

Coastal Carolina Clarion Newsletter

August 2022 issue



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President's Message

I am proud to report that our Chapter – Coastal Carolina is the recipient once again of the Five Star Level of Excellence Award (LOE) for 2021. Congratulations and thank you to our Board of Directors and the Coastal Carolina membership team for all your efforts. In addition to our Board efforts, I would like to thank Mike Kennedy and Mark Sandvigen who comprised the Chapter LOE Team by presenting and validating the many Chapter accomplishments and initiatives. Mark again compiled and organized the information, in addition to editing and presenting our package to MOAA National.

In Memoriam: I am very sad to report the passing of Vivienne Armstrong, Coastal Carolina Chapter / Eastern Carolina Chapter Surviving Spouse. Vivienne was very active with the Chapters for many years. Anne Harman, Surviving Spouse recently passed away as well on Sunday, August 21, 2022. Her husband, Steve Harman passed away in January 2022. Please keep Anne and the entire Harman family in your prayers. Funeral service plans are unknown at this time.

On the horizon:

North Carolina State meetings – September 16/17 (TBD) and November 4/5 – Annual Meeting (Winston / Salem). Upcoming Coastal Carolina Board meetings are September 15, 2022, March 9, 2023, June 8, 2023, and September 14, 2023. Again, as mentioned in the last newsletter, all Chapter members are welcome to attend. Your topics are always welcome.

Naval Academy Midshipman versus the Eastern Carolina University Pirates Football Game – Saturday, September 24th (Currently have filled the ticket slots with 23 Coastal Carolina Chapter MOAA members attending). If you still wish to attend the game, please contact the ECU ticket office.

MOAA Council and Chapter Leadership Workshop (Mid-Atlantic Region) - Mark Sandvigen and I attended the workshop on 12/13 August in Raleigh. Highlights of the Workshop are included throughout this Newsletter. Workshop topics included a moderated Senior Leader Panel and updates from the General Counsel, Membership and Marketing, Surviving Spouse, Communications, social media, and Surviving Spouse Liaison Training. Additionally, Mark participated in the Legislative Training Breakout Session and I in the Chapter Management Breakout Session. One of the many key takeaways was the 2022 to 2026 Strategic Plan Mission Statement - To preserve and protect earned benefits for our uniformed services, veterans, their families, and surviving spouses through: Advocacy, Leadership, Education, Service.

Of note, MOAA National has committed to reach out to all Councils and Chapters with visits from a Senior National Staff member every two to three years. I will inform you of any future visits to our Council meetings. Please consider joining us for our upcoming Fall and Winter events.

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ID Cards



It is time to look at your expiration dates as the new military ID cards are being issued. We will no longer have the old-fashioned cards, but the newer Common Access Card (CAC) once they are renewed.

If you have not been to [Military OneSource](#) the new [OSD](#) site to update your information, please do. Once you are there and have updated your records, there are instructions on contacting and

making appointments at the Pass/ID offices at our local military bases. If your ID card is expiring, do not wait as renewal is 100 times easier than replacement.

SAVE THE DATES



The Blue Angels will be appearing at the [Wings over Wayne](#) Airshow at Seymour-Johnson AFB May 20-21.

If you have never done it, fly with [The Blue Angels](#) – have fun.

Trip to the Bahamas



MOAA's North Carolina's Council of Chapters is arranging a trip to the Bahamas for November 11-16, 2023, which is open to all MOAA Members, Family and Friends.

The trip will be 5 nights Aboard Carnival's "[Sunshine of the Seas](#)", departing from Charleston, SC with a destination- Nassau, Half Moon Cay (Little Salvador Island), Bahamas. The flyer is attached at the end of this newsletter and will also be posted on our website.

SCAMS – BE PREPARED AND BEAT THEM



The latest is the [Camp Lejeune and Toxic Exposure](#) – DO NOT be taken in by television adds or phone calls. Do your homework and follow the procedures. If you have questions, contact the local Veteran's Service Office. You can normally find their link on your county's webpage.

"THE FOLLOWING IS NOT AN ADVERTISEMENT FOR WARD AND SMITH – IT IS OFFERED AS INFORMATION TO THOSE EXPOSED TO CAMP LEJEUNE'S WATER FROM 1953-1987."

For over 30 years between 1953 & 1987 the drinking water at Camp Lejeune was contaminated with dangerous chemicals that caused cancer, Parkinson's Disease, birth defects & more. By the time the danger and cause of the problem was made known to the public, all claims were time barred by NC's statute of repose. As a result, years ago, a lawyer named Ed Bell began assembling a team to try to get legislation passed by the US Congress that would allow victims to be compensated. MG Hugh Overholt (Coastal Carolina member), joined Bell's lobbying team to effectuate a legislative fix. The #CampLejeuneJusticeAct (which is part of the larger PACT Act) become law last week.

Key criteria for claims:



1 A minimum of 30 days exposure to Camp Lejeune water between 1953 & 1987.

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2 Claims can be made by military (Active Duty & retired), spouses, kids & civilian contractors.

3 Given how old these claims are, many impacted have died. Criminal Justice Law (CJLA) allows claims to be brought by decedents' estate representatives so that families can receive compensation.

If you have clients, friends, family or loved ones who are interested in exploring a claim, please direct them here: <https://www.wardandsmith.com/practice-areas/camp-lejeune-water-contamination>. Ward and Smith, P.A.'s site contains an electronic portal through which potential clients can confidentially submit info in order to see if they qualify to make a claim.

There is a TAB on the Camp Lejeune Water Contamination page entitled "FREE CASE EVALUATION". After clicking on that tab, the process is very easy. If you'd prefer to speak with someone at the firm, please call their intake specialist, Bryan Preston at (910) 794-4843.

Lawyers from all over the country are flooding TV, social media and in some cases even directly contacting victims seeking to represent them. A couple of differentiating factors for Ward and Smith, P.A.

1 They we're involved in crafting and getting the actual legislation passed that will make these claims possible. There is only one other litigation firm in the country that can say that - the Bell Legal Group. These two firms will be litigating these cases together as co-counsel.

2 Ward and Smith, P.A. has long, deep eastern NC roots – they have lived and practiced law here for decades – this is their backyard.

3 The exclusive jurisdiction for these lawsuits is the Eastern District of NC (Federal Court).

4 Ward and Smith has offices in every city in the Eastern District where there are staffed Federal Courthouses (Greenville, Raleigh, New Bern, & Wilmington).

Note: claimants need not live in NC now, as long as they had 30 days exposure to the water during the applicable time period (and hire an attorney admitted to practice in the Eastern District of NC).

MOAA PEOPLE DOING MOAA THINGS



If you are a surviving spouse, 2023 will be your year! The Federal tax indemnity on the retirement annuity paid to surviving spouses will be removed. In addition, the State of North Carolina has also removed the tax indemnity.

If you are medically or military retired, USPHS, NOAA retiree, or qualified National Guard service member your North Carolina State tax indemnity on retirements has been removed as well.

I bring this us as these actions as they are the direct result of MOAA's National, State, and local members. I want to thank all of those who sent emails, made calls, and personally contacted their representatives to make this happen. In the movie Gladiator, Maximus Decimus Meridius utters these famous words, "What we do in life echoes in eternity". What you do matters, thank you.

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MEMBERSHIP



The MOAA Leadership Symposium was recently held in Raleigh. One of the most startling statistics was the average age of MOAA members. The average age of MOAA's 350,000 members is 73, like all Veteran's Service Organizations we having an aging population.

What to do about it? I know that many of you have family members who chose to serve their country as well. Consider a [MOAA membership](#) – it is free! MOAA has found that members who start with the Basic membership, soon become Premium or Life Members. MOAA's primary pillars being Legislative, Transition, and Quality of Life - the value is there.

Remember - networking with friends and neighbors is the key to attracting new members to our Chapter. Every member is a recruiter and in the famous words of Francis Daniel Pastorius, encourage everyone to *"Folgen sie unseren fusspuren!"* or "Follow in our footsteps".

Welcome Aboard - Welcome aboard to Shawn and Laurie Hilvers. Shawn and Laurie recently moved to New Bern from northeast PA. Shawn was a Major in the WVA National Guard flying C-130s and a graduate of the Naval Academy (79). A recently retired pilot for American Airlines most recently flying international trips out of JFK on the Boeing 777. Laurie is a University of Michigan grad..

JROTC and ROTC Support



Our Chapter will once again offer our support to ECU's ROTC programs and the area's high school JROTC programs. Key Chapter Officers attend and present MOAA's Leadership Medals and Certificates to deserving ROTC and JROTC cadets and midshipmen.

We will once again present all the awards and pictures of the event in future newsletters, on the Website, and coming soon Facebook.

Chaplain's Corner – National Civility Month



The complete understanding and evolution of Civility came about in the 300 years of the Enlightenment. Historically, Civility had to do with how we treat one another, mutual respect, courtesy, and politeness. Civility was taught to us at a very young age by our parents, grandparents, and other mentoring adults. I know in my home if I didn't practice civility there would be consequences from my mother or dad. I remember my mother saying, "If you can't say anything good about another person, then you shouldn't say anything at all".

Some principles to practice and live by. 1) If I can't say anything good about another person, then don't say anything at all. 2) Speak to others in the same way you would want them to speak to you. 3) Find the goodness in others; remember Jesus said, "LOVE your neighbor as yourself".

The Veteran's Memorial



Behind the SECU Comprehensive Cancer Center at Carolina East Medical Center, you will find a flagpole surrounded by bricks purchased to honor or memorialize a veteran. The Coastal Carolina Chapter Board worked with MOAA, the Carolina East Foundation and the brick manufacturer to ensure that we honored your service. Net proceeds of the Bricks for Veterans campaign are used to support special programs for veterans sponsored by CarolinaEast Health System, including the hospital's "Final Salute" program.

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Procedural Issue Delays Much-Needed Toxic Exposure Benefit Reforms

By: Cory Titus

Despite a strong bipartisan vote in the Senate on June 16, a procedural issue has prevented the House from taking up the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022. The delay could put the bill in jeopardy as competing legislation clogs up a busy legislative calendar. MOAA has worked to keep the comprehensive reform bill on the radar, but lawmakers need to hear from their constituents to ensure the long-sought benefits aren't delayed further.

The Senate bill includes a tax-related clause unrelated to specific toxic exposure benefit changes. This provision was not part of the original House bill, and because tax and revenue measures are required to originate in the House, the Senate must pass an amended version to take out the provision.

Sen. Jon Tester (D-Mont.), an ardent supporter of the legislation and the chair of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, proposed a fix via unanimous consent, but Sen. Pat Toomey (R-Pa.) objected, citing funding concerns unrelated to the underlying procedural issue. This means the chamber must reconsider the updated legislation when senators return from recess the week of July 11. While the 84-14 Senate vote on June 16 showed strong bipartisan support among legislators, and the House passed the original legislation by a 256-174 margin, the risk comes in the timing – the House will be in session for less than a full month between now and the election, and with competing priorities, it's up to advocates like you and others you know to make sure both chambers move on this bill with deliberate speed.

MOAA and the dozens of other advocacy groups supporting this legislation have increased efforts on the Hill to rally support for the measure. Veterans who've waited decades for these earned benefits shouldn't have to wait a day longer – call or write your lawmakers today and encourage them to support the Honoring Our PACT Act.

DoD Releases Details on Atomic Veterans Commemorative Service Medal

By: Kevin Lilley

A half-million veterans may be eligible to receive an award honoring their service related to atomic weapon use, testing, and cleanup in the decades after World War II.

The Atomic Veterans Commemorative Service Medal will be available to hand out by year's end, according to a July 5 DoD press release. The creation of the medal was part of the FY 2022 National Defense Authorization Act; the law allowed DoD to establish eligibility criteria with recommendations from House and Senate Armed Services Committee members. Veterans eligible for the award must have performed one of the following actions as part of official military duties from July 1, 1945, to Oct. 1, 1992, according to the news release:

1. Directly participated in the detonation of an atomic weapon or device.
2. Directly participated in the cleanup of radioactive material resulting from any such atmospheric detonation.
3. Directly participated in the cleanup of radioactive material resulting from an accident associated with an atomic weapon; or
4. Were exposed to ionizing radiation resulting from the operational use of atomic weapons during World War II.

The next-of-kin of deceased veterans who meet the above criteria may apply for the medal, as well. An online application process will be created "in the near future," per the DoD press release. It's unclear how many veterans participated in such operations. Most reports suggest about 225,000 servicemembers took part in atomic testing and development, but when those who worked in cleanup efforts or suffered other exposure are added, the total figure could eclipse 500,000. The medal's design, also released July 5, includes an eagle and a symbol of an atom on the obverse, and language on the reverse noting the honor was "awarded for unique service in support of nuclear deterrence."

From MOAA's President: There's Still Time to Support MOAA's Day of Giving

By: Dana Atkins

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We established July 4 as MOAA's Day of Giving with the goal to raise \$75,000 to support our veterans, servicemembers, and their families across all branches of service.

I want to give a big THANK YOU to every one of our members who have already joined this year's campaign and helped us surpass our 2021 effort. We know we can move mountains for the uniformed services community when our members stand together, and there is still time to meet our goal in support of our two charities, The MOAA Foundation (TMF) and the MOAA Scholarship Fund.

You can visit our Day of Giving website, MOAA.org/dayofgiving, to make a tax-deductible gift today. You can also show your MOAA spirit with the purchase of our 2022 MOAA Charities "Charitee-shirt" available at this link, MOAA.org/charitees.

Both our charities are GuideStar Platinum-rated and have adapted the programs we provide to those we serve, and I am proud of the progress we have made. Here are a few illustrations of what we have accomplished with the support of generous donors:

- TMF has created a fifth pillar of support to serve uniformed servicemembers and their families when disaster strikes.
- In 2021, almost 900 students received financial assistance for their college education through the MOAA Scholarship Fund.
- The amount of money distributed through Community Outreach Grants has increased over 10% since 2019.
- In 2021, 36% of the financial assistance distributed by the Scholarship Fund was in the form of grants – up from 12% in 2019.

Our development team is constantly speaking with MOAA members, chapters, and beneficiaries across the country to ensure our programs meet the current needs of uniformed servicemembers and their families.

Robert, a Life Member of MOAA, told me recently that he donates to our charities because "MOAA is an officer organization, and we have a leadership responsibility to take care of our own. Donating to the charities gives us a chance to do that."

With so much gratitude, I give thanks again to our members for supporting our association and truly making a difference in the lives of so many veterans, servicemembers and their families.

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5 nights Aboard Carnival's "Sunshine of the Seas" Departing from Charleston, SC
Destination- Nassau, Half Moon Cay (Little Salvador Island), Bahamas
Open to all MOAA Members, Family and Friends

Prices:
\$1245 Interior Cabin
\$1370 Ocean View Cabin
\$1680 Balcony Cabin

Prices are per couple including all taxes, fees, port charges, gratuities and food in Main Dining Room and the Lido Deck – No Surprises! Accessible Cabins at no additional charge. Single rates, Suite rates and rates for up to 5 in a cabin available - Contact POC below. Covered secure parking available at Port \$15 per day.

As an added educational program feature, RDML Ron Henderson, USN(Ret) is scheduled to present daily lectures with graphics on the Pacific Battles during WWII. The lectures will be open to all members and guests at no additional cost.

Registration Form

Full Names (as on passports)

_____ DOB _____

_____ DOB _____

Mailing Address _____

Email _____ Telephone _____

Cabin Preference (circle) Interior Ocean View Balcony Other _____

Please email POC Jim Jackson: jimjackson2224@gmail.com for rates on Singles, Suites, 3-5 persons sharing a room, travel insurance or any other questions or issues.

Travel insurance is highly recommended for international trips. Coverage includes cancellation for medical reasons, medical and dental issues emergencies, medical evacuation. Most

U.S. issued insurance is not recognized in foreign destinations. Contact POC Jim Jackson for a quote. **To confirm your reservation please send a \$50 deposit per person and the registration form by January 13, 2023 (or ASAP FOR CHOICE CABIN LOCATION or an ACCESSIBLE CABIN) to the address below. A second deposit of \$100 per person is required by July 14, 2023. Final payment is due by August 28, 2023.**

Ken Hillman Treasurer NCCOC
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