



The Salute online



Monthly newsletter of the Portsmouth Area Chapter, an affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America, serving Portsmouth, Chesapeake, Suffolk, Smithfield and Franklin, Virginia, since 1983. Dinner meetings are held the Second Thursday of each month except July and August.

VOLUME XXXVI ISSUE I

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pacmoaa.org

January 2017

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



As I end my tour of duty as your President, I say "Thank You" to all who have made PACMOAA a great success in many ways. You have been a great team exemplifying duty, honor, fellowship, and service. We continue to receive MOAA recognition as a "five star" chapter and will affix our 2016 five star streamer to our flag at our first 2017 meeting on 12 January; do not miss it. Our special guest will be the Honorable John Rowe accompanied by his wife, Carol. I was one of four Chaplains and Pastors at the installation ceremony for him as Portsmouth's Mayor and three newly elected council members just last month. John will administer the oath of office to our newly elected officers. He will also address us about his aspirations for the coming years. Congratulations to all newly elected officers, especially

Maj. Sherry Ferki who will again assume responsibilities as President.

PACMOAA is a great little chapter working hard for all our military: Active Duty, Guards, Reserves, Retirees, Veterans, and their families who also served. We can be proud that half the current elected Virginia Council of Chapters (VCOC) leadership is from our ranks. Be reminded that we must continue vigilance and diligence. There is great pressure on the Legislature and DoD, resulting from shortfalls in available resources, to transfer part of this shortfall burden on the military. We must ensure our active military remains strong while protecting personnel and their families from unfair financial reductions and loss of earned benefits resulting from said shortfalls. Let us hope that new leadership, from Portsmouth to D.C., will be up to the challenge.

One of the ways we protect our interests is meeting face to face with elected officials who directly affect us through legislative actions. MOAA members convene with Congress (a National event) and State legislature (a VCOC event). Our first encounter for 2017 will be 22 to 23 January when VCOC will again assemble state chapter representatives in Richmond to "Storm the Hill." You should seriously consider participation in this great event.

PACMOAA membership comprises a wide variety of experienced and talented individuals with the common history of military service. I hope you will give serious thought to stepping forward to assist in our great task in any way that matches your skills and interests. I am always eager to chat with you at any time about increasing your participation. Such participation can increase your personal potential and help you develop new interests. We are always interested in your ideas and suggestions concerning meetings, venues, programs and activities. We want to hear from you.

I trust you had a Blessed Christmas and will experience a Happy New Year.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Richard J Titi

Thank you for Everything.
Never Stop Serving
Hal Hostetler
COL, USA Ret

Chapter Happenings

Jan 02 New Year's Holiday	Jan 20 Inauguration Day
Jan 12 PACMOAA Dinner	Jan 26 Military Spouse Day
Jan 16 Martin Luther King Day	Jan 22-23 "Storming the Hill"

JANUARY DINNER

Our installation of officers dinner will be held on **Thursday, 12 January** at the Hilton Garden Inn (HGI) Ballroom at 5921 Harbour View Boulevard in Northern Suffolk. [LINK TO HGI](#) for an excellent map, GPS information and HGI contacts. Social hour will begin at 1800 with dinner at 1900.

MENU

Caesar Salad with Parmesan Cheese and Croutons
 Chicken Marsala
 Mashed Potatoes, Broccoli, and Rolls
 Chef's Choice Dessert
 Coffee and Hot Water for Tea Station
 Water and Ice Tea

Cost is **\$30.00** (includes tax and gratuity) Please make your reservation no later than **Sunday, 8 January** with Sherry Ferki at _____.

Come join us for good company, good food and a good time.
REMEMBER A RESERVATION MADE IS A RESERVATION PAID.

GUEST SPEAKER



Recently elected Portsmouth Mayor John Rowe will be the guest of honor at our January meeting. John held many positions in his professional and personal lives, but all include the descriptor "Service".

John has a unique combination of nearly four and one-half decades of public administration experience in the Commonwealth of Virginia, mostly in local government management within the Hampton Roads region and nearly a decade in public higher education as a college vice president for finance and administration. John helped create several of the regional public authorities within the Hampton Roads, notably, the Tidewater Transportation District Commission, precursor to the HRT, the Southeastern Virginia Public Service Authority (SPSA). Lastly, serving as chairman of the re-



Chapter Happenings Continued

gional planning district commission for the south side of the Hampton Roads (the former Southeastern Planning District Commission) in the 1980s, John was part of the leadership that brought about the consolidation of the Peninsula Planning District Commission and the Southeastern Virginia Planning District Commission to create the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission.

John, raised in Portsmouth, is a product of the Portsmouth Public School System graduating Woodrow Wilson High School in 1962. He is a Distinguished Military Graduate of the Virginia Military Institute and commissioned a Regular Army Infantry Officer in 1966 serving until 1971. His service included Mechanized Infantry Rifle Company Commander in Germany, Combat Advisor to an infantry battalion of the Regular Army of the Republic of South Vietnam and Assistant Professor of Military Science at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU). His military awards include the Bronze Star, Air Medal with First Oak Leaf Cluster, the Army Commendation Medal with First Oak Leaf Cluster and "V" Device, the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Silver Star, the Vietnamese Armed Forces Honor Medal (First Class), the Combat Infantryman Badge, and the Parachutist Badge.

While at MTSU, John's professional interests changed to local government management and he completed graduate work earning him a Masters of Public Administration. John began his work in local government in 1971 working for the Norfolk City Manager. John next served as Suffolk Assistant City Manager in 1975. Subsequently, John's career included City Manager of Poquoson, Suffolk, Clifton Forge, Emporia, and Portsmouth and Interim Town Manager of Windsor, Virginia.

His experience includes positions of VMI Vice President for Finance & Administration, President of Western Tidewater Chapter of the VMI Alumni Association and Treasurer for Emily

Green Shores Assisted Living here in Portsmouth. John has served on numerous boards and commissions including economic development authorities, Chamber of Commerce boards, a hospital Board, Board of Directors member and Board President for Portsmouth Volunteers for the Homeless, Board of Directors for Future of Hampton Roads and the Hampton Roads Center for Civic Engagement. John is active in his church as Church Administrator, trustee, deacon and teacher. John is married to Carol Evangelo Rowe a native of Portsmouth, Virginia. They have two adult children and three grandchildren.

WELCOME BACK

The Salute extends a hardy welcome back to Col William Conrad. Strickland, USAF (Ret.) and his wife Debbie who live in Portsmouth.

PERSONAL AFFAIRS

Instructions concerning our Personal Affairs Officer PACMOAA bylaws as revised at the November 2015 Annual Business Meeting reads as follows:

"To provide PACMOAA with a method of keeping the membership advised of those members and next of kin who are indisposed or experience illness or death in the immediate family; to educate/inform members of the importance of notifying PACMOAA of such events; to notify the Secretary of the illness or death of a member or of his immediate family; to assist in the personal affairs when requested by a member or his immediate family for preplanning or for information per survivor benefits; to send greeting cards or memorials when authorized by the secretary; and/or visit members who, for any reason, may be indisposed. The Personal Affairs Officer will contact the family after the death of a member, provide assistance as needed and notify MOAA

of death of a member".

I need information from the membership in order to assist our members and family members when someone is ill or worse. When my Mom was in the hospital with a broken hip and I had just had foot surgery, PACMOAA members took turns giving me a ride to the hospital to see my Mom. Legislative efforts are a big focus of MOAA, but supporting each other is another important aspect of PACMOAA membership. Many of us volunteer with other groups in the community but we should also help each other. It is difficult to do that if we do not know there is a problem or issue a member or family member requiring assistance. To help each other more effectively, I am asking the membership for their assistance. As Personal Affairs Officer, please let me, the chaplain, or the surviving spouse liaison know if a member or family member might benefit from our assistance.

Thank you!
Sherry Ferki
Personal Affairs Officer



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

by Bob Steorts, Chaplain

HONOR BOUND

Wars may be fought with weapons, but they are won by men.

It is the spirit of the men who follow and of the man who leads that gains the victory.

General George S. Patton

In September 1943, as a newly commissioned second lieutenant navigator, I was assigned to the 452nd Bomb Group at Moses Lake, Washington. This was a new group being formed for service in the 8th Air Force, and I was attached to a crew headed by Lieutenant Theodore MacDonald. "I'll call you Murph," MacDonald said when we met. "Okay," I replied. "I'll call you Mac." We had quite a lot in common and quickly established a rapport. He was from Rochester, New York, and I was from Brooklyn. Both of us had lost our mothers at an early age and had left college to enlist in the Air Corps.

During our three-month training period, our friendship grew. With the New Year in 1944, our group was sent to England, and we began flying bombing missions against Germany. Losses were heavy at that time. Our commanding officer was shot down on the group's first mission.

On our crew's eighth mission, a daylight raid on Berlin, we were in the lead squadron and were attacked over Hanover by German "Focke Wulfe" fighter planes. Our bomber was struck repeatedly from nose to tail. Two engines were knocked out of commission. I was in the nose of the plane and was hit several times in my right leg. My parachute was shredded by the cannon fire. MacDonald was ringing the "bail-out" bell, ordering us to evacuate the plane.

I yelled to him over the intercom, "Mac, I have no 'chute!"

"Come up here and take mine!" he said without hesitation. "Get out now!"

He was my superior, and I did as I was instructed. I took the 'chute, went to the hatch and after the bombardier and copilot had evacuated the plane, I, too, jumped.

Unfortunately, for me, after scraping through trees, I landed in the midst of a Luftwaffe antiaircraft battery. I was immediately taken prisoner and placed in a small cell at an air base. Miserable hours went by as I sat alone in the dark, pondering the fate of MacDonald, whom I'd left in the disabled airplane. I know the man had saved my life and possibly sacri-

ficed his own in the process. I just hoped and prayed he made it, and I resolved to do everything I could to discover what had happened to him.

After what seemed like forever, I heard footsteps approaching my cell. The door opened, and two German guards appeared. Standing between them was none other than Lieutenant Ted MacDonald, looking a little worse for wear but otherwise unharmed.

We grinned at each other, and I breathed a long sigh of relief. When the guards left, Mac told me he had managed to crash-land the plane, but he hadn't gotten far before being captured.

Soon we were sent to Stalag Luft 1 prison camp for air corps personnel. My wounded leg festered and swelled and I became feverish. MacDonald, noticing this, called Colonel Hancke, the camp doctor, who was a British officer. He had me transferred to the POW hospital for treatment. I was there over a month.

Liberated by our allies at the war's end, Ted and I both returned to civilian life. Over the years, we maintained our friendship. Our sons went to college near Rochester, and two of his daughters came to New York City. We celebrated weddings and bar mitzvahs jointly.

In early 1992, disturbed at not having received our customary Christmas card, I called Rochester and spoke to Ted's wife, Patricia. She told me Ted was suffering from terminal cancer and didn't have long to live. In March, my wife, Irene, and I flew to Rochester to see them. Ted was fading fast.

There was a question that I felt I had to ask him. It had haunted me for all those years, though strangely, I had never mentioned it before, not even in the POW camp. At his bedside, in a moment when I was alone with him, I finally asked, "Mac, why did you give me your parachute?"

Despite his illness and weakness, he replied in a firm voice, "I was your commander - that's what I had to do."

I just nodded and gripped his hand. I think I'd

already know what his answer would be. The reply was so typical of him. Faithful to his country. Faithful to his comrades.

Two days later, Patricia called to tell us Ted had passed away. "He held on for so long. It was as if he was just waiting to see you first", Patricia told me.

That didn't surprise me either. The bond of friendship tempered by the fire of combat is one of the strongest ties men can have. Mac and I had that connection. And always will.

FROM: CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE VETERAN'S SOUL

As we begin the New Year, let us all remember, and never forget what others have done for us. Happy New Year! Bob Steorts, Chaplain

GALA WAS GREAT

This year's Christmas Gala was a success as always. Churchland High School Marine Corps JROTC had a particularly good year.



Each year, the Marine Corps Reserve collects hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of donations for its annual Toys for Tots drive. Marines in dress blues collect the toys and other donations, which are delivered to children in their communities around the holiday season. In 2014 and 2015, Toys for Tots generated more than \$550 million in donations. Toys for Tots is a top-rated charity, according to its website, with 97 percent of donations going toward its mission. Here are seven facts you

might not know about Toys for Tots.

1. A military officer started it all. In 1947, Maj. Bill Hendricks, USMCR, along with a group of fellow Marine Corps reservists, collected 5,000 toys to give to underprivileged children in Los Angeles. Hendricks' wife, Diane, had the idea to start Toys for Tots after learning no programs in their area helped children in need around the holidays, according to a Marine Corps news release. By the following year, Marine Corps Reserve units across the country began collecting toys for children in their communities.
2. Walt Disney designed the famous logo. The famous train logo on every Toys for Tots collection box was designed by Walt Disney in 1948. Over the years, Disney characters like Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck have been featured on Toys for Tots posters. Disney continues to be a major sponsor for Toys for Tots, along with Toys R Us and Macy's.
3. There's a theme song. In 1956, Oscar-winning songwriters Sammy Fain and Paul Webster composed a Toys for Tots theme song. Nat King Cole, Peggy Lee, and Vic Damone all later recorded the song.
4. The first national TV spot was on Wheel of Fortune. The year 1990 was big for the Marine Corps Reserve's Toys for Tots program. The evening TV gameshow Wheel of Fortune and Pizza Hut conducted a three-week Toys for Tots promotion that raised close to \$3 million. That figure set several milestones that are recorded in the Guinness Book of World Records for participation and donation calls made in response to a promotion according to the Toys for Tots site.
5. It's big with some celebs. Toys for Tots has had several high-profile sponsors over the years, including celebrities like Bob Hope and Kenny Rogers along with public figures like President Ronald Reagan and first lady Michelle Obama. In recent years, former professional basketball star Shaquille

O'Neal has teamed with Toys R Us to raise awareness for Toys for Tots. In a promotional video, O'Neal - who dresses up as "Shaq-A-Claus" - said he knows what toys children will like each year because he himself is "a big kid."



6. The toys sometimes go overseas. While Toys for Tots is designed to help children in the U.S., there have been a few times that some of the toys were donated to kids overseas. The first time was in 1959, when a typhoon devastated the city of Nagoya, Japan. Toys also were sent to Panama twice: once in 1988 after the U.S. invaded the country and then again in 1989 following a hurricane. Toys for Tots also has sent donations to children in the U.S. following natural disasters in their cities.

7. It is an official mission. In 1995, then-Defense Secretary William Perry approved Toys for Tots as an official activity of the Marine Corps - and as an official mission of the Marine Corps Reserve.

NEWS FROM MOAA

By: Col. Dan Merry, USAF (Ret) MOAA Vice President, Government Relations

MOAA was successful in working with Congress to avoid the vast majority of TRICARE fee hikes for current beneficiaries. That means we/you dodged the bullet on proposals to:

- impose an annual TRICARE For Life enroll-

ment fee of up to 2 percent of retired pay;

- raise annual fees by 50 to 100 percent for TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Standard over several years; and
- double pharmacy copayments over the next 10 years.

In the end, Congress opted to (mostly) grandfather currently serving and retired military beneficiaries against these hikes.

But while you can breathe a sigh of relief on that score, some lesser changes are coming over the next few years that will affect roughly 1.5 million retired military and survivor beneficiaries who get their health care under TRICARE Standard. Those changes include:

As of Jan. 1, 2018, TRICARE Standard will be renamed TRICARE Select.

Also starting in 2018, you will need to go through a formal enrollment process (signing an enrollment form) to participate in TRICARE Select. Currently, you have to enroll to get care under TRICARE Prime, but your ID card is all you need under TRICARE Standard. That will change in fall 2017, when Standard users will get a notice about needing to enroll in TRICARE Select if they want coverage in 2018.

MOAA successfully lobbied for a grace period for that first year of enrollment, recognizing there always will be people who don't get the word about big changes like this. During that first year, if you haven't enrolled and have to go to a doctor or hospital, you will be charged the out-of-network fee for that first incident of care but then must enroll in TRICARE Select to get further care.

For 2018 and 2019, there won't be any enrollment fee for TRICARE Select.

But beginning Jan. 1, 2020, there will be an annual TRICARE Select enrollment fee of \$150 (individual) or \$300 (family). Currently serving families, Chapter 61 (medical) retirees, and military survivors whose sponsors died on active duty will be exempt from paying the fee.

For subsequent years after 2020, the enrollment fee will be increased by the same annual percentage as the annual retired pay COLA.

At the same time the TRICARE Select enrollment fee is established in 2020, the annual catastrophic cap on out-of-pocket expenses for retired families will be raised to \$3,500 (versus the current \$3,000). In subsequent years, the cap will be increased by the same percentage as the annual retired-pay COLA. The cap will remain at \$1,000 a year for currently serving families.

Though we avoided many threats earlier this year that would have affected TRICARE beneficiaries, these TRICARE Standard changes still represent administrative and fiscal changes for current users who have never been subjected to any enrollment requirements.

MOAA has worked hard to protect retired Standard beneficiaries from inadvertent adverse experiences during the transition to the new enrollment system. We particularly were concerned about those who might have been threatened with loss of coverage simply because they didn't get the word about the new enrollment requirement — thus the first-year grace period.

We'll be working throughout the coming year to educate MOAA members about the transition in 2018. You can help by spreading the word to your retired military and survivor friends who use TRICARE Standard.

SURVIVING SPOUSE CORNER

By Gail Joyce, MOAA Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee member

Last year was a time of change and new challenges. We began 2016 with a new name — the Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee (SSAC) — one the committee felt brought a better understanding of who we are.

In April, we participated in Storming the Hill

in Washington, D.C., with 160 MOAA members, visiting our elected representatives to discuss important legislation that would affect the military and their families, including the Survivor Benefit Plan/Dependency and Indemnity Compensation offset. We asked that the offset be fully repealed, but if sufficient funds could not be found, that the Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance (SSIA) be extended and increased to continue phasing out the offset completely.

Even though our work on a full repeal of the offset continues, in the FY 2017 Defense Authorization Act, the SSIA has been extended through May 2018 at the current \$310 monthly rate. This will give us a chance to push Congress this year to increase and further extend the allowance or eliminate the offset in its entirety.

Our efforts to increase the number of surviving spouse liaisons at the council and chapter level continue as well. The number of surviving spouse liaisons has increased by 145. However, that number only represents a little more than half of the total chapters. We will continue to promote the importance and benefits of a surviving spouse liaison. Our goal remains 100-percent participation.

In October during MOAA's 2016 annual meeting, we honored two highly qualified and deserving surviving spouses with the Surviving Spouse Excellence Award: Paula Muth of the Heartland (Neb.) Chapter and Barbara Smith of the Hampton Roads (Va.) Chapter.

We also had two very productive committee meetings in 2016, during which we made decisions to:

- increase the member term limit from three years to four years, with an option to extend for up to two more years if a member is willing and able. This should provide more continuity and improve productivity;
- change the start date for new SSAC members from April to October to coincide with the orientation/installation of new members of

MOAA's board of directors. New SSAC members can participate in the board of directors orientation and be better informed about MOAA;

- increase the committee from six members to eight members on a trial basis. Two new members will be "virtual members," with no expectation of attending SSAC meetings in person. This might help bring in younger surviving spouses who are unable to travel for extended periods because of jobs, children, or aging parents; and

- find new ways to recruit and engage surviving spouses by:

- ⇒ using *Military Officer* magazine and social media to reach a younger demographic and
- ⇒ reaching out to and involving other organizations, such as the Retired Officers Wives Association, the Society of Military Widows, the Survivor Outreach Services, etcetera.

Because of the decisions made in 2016, we will be a stronger committee in 2017 and the years to come.



The Tidewater Concert Band Conductor Chris Serrano appeared to enjoy the Gala Christmas program.

THAT'S A WRAP FOR JANUARY 2017

PLEASE READ THE MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE
AND RENEWAL UPDATE FORM ON THE NEXT PAGES

JANUARY 2017 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL REMINDER

The PACMOAA dues, changed at the annual November business meeting in 2012, as follows:

Regular members pay \$25.00/year

Auxiliary members pay \$20.00/year

You can pay your dues at the next meeting or mail it to:

PACMOAA
P.O. Box 5353
Portsmouth, VA 23703.

Your dues money enables PACMOAA to pay for things like the newsletter; speaker expenses; VCOC dues and expenses; admin expenses like nametags, printing, postage and entertainment like the Tidewater Concert Band that performed at our Christmas gala.

Remember that your membership is important. Some members feel like they should not belong to an organization if they cannot be an active member, attending meetings or participating in other PACMOAA activities. We would love to have every member attend each meeting but that is not possible for many members. During our military careers and later in our lives, the time we can commit to any organization varies. An important part of PACMOAA and MOAA membership is legislative involvement. Whether you are able to attend meetings or not, you can contact your Congressman and State Legislators about issues relevant to veterans. Your membership keeps you updated on those issues. **Please help us protect the benefits of our military: Active Duty, National Guards, Reservists, Veterans, Retirees and their families.**

Please pay your dues as soon as possible so PACMOAA can continue to provide all these services. Please include the renewal form on the next page to help us keep our records up to date. Remember the effectiveness VCOC has in the state legislature relates directly to chapter membership! Thank you.

PACMOAA MEMBERSHIP FORM 2017

FULL NAME:_____ **NICKNAME:** _____

GRADE/RANK:_____ **SERVICE:**_____ **BIRTH DATE:** _____

STATUS: **Active** **Retired** **Former** **Surviving Spouse**

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

HOME PHONE:_____ **CELL PHONE:**_____

Civilian Occupation: _____ **MOAA Membership No.** _____

MOAA Membership No.: _____ **(From MOAA card or *Military Officer* Mailing Label)**

Spouse's Name: _____ **Spouse's Nickname:** _____

Are you willing to serve as board member or on a committee? () Yes () No

PLEASE CIRCLE CORRECT AMOUNT: ANNUAL DUES ENCLOSED IS \$25.00 FOR REGULAR MEMBER OR \$20.00 FOR AUXILIARY MEMBER. Make checks payable to PACMOAA and send mail to:

PACMOAA, PO Box 5353, Portsmouth, VA 23703

DATE: _____ **SIGNATURE:**_____

NOTE: For members joining after 1 July, \$12.50 for regular members and \$10.00 for auxiliary members



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

101 N. 14TH ST, 17TH FLOOR
RICHMOND VA 23219

Air Force Association
American Legion
AMVETS
Association of the United States Army
Disabled American Veterans
Fifth Baptist Church
Veterans' Ministry
Fleet Reserve Association
Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America
Korean War Veterans Association
Legion of Valor of the U.S., Inc.
Marine Corps League
Military Order of the Purple Heart
Military Officers Association of America
Military Order of the World Wars
National Association for Uniformed Services
Navy Seabee Veterans of America
Non-Commissioned Officers Association
Paralyzed Veterans of America
Reserve Officers Association
Roanoke Valley Veterans Council
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Vietnam Veterans of America
Virginia Army/Air National Guard Enlisted Association
Virginia National Guard Association
Women Marines Association

Summary of 2017 JLC Policy Initiatives As approved December 21, 2016

Initiative	Recommendation
JLC 2017-01 <i>Virginia Veteran and Family Support Services</i>	That the Governor and General Assembly change the Code of Virginia to revise the charter of the VVFS; release \$393,494 to DVS in FY17; authorize 21 new positions in FY17 and FY18; and appropriate an additional \$700,000 (GF) in FY18 to convert VVFS to an all-state employee service delivery structure.
JLC 2017-02 <i>Virginia War Memorial</i>	That the Governor and General Assembly appropriate an additional \$100,000 (GF) FY18 to ensure the Virginia War Memorial has the resources necessary to accomplish its dual mission of honor and education.
JLC 2017-03 <i>Guard Income Tax Subtraction</i>	That the Governor and General Assembly increase the state income tax subtraction level for members of the Virginia National Guard from \$3,000 to \$5,000 per year.
JLC 2017-04 <i>In-state tuition for all members of the Reserve Components</i>	That the Governor and the General Assembly change the eligibility for in-state tuition to include all members of the Virginia National Guard and the Reserve components, thus recognizing their service to the Commonwealth and treating them equally to the active components and veterans
JLC 2015-05 <i>Virginia Veteran Entrepreneurship Grant Pilot Program</i>	That the Governor and General Assembly approve legislation creating the <i>Virginia Veteran Entrepreneurship Grant Pilot Program</i> under the Department of Veterans Services and appropriate \$900,000 (GF) per year in FY18 and FY19 to award grants to companies that provide entrepreneurship training to veterans. Also, that the Board of Veterans Services (BVS) continue its work on veteran entrepreneurship and develop additional recommendations for consideration.
JLC 2017-06 <i>VMSDEP</i>	That the Governor and General Assembly remove the requirement that a veteran's disability rating be combat related. Instead, a permanent service-connected disability rating of at least 90%, plus satisfaction of the other requirements currently in the Code, would qualify a veteran's spouse or child for VMSDEP benefits.
JLC 2017-07 <i>Electronic Ballot Return</i>	That the Governor and General Assembly enact legislation and provide budget support of a pilot program for the electronic return of absentee ballots by Virginia's deployed military service members to enfranchise their voting privileges.

THE 25 ORGANIZATIONS OF THE JOINT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL HAVE MORE THAN 250,000 MEMBERS