



COLUMBIA RIVER CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

5-STAR EXCELLENCE
CHAPTER



MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION of AMERICA
P.O. BOX 1872 VANCOUVER, WA 98668

ESTABLISHED 1970

website: www.moaacolumbiariver.org

May 2016

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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360-721-0865

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360-281-9998

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360-326-3346

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360-607-6015

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360-904-8966

Scholarship:
Paul Crosby
360-666-8871

Chaplain:
Rev Max Metcalf
541-961-0869

Spring is here! Along with our crazy April weather! Our chapter has been involved in many activities, including ribbon cutting at the Fisher House on the Vancouver campus of the VA on March 23. We had an excellent turn out of chapter members. We continue to support the Fisher House with donations and have delivered personal toiletries and kitchen items. At present, they have plenty of toiletries, but are in need of individual servings of food and snacks.

You can bring your donations to our May 19 dinner, and **Dave Casteel** will see that they get delivered.

I had the privilege of attending a Women Veterans Conference on March 18 and 19. It was sponsored by the Oregon Department of Veteran's Affairs at Camp Withycombe in Clackamas, OR. There were terrific speakers, breakout sessions, and vendors, whose mission was to help women veterans feel appreciated and that their service had meaning.

Les Berger, Dave Casteel, and I had a planning session before we met with our legislator's staff regarding military health care reform. As a retired Army MD, **General Berger** is a wealth of knowledge about military health care. On April 11, he was able to give **Senator Murray's** staffer,

Bryan Stebbins, excellent background information prior to Dave discussing MOAA's position on proposals before Congress regarding health care for active, retired, and former military members.



National MOAA does an outstanding job explaining our stand on various issues.

The website has excellent materials for members to use and flyers to hand out. Please sign and send the letters and postcards you receive with you MOAA magazine. They really do have an impact!

Jim and I attended the Our Community Salutes Future Military Service Members at

Skyview High School on April 28. This was to honor high school seniors in Vancouver and Clark County who have committed to enter military service upon graduation. It was an uplifting and happy event and, as always, well organized by CMAC.

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**19 May
Thursday
Club Green Meadows
7703 N.E. 72nd Avenue
Vancouver, WA
Buffet Dinner
RSVP 16 May
Details on page 11**

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE continued

I know those seniors will make outstanding soldiers and marines, even though they look very young! I am showing my age.

On a more somber note, **Colonel Gunnar Kilpe** passed away in April. We have no information on a memorial service, but will pass on any information when we get it.

Scholarship Corner by Paul Crosby

At the March 2016 luncheon, members had the opportunity to meet **Kelsey Bishop**, our 2015-16 Fenning scholarship recipient. Kelsey, a two-time chapter scholarship recipient, is on track to graduate with a bachelor's degree in dental hygiene in June.

I recently took checks to Clark College and WSU-Vancouver to provide funding support for our four scholarships for the 2016-17 school year. You will recall that the chapter funds the Chriss, Doty, and Fenning scholarships at Clark and the Allan scholarship at WSU. All four are \$1000 scholarships.

The chapter pays for the three Clark scholarships with a combination of funds from our Clark College Foundation endowment and the chapter's foundation scholarship fund. The Clark Foundation endowment leveled off in a flat market year but the payout continues to grow. On December 31, 2015, the endowment had a value of \$53,532 a slight loss from \$55,003 but the payout increased from \$1558 to \$1612. So I took a check in the amount of \$1,388 to Clark and a check for \$1,000 to WSU-Vancouver, where we have no endowment.

That is good news for the chapter. This is the second consecutive year that the chapter has been able to reduce our payout from the scholarship fund. The other good news is the amount in the scholarship fund is now over \$16,000. I will make a proposal at the May 12th board meeting to take some of that \$16,000 and add it to the Clark endowment. The chapter continues to search for funds to start an endowment at WSU, but to reach the \$25,000 minimum will take some number of years and we can increase the payout from Clark by adding to that endowment now.

The Executive Board is looking for suggestions about meeting venues or activities. Please let any board member know what you like or dislike about our meetings and events, and any ideas for the future. I look forward to seeing you at the May dinner.

Remember – Never Stop Serving!

Evelyn Brady
President

Thank you for your generosity. If you have any suggestions on how we can improve our scholarship program, please let me know.

Paul Crosby
Scholarship
360-666-8871



CMSGT **Shannon**, USAF, Ret., presents the MOAA medal to Battleground High School JROTC Cadet **Isaac Davisson** on 26 April. The medal recognizes an outstanding JROTC cadet who shows exceptional potential for military leadership. **Davisson** is a Flight Commander in his junior year and a member of the JROTC Drill Team.

Newsletter Editor

Newsletter Editor: Rich Wersinger. You can contact him at 360-901-1915 or e-mail him at rich@rjwconsulting.org.

Our Chapter Secretary Rod Heidelberg, (360) 607-6015 roderickjheidelberg@yahoo.com coordinates calendar inputs and newsletter distribution.

Newsletter Distribution

We continue to distribute our newsletter by e-mail, so if you are receiving this via postal service and would prefer e-mail please notify our Chapter Secretary, Rod Heidelberg.



**ADVANTAGES
OF
MILITARY OFFICERS OF AMERICA ASSOCIATION (MOAA)**

WITH MOAA MEMBERSHIP YOU GET ALL OF THIS

WHAT YOU GET	PRICE
✓ Membership in national MOAA and local chapter <small>(First 3 years free with National. 1st year free in Chapter, thereafter \$15.00/yr)</small>	FREE
✓ 12 month associate membership for your spouse or partner	Included
✓ MOAA Magazine (290,000 circulation)	Included
✓ On line access to MOAA national and state legislative activity and news bulletins	Included
✓ Access to exclusive products: long term health insurance, medical products, and exclusive materials	Included
✓ Volunteer opportunities in your state or community chapter	Included
✓ Discounts on hotels, airline, cruises, car rental, home security and more	Included
✓ Representation in Washington, DC and all 50 states. Advocating for and protecting pension rights and benefits for active and retired military and spouse or partner.	Included™

TOTAL ONLY: FREE

Learn more: Contact the Columbia River Chapter today. Contact our **Membership Chair, Jeremy Baenen** at 360-281-9998 or Jeremy.Baenen@gmail.com or our **President, Evelyn Brady** at 360-721-0865 or evelynbrady@rocketmail.com



Membership Update by *Jeremy Baenen*

Thank you all for your recruiting efforts! Since our last newsletter we have had a number of visitors attend our luncheons and express interest in joining our chapter. As a result, we have several new members I would like to introduce.

I would like to welcome and introduce **Lee Loomis** and his wife **Sharon**. **Lee** retired as a Colonel from the Air Force and then served in the US Public Health Service. **Lee** and **Sharon** live in Camas.

I also would like to welcome and introduce **Lew Meyer**. **Lew** retired as a CDR in the Navy and served from 1953 to 1976. **Lee** recently moved across the country to reside here in Battle Ground. One of his passions is bicycling which he hopes to get back to after settling in.

Thank you both for you and your family's service to our country and welcome to the chapter!

If you would like to reach me, you can e-mail me at Jeremy.Baenen@gmail.com or call my cell 360-281-9998.

Jeremy Baenen
Membership Recruitment Committee

**Chapter ~ Membership Eligibility**

Chapter membership is open to active duty, National Guard, Reserve, retired, and former commissioned officers and warrant officers of the following uniformed services: Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Public Health Service, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Surviving spouses of deceased officers are also eligible to join.

Columbia River Chapter ~ Affiliate

Our chapter is an affiliate of the 390,000 member national MOAA which is the nation's largest and most influential association of military officers. MOAA and the chapter are nonprofit, politically nonpartisan organizations. Our chapter is an IRC 501(c)19 war veterans organization.



2016 MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCE COMMUNITY EVENT

Monday, May 30 at 11 AM

LOCATION:

The Bandstand (Gazebo)

Fort Vancouver National
Historic Site, just west of
1501 Evergreen Blvd,
Vancouver WA 98661



Parking available at Hudson's Bay High School: C-Tran will be providing transportation between Hudson's Bay and the event site!



*Visit the National Park
Service Soldier's Bivouac at
Fort Vancouver after the
Memorial Day Service.*

Event
Sponsors:



Community Military
Appreciation Committee



Waste
Connections



Legislative Contacts

MOAA Legislative Action Center

<http://www.moaa.org/Legislative/>

MOAA Capitol toll free hotline at 1-866-272-6622

White House

Comments: 202-456-1111 Switchboard: 202-456-1414
FAX: 202-456-2461 E-mail: comments@whitehouse.gov

Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler

Washington's 3rd Congressional District

<http://herrerabeutler.house.gov/>

The U.S. Government's Portal: <http://www.usa.gov/>
U.S. Senate: <http://www.senate.gov/>
U.S. House of Representatives: <http://www.house.gov/>



Washington, DC Office: U.S. House of Representatives 1130 Longworth House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 Phone: (202) 225-3536 Fax: (202) 225-3478	Vancouver, WA Office: O.O. Howard House 750 Anderson Street, Suite B Vancouver, WA 98661 Phone: (360) 695-6292 Fax: (360) 695-6197
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Contact Congresswoman Herrera Beutler via email:
<https://herrerabeutler.house.gov/contact-me/email-me>

U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell <http://cantwell.senate.gov/>

WASHINGTON, DC 511 Dirksen Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510 202-224-3441 202-228-0514 - FAX 202-224-8273 - TDD	SW WASHINGTON The Marshall House 1313 Officers Row Vancouver, WA 98661 360-696-7838 360-696-7844 – FAX	SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 915 Second Avenue Suite 3206 Seattle, WA 98174. 206-220-6400 206-220-6404 - FAX
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Contact Senator Cantwell via email: <http://cantwell.senate.gov/contact/>

U.S. Senator Patty Murray <http://murray.senate.gov/>

WASHINGTON, DC 173 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510 Phone: (202) 224-2621 Fax: (202) 224-0238	SW WASHINGTON The Marshall House 1323 Officer's Row Vancouver, Washington 98661 Phone: (360) 696-7797 Fax: (360) 696-7798	SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 2988 Jackson Federal Building 915 Second Avenue Seattle, WA 98174 Phone: (206) 553-5545 Toll Free: (866) 481-9186 Fax: (206) 553-0891
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Contact Senator Murray via email: <http://murray.senate.gov/email/index.cfm>

Vancouver Area Washington State Legislative Districts and Representatives

Legislator	District 49	District 17	District 18	District 14	District 20
Senator	Annette Cleveland 786-7696	Don Benton 786-7632	Ann Rivers 786-7634	Curtis King 786-7626	John Braun 786-7638
Representative, Position 1	Sharon Wylie 786-7924	Lynda Wilson 786-7994	Brandon Vick 786-7850	Norm Johnson (509) 454-7210	Ed Orcutt 786-7990
Representative, Position 2	Jim Moeller 786-7872	Paul Harris 786-7976	Liz Pike 786-7812	Gina McCabe 786-7856	Richard DeBolt 786-7896

Note: All phone numbers are 360 area code, except where otherwise noted. Toll free **1-800-562-6000**
More info at www.leg.wa.gov/legislature

Legislative Affairs: *by Rod Williams***MOAA's Top 10 Legislative Goals for 2016**

1. Ensure any TRICARE reform sustains top-quality care. MOAA will strive to ensure the problems with TRICARE are addressed in a systemic manner, programs that are working well are sustained, and problem areas are addressed to improve care, coverage, and readiness.

2. Prevent disproportional TRICARE fee increases. Any fee-adjustment formula must recognize that military beneficiaries prepay very large premiums for their lifetime coverage through decades of service and sacrifice, and the country must have a higher obligation to them than what corporate employers demonstrate for their employees. To that end, a percentage increase in military beneficiaries' health care fees in any year should not exceed the percentage increase in their military compensation. MOAA adamantly will resist proposals to make military health care programs more like those offered by civilian employers and that add thousands of dollars a year to military beneficiaries' costs.

3. Sustain military pay comparability with the private sector. For 2016, the military pay raise was capped at 1.3 percent, 1 percentage point below the 2.3-percent private-sector pay growth, as measured by the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Employment Cost Index (ECI). This is the third consecutive year of capping military raises below the statutory ECI standard, and the president's budget envisioned additional caps for six consecutive years. Past history with military pay-raise caps shows they continue until they hurt retention and readiness. MOAA strongly objects to further planned pay caps. This unwise process generated retention crises in the 1970s and '90s. Sustaining pay comparability is essential to long-term retention and readiness.

4. Block erosion of compensation and commissary benefits. Protect against privatization, consolidation, reduction in services, or elimination efforts in commissary and exchange programs. Sustain funding support, and guard against diminution of this substantial benefit for active duty, reserve, and retired service members and their families and survivors.

5. Protect military retirement/COLAs. Proposals to cap annual COLAs below inflation or to redefine and depress the Consumer Price Index for the purpose of geometrically depressing successive annual adjustments would break long-standing statutory commitments to them. MOAA will continue to exert every effort to preserve the congressional intent, as expressed in the House Armed Services Committee Print of Title 37, U.S. Code, "to provide every military retired member the same purchasing power of the retired pay to which he was entitled at the time of retirement [and ensure it is] not, at any time in the future ... eroded by subsequent increases in consumer prices."

6. Sustain wounded-warrior programs and expand caregiver support. A recent RAND Corp. study of caregivers found more than 1 out of 6 of our nation's 5.5 million caregivers are caring for post-9/11 veterans. Nearly 40 percent of these caregivers are under the age of 30 and will remain in the role of caregiver for decades to come. We must do more to support these caregivers who are providing an estimated \$3 billion a year in services to our wounded, ill, and injured service members and veterans. Improvements to respite care, employment accommodations, and health care are a priority. Full-time caregivers of severely disabled veterans from conflicts prior to Sept. 11, 2001, must be included in Caregiver Act services, support, and respite care. More must be done to ensure medical and benefit systems are providing continuity of care and coverage for wounded warriors of all services and components, including reasonable assistance, training, mental health and family-marital counseling, and compensation for their dependent and nondependent caregivers.

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MOAA Legislative Goals continued

DoD and the VA have made progress toward increasing the number of behavioral health care providers, but timely access to qualified, appropriate mental health intervention and treatment remains difficult in many DoD and VA health care facilities. The shortage of mental health care providers results in increased referrals to civilian providers, many of whom have little knowledge or understanding of military culture and the unique needs of military families. Specialized training and military cultural-awareness programs should be expanded for community providers to improve efficiency when working with service members and veterans and their families.

The health and well-being of the all-volunteer force has never been more critical. DoD and the VA must have viable and effective systems of care and support that address all warrior physical, mental, and emotional issues, including managing pain, substance use, and complex trauma conditions. Senior commanders must continue to strengthen efforts to establish a command climate that eliminates stigma associated with seeking mental health care. Establishing a culture that encourages individuals to seek help as an act of strength rather than as a sign of weakness is central to transforming the willingness of service members to seek treatment.

7. End disabled/survivor financial penalties. MOAA supports a plan to phase out the disability offset to retired pay for all disabled retired service members, with initial priority for those who were prevented from serving 20 years solely because they became severely disabled in service. MOAA will work with Congress, DoD, and the administration to advance this proposal as a further important step toward ending the offset for all disabled retirees. In addition, MOAA will continue to fight for full repeal of the deduction of VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) from Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuities for survivors of service members who died of service-connected causes. MOAA strongly believes when military service causes a service member's death, DIC should be paid in addition to SBP rather than being subtracted from it. To the

extent funding cannot be obtained for immediate, full repeal, MOAA will seek interim steps to extend and substantially upgrade compensation for these most deserving survivors by supporting legislation to extend the Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance (SSIA) beyond the current statutory expiration date of Oct. 1, 2017. Congress enacted SSIA as an interim means of easing financial penalties for survivors affected by the deduction of DIC from SBP. Since October 2008, qualifying surviving spouses have received gradually increasing monthly payments. The FY 2017 monthly allowance will be \$310. It will be essential to include an extension provision in the FY 2017 defense bill to keep these survivors from experiencing a significant income loss.

8. Fix Guard/Reserve retirement. Guard and Reserve families cannot be indefinitely burdened with irreconcilable tradeoffs between civilian employment, personal retirement planning, and family obligations. Operational Reserve policy requires reservists to serve one of every five years on active duty, though many already have served multiple combat tours equal to active force deployment cycles. Regardless of reemployment protections, periodic long-term absences from the civilian workplace can only limit these service members' upward mobility and employability, as well as personal financial security. The new hybrid retirement plan (for service entrants on or after Jan. 1, 2018), composed of reduced retired pay and a matched 401(k)-style system, will require robust financial education of all service members, including guard members and reservists, to protect their retirement interests.

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MOAA Legislative Goals continued

9. Improve spouse and family support. Preserve funding for family support; morale, welfare and recreation; exchange; commissary; and other critical support services and quality-of-life programs. Improve and enhance access to affordable, quality child care. MOAA recognizes the significance of continued crucial support of military family members bearing the brunt on the home front of over a decade at war. MOAA will work with Congress, DoD, and others in ensuring necessary family support and quality-of-life services across all components, installations, and communities. Military families with a special-needs member face additional stressors. More must be done to enhance support services and health care for these families.

10. Assure timely access to the VA, and eliminate the VA claims backlog. The VA must aggressively implement reforms to assure timely access to the quality care most enrolled veterans experience. Changes in leadership in some facilities, recruitment of separating DoD medical professionals, upgrades of clinical space, and an overhaul of the out-of-date scheduling system are needed. MOAA supports a

comprehensive, strategic plan for VA health care delivery in the 21st century. The VA must double down on efforts to improve mental health care delivery and address the number of veteran suicides. The VA and DoD need to strengthen their collaboration in delivering long-term medical and benefits counseling and caregiver support for catastrophically disabled veterans. To sustain VA services to the nation's veterans, two-year funding across all VA accounts must be enacted. MOAA will continue to be watchful against any initiative that would force dual-eligible beneficiaries, solely as a cost-savings measure, to choose between the DoD and VA health systems.

If you have questions or concerns about MOAA's legislative goals please call the Member Service Center at 1-800-234-6622 or email legis@moaa.org. See more at: [MOAA's Top 10 Legislative Goals \(http://tinyurl.com/grdn8uo\)](http://tinyurl.com/grdn8uo)

Rod Williams
Chapter Legislative Chair



Washington State Legislative Affairs Update: by Dave Casteel

Bill #	Title and Summary	Sponsor
<p>ESHB 1213 C 76 L 16 Effective 6/9/2016</p>	<p>County veterans assistance fund: Modifies the definitions of "veteran" and "family" for the purposes of the Veterans' Assistance Fund</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deletes references to RCW 41.04.005 and .007. • Aligns WA State with the Federal definition of 180 days of active duty service. • Allows an individual with a discharge for medical reasons (honorable conditions) OR a VA Service Connected Disability rating, to access the fund regardless of # of days served on active duty. Requires that the medical discharge be given for a condition listed as non EPTS – existing prior to service. • Allows a National Guard member or Reservist to access the fund if they have been activated by Presidential call-up (regardless of # of days served) IF they are still serving in the National Guard or Reserve. • Allows a National Guard member or Reservist to access the fund if they have completed their initial service obligation, even if they are not still in the Guard or Reserve. • Allows the family of a servicemember killed in action to access the fund, even if the servicemember did not complete 180 days of active duty. • Gives Counties the ability to pass bylaws so that they can expand eligibility for the fund. 	Sponsor
<p>ESHB 1351 C 78 L 16 Effective 6/9/2016</p>	<p>National Guard hunting license: Requires the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to issue three types of recreational hunting licenses to resident full-time members of the Washington State Guard and National Guard at no charge.</p>	Blake
<p>HB 2637 C 102 L 16 Effective 6/9/2016</p>	<p>Historic cemetery preservation: Creates the Washington state Historic Cemetery Preservation Capital Grant program in the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. The program's public benefits include: preserving the state's historic heritage, allowing historic cemeteries to continue serving communities, and honoring military veterans. Cemetery property owners, nonprofit organizations, and local governments are eligible to apply for grants for construction, renovation, or rehabilitation projects that preserve a cemetery's historic character, features, or maintain or improve its functions. Grants may be awarded biennially, subject to appropriation. Grant awards are capped at \$50,000, adjusted each biennium for inflation. No match may be required from applicants.</p>	Manweller
<p>E2SHB 2793 C 90 L 16 Effective 6/9/2016</p>	<p>Suicide education: Establishes a Safe Homes Task Force (including WDVA participation) to develop suicide awareness and prevention education messages and training and implement advocacy efforts with key stakeholders to pair suicide prevention training with distribution of devices for safe storage of lethal means. Creates a Safe Homes Project to certify firearms dealers and firearms ranges that meet specified requirements as Safe Homes Partners. Requires licensed pharmacists to complete a one-time training on suicide assessment, treatment, and management.</p>	Orwall
<p>SB 6202 C 12 L 16 Effective 6/9/2016</p>	<p>National Guard employment rights: Requires the Attorney General to take enforcement action to protect a state service member's employment rights after the Adjutant General has attempted to resolve the matter with the employer.</p>	Hobbs
<p>SSB 6254 Gov Signed</p>	<p>Purple Heart license plates: Allows individuals qualified to display Purple Heart special license plates to purchase additional plates for use on more than one motor vehicle. Additional funds are deposited into the Stewardship account to be used for the State Veterans Cemetery and homeless veteran services.</p>	Sheldon
<p>SB 6405 Gov Signed</p>	<p>Civilian health program: Exempts the Civilian Health and Medical Program for the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) from the definition of "health plans." Permits CHAMPVA coverage to be offered to groups other than to those set forth in statute.</p>	Benton

2016 CHAPTER CALENDAR

19 May
Thursday
Dinner at Club Green Meadows
Program: Joseph Cavalli
Topic: Overview of the Viet Nam War
Details Below



30 May
Monday
Please join us at our booth from 9:00 am to 11:00 am.
We will be providing escorts for the Gold Star families from the reception area to the seating area shortly before the 11:00 am program.

12 June
Sunday
Noon **Bethany Vineyards** in Ridgefield for **wine tasting and lunch**.
It is a beautiful setting and we will eat on a floating patio.
Plan to come even if you don't have any wine!
It is a relaxed social event and a great time to get to know fellow members better.



Chapter Dinner Meeting

19 May 2016

Club Green Meadows

7703 N.E. 72nd Avenue
Vancouver, Washington 98661

Meet and greet at 5:30 pm
Buffet dinner at 6:00 pm

Cost: \$25 per person at the door

RSVP: NLT 16 May

Call or e-mail Ron Pastor

882-1275 pastor2718@comcast.net

Program

Joseph Cavalli

Topic: Overview of the Viet Nam War

A raffle will be held.

