



MOAA UPDATE FOR Maryland SPOUSES AND SURVIVING SPOUSES
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020

Cheryl Glang email: glanghaus@gmail.com

This will be my first newsletter in the role of liaison for Spouses and Surviving Spouses. I am happy to serve and will do my best to help voice the concerns of all services spouses and to share what information I can.

I am the spouse of a retired NOAA Corps officer who also served 5 years in the Air Force when we lived in Massachusetts (Hanscom AFB area) as a newly married couple. Gerd enjoyed his time with the Air Force, but his 4 years at NY Maritime College instilled a calling for the sea. He made the switch from USAF to NOAA Corps and we transferred to Seattle, WA for his first of four sea assignments. This was the beginning of our 28 years with the NOAA Corps which included 6 moves to 5 different states. We have 2 children; my son is married living in Greenville, SC and my daughter is engaged and living in Frederick, MD.

My connection to MOAA started in the mid 1990's when I was introduced to Bob Norton. We were introduced during a time

when the Clinton administration was looking to eliminate the NOAA Corps. Bob was instrumental in helping myself and a few other spouses of the NOAA Corps navigate the ins and outs of “working the hill”. Our little group “Stormed the hill” for several months and I even was called to testify at a committee hearing. Ultimately, we were successful.

My interest in helping families continued serving as President of our NOAA Officers Family Association for over 10 years. In 2005 I was asked to serve on the National Military Family Association Board of Governors where I sat on their board for 6 years.

As I glanced through past newsletters, I tried to get a sense of what was to be included. Please feel free to request areas that you might find interesting. I have included several links for more information on some of these items.

HEALTH CARE

TRICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT NOVEMBER 9, 2020 – DECEMBER 14, 2020.

It’s that time you can make changes to your Tricare coverage for the following year. This is the second year that TRICARE has offered it and was passed by Congress to bring TRICARE enrollment more in line with traditional healthcare plans which commonly restrict how and when users can freely change plans from year to year.

RELATED LINK:

<https://www.military.com/benefits/tricare/tricare-open-enrollment.html> Also Related: [Retirees Must Start Paying for Tricare Select Now or Lose Coverage in January](#)

COVID-19 – “Wear the damn mask” – as our MD Governor announced!

With the holidays fast approaching I know we are all weighing the family gathering question. With the current rising levels of COVID, our family may decide to stay put. We are a science loving family and I will share with you a link that my daughter shared regarding “Gatherings and COVID”. Her own words “It’s so cool!”

<https://covid19risk.biosci.gatech.edu/>

Set your Event Size and then scroll over the US map to your county.

GET YOUR FLU SHOT! I received mine at Walter Reed on the last day they were holding the clinic. I am told that you can still go to Immunization (America Building) and receive a flu shot. You can also get a flu shot at several pharmacies and grocery stores. Here is a link to help you find a location.

<https://tricare.mil/fluvaccine>

TRICARE to Offer Free Physical Therapy for Back Pain in Some Locations. Includes family members

OCTOBER 30, 2020

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2020/10/27/tricare-offer-free-physical-therapy-back-pain-some-locations.html#:~:text=Defense%20Health%20Agency%20officials%20announced,therapy%20treatments%20for%20their%20pain.>

Retirees: Start Paying for Tricare Select Now or Lose Coverage in January

19 Oct 2020Military.com | By Jim Absher

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2020/10/19/retirees-start-paying-tricare-select-now-or-lose-coverage-january.html>

LEGISLATION- Maryland

COVID-19 definitely affected the outcome of the 2020 Session as lawmakers were asked to prioritize legislation due to the shut down in March 2020. Unfortunately, many of our bills were not addressed in 2020 and The Maryland Military Coalition together with our MD MOAA Chapter sent the attached letter (located on the last page) outlining the MMC's legislative priorities for MD veterans for the 2021 session.

COVID-19 Shut Down also impacts how we communicate and lobby with our MD legislature int 2021. This will most definitely be a topic of conversation in the next couple of months.

Related article:

<https://www.baltimoresun.com/politics/bs-md-pol-no-special-session-20200917-titu2es53jb5dkljxk3r7hkofm-story.html>

The Maryland Veterans Symposium was held on November 13, 2020. Several of our MOAA members attended. The lengthy meeting included a re-cap of bills passed in the last Session related to the uniformed services community in our state. If you care to view it on YouTube – here is the link.

<https://youtu.be/oYMXhPRV9g>

Military One Source held an Online Survivor Benefits Report Webinar on October 6, 2020. If you missed it and would like to see the Power Point, please let me know and I can send it to you. The actual Webinar is being edited for publication and will be available on their web site with the next month.

MOAA SUPPORTED BILLS

With the repeal of the “widow’s tax” in last year’s defense budget, MOAA recognizes that there is still more work to be done. The Caring for the Survivors and Families of Veterans Act, [S. 4594](#) and the Surviving Families Benefit Expansion

Act, [H.R. 8559](#) are just two of these bills which MOAA along with The Military Coalition are supporting. To read more, please click on the following link.

https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2020-news-articles/advocacy/these-moaa-supported-bills-will-improve-survivor-benefits/?fbclid=IwAR1fGh4tDSqu1lkpXzsony6flyr_hDyZYcq39eOUOV04DslbHs4opdF0l9Y

Related: Listing of Governor Hogan's 2020 goals:

<https://governor.maryland.gov/session2020/>

Finally – a recent article of interest on the possible shut down of Military Treatment Facilities which may affect Fort Detrick and Fort Meade.

<https://www.capitalgazette.com/opinion/columns/ac-ce-column-tom-jurkowsky-20200822-iaej3x6eifflijhlgd7v47idgnm-story.html>

THINGS TO PONDER NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020

November and December are months where you really need to be aware of telephone scams and email scams. AARP recently published this scam tool that when you put in your zip code it will give you the most recent scams reported in that area. Check it out! (no membership required)

https://www.aarp.org/money/scams-fraud/tracking-map/?cmp=EMC-DSM-NLC-MBA-MEM-20201117_MBU_CTRL_901501_1392203-111720-F5-AARPFraudWatchNetwork-CTA_Button-SM-Finance_General-5009957&encparam=nNdoXJKyxwqUSplha6je%2bjqQwdtfkxJ8WUEYhIrdjwk%3d

I am also sharing this article on sharing “fake news” on social media. In the past couple of years I have seen a lot of erroneous articles shared via emails (big tip – something that is forwarded, forwarded and forwarded) and on social media. It’s always good to fact check before you share.

<https://www.militaryspouse.com/news/milspouse-media-rules/>

On a personal note: My father in law – age 89 (actually just shy of his 90th birthday) passed away in 2018. We thought he had his affairs in order until we had to take care of things after he passed. This experience helped push Gerd and I to take a look at our affairs. We found our 25-year-old will was no longer current, or even valid on some things. We were encouraged to visit an estate planner and have successfully updated our documents so that our children won’t have to make these decisions on their own. MOAA has recently published this article to help you included items in your estate planning.

<https://www.moaa.org/content/publications-and-media/news-articles/2020-news-articles/surviving-spouse-corner-preparing-for-the-unpredictable/?fbclid=IwAR3S5jV7Uz2ahyITTNDjTN2vIS2He2QIc61sfB-n656ZtUVqo7XJzlcuwnw>

And finally, I leave you with this Poem – very thought provoking- don't you think?

What if 2020 is the year we've been waiting for?
A year so uncomfortable, so painful, so scary, so raw — that it finally forces us to grow.
A year that screams so loud, finally awakening us from our ignorant slumber.
A year we finally accept the need for change.
Declare change. Work for change. Become the change. A year we finally band together, instead of pushing each other further apart.
2020 isn't cancelled, but rather the most important year of them all.”

~Leslie Dwight via Instagram

Questions or comments please send an email to glanghaus@gmail.com

From: Bob Norton
Sent: Mon, Nov 16, 2020 4:45 pm
Subject: Montgomery Cty Legis. Priorities Hearing, 12 Nov

Dear Senator Smith,

On behalf of the Maryland Military Coalition (MMC) and the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) Maryland Council, I write to thank you for participating in last week's Montgomery County Joint House and Senate Priorities Hearing. I attended the hearing virtually.

Below is an email I sent to DEL Bonnie Cullison along with the attachment above outlining the MMC's legislative priorities for MD veterans for the 2021 session. We recommend that you pre-file your 2020 session bill, SB 532, that is intended to support the veteran-owned small business program. The MMC's and MOAA's other priorities are described in a letter and attachment to MD Secy of Veterans Affairs George Owings, dated 7 October 2020.

I appreciate your leadership and commitment to our fellow military-connected Marylanders and look forward to working with you in the upcoming session.

MMC Officers are cc'd on this email: Pat Guibao, VP and Legis. Dir; John May, Secretary / Treasurer; Lynn Slepki, Communications Director.

Sincerely,

Bob Norton
COL, USA-ret.
President, Maryland Military Coalition
1VP, MOAA Maryland Council of Chapters
District 19