Surviving Spouse Update

Presented by:
Barbara Smith
MOAA Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee
“Sometimes our light goes out, but is blown again into instant flame by an encounter with another human being.”

- Albert Schweitzer
Agenda

• Background
• The Role of the Surviving Spouse Liaison
• Eligibility Requirements
• Encourage, Engage, and Educate
• How to Stay Informed
• Best Practices
• Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter
Background
Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee
The Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee

• Who we are
• Who we represent
• Voting Members of MOAA
• Representation on MOAA Board of Directors
Key Roles

• Promote the key values of MOAA
  – Advocacy
  – Membership
  – Council & Chapters Support
The Role of a Surviving Spouse Liaison
What is the Role of the SSL?

• Primary Point of Contact for Surviving Spouse Members and Spouses of members for information on key legislation, benefits and health care issues that may affect them.

• Advise the council or chapter president on Surviving Spouse Issues
What is the Role of the SSL, Cont.

- Encourage, Engage, and Educate surviving spouses and spouses of members to take an active role in the chapter/council and MOAA advocacy

- Assist members during times of loss
Who can be a Surviving Spouse Liaison?

• Any member can be appointed to the position – does not have to be a surviving spouse
Encourage, Engage, and Educate
How Surviving Spouse Liaisons Participate

• Encourage Surviving Spouses & Spouses

• Engage Surviving Spouse Liaisons in Councils and Chapters

• Educate Surviving Spouses & Chapter Members
Encourage Surviving Spouses

• Encourage surviving spouse & spouse participation within chapters

• Initiate post death contact, invite to chapter meetings

• Make phone calls; offer rides
Encourage Surviving Spouses, Cont.

• Welcome and include in all chapter activities

• Request feedback

• Recognize outstanding performance – local & national (Surviving Spouse Liaison Excellence Award)
Engage Surviving Spouse Liaisons in Councils and Chapters

• Appoint to Chapter Board
• Solicit input to design programs of interest
• Elect to leadership positions
• Incorporate Surviving Spouses in all aspects of chapter management
• Take charge: Design, Develop, Direct a special Project
• Be an Advocate: Promote MOAA legislative Issues
MOAA Legislative Issues

• Legislative issues impacting surviving spouses:
  – Survivor Benefit Plan – Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (SBP-DIC) Offset
  – Authorize survivors of retirees to draw full month's retired pay for the month in which retirees die
  – Improve Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)
  – Improve Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits
What Are You Doing?
Educate Chapter Members & Surviving Spouses

• Use the term Surviving Spouse rather than Auxiliary

• A Surviving Spouse is a regular member & the spouse did not have to be a MOAA member

• Educate on personal affairs and what to do in case of personal loss
Surviving Spouse (SS) MOAA National Membership

- **BASIC Membership**
  - Membership cost is FREE

- **PREMIUM Membership**
  - 1 Year: $43.00
  - 2 Years: $73.00
  - 3 Years: $97.00
  - SS receive a FREE 1-Year membership, if the deceased spouse was an ACTIVE Premium Member at the time of passing

- **LIFE Membership**
  - Membership cost varies by age
  - If the deceased spouse was a Life Member, then that membership is transferred to the Surviving Spouse for FREE
How to Stay Informed
How to Stay Informed

- **MOAA website**
  MOAA.org  Check “I Am a Surviving Spouse”

- **Surviving Spouse (SS) Advisory Committee Articles** in The MOAA Newsletter & on MOAA website under Surviving Spouse Resources

- **MOAA publications** about Surviving Spouse issues
Best Practices
Best Practices

- Communicate with surviving spouses through newsletters, personal contact, and at meetings
- Organize events of interest to surviving spouses & spouses
- Provide valuable resources about benefits
- Offer assistance and support during personal loss
- Involve surviving spouses in Community Activities & Military Events
What Are Your Suggestions?
Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter
Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter

• Connecting Surviving Spouses throughout the US and across the world

• Providing opportunities to Encourage, Engage, and Educate

• Must be a MOAA Member

• No dues

• Meetings are quarterly by conference call
Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter, Cont.

- Meetings are the 3rd Tuesday of every quarter

- **Next Meeting:** Tuesday January 21, 2020 @ 1:00PM Eastern

- Topics to discuss:
  - Legislative update on SBP/DIC
  - Information on Virtual Chapter Cruise Sept 2020
  - Applying for SSAC vacancies in 2020
  - Health care issues
  - Financial Planning
Additional Surviving Spouse Contacts

MOAA Staff Advisor
LTC Suzanne Walker, USA (Ret)
Katherine Ryan

Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter (SSVC)
Micki Costello
Pat Farnsworth
Gail Joyce
Questions?

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“The only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve”

- Albert Schweitzer