

# Coastal Carolina Clarion Newsletter

May 2022 issue



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## President's Message

In our latest newsletter we will be celebrating awards, scholarships, new members, our legislative winners, and a special tribute to the loss of one of our best, Capt. Kevin Hynes, USAF.

I attended the East Carolina University's Army and Air Force ROTC Awards Ceremony on April 20<sup>th</sup>. It was my pleasure to present the MOAA Leadership Award to Army "Cadet Jackson Blumhardt" and Air Force "Cadet Justin Brogden". In addition to the two MOAA Leadership Awardees, I was very impressed by all the cadets who will soon be serving in our military.

Our annual Scholarship Dinner was held at Taberna Country Club on Thursday, May 19<sup>th</sup>. Once again, our Chapter awarded five \$1000 scholarships to deserving students. Thank you all for your generosity.

The Coastal Carolina Chapter was once again recognized for the MOAA 5 Star Col. Marvin J. Harris Communications Award for Print/E-Newsletter and for our website for 2021. Special thanks to Mark Sandvigen for all his efforts in maintaining our Website and Newsletter. He puts in many hours to keep communications flowing to our membership and public. Well done!

Congratulations to MOAA Coastal Carolina Chapter members ET Mitchell – Craven County Commissioner, District 4 and Bob Brinson, Alderman, Ward 6 for winning their primaries on May 17<sup>th</sup>

Next Coastal Carolina Chapter Board Meeting is June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Please remember chapter member Kevin Hynes who recently passed away. Keep him and his family in your thoughts and prayers. Also, as we approach Memorial Day, let us remember and honor the fallen and wounded.

## Blue Star Memorial Marker



A Blue Star Memorial Marker was dedicated at the New Bern National Cemetery on Tuesday, May 24, at 11:00 a.m. This marker honors those who have served the United States of America and is long overdue. It honors the more than 7500 servicemen and women who are entombed at the New Bern National Cemetery.

Since 1945, Blue Star Markers have been placed on highways, byways, National Cemeteries, parks, civic and historic sites to honor all Armed Forces of the United States. The Trent Woods Garden Club dedicated this Blue Star Memorial Marker with support from the Knights of Columbus Assembly, the Elks Lodge, and the Vietnam Wall Committee. As many of our Coastal Carolina Chapter members are also members of these organizations, and we provided many of the volunteers for the Vietnam Wall, the

fact that we were well represented speaks highly of our chapter. A special thank you goes out to President Randall Ramian for the photo.

## Scholarship Dinner



Our annual Scholarship Dinner was held at Taberna Country Club on Thursday, May 19<sup>th</sup>. Once again, our Chapter awarded five \$1000 scholarships to deserving students. Our Chapter appreciates our members who contributed so generously to the Scholarship Fund for making this happen. Our thanks also go out to USAA whose generous donation helped pay for the recipients and their family's dinners.

The Scholarship Committee included Gail Bateman, Mike Kennedy, Dan Walczak, Diane Bauer, and Randall Ramian. Our continued thanks to Gail Bateman for her leadership and ongoing efforts with this program. Also, we wish to thank Randy Bogle who organized the dinner and supporting materials at the Taberna Country Club.

Awardees for this year are as follow:

**Emmanuel Cantey (picture #1)** - Emmanuel is a returning applicant who won the CC MOAA Scholarship last year. He graduated from Havelock High School 2021, and he has been attending NC State, where he is majoring in Statistics.

**Juliana Magyar (picture #2)** - Juliana is also a returning applicant who won the CC MOAA Scholarship last year. She graduated from New Bern High School in 2021, and has been attending UNC Wilmington, where she is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

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**Jacob Reeves (picture #3)** – Jacob is graduating from Pamlico High School and will be attending UNC Chapel Hill where he plans to pursue a Bachelor of Arts degree in Exercise and Sport Science.

**Madelyn Coble (not pictured)** - Madeline is graduating from the Epiphany School of Global Studies, and she will be attending UNC Chapel Hill, where she will be majoring in Astrophysics.

**Brent Eilertson (not pictured)** - Brent is graduating from Croatan High School, and he will be attending Barton College, with plans to become a Physical Therapist, with a degree in Exercise Science.

## Special Tribute – [Capt. George “Kevin” Hynes, USAF](#)



For those of us who were fortunate enough to know Kevin, he can only be described as a “Force of Nature”. A decorated hero of the Vietnam Conflict, his life became one of dedication to the service men and women and their families whose sacrifice can only be appreciated by those who serve.

His unstinting efforts on behalf of all veterans was rewarded in 2021 by his receiving the Craven County Veterans Council’s Lifetime Achievement Award. Like all veterans Kevin was modest, kind, and loyal. In these ways, he was a true “everyman” all while being one of a kind – a loving husband, a caring father, an American patriot, and a leader. Until the end, Kevin “Never Stopped Serving”, he will be missed.

## JROTC Cadet Corps Awards

Our continued thanks to Col. Mike Kennedy for his continued efforts on behalf of our next generation of service men and women. Mike works tirelessly with the Cadet Commands to ensure that deserving individuals are rewarded for sustained superior performance. As Mike is keen to say, “All the cadets selected by their units are inspiring. Our country is in good hands with these young All Stars!”

CCMOAA has given out awards to:

Date	School	Unit	Awardee	Presenter
April 20, 2022	East Carolina University	Army ROTC	Cadet Jackson Blumhardt	CAPT Randall Ramian
April 20, 2022	East Carolina University	Air Force ROTC	Cadet Justin Brogden	CAPT Randall Ramian
May 19, 2022	Havelock High School	Navy JROTC	Cadet Seaman Cayden Sharp-Bessire	Col Mike Kennedy
May 13, 2022	New Bern High School	Navy JROTC	C/SN Angel Aaron	CDR Russ Bauer
April 6, 2022	Pamlico High School	Navy JROTC	C/Ens Abby Harwick	CAPT Marie Senzig
April 28, 2022	South Central High School	Army JROTC	Cadet SGM David Ige	Col Mike Kennedy mailed
May 11, 2022	Southern Wayne High School	Air Force JROTC	Cadet Juliyah Williams	Col Mike Kennedy

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## Membership

We are fortunate this month to be able to welcome two new members: Mary Jane Cahill, Colonel, USAF (Ret) and Virginia Spencer, Captain, USA (Ret). We look forward to meeting them both in person at one of our next membership get-togethers.

## Salute to Veterans



On May 10<sup>th</sup> at the Havelock Tourist and Event Center, the Salute to Veterans 2022 was held. Mark Sandvigen, Champ and ET Mitchell are seen at left signing the flag. MajGen Braaten, the night's MC, kept everyone in stitches as he tried to identify the oldest and youngest service members in attendance. The cake cutting (center) was officiated by a WWII Marine Corps veteran and five young Marines whose accession date into the Corps was November of 2021. The cakes were beautiful, there being one for every service.

Our local chapter member and Craven County Commissioner, ET Mitchell is in the final picture featured with LtGen Gaskin, USMC (ret.) who now serves as Secretary of North Carolina's Department of Military & Veterans Affairs (the night's featured speaker), State Representative Steve Tyson, and Col. Mike Huber, Commanding Officer MCAS Cherry Point. The evening was beautifully presented, and it was refreshing to see so many veterans, spouses, and currently serving military.

## Memorial Day Ceremony – New Bern National Cemetery



Monday, 30 May 2022, a Memorial Day ceremony was held at New Bern's National Cemetery. The ceremony was planned and officiated by the Craven County Veteran's Council. The Coastal Carolina Chapter was well represented by LCDR Ron Fry, Commander of the New Bern High School NJROTC unit, and his NJROTC Cadets who were there to assist as VIP escorts and other general duties. Also in attendance was MajGen Braaten, Capt.'s Randal Ramian and Randy Bogle and their wives Mary and Joanie, Capt. Trish Miller, Col. Dave Nelson, Lt.Col. Doug Uhland, LTC Bob Brinson, CDR Russ Bauer,

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and LCDR ET Mitchell. The cemetery was festooned with American Flags that had been placed the Saturday before by local area Girl's and Boy Scouts. Again, our thanks to "Mr. Camera Ready", President Randall Ramian for the photos.

## Chaplain's Corner



Our nation's hearts and souls are saddened and broken by what has happened in Texas. As the recriminations and finger pointing start, let us not forget that in the small town of Uvalde, Texas at the Robb Elementary School a shooter entered the school killing 19 children and two teachers in their class. One of the parents of a slain child died shortly thereafter of a heart attack. We pray fervently for ALL who are grieving and wounded.

We thank ALL the first responders.

The Holy Scriptures say, "Unless you come unto me as like a child, you will not inherit the kingdom of God". CH Will G. Barnes

## Legislative Action Center



If you have not checked out MOAA's new [Legislative Action Center](#), please do. MOAA has pre-written the advocacy letters for you. All you need to do is fill out your MOAA information and let fly. They will ask you for the chapter number, it is NCO2.

Pick those issues that you are most passionate about and let our congressmen know your feelings. The offices of our representatives keep count, if you do not write they do not know this issue is meaningful to us. As an end note, it takes about 10 years to get a bill passed, it would take less time if there was a ground swell of support for some of this proposed legislation. Make it a point to be part of the Tsunami!

**Maj. Richard Starr Act** - This bill provides that combat-disabled uniformed services retirees with fewer than 20 years of creditable service may concurrently receive, without reduction, veterans' disability compensation and retired pay or combat-related special compensation. For all of us who have campaigned for this Bill, we are having trouble pushing this over the finish line and getting S. 344 and H.R. 1282 to a Senate and House vote. Neither Senator Burr or Tillis have co-sponsored this Bill and we have only eight of our thirteen Representatives signed up to cosponsors. Please use the link above to request that our Senators and Representatives get behind this Bill. If you have served and were medically retired, these Bills could affect you and your benefits plus what will be provided to your spouse when you pass.

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## Take These 3 Actions After Filing Your Taxes

If you were required to file 2021 taxes, hopefully you did so by April 18 ... or at least filed for an extension. This was the first time in two years federal taxes were due in April, and millions of taxpayers rushed to file at the last minute. While most folks would rather forget about their taxes for another whole year, there are a few actions that you should take before filing away all those forms and documents.

### 1. Check the Status of Your Return

The IRS says that it issues 9 out of 10 refunds within 21 days. However, some returns require additional review, and the IRS has issued a statement explaining why some might take more time, with reasons ranging from errors to suspected identity theft. One thing is clear: Don't count on receiving the money by any particular date. If you're curious about the status of your refund, you can use the IRS' Where's My Refund tool 24 hours after e-filing and four weeks after mailing in your return. The status is updated daily.

### 2. Have a Plan for Your Refund

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You may not know when your refund will arrive, but you should have some idea what to do with it when it does. Whether it's boosting your emergency fund, paying off debt, or saving for your kids' education, have a concrete plan in place. Otherwise, that money may get treated (and spent!) as an unexpected windfall.

### 3. Revisit Your Withholding Amounts

If you had an unexpectedly large refund or, conversely, an unexpected tax bill, then you might want to adjust the amount withheld from your paycheck or your retired pay. Remember, a huge refund generally means that you gave the government an interest-free loan. On the other hand, if you withhold too little, you may be subject to penalties and be forced to make estimated payments in the future. The IRS has a withholding estimator you can use to figure out your federal tax withholding. If you have no earned income, only a pension, then you can use Form W-4P to determine the correct amount of tax to withhold. Visit [MOAA.org/Finance](https://MOAA.org/Finance) for the latest news, resources for MOAA members, and more.

## MOAA-Backed Bill Improving SGLI, VGLI Passes Senate

By: Kevin Lilley

A MOAA-supported bill increasing the amount of life insurance available to servicemembers and veterans via two popular VA plans took a major step forward last week, passing the Senate via a voice vote.

The Supporting Families of the Fallen Act (S. 2794) would increase the automatic maximum coverage under both the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) and Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI) plans from \$400,000 to \$500,000. It would be the first coverage-cap increase for either plan since 2005.

"This legislation is ultimately about supporting the families of servicemembers," said MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins, USAF (Ret). "MOAA looks forward to growing bipartisan support for this important modernization of life insurance."

The bipartisan bill heads to the House for consideration. The House version of the bill (H.R. 3793), introduced in June 2021 by Reps. Chip Roy (R-Texas) and Mike Levin (D-Calif.), has 13 co-sponsors. Sen. Tommy Tuberville (R-Ala.), who introduced the Senate version, told [Military.com](https://Military.com) the bill "has good support" in the House.

The bill marks a major step toward adjusting SGLI and VGLI coverage for inflation. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics inflation calculator, \$400,000 coverage in January 2005 would represent more than \$595,000 in purchasing power in February 2022.

While the \$100,000 increase doesn't cover the entire amount, the legislation could set the stage for Congress to make further adjustments – moves necessary to protect the benefit of these insurance programs and preserve the financial security of military families.

## Ready to Go Remote? Don't Miss These 2 MOAA Events in May

By: Kristian Spraggins

MOAA has partnered with Indeed to offer two May events designed to help you land the perfect remote-work situation -- a special webinar and a virtual career fair featuring remote and teleworking opportunities. If you are in the process of transitioning out of service, a military spouse looking to change career paths, or a veteran or spouse seeking advancement in your career, don't miss these exclusive opportunities.

First, join MOAA and Indeed's Solomon Rhima, senior sales strategist with Indeed for Military, for a May 12 webinar designed to maximize your virtual hiring experience. Among the topics addressed:

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- Best practices for your job search.
- Tips for researching your companies, including an employer's military- or veteran-hiring page.
- Résumé do's and don'ts for remote work.
- How to ace an interview.

Participants also will be able to ask questions after the presentation. Can't make the webinar? Register and you'll receive a link to the recording

Once you're prepared for success on the remote-job market, join MOAA and Indeed on May 17 for a virtual career fair focused on telecommuting opportunities. Visit the event page to register and for a list of participating employers.

Working with MOAA and Indeed can help you take advantage of a job seeker's market: U.S. job postings on Indeed were up 60.5% year-over-year as of January 2022, according to the Indeed Hiring Lab. MOAA and Indeed can help you find military-friendly, veteran-ready companies among those seeking new talent, and can help you take advantage of some of the perks being offered to attract talented workers, including more remote roles. Job seekers are also using their power in this market to demand more fulfilling jobs and work. A fulfilling job can mean different things to different people – from higher pay to flexible hours to more responsibility.