



Military Officers Association of America
SOUTHERN MARYLAND CHAPTER
P. O. Box 84
NAS Patuxent River, MD 20670
<https://www.facebook.com/SoMdMOAA>
(443) 486-0150
somdmooa@gmail.com

The
SOUTHERN MARYLAND
NEWSLETTER



2007-2009-2010-2012-2013-2014

February 2015

President's Corner

Ladies and Gentlemen,

What a great start to the year! Our very own LTC Jack Fringer, USA (Ret), was instrumental in updating the MOAA survey that demonstrates the clear economic benefit to the state of Maryland that comes with exempting military pensions. State MOAA leadership made the rounds in Annapolis, sharing the survey with lawmakers. The Calvert Recorder picked up the story and wrote an article about it – you can find the article on somdnews.com. Getting the word out to voters is critical, because those voters sound off to their elected representatives to make change happen. [See latest news on page 3. Ed.]

We've got a great year laid out for you. For long range planning, mark your calendars for March 21. We're planning to meet at Charlotte Hall Veterans Home (CHVH). If you have never been for a visit, let me tell you: CHVH is like nothing you've seen before! Charlotte Hall is a benefit available to Maryland veterans, and it is important not only that we support CHVH, but also get the word out about its services.

Also in this edition of the newsletter, you'll find a summary of my vision for the chapter for 2015. Please give it a read, and then think about how you can participate.

Very respectfully,
CDR Phil Campbell, USN.

February Meeting

Our next meeting is this Saturday, 21 February 2015 at 1130 at the Ruddy Duck in Solomon. We are calling this event a "New Ideas" meeting which will be structured as a Board meeting but will be open to all Chapter membership. It will serve as an open forum regarding the path ahead for our chapter to include discussions on membership recruitment & participation and chapter activities.

We are meeting at the Ruddy Duck Brewery & Grill located at 13200 Dowell Road (located right off route 2/4) in Solomons. Please notify CDR Greg Dalke know if you plan to attend by Thursday 19 Jan so he can get a headcount (301-373-3889 or dalke@olg.com). Attendees will self-order/pay from the meeting. You can preview their menu at ruddyduckbrewery.com

Annual Chapter Dues

Our annual Membership Renewal Campaign is underway. Membership renewal notes will be sent out to those whose memberships expired at the end of 2014. Dues are still only \$15 for Regular Members (active duty, retired and former officers) and \$5 for Auxiliary Members. We don't have a "Lifetime" membership program like national MOAA does, but if you would like to pay for a year or two in advance, that would be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, contact Tony Blankenship at (410) 414-8211 or tonyblank@aol.com.

Washington's Birthday

The federal holiday honoring our first Commander-in-Chief George Washington was originally implemented by an Act of Congress in 1879 for government offices in Washington and expanded in 1885 to include all federal offices. As the first federal holiday to honor an American president, the holiday was celebrated on Washington's actual birthday, February 22. On January 1, 1971, the federal holiday was shifted to the third Monday in February by the

Uniform Monday Holiday Act. This date places it between February 15 and 21, which makes the name "Washington's Birthday" in some sense a misnomer, since it never occurs on Washington's actual birth date of February 22 (1732 per New Style / Gregorian calendar). FYI: The holiday is officially called Presidents' Day in Maryland. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington%27s_Birthday viewed 15 Feb15

Vision 2015

Our MOAA chapter is a five-star chapter – that is a great measure of the hard work that the Board has done for you. Resting on our five-star laurels, however, is not a great way to advance the interests of Southern Maryland active duty members and veterans. Here is the vision that I presented to the Board in December.

The vision is composed of three major initiatives: structure, membership and budget. The structural initiative is meant to better define our chapter and establish our identity within the broader community. As a senior officer, I have learned the value of having well-defined goals and a clear mission. We need to define our mission, and along with that identify where we are targeting our mission. Active duty? Veterans? JROTC? Part of servicing that target is establishing a more predictable meeting schedule with a regular venue. Once we have a predictable calendar, we need to have engaging events that benefit our membership and the broader military community. Finally, as a chapter, I believe we ought to identify a signature project for the chapter – something we are known for in Southern Maryland.

The membership initiative is about engaging our membership more. The board meetings and the chapter meetings are not that different in terms of attendance...I would love to see more unfamiliar faces at our chapter meetings. What does that mean to you? Expect a phone call from a board member sometime during the year, inviting you to a meeting and asking what we can do to help you get there. We also need to make sure our MOAA members know what services MOAA offers to its members. For instance, did you know you can arrange travel through MOAA – and that the chapter receives a check for your travel? That's right, you can help fund the chapter just by traveling with like-minded folks with whom you already have a veteran connection! Please also stay tuned to our Facebook page and the web site. The Facebook page has more current information – so check it out.

The final initiative regards our budget. The chapter is healthy, but our budgeting process could stand to be more formal. Currently, the O'Neill award, Charlotte Hall donation and NJROTC award dinner come out of operating funds; that makes them subject to annual budget pressures. A foundation fund would remove that pressure and provide funding in future years. We also need to look at how we use our dues, and how we allocate them across years.

I want to hear your feedback. Please do not hesitate to write at somdmooa@gmail.com. I would also appreciate it if you could write to let me know about any veterans' events ongoing in Southern Maryland. We want to support with our presence, but I need to know about them. So if you hear about a wreath-laying or memorial or benefits event, write in! Stand by for another exciting year!

Governor Larry Hogan Announces Tax Relief For Veterans

February 12, 2015

Joins With Secretary-Designee George Owings, Local Veterans To Support Military Retirement Income Tax Exemption

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Governor Larry Hogan joined Maryland Veterans Affairs Secretary-designee George Owings and local veterans to announce [House Bill 482](#) – the Military Retirement Income Tax Exemption [Cross-filed with [SB0592](#)]. The bill aims to eliminate income tax on all military retirement income, phasing in relief over a period of four years, providing for 25 percent relief in the first year, and rising to 100 percent in the final year.

“Making our state as welcoming and friendly as possible to military retirees is not only common sense but it’s simply the right thing to do,” said Governor Hogan. “After years of thousands of our citizens fleeing our state, this tax cut is the first step, among many to come, to ensuring that the people who spend their lives in service to others are given the support and tax relief they deserve.”

As announced in his State of the State address, House Bill 482 is representative of Governor Hogan’s goal to fully eliminate income taxes on all retirement income. This legislation also fulfills a commitment that the governor made to Maryland’s military retirees during his campaign, and is a significant testament of his administration’s commitment to the men and women who have dedicated their professional lives to the defense, safety, and security of our nation.

“I am honored to join Governor Hogan today as he visits American Legion Post 136 in Greenbelt and demonstrates his commitment to our veterans,” said Secretary-designee George Owings. “Such an early visit to a Veterans Service Organization indicates the importance Governor Hogan places on our veterans.”

Under current Maryland law, military retirement income is subject to personal income tax with the first \$5,000 being exempt. In 2013, there were over 54,251 military retirees in the state, of which 50,889 received pensions. Military pensions totaled over \$1.4 billion or an average of \$28,666 per person.

“The American Legion, Department of Maryland supports raising the tax exemption of military retired pay for Maryland residents over the coming years until such pay is completely exempt from State income taxes,” said Russell Myers, Jr., Department Adjutant, the American Legion, Department of Maryland. “Our organization supports all efforts to increase military retired pay exemption in Maryland.”

HB 482 can be viewed [here](#).

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<http://governor.maryland.gov/2015/02/12/governor-larry-hogan-announces-tax-relief-for-veterans/>
viewed 15 Feb 2015

Status: In the House - Hearing 2/27 at 1:00 p.m.