



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

March 2017

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

President:

Evelyn Brady
360-721-0865

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& Membership:
Jeremy Baenen
360-281-9998

2nd Vice-President:
& Programs

Secretary:

Treasurer:

Ron Pastor
360-882-1275

Immediate Past

President,

CRMF president:

Dave Casteel
360-834-2448

Army Rep:

Jon Frederick
360-576-9078

Marine Rep:

Terry Babin
360-608-7789

Navy Rep:

Rich Wersinger
360-901-1915

Air Force Rep:

Jeremy Baenen
360-281-9998

Coast Guard Rep:

Public Health Rep:

Chris Rubadue
425-269-1902

Surviving Spouse

Liaison:

Terry Whisenant
360-576-7736

Legislative Affairs:

Rod Williams
360-891-5605

Membership Services:

Terry Babin
360-608-7789

Public Affairs:

John Donnelly
360-904-8966

Scholarship:

Paul Crosby
360-666-8871

Chaplain:

Rev Max Metcalf
541-961-0869

Okay, show of hands. Who is tired of ice, snow, and wintry mix? Yep, it's unanimous.

On Saturday, February 25, 2017, I sat down at my computer and opened www.moaa.org. Just opened the home page. Didn't log in. From there, I hovered the mouse on Take Action in the tool bar. That opened a drop down menu and I clicked on Top Issues. That action opened capwiz.com. The issue that popped up was repeal sequestration. I clicked on the Take Action button, et voila! A ready to use message to my members of Congress came up. I had the opportunity to add or change the message, and choose email or letter. I checked that all my information was correct, and clicked on send message. Three emails were sent out with the MOAA message to my two Senators and one Representative. Took me about one minute. I went back to the Top Issues page and the next issue was the needs of Wounded, Ill, or Injured Veterans and I repeated the process to send the MOAA stance to my Congress members. In about two minutes, I sent six emails. Give it a try, it's fun!

Be sure to read the help wanted ads in this issue, page 4. You may see the opportunity you've been looking for, just didn't know it yet.

There are many events coming up in the next few months. Yvette Brown-Wahler is doing a nice job as our CMAC liaison. Between CMAC events and CRC events, there seems to be a veteran happening every week.



Check out the community events article in this issue.

On March 16 we will have a "Green" luncheon at Cascadia Technical Academy (formerly Clark County Skills Center). Our speaker will talk to us about native plants and spring gardening. Details are in the calendar.

[Continued on page 2]

**16 March
Thursday
Chapter Meeting
Cascadia Technical
Academy
(formerly Clark County
Skills Center)
NE 28th St.
Vancouver, WA
RSVP 9 March
Details on page 10**

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President's Message continued

Chapter members continue to visit with **Bob Cross**. By all accounts he is doing better and has an outstanding attitude. Please continue to keep him and Liz in your thoughts and prayers. All this positive energy is bound to help!

Please help us decide our social event for June. For several years, we have gone to Bethany Vineyards for wine tasting and food. It is a beautiful outdoor venue but it might be time for a change. Ideas anyone? We can get together at the American Legion Hall Post 14. If we buy alcohol at the bar, we are able to bring in our own food. We can do a wine/beer tasting there with appetizers and desserts. What would you like to do for our June event? If you don't tell us, we may pick something you don't want to do. Let any board member know.

Keep smiling, and remember, never stop serving.

**Evelyn Brady
President**



Veterans Townhall by Dave Casteel

Time/Date: 17:00 to 19:30/ Monday, March 20

Location: VA Vancouver Campus
1601 E. 4th Plain Blvd.
Vancouver Bldg. 11, Columbia Room.

Veterans, family members & media representatives are invited!

The VBA Claims Clinic starts at 5 pm – Veterans can meet one-on-one to speak to a VBA Claims specialist regarding their claims or to a VAPORHCS Patient Advocate about any specific health care related issue or concern.

The Director of VAPORHCS and the VBA Portland Regional Office will start the Town Hall at 6 p.m. where they will share information and provide plenty of time for questions from attendees.

The event will be broadcasted on Facebook Live on the VAPORHCS Facebook page.

Questions?

Contact VAPORHCS Public Affairs at 503-402-2975, VHAPOR-PublicAffairs@med.va.gov



Membership Update by *Jeremy Baenen*

The few – the proud – the Marines! Since our last newsletter, I would like to welcome and introduce **James (Jim) and Candee Renton** to our chapter. **Jim** spent 14 years in the USMC. Many of you probably know **Jim** if you spent any time at 40 et 8 where he has worked for many years. He has also participated with us at other chapter events and we are really happy to see him formally join our ranks. Thank you both for you and your family’s service to our country and welcome to the chapter!

Those who have spent any time with MOAA know the value of belonging to MOAA and our chapter. But when you’re talking to a potential new chapter member, it’s important to remember that many officers may have only limited knowledge of MOAA’s chapter system. This year is the time for them to join our chapter to add their voice to the thousands of other MOAA members making a difference on the legislative front and in their communities. Here are three good reasons for any officer to join MOAA today:

1. **Make yourself heard** – MOAA chapters provide critical grassroots support for national legislative agendas. Military benefits are under attack and MOAA stands up to preserve them.
2. **Giving back to the community** – Chapter members are MOAA’s ambassadors in their communities, supporting countless programs that make a difference in the lives of others and continuing to make “officership” service even though no longer wearing the uniform.
3. **Value added to chapter member lives** – Our chapter sponsors interesting programs and opportunities to interact with civic, political, military and business leaders on issues important to our members.

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.

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 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.



Help Wanted

SECRETARY

The Columbia River Chapter (CRC) is looking for a Secretary to serve on the Executive Board. If you are looking for a way to make your life more interesting and interactive, this job is for you. Duties include taking and distributing minutes of all Board Meetings. Responsible for sending out electronic and paper newsletters six (6) times per year. Responsible for sending out electronic messages to the general membership when needed. The CRC is an equal opportunity employer. Special consideration given to veterans, surviving spouses, and member spouses.

Please contact Evelyn Brady at (360) 721-0865 or evelynbrady@rocketmail.com.

Help Wanted

TREASURER

The Columbia River Chapter (CRC) is looking for a Treasurer to serve on the Executive Board. If you have never been convicted of a felony, you qualify! Duties include maintaining the CRC financial books, preparing reports to the Executive, collecting annual dues, handling the money at the door of our meetings. Other duties as assigned. The CRC is an equal opportunity employer. Special consideration given to veterans, surviving spouses, and member spouses.

Please contact Ron Pastor at (360) 882- 1275 or pastor2718@comcast.net.

Help Wanted

PROGRAM CHAIRPERSON

You don't want to miss this exciting opportunity! The CRC is seeking an imaginative, fun loving and energetic person to plan and execute 8 member events per year. This is the job for you if you are enthusiastic and eager to try new experiences. The CRC is an equal opportunity employer with special consideration to veterans, surviving spouses, and member spouses. Our salary is competitive with all other MOAA Chapters.

Please contact Evelyn Brady at (360)721-0865 or evelynbrady@rocketmail.com.

Help Wanted

ROSTER MANAGER

If you are looking for an opportunity to ease into serving on the Executive Board, this position is just what you want. The CRC is seeking an organized, methodical person to keep our roster up to date. When new members join, you will add them. When members leave the chapter, you will take them off. In January of each year, you will submit our Chapter roster to national MOAA. The CRC is an equal opportunity employer with special consideration given to veterans, surviving spouses, and member spouses. Don't forget about the competitive pay scale! Please contact Evelyn Brady at (360) 721-0865 or pastor2718@comcast.net.

***Military Health Care Update:
Surviving Spouse Advisory
Committee: by Sharon DeVaney***

When servicemembers and dependents turn 65 and they enroll in Medicare, they also will become eligible for TRICARE For Life (TFL). No fees are associated with TFL, however, beneficiaries must pay the Medicare Part B premiums to stay enrolled in TFL. TFL works as the secondary payer to Medicare; Medicare pays 80 percent of covered services, and TFL pays the remaining 20 percent. TFL also pays the Medicare deductible. Generally, beneficiaries should not have any out-of-pocket costs for Medicare and TRICARE-covered services.

Under provisions of the FY 2017 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), TRICARE benefit plans for servicemembers and dependents under age 65 will be streamlined from three plan types to two. TRICARE Select is the new preferred provider option; it will replace TRICARE Standard. The new TRICARE Select will have an Extra-like network of TRICARE providers who will have agreed to accept a pre-negotiated rate of payment. The other option is TRICARE Prime. It will be modernized so the majority of referrals to specialists from primary care managers will no longer be required to through a pre-authorization process.

TRICARE also has new preventive care coverage, including the Cologuard colorectal cancer screening exam and BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene testing for breast cancer. For children and families, TRICARE's benefit coverage will be consistent with the American Academy of Pediatrics' standards of care of well children over age 6. Beneficiaries using TRICARE Standard no longer will pay cost shares for well-child screening and preventive visits. Learn more about the new preventive care coverage on MOAA's website.

Regarding pharmacy changes, TRICARE Pharmacy contractor, Express Scripts, announced CVS pharmacies no longer would process prescriptions as of Dec. 1, 2016. Instead, Walgreens pharmacies returned to the TRICARE network. Beneficiaries who had been using CVS should have been notified how they could transfer their prescriptions to a nearby network pharmacy.

You can find your closest TRICARE network pharmacy using the Express Scripts website www.express-scripts.com.

The FY 2017 NDAA also included a provision that would allow dependents of retired members to purchase hearing aids at-cost. MOAA is working closely with DoD's TRICARE department on the details of this benefit and likely will have updates in a few months.

Sharon DeVaney
Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee Member



Foundation (CRMF) Update

by Dave Casteel

On behalf of the Officers and Board of Directors, I would like to thank members for their generous donations to the Columbia River MOAA Foundation (CRMF). As of the end of February, members donated \$1,665 to the Scholarship fund and \$1,961 to the Support the Troops fund so far in 2017. This brings these funds to \$10,665 in our Scholarship fund and \$5,865 in our Support the Troops fund.

If you attended the January annual meeting you learned that in 2016 we made a onetime sweep of \$6,000 to the Clark College Foundation to increase the size of the MOAA CRC Endowment as well as contributing \$1,388 towards three \$1,000 scholarships. One reason for the additional contributions to the endowment was that their earnings exceed what we can earn from a bank; another reason is that by increasing the endowment at Clark, we can, over time, reduce our annual share of the Clark scholarships cost. We also sent \$1,000 to the WSU-Vancouver Foundation to fund our single \$1,000 scholarship there (we don't have an endowment at WSU-Vancouver, so the entire scholarship comes out of our funds).

While \$10,665 sounds like a lot, remember your board believes it prudent to retain three years of our annual average outlay. This retained threshold is \$9,000. Anything over this amount on December 31 is swept to Clark Foundation in January of each year. The January 2017 sweep amount was \$650.00.

The Chapter board decided to increase the WSU-Vancouver scholarship from \$1,000 in 2016 to \$1,500 in 2017. The reason for this is tuition is much higher at WSU. It is our goal to have an endowment at WSU-V one day as well.

Regarding the Support the Troops fund, your chapter and CRMF boards are in discussion with the Fisher House to contribute between \$1,000 and \$2,000 towards capital needs. Of course, we continue to deliver your food donations as you donate them. We are also looking at increasing the use of the fund for worthy needs that come up elsewhere in the community throughout the year. We are currently working on developing guidelines for this.

You can rest assured that 100% of your donation goes directly towards these two funds based on your designation. This is because the chapter pays the small administrative fees the CRMF incurs. The chapter uses your dues toward this purpose.

You can learn more information by going to the chapter website, www.moacolumbiariver.org and hovering your mouse over "Foundation (CRMF)." From there, you can select one of the six drops downs (Why the 501(c)3 was Created, Why Support the CRMF, How to Donate, CRMF By-Laws, Annual Financial Statement, and Officers).

Again, thank you for your generosity helping those in our community.

Donations may be made any time by handing it to either the CRC or CRMF treasurer at a monthly event with your fund designation(s), or by mailing it to the chapter at P.O. Box 1872, Vancouver, WA 98668.

Dave Casteel
President, Columbia River MOAA Foundation





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
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
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
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	Lynda Wilson 786-7632	Ann Rivers 786-7634	Curtis King 786-7626	John Braun 786-7638
Representative, Position 1	Sharon Wylie 786-7924	Vicki Kraft 786-7994	Brandon Vick 786-7850	Norm Johnson (509) 454-7210	Richard DeBolt 786-7990
Representative, Position 2	Monica Stonier 786-7872	Paul Harris 786-7976	Liz Pike 786-7812	Gina McCabe 786-7856	Ed Orcutt 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

Federal Legislative Update: by Dave Casteel

At risk of writing an article that will be out of date before it is published, we know the White House has announced that President Trump plans to increase Defense Spending by 10%. Trump said he would “put America first by focusing on defense, law enforcement and veterans” using money previously spent abroad. This would be paid for by offsetting cuts in other programs and agencies. Of course, the “devil is in the details” as the saying goes.

The President’s Budget proposal to Congress is not expected to be finalized until late March or early April. We know that both sides of the aisle in Congress have their own thoughts on what the budget should look like. Certainly, there will be considerable discussion in Congress on the proposed budget. This is where you fit in. (Please see the last three paragraphs of this article.)

According to the MOAA website, we know that a top 2017 fiscal priority of MOAA is *“to make a concerted effort to end sequestration. Significant cuts to the defense budget already have directly affected compensation and benefits. Military service is a calling, but for some, its appeal is fading. MOAA’s focus is on ending sequestration, supporting troops and their families, increasing force levels to match demand, and convincing legislators we are on the wrong road and need their leadership to find a better way forward.”*

Regarding the Defense Budget, *“MOAA believes strongly that maintaining military manpower, replacing and upgrading weapons and equipment worn out by years of war, and treating military people fairly are not mutually exclusive.*

Addressing the nation’s debt is a priority, and all Americans must be prepared to share the sacrifices required to accomplish it. But a nation still in conflict must meet funding needs for both people and weapons, rather than sacrificing one for the other.

Arbitrary sequestration cuts will force service planners to impose even steeper force-reduction efforts in the midst of ongoing military operations. This threatens the nation’s ability to respond to threats and places the burden of these operations on the shoulders of the remaining troops and families. The recent two-year budget agreement does not fix the problem; it only defers it.

To the extent force cuts require separation of members with lengthy service, MOAA supports the use of early retirement authority and enhanced voluntary separation incentives to more fairly recognize the extended service and sacrifice of these servicemembers.”

As always, YOU can make a difference by weighing in and by signing up for MOAA’s Legislative Alerts. When you receive them, “hit send.” If your spouse does so also, you can effectively double your effectiveness. If all of MOAA’s spouses did this, we could potentially send well over 500,000 messages to Congress!

We hope to demonstrate the ease of using the MOAA hotline to communicate with your members of Congress at the March lunch meeting to show you how easy it is. The MOAA Hotline number is published near the top of the Legislative Contacts page in every newsletter.

As a reminder, MOAA Council (i.e., State) Presidents, National Directors, and staff will Storm the Hill on April 5th. Please plan to support them during the first week of April with a phone call and/or e-mail.

Dave Casteel
Legislative Affairs



Washington State Legislative Affairs

Update: *contributed by Dave Casteel*

The Veterans Legislative Coalition (VLC) is working on your behalf

Kitsap Daily News Tue Feb 28th, 2017 4:13pm

Service to this country often comes with certain handicaps and being assigned to this state often exacerbates them. That's why the Washington State Veterans Legislative Coalition is advocating on behalf of active duty, reservists, veterans and their families.

There are many differences in the lives of active duty, reservists and veterans from those of their civilian counterparts. For instance, a civilian leaves school and then enters the workforce and progresses on with life. They know the community and can flourish within it. However, those who go into the military are almost always separated from the community in which they grew up, distanced from family and friends — building a civilian career is put on hold. They cannot put down roots. So when they eventually do leave the service, there is much catching up to be done.

Many of the rules, ordinances and laws in this state did not take into consideration military families and their lifestyles. The purpose of the Washington State Veterans Legislative Coalition is to level the playing field for service members, their families and veterans. The coalition is a lobbying organization formed to work with the Washington State Department of Veteran Affairs and the state Legislature.

The Veterans Legislative Coalition's membership is made up of veteran service organizations and volunteers. Operating in conjunction with the WDVA, the coalition communicates with elected officials regarding laws protecting or enhancing the lives of service members, veterans and families.

Each year at the beginning of the legislative season in Olympia, the Veterans Legislative Coalition receives a list of proposed veteran-focused bills from the WDVA. It then decides which bills it will support and has a member there to provide supportive testimony at public hearings.

The Veterans Legislative Coalition enjoys good standing with the Legislature because of its professionalism. Thanks to its willingness to work with the legislators, success rates are high.

For example, active duty members and family once had to pay out-of-state college tuition until they could show Washington state residency for 12 months. The Veterans Legislative Coalition worked with the WDVA and the Legislature to reduce that residency requirement to just one month.

Other examples of their work: a bill that reduced the fees in state parks and forests for active duty and veterans and stricter laws against "pension poaching" — a scam that fooled elderly vets by charging for services that are, in fact, free.

This session, the Veterans Legislative Coalition is supporting the passage of Senate Bill 1041. It would have the Washington attorney general enforce certain consumer protections for active duty service members related to contracts for cable television, cell phones, apartments, and so on.

"The men and women of our armed forces face unique challenges. As someone who comes from a military family, I believe it is important to do everything we can to support those who serve or have served our country. My proposal ensures military consumers don't get stuck with contracts they can't use because they are deployed or ordered to relocate," said state Attorney General Bob Ferguson.

The Veterans Legislative Coalition is also supporting House Bill 1055, which would permit the Washington state attorney general's office to provide free legal services for reservists and active duty folks related to legal issues stemming from their military service.

Readers can go online to www.app.leg.wa.gov/billinfo to learn who their elected officials are and find out what veteran/active duty-focused bills under consideration. A simple email, phone call or — even better — face-to-face testimony at a public hearing are effective ways to get laws passed that benefit all of us.



2017 CHAPTER CALENDAR

16 March
Thursday

Chapter Meeting

Program: Native Plants & Gardening Tips
by Micki Stauffer of WSU Vancouver's Master Gardening Program

Social: 1130 - Lunch: 1200

Cascadia Technical Academy (formerly Clark County Skills Center)
12200 NE 28th Street, Vancouver, WA 98662



20 April
Thursday

Chapter Meeting

Program: Our luncheon speaker is Dr. Alperin, Chief of Primary Care at the Portland VA.

Social: 1130 - Lunch: 1200
40 et 8 Chateau



18 May
Thursday

Dinner Meeting

Program: TBD

Venue: TBD

Chapter Meeting

16 March 2017
Thursday

Cascadia Technical Academy
(formerly Clark County Skill Center)

12200 NE 28th Street
Vancouver, WA 98662

Social 1130 - Lunch 1200

Cost: \$15 per person at the door.

RSVP:

Call or e-mail Ron Pastor NLT 9 March
882-1275 pastor2718@comcast.net

Program

Native Plants & Gardening Tips by Micki Stauffer of
WSU Vancouver's Master Gardening Program
Whether you're the gardening manager or laborer at
your home, you'll want to hear this presentation.

Raffle: Please bring a gift for our raffle!

