Apr 2025	Anna’s Brick Oven	Lunch	Annual ROTC Event
29 May 2025	Williamsburg Landing	Lunch	TBD
13 July 2025	James River County Club	Brunch	Joint Chapter Brunch sponsored by VIPMOAA
28 Aug 2025	TBD	Lunch	Leo Titus, FEMA & 9/11 at the Pentagon

Click on link under Lunch or Dinner for reservation form/online reservations.

If you have suggestions for topics or speakers, please contact COL Ron Corson jrcorson@aol.com 757-810-4155. Newsletters are posted on the website and emailed to members on the 1st of the month. If you don’t receive your monthly Newsletter by the 3rd of the month, check your spam email first, then contact the Newsletter Editor at mchale@vipmoaa.org Newsletters sent by USPS 1st class mail take 2-8 days + 5 days preparation by printer. Will receive it approximately the 12th – 16th of the month.