

EDUCATE - INFORM - CONNECT

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAPTER PRESIDENT:

I'm Thankful for You

As we observe the upcoming holidays and reflect about what

we're grateful for, I want each and everyone of you to know that I'm thankful for you. You play an important role in making Central Virginia, chapter 2809, one of the best upcoming chapters in AUSA.

I'm thankful for team 2809, the members we have the honor of serving and our communities we support and keep safe. You are a vital part of a team that serves a great purpose. You are appreciated.

It is with regret that due to mitigating circumstances, our chapter's holiday dinner event has been rescheduled for next year, 2024, maybe in the spring.

I would also like to take this opportunity to appeal to you on two important topics, both related to fiscal well-being of the chapter.

• Make a tax-deductible monetary gift to the chapter by going to our website www.ausa.org/chapters/central-virginia-chapter and

clicking on. the donate button at the bottom middle of the page.



• Also, the chapter is aggressively seeking sponsors for our 2024 Army Birthday Golf Tournament. If you have any leads or recommendations for local businesses or service providers who you think would want to support us, please contact Dave Sitler at 804-986-0603 or dksitler@aol.com. We will follow up on your lead.

Stay Safe for these upcoming holidays, and we will be reconnecting in year 2024.

Thomas (Tom) House President, Central Virginia Chapter

AUSA ANNUAL MEETING AND EXPOSITION - CHAPTER AWARDS

The 2023

AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition, held annually at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington DC was a huge



success. This year's meeting saw a record breaking 41,000 registrants, along with 755 defense industry partners exhibiting their wares. The Annual Meeting is a crucial way for the Army to talk about its

priorities and tell its story to a wide audience.



While at the meeting Tom House, chapter president along with chapter members Brian Fortier, Bob Sempek,

Dave Sitler,

Erik Peterson, and Aaron Stanek attended the 2nd Region breakfast. The breakfast is traditionally where chapters are recognized for the



achievements over the past year. The Central Virginia Chapter was recognized and received streamers for:

- Merit Chapter
- Star Chapter
- Community Partner Growth
- Support to the U.S. Army Recruiting Command
- Professional Development
- Support to Cadet Programs









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CHAPTER MEMBER LEADS THE WAY IN ARMYTEN MILER

BY MICHAEL BROOKS

On Sunday, October 8th, 2023, 1SG Michael Brooks (US Army,Retired), a member of the AUSA Central Virginia Chapter, participated in The Annual Army 10-Miler race.

The Army 10-Miler recognizes that some veterans cannot and offers run Recumbent Tricycle, Handcycle, and Push-rim categories to match abilities. 1SG Brooks, from Chester, Virginia, was entered in the Recumbent Tricycle Category. He sustained



injuries from a tree landing during a Parachute Operation in 1997. At the time, he was serving as Operations Sergeant for 307th FSB, part of 1st BDE in 82nd ABN.

1SG Brooks started fast and kept going, finishing first in the Adaptive Categories. He set a new record in the Recumbent Category coming in at 32:59; bettering the previous record of 35:17.

When asked about this accomplishment, 1SG Brooks said, "I am so thankful for all the folks that helped me get to this point. Sure I worked hard, but there are so many people that helped. The adaptive sports community has accepted me, mentored me, trained me and then supported my efforts."

1SG Brooks went on to say, "The teams at the VA, PVA-Racing, and Sportable-Richmond made the difference. Last year, in September I could barely walk, used a cane always, and a wheelchair sometimes. I had a total knee replacement at the end of September, then began rehab, returned to a trike a few months later, then active race training; a

grueling year. This nice result makes me smile, but what will make me truly happy is to use this as an example to get more veterans looking at how Adaptive Sports can enhance their lives."

1SG Brooks sees the value of training, competing, and sharing; and hopes to see more participants in the future. After disabling injuries, the change in life and work roles can be hard to navigate. The Veterans Administration at Richmond Medical Center has a recreational therapy program that is focused on Adaptive Athletes. They provided 1SG Brooks with his Recumbent Tricycle in order to facilitate his rehabilitation needs. The VA and Sportable, both in Richmond, have numerous adaptive programs including bocci, bowling, cycling, air rifle; pickleball, and many others.

UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS

HAPPY HOLIDAYS - SEE YOU IN 2024!

9 Jan 2024, 1900hrs. - Chapter leadership meeting

13 Feb 2024, 1900hrs. - Chapter leadership meeting

12 Mar 2024, 1900hrs. - Chapter leadership meeting

31 Mar 2024, - Spring Newsletter Published

9 April 2024, 1900hrs. - Chapter leadership meeting

TBD May 2024 - General Membership Meeting

10 June 2024 - Army Birthday Golf Tournament and Fundraiser.



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JROTC HIGHLIGHT MEADOWBROOKS HIGH SCHOOL

BY LTC Dennis Calloway, US Army Retired



Almost as beautiful as these sunny fall days, the 2023/2024 academic school year is off to a great start within the Meadowbrook High

School, Army Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps. As the world battles back from the challenges of COVID-19, we have made a concerted



effort here at the Monarch Battalion to enhance our physical and mental fitness. The protocols associated with COVID-19 dramatically changed the way we educate our students, so 1SG Thomas Ghent and I created a training plan that would get back to prioritizing total health fitness. Some of the direct impacts to our students while living within the COVID-19 bubble range from reduced test scores, gaps in learning, fear, isolationism and reduced physical activities. As the world continues to evolve each and every day with uncertainty, JROTC Instructors and Administrators at Meadowbrook High School concluded we must have our students ready and capable of solving tomorrow's problems today.

We challenge our Cadets here at Meadowbrook High School both mentally (with mandated lesson plans and practical exercises) and physically through our active and aggressive physical training regimen. While in attendance at JCLC (JROTC Leadership Camp) summer of 2023, we multitasked

and wargamed what we are now calling our best way forward to achieve our JROTC goals, capable leaders of tomorrow. We want our kids to compete for Service



Academy appointments, college ROTC scholarships, enlistment in the Service, or workforce placement after graduation. Although a lofty goal, we feel as though with the continued support of current administration and a focused JROTC staff we can not only create change in halls of Meadowbrook High School, we can change the home lives of our cadets as well.

While at our summer leadership camp, we were notified we had been appointed a new principal to Meadowbrook High School, Dr Craig Reed, a lifelong educator and avid supporter of the JROTC **Immediately** Program. upon his arrival Meadowbrook High School, Dr Reed called for a meeting with the JROTC staff as he inquired about the vision and direction of the program. During our initial meeting we presented and discussed our near, medium and long-range goals with Dr Reed which he validated and accepted as a Monarch pathway to success. Our program enrollment is trending upwards as we continue to connect with kids across the spectrum of Chesterfield County. Meadowbrook High School, our vision is to grow our program to be the best program we can be, by producing dynamic, energetic, and capable Cadets.



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Lastly, we are proud that our cadets are a multicultural slice of the citizens of Chesterfield County Public Schools (CCPS), the fifth largest school

district in the state of Virginia. With our JROTC focus on character, discipline, leadership and health fitness we are constantly



challenging our cadets to be nothing less than excellent. Our cadets understand the value and expectation of hard work as we demand that from them each and every day in JROTC. We constantly communicate and share with them the value of hard work, goal setting and planning as young leaders in training because simply stated "we build leaders here." As we survey the horizon, we see nothing but success here at the Meadowbrook High School JROTC department. Our cadets are eager, excited and ready to attack the challenges associated with tomorrow's workforce while becoming better citizens for the growth and stability of our Nation.

GEORGE CONFIRMED AS 41ST ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF

SOURCE: WWW.AUSA.ORG



Gen. Randy George on Sept. 21 was confirmed by the Senate to be the 41st Army chief of staff. He was sworn in shortly afterward by Army Secretary Christine Wormuth.

The Army vice chief of staff since August 2022, George had been performing the duties of the chief of staff since Gen. James McConville retired Aug. 4. George was confirmed by a vote of 96-1. His nomination had been held up, along with hundreds of other general and flag officer nominations, in a dispute over a Pentagon policy on reproductive health care.

"Today I was delighted to be able to swear in General Randy George as the U.S. Army's 41st Chief of Staff following his confirmation by the Senate," Wormuth said in a statement. "General George is a battle-tested soldier and seasoned leader who has been a critically important champion for the Army as Vice Chief of Staff and as Acting Chief."

Having first entered the force as an enlisted soldier 42 years ago, George "understands the importance of service and leadership at every echelon," Wormuth said. "I deeply value the partnership we have already built and look forward to working with him to strengthen and transform the Army's warfighting capabilities and sustain our all-volunteer force."

A former commander of I Corps and the 4th Infantry Division, George is a 1988 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York. He commanded I Corps at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, from February 2020 to June 2021, and the 4th Infantry Division at Fort Carson, Colorado, from August 2017 to October 2019.

While performing the duties of Army chief of staff, George has emphasized the importance of an Army that's focused on warfighting and able to respond to any contingency anywhere in the world. "Our Army exists to fight and win our nation's wars. That's why we exist, that's why we're in this uniform,"







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George said Sept. 12 at the 2023 Maneuver Warfighter Conference at Fort Moore, Georgia. "We are a global Army. We've got to be ready to go anywhere on short notice."

To maintain the Army's edge, George has four focus areas—warfighting, continuous transformation, delivering ready combat formations and strengthening the profession.

"I expect you to focus on what makes you more lethal and cohesive," George said. "If there are things that are on your training schedule that are not making you more lethal or a more cohesive team, ... then you need to have a discussion about taking that off your training schedule."

CHAPTER OFFICERS & ADVISORS

Executive Committee

President: 1SG Tom House, USA RET

Vice President for Programs: LTC Dave Sitler, USA

RF1

Secretary & 2nd Vice President for Individual Membership: LTC **Erik Peterson,** USA RET Vice President for Community Partners: Mr. **Brian** Fortier

Treasurer & Immediate Past President: LTC **Bob**

Sempek, USA RET

Vice President for YPP and Editor Chapter Newsletter **COL Leif Johnson**, USA RET

Vice president for Reserve & National Guard affairs,

MG Tim Williams, USA RET

Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Ms. Jackie Fuller

Council of Advisors

BG Walt Mercer, USA RET – Distinguished Senior Advisor

COL Carlton Day, USA RET - Membership & ROTC/JROTC Programs

COL Aaron Stanek, USA RET

Mr. Pete Svoboda

Mr. James Boykin

COL Tom Stephen, USA RET – Employer Support to the Guard and Reserve (ESGR)

LTC Ron White, USA RET – Governmental Affairs COL Mike Flanagan, USA RET – Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army (CASA), Central Virginia

Want to do more?

Thanks to your engagement and support the Chapter continues to grow, and we are looking for new and energetic volunteers so we can continue to provide quality events that support our Army community. On-the-job training will be provided. Benefits: Doing Good & Feeling Good!

Vacant Chapter Leadership Positions Include:

- Vice President for Charlottesville Area
- Vice President for Army Civilian Affairs
- Vice President for NCO and Soldier Programs
- Advisor for Army Recruiting

Interested? Please contact Tom House, Chapter President at thouse5857@aol.com

THREE NEW COMMUNITY PARTNERS JOIN THE CHAPTER

The chapter is pleased to announce and welcome three new Community Partners. AUSA's Community Partners are local businesses, large corporations, civic groups, veteran's organizations, societies, and local community groups.

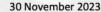
These Community Partners demonstrate to the central Virginia community that they support Soldiers and their families while strengthening their own organizational and business objectives.

Joining Aorta Medical Inc., our newest Community Partners are:









Camp Holiday Trails, located in the Charlottesville area, CHT provides summer camps and year-round programs for children age 5-17 from throughout the Mid-Atlantic region who have medical challenges. Our focus is on allowing kids to experience challenges in our safe, supportive and caring environment - our counselors are outstanding role models; all activities are adapted for each ability; our environment is rustic and we let our kids get dirty while exploring the natural environment.

Durabook Federal Inc. Located in Glen Allen, VA, Durabook is a leading manufacturer of rugged computing solutions, including the Durabook line of laptops, mobile tablets and all-in-one computers. Durabook Americas (formerly Gammatech Computer Corp) covers and serves the entire continent of North America.

Kelvin Hughes. Kelvin Hughes (A Hensoldt Company) is a global radar system solution provider meeting the surveillance, security and safety needs of the world's critical civil infrastructure operators, border agencies, shipping, coastal protection, commercial perimeter security, law enforcement and military organizations.

If you are a small business owner, entrepreneur, or professional service provider, consider becoming a Community Partner with The Central Virginia Chapter and AUSA. AUSA and the chapter provide a platform to network throughout the area, access to professional development, benefits and discounts, a voice on Capitol Hill, direct support of Soldiers, Army Civilians, Veterans and Army Families while keeping you informed on what is happening to and for your Army.

go to www.ausa.org/membership for Please additional information and application. Or contact Brian Fortier, Chapter Vice President for Community Partners, fortierbj@gmail.com, (804) 364-9846

From the AUSA Shop: A musthave AUSA publication for every Army family. Whether you are a new Army bride, parent of a Soldier, or a Soldier for Life, author Ginger Perkins has created a condensed reference



resource from A-Z that you will turn to again and again!

CHAPTER SUPPORTS FRIENDS OF THE WOUNDED FUND GOLF FUNDRAISER

By Leif Johnson



On Tuesday 11 Sept 2023, 12vears after infamous the and tragic attack on the United States. members of the

Central Virginia Chapter joined with the Families of the Wounded Fund, on what has become National Service Day, and paid tribute to those who died on that day, and also the KIA, MIA, and wounded of the ensuing wars.

In this case that tribute was in the form of a fundraising golf tournament held at Brandermill Golf Club in Midlothian, VA. Aside from the camaraderie of playing, the chapter was also a hole sponsor.

Representing the chapter were Dave Sitler, Brian Fortier, Leif Johnson, and guest Larry Varnas (West Point Class of '71).



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THE VIRGINIA NATIONAL GUARD FAMILY READINESS PROGRAM HELPS SUSTAIN READINESS

Source: www.va.ng.mil

The Soldier and Family Readiness Program is one comprehensive program that provided direct support to Army leadership and assists National Guard service members and their families navigate the unique challenges of their military and civilian live.

The Soldier and Family Readiness program is designed to be the Guard's entry point and primary contact for all readiness and assistance needs. We have 10 Soldier and Family Readiness Assistance Centers throughout the state to support the geographically-disbursed force and families of the Virginia National Guard.

Soldier and Family Readiness Specialists provide assistance and non-medical case management to service members and families on a variety of subjects. Services include basic financial education, Tricare claims assistance, ID card questions, resource and referral to community services, state agencies, employment assistance and guidance through the Exceptional Family Member Program. Working closely with the commander's Family Readiness Program to assist Army leadership and volunteers, we provide training support and briefings to command leadership, family readiness groups, Soldiers and families, and community partners.

Services are confidential and available throughout the week during normal office hours and 24 hours through their emergency assistance hotline (434-480-6585).

CENTRAL VIRGINIA CHAPTER BY THE NUMBERS

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP: 4,218

LIFE MEMBERS: 118

ASSOCIATION MEMBERS: 3,634

BASIC MEMBERS: **200** FAMILY MEMBERS: **4**

PREMIUM INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS: 330

COMMUNITY PARTNERS: 4

MY MEMBER BENEFITS





Log in to Start Saving!

In addition to your member benefit savings at www.ausa.org/savings, we're now happy to offer even more discounts on national and local brands -- from big-box stores to your local mom-and-pop shops. Click "Categories" above and check out the AUSA Exclusives first, as many support the AUSA mission with a small donation. With thousands of local and national offers across 10,000 cities and easy mobile access, we're confident you will find the perfect perk for you.



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WORLD WAR II ARMY VETERAN RECEIVES FRANCE'S HIGHEST HONOR

Source: www.ausa.org



John Gojmerac, a World War II veteran who served in the 3rd Infantry Division, recently was awarded the insignia of Knight of the Legion of Honor, France's highest decoration. Jeremie Robert, consul general of France in New York, presented the award to

Gojmerac Oct. 20 in a ceremony in Tonawanda, New York.

During the war, Gojmerac, a Slovenian immigrant who was drafted into the U.S. Army, served with the 3rd Infantry Division's 7th Infantry Regiment. He participated in the unit's many campaigns, starting with the initial landing in North Africa to its campaigns in Italy, France and Germany.

Gojmerac, now 99 years old, served in many capacities, including as an infantryman, a scout, a photographer and a telephone line repairer.

The Legion of Honor recognizes people "who have carried out actions of great value, forged by their own merits," reflect French values and contribute to the public good, according to the Legion of Honor website.

Gojmerac survived numerous close calls during his service. On one occasion, he was knocked to the ground by a German grenade. On another, he was wounded and used his rifle as a cane to safely get back to the medical tents.

In November 1944, while serving in France, Gojmerac earned the Silver Star, the nation's third-highest award for valor, for repairing a telephone line between two platoons several times during a single engagement, according to the Army. On the last repair, Gojmerac captured a German soldier who was trying to cut the line. His actions helped his fellow soldiers coordinate their attack against the enemy, according to the Army.

"How I survived ... it makes me wonder sometimes," Gojmerac said.

Even as he accepted the honor from the French, Gojmerac talked about the fallen soldiers he served alongside. "I'm not accepting it for myself, but for the men that didn't make it," he said.



VA's Million Veteran Program, the world's largest research program of this type, has already led to 350+ new health discoveries!

Key facts about the Million Veteran Program:

It reflects the diversity of the Veteran population: More than 250,000 minority Veterans and 100,000 women Veterans have joined the program, and MVP includes more people of African ancestry than any research program in the world. This allows researchers to learn more about — and ultimately treat — populations that have historically been underrepresented in research.

It's been used in the largest-ever genetic studies on anxiety, depression, blood pressure, heart disease, non-alcoholic liver disease, and more: These studies have helped increase the understanding of genetic risk factors for these conditions, paving the way for future treatment and research. It helped lead to a breakthrough in understanding post-traumatic stress: A study of more than 165,000 MVP participants identified several genes related to reexperiencing traumatic memories, the most distinctive symptom of PTSD. The study shed new light on the biology of PTSD.

It's the world's largest database on nutrition: When Veterans enroll in MVP, they are asked to complete a lifestyle survey that gives VA important information about what foods they eat and at what quantities — which helps researchers make



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important discoveries for Veterans and all Americans. For example, one recent MVP-driven study found that yogurt of any kind is good for heart health.

Veterans join MVP by voluntarily providing a blood sample, filling out surveys about their health and wellness, and granting researchers secure access to their health records. That data is secured, protected, and anonymized for patient privacy, then used to study the interactions between genes, lifestyle, military experiences, and exposures to learn more about how those factors impact health.

MVP is continuing to enroll Veterans, and any Veteran can enroll in MVP. Veterans can join MVP at 65+ VA facilities across the nation, online at www.mvp.va.gov, or by calling 866-441-6075 for more information.

ARMY MATTERS

How Does a Wreath Symbolize Freedom?

with Karen Worcester & Cindy Tatum, Wreaths Across America

Every December, thousands of volunteers from around the country place wreaths on millions of graves of fallen servicemembers—in cemeteries across the United States—thanking each one individually. This initiative was started by Morrill and Karen Worcester in 1992; from there, it has grown to include an annual event, a radio station, an educational guide and more. Hosts LTG (Ret.) Leslie C. Smith and guest host LaSherryn Duncan sit down with Wreath's Executive Director Karen Worcester and Education Liaison Cindy Tatum, a Gold Star mother, to discuss the creation of the organization, the importance of remembering each and every fallen servicemember, and how people in Maine refuse to say their "R"s.

AUSA's Army Matters podcast can also be heard on Wreaths Across America Radio on Monday at 8 pm Eastern. You can find Wreaths Across America Radio on the iHeart Radio app, the Audacy app, and the TuneIn app. Search the word "wreath."

AUSA SCHOLARSHIPS

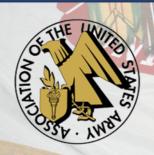
AUSA Premium Members, Association Members, and their dependents (to include children, spouses, and grandchildren) are eligible to apply.

APPLICATIONS ARE CURRENTLY CLOSED. APPLICATIONS WILL OPEN IN FEBRUARY 2024.

Please verify your membership on the application form to expedite the application process. If you do not know your AUSA membership number or that of your sponsor, please contact AUSA Member Support at membersupport@ausa.org or 1-855-246-6269.

MILITARY EXPERIENCE IS NOT A REQUIREMENT FOR MANY SCHOLARSHIPS. APPLICANTS MAY APPLY TO ALL PROGRAMS FOR WHICH THEY QUALIFY WITH A SINGLE APPLICATION.







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Proceeds go to AUSA's Central Virginia Scholarship Fund and Chapter programs that support local Soldiers, Army Families, and Veterans.

Mad Golf Skill Contests:

- Closest to the Pin
- Longest Drive
- Best Putt

Format: Captain's Choice Foursomes
Shotgun start
Price Includes Green Fees, Range Balls,
Cart, and Lunch

Price per player:

\$100 through 31 March 2024 \$110 if 1 April 2024 or later

Register online at:

www.birdease.com/CentralVirginiaChapterArmyGolf

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Mail-in registrations must include a Team POC, each player's name, email and phone number. Make checks payable to: Central Virginia Chapter, #2809 and mail to Bob Sempek, 14208 Cove Ridge Court, Midlothian, VA 23112.



0730 - 0830 Registration

0800 - Start of putting contest

0840 - 0850 Tribute to the Nation; Announcements

0850 - 0900 Disperse to T-Boxes

0900 - 1300 Tournament play

1300 - 1400 Lunch and awards



For more information, contact Dave Sitier: dissitier@aol.com





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Title Sponsor

\$5000

- Company Name & Logo on Printed Material
- Your Company Banner Displayed at Registration
- 3 Tournament Teams
- Longest Drive Sponsor
- 3 Hole Sponsorships

Gold Sponsor \$2500

- Company Name & Logo on Printed Material
- Your Company Banner Displayed at Registration
- 2 Tournament Teams
- Closest-to-Pin Sponsor
- 2 Hole Sponsorships

Silver Sponsor \$1500

- Company Name & Logo on Printed Material
- 1 Tournament Team
- Breakfast/Lunch Sponsor
- 1 Hole Sponsorship

Bronze Sponsor \$1000

- Company Name & Logo on Printed Material
- 1 Tournament Team
- Driving Range Sponsor
- 1 Hole Sponsorship

Corporate Sponsor \$500

- Company Name & Logo on Printed Material
- 1 Tournament Team
- 1 Hole Sponsorship



Beverage Cart Sponsor

\$500

- Name recognition in tournament program
- Sponsor name on beverage cart

Lunch Sponsor

- Name recognition in tournament program
- Company sign in awards lunch area
- Company recognition at lunch

Driving Range Sponsor \$250

- Name recognition in tournament program
- Company sign at practice range

Putting Contest Sponsor \$250

- Name recognition in tournament program
- Company sign on putting green

Longest Drive Sponsor \$250

- Name recognition in tournament program
- Company sign at longest drive tee box

Closest-to-Pin Sponsor \$250

- Name recognition in tournament program
- Company sign at closest-to-pin tee box

Breakfast Sponsor \$15

- Name recognition in tournament program
- Company sign in breakfast area

Hole Sponsor \$150

- Name recognition in tournament program
- Signage at 1 hole

On-line sponsorship, donation, and payment can be made at:



r www.birdease.com/ CentralVirginiaChapterArmyGolf



Mail-in sponsorship and payment should include: Sponsorship level, Company or Individual name, and a POC with email and phone number. Make checks payable to: Central Virginia Chapter, #2809 and mail to Bob Sempek, 14208 Cove Ridge Court, Midlothian, VA 23112.

Voice for the Army

Support for the Soldier







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