



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 2018

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

President:
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360-721-0865
**1st Vice-President:
& Membership:**

**2nd Vice-President:
& Programs**
Dan Sockle
360-624-4478

Secretary:
Chris Rubadue
425-269-1902

Treasurer:
Susan Ells
360-910-0357

**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

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
360-721-3792

Scholarship:
Paul Crosby
360-666-8871

Chaplain:
Rev Max Metcalf
541-961-0869

Roster Manager:
Mike Ellis
360-910-0625

Mid-May already? 2018 is flying by. Our chapter has already accomplished some terrific things. We received the 2017 Harris Communication Award for our newsletter and website with big kudos to **Rich Wersinger** and **Dave Casteel!** They keep our communications in top shape. The Columbia River Chapter charitable arm, Columbia River MOAA Foundation (CRMF), was able to double the donation to our endowment at the Clark College Foundation with a matching funds campaign. Kudos to all our members who support the CRMF with donations!

I attended a Women Veterans Conference in Sun River Oregon at the end of April. It was organized by the ODVA and was a really worthwhile and uplifting conference. The conference opened with a screening of the movie "Lioness" depicting the experiences of some of the first women in combat in Iraq. Then one of the women in the movie, a true Lioness, spoke to us and answered questions. I highly recommend this movie.

Dave and Marilyn Casteel traveled to Washington DC to participate in Storm the Hill in April. As usual, MOAA has an impressive presence on the Hill.

May is a busy military/veteran month in and around Vancouver. On May 16, there is a fund raiser for the Clark College Veterans Resource Center at the VFW Bingo hall, followed by our annual dinner meeting on May 17. On May 23, the Battle Ground JROTC awards ceremony takes place, and on the May 24,



the Prairie AFJROTC is scheduled. We need volunteers to attend these and award our medal and present the check. It is really fun; please let me know that you want to do one or both. May 23 is the 2nd anniversary of Fisher House, and May 28 is the annual Memorial Day event at Vancouver Barracks. Please come out and support us at our

table on Memorial Day. I am looking forward to seeing you soon at one or all of the events.

[Continued on page 2]

**17 May
Thursday
Chapter Dinner
Meeting
La Costa Mexican
Restaurant
5:30 PM
Vancouver, WA
RSVP by 15 May
Details page 11**

Newsletter Highlights

President's Message	Page 1
Fisher House Donations	Page 2
Membership Update	Page 3
Scholarships Update.....	Page 4
TRDP to End	Page 5
Reimbursements Policy	Page 6
Fisher House Anniversary.....	Page 8
Congressional Contacts	Page 9
Legislative Affairs	Page 10
Chapter Calendar	Page 11

President's Message continued

We still have a few really exciting and fun Executive Board positions available. These are a relatively painless way to be more involved with our chapter. The 1st Vice President office is open as well as the membership recruitment chair. This can be a satisfying way to keep serving. Not to mention the terrific pay!

**Evelyn Brady
President**



President Evelyn Brady with MOAA Director Mary Mayer at the Women Veterans Conference April 2018



President Evelyn Brady at our MOAA booth at Our Community Salutes Event, Skyview High School. CMAC recognized and honored about 100 high schools entering the Armed Forces. April 19, 2018



Our Community Salutes Event, Skyview High School 19 April 2018. Chapter members: Larry Smith at podium. 2nd from left Bob McFarlin; 7th from left Les Berger.

Membership Update by *Jeremy Baenen*

We wanted to remind our members how important it is to find opportunities to recruit new members!

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, **Chris Rubadue**, 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 Rich Wersinger, our Newsletter Editor.



Scholarship Corner by Paul Crosby

Last month I took checks to the Clark College Foundation and WSU-Vancouver to help pay for our four scholarships. The three Clark scholarships are paid with a combination of our Clark College Foundation endowment and chapter money and the WSU scholarship with chapter money.

Since I became the chapter Scholarship Coordinator in 1998, my goal and the chapter's has been to grow our Clark College Foundation endowment to self-sustainment. The endowment already had a solid beginning when Elsie turned over the scholarship responsibilities to me.

In 1999, I met **Shirley Schwartz** who worked for the Clark College Foundation. Since that time, Shirley and the foundation worked hand in hand with the chapter to grow our endowment and help us pay for our scholarships when the endowment payout was less than needed.

Over the years times have changed as our endowment has grown. Thanks to chapter contributions, the dollar value of our annual scholarships has grown from \$500 to \$750 to \$1000 at Clark and to \$1500 at WSU

So the purpose of this article is to thank all the chapter members who have generously contributed to our scholarship fund and to the Clark College Foundation for their support to the chapter. And specifically we want to thank **Shirley Schwartz** who is the Foundation Director of Scholarships for almost 20 years of encouragement, advice, and guidance. Lastly, we want to thank Hal Abrams, the Foundation Vice-President of Development, for his support and the \$5520 match which was recently deposited in our endowment.

I will end by letting you know that our scholarship work isn't done and won't be until our endowment is self-sustaining. Until then, I will look forward to your continued support.



**Paul Crosby
Scholarship
360-666-8871**



How to Earn Cash \$\$\$ Rewards for Yourself AND the Columbia River MOAA Foundation (CRMF) While Shopping at Fred Meyer

1. Go to www.fredmeyer.com
2. Select the Rewards tab and scroll down to Fred Meyer Community Rewards
3. Scroll down to (and click on) "re-enroll or link your Rewards Card now"
4. Sign into your account using the user name and password you setup when you received your Rewards Card (or click "forgot password").
5. A screen will appear entitled "Find Your Organization." In the box that asks you to enter "your organization's number or at least 3 letters of the organizations name," enter "Columbia River MOAA Foundation" then click search
6. When the search finds the Columbia River MOAA Foundation simply click on the O in front of Columbia River MOAA Foundation #81245
7. Then click "enroll"
8. Use your phone number as your alternate ID when you check out and YOU and the Columbia River MOAA Foundation BOTH receive cash rewards.

Don't have a Fred Meyer Rewards card? Go to any Fred Meyer Customer Service Counter and sign up. Then link your Rewards card on your phone or PC.

It's quick and easy. The **best part is YOU AND the Columbia River MOAA Foundation** will both earn \$\$\$ when you tell the clerk your Rewards (phone) number at check out. You will earn your full normal rewards AND Fred Meyer will donate money to the Columbia River MOAA Foundation (CRMF) quarterly.

TRICARE Retiree Dental Program will end by Dave Casteel

TRDP-to-FEDVIP transition

On December 31, 2018, the U.S. Department of Defense's TRICARE Retiree Dental Program will end. However, as directed in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2017, certain TRICARE-eligible retired uniformed service members and their families, will have the opportunity to enroll in the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP). The end of TRDP is part of the historic reforms that began rolling out in the Military Health System on January 1, 2018. The implementation of the provisions under the 2017 NDAA and the beginning of new TRICARE support contracts is meant to improve health and enhance medical readiness for the uniformed services.

The first opportunity to enroll in FEDVIP will be during the next Federal Benefits Open Season, which runs from November 12 through December 10, 2018, with coverage effective January 1, 2019.

If you are currently enrolled in a TRDP plan, you will not be automatically enrolled in a FEDVIP plan for 2019. You must enroll during open season.

Who's affected by the transition from TRDP to FEDVIP?

In general, retired uniformed service members and their families who were eligible for TRDP in 2018 will now be eligible for FEDVIP dental coverage and, if enrolled in a TRICARE health plan, FEDVIP vision coverage, beginning in 2019. If you are currently enrolled in a TRDP plan, you will not be automatically enrolled in a FEDVIP plan for 2019. You must enroll during the next Federal Benefits Open Season, which runs from November 12 through December 10, 2018, with coverage effective January 1, 2019.

What should I do if I am currently enrolled in both a TRDP and a FEDVIP plan?

No action is required at this time. Your TRDP plan will end on December 31, 2018, and your FEDVIP dental and/or vision plan, if previously enrolled, will continue automatically for the 2019 plan year. If you wish to make changes to your FEDVIP enrollment, you may do so during this year's open season.

What can I do to maintain my dental coverage?

You are not able to maintain your TRDP dental coverage beyond December 31, 2018. To prevent a gap in dental coverage when your TRDP plan ends, you must select and enroll in a FEDVIP dental plan during the next Federal Benefits Open Season. Open season is your annual opportunity to sign up for FEDVIP coverage, and this year it runs from November 12 through December 10, 2018, with coverage effective January 1, 2019. You will not be automatically enrolled in a FEDVIP plan.

In the meantime, click on "Sign up for updates" and we'll notify you when new information is available and key dates approach.

What happens if I do not select and enroll in a FEDVIP dental plan during open season?

If you're currently enrolled in TRDP, you will not be automatically enrolled in a FEDVIP plan. If you do not select and enroll in a FEDVIP dental plan during open season, you will not have dental coverage as of January 1, 2019.

How do I stay informed?

Click on "Sign up for updates" and we'll notify you when new information is available and key dates approach.

Is Delta Dental a FEDVIP provider?

Yes. But, the dental plan offered through FEDVIP may include different features and costs from the plan previously offered through TRDP. You'll have the opportunity to research and compare plans and rates for all 10 of the FEDVIP dental carriers once the 2019 FEDVIP benefits have been finalized.

Do I have to enroll in a Delta Dental plan under the FEDVIP, since they are the current TRDP provider?

No. There are 10 FEDVIP dental carriers to choose from, and we encourage you to review each dental plan to decide which one is best for you and your family. You'll have the opportunity to research and compare plans and rates for each carrier once the 2019 FEDVIP benefits have been finalized.

Chapter Reimbursement of Member Expenses by Terry Babin

Have you incurred, or will possibly incur, expenses in support of the administration and operations of the Columbia River Chapter? How do you get such expenses authorized and reimbursed?

These questions have been difficult to answer in the past. The Chapter's 2017 Joint Audit of financial records and processes identified the need to have definitive guidance to help the Treasurer determine what expenses might qualify for reimbursement to Chapter members. During the February and March 2018 Chapter Executive Board meetings, a reimbursement policy was formulated and approved. Those deliberations resulted in the approval of the Policy Letter included in this Newsletter.

So basically, what is the policy?

- Usual and recurring administrative and activity/event expenses (e.g., Newsletter publication and distribution, etc.), which are included in the Chapter's approved annual budget, do not require further authorization for reimbursement.
- Member reimbursement for other budgeted expenses may be made for an amount up to \$100 per occurrence/event without further authorization; but, if the reimbursement request exceeds \$100, approval by the Executive Board is required.
- "Non-budgeted" expenses and reimbursement are more complicated, and the criteria is provided in the Policy Letter.

What actions should a member do to protect the member's eligibility for reimbursement?

- Give yourself enough time to:
 - ✓ Confirm with the Chapter Treasurer in advance of incurring the expense whether the expense is budgeted, and if authorization is required.
 - ✓ If authorization is required, submit to the Executive Board in person, or by e-mail via the Treasurer or any other Board member:
 - 1) The reason for the expense,
 - 2) Who will provide the product/service, and
 - 3) An estimate of the cost.
- Keep and submit copies of all applicable receipts with a written and signed statement of the purpose for the

expense, who authorized and when (if authorization needed), and the amount of reimbursement the member is requesting.

A Reminder: The Executive Board meets the second Thursday of every month (except July and August). If authorization for reimbursement is needed before the next regularly convened Board meeting, you can call or send an e-mail to any Board member requesting that Board member poll the Executive Board by e-mail.



Fisher House Donations by Paul Crosby

Recently there have been questions about how to make a tax-deductible donation directly to the Fisher House. Since I had this same question, I contacted **Shaun Benson** who is the Chief, Voluntary Service, Portland VA Health Care System. The Fisher House in Vancouver is referred to as the Portland Fisher House and falls under the purview of the Portland VA. **Shaun** is a veteran of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Here are the steps he suggests:

1. Make out your check to Portland VA Health Care System
2. Put Fisher House in the memo line
3. Mail the check to
Portland VA Health Care System
ATTN; Voluntary Service, P4VOL
3710 SW US Veterans Hospital Road
Portland, OR 97239

The VA Voluntary Service office and all donations received fall under the VA's government 501C3 equivalent and you will receive a thank you letter and a tax donation letter with their tax ID.

See the next page about the Fisher House Two-Anniversary celebration on May 23, 2018!



THANK YOU



Portland VA Fisher House is celebrating its two-year anniversary!

Please join us to tour the home and see what we do each day to serve our Veteran and Military Families! Refreshments will be served.

Wednesday, May 23rd @ 11:00am-2:00pm



Fisher House
1601 E. 4th Plain Blvd
Vancouver, WA 98682
(Next to Community Living Center)



Did you know? Since opening 3/28/16, the Portland VA Fisher House has served approximately 1700 families, 2900 individuals, and 9700 nights of lodging!



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

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/>

Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler Washington's 3rd Congressional District

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



Washington, DC Office: U.S. House of Representatives 1107 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/>

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

WASHINGTON, DC 511 Hart 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: <https://www.cantwell.senate.gov/contact/email/form>

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

WASHINGTON, DC 154 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: <https://www.murray.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contactme>

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 Buck Marr*

Well, here we are half way through FY18 with a budget in hand. Of course, a quick peek at the seldom adhered to Federal appropriations process time line established by the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 shows we are falling behind schedule for FY19. Surprise! The Congressional Budget Office did provide their budget and economic outlook by testimony on 12 April (nominally due Feb15) and now the budget committees should initiate their own budget process to include adoption of a spending and revenue framework called a "Budget Resolution." However, most insiders think it is unlikely the House and Senate Budget Committees will produce a budget resolution for FY19. Apparently, there are several reasons we may not see a resolution and most of them can be summed up by saying that the party in control of the two Houses doesn't see any benefit in a fight to pass a resolution not to mention the deep divide within the majority party itself. With that hurdle skipped, the House Armed Services Subcommittees did complete their FY 2019 Budget Mark-Ups. Highlights included full funding of the by-law pay raise for the troops and end-strength increases across all Services.

The point I am making is that all of us will need to keep a close eye on our legislative issues for FY19. Let's not get lulled to sleep thinking things are relatively quiet legislatively. In addition to the published legislative priorities advanced during the recent MOAA Storm the Hill activity, there are some important emerging issues to track. For example:

~ Who will head the VA is certainly critical. The entire issue regarding privatization could hinge on who is finally approved to head the Department. Currently, the issue is wrapped around a couple of confrontations. One, between the President and the minority leader of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee is more about an election in Montana than who the Secretary will be. Another emerging confrontation is showcased by a lawsuit challenging the Administration's authority to replace former **Secretary Shulkin** with a person assigned to another major Government Department while ignoring the sitting and current **VA Deputy Director Bowman**. VSO's around the country are

apprehensive that if the President is allowed to select a new Secretary from outside the VA, it will lead to an aggressive move to push veteran health care to the private sector i.e. "privatization." All of this should concern the veteran community. The vast majority of the VSO's do not support a significant move of veteran health care into the private sector. And, to complicate issues, the temporary Choice Program is projected to run out of funds NLT mid-June. Both the proposed Bill to replace the Choice program and the extensive of funding have stalled. The veteran community needs a legitimate Secretary to work Choice Program alternatives with Congress.

~ Another emerging topic included in the HASC subcommittee's mark-up is improving veterans' preparation for transition to life after the military. Several VSO's have been participating in discussions aimed at reforming the military's transition assistance program, or TAP. A comprehensive plan for TAP reform was recently introduced by a Representative from Texas. It is called the Navy Seal Chief Petty Officer William "Bill" Mulder (Ret) Transition Improvement Act of 2018. Suffice it to say that it proposes major improvements to all aspects of the current transition program which is proving to be inadequate.

A final note on the 2018 legislative calendar. This is a midterm election year. As such, the House plans on working 24 fewer days than its 2017 schedule and the Senate is planning on seven fewer working days. It is common for the chambers to adjust their schedules during election years to provide time for campaigning. The House plans to be out of town for three full weeks ahead of Election Day on Nov. 6 (and four weeks total around the election), while the Senate plans to recess for two weeks around the midterm. This should be a wake-up call for advocacy efforts. Please monitor and use MOAA's Legislative Action Center frequently.

Buck Marr
Federal Legislative Affairs



2018 CHAPTER CALENDAR

16 May
Wednesday **Fundraiser for Clark College Veterans Resource Center** at the VFW Bingo Hall on 78th Ave. Dinner and Bingo, starts at 1730

17 May
Thursday **Dinner meeting**, La Costa Mexican Restaurant
Judy Russel, Executive Director of the Clark County Veterans Assistance Center and **Dan Kern** from the Clark County Veterans Assistance Center will be our speaker.
See details below!

23 May
Wednesday **Second anniversary of the Vancouver Fisher House. 1100 - 1400**
See details on page 8.

28 May
Monday **Memorial Day Event** at Fort Vancouver National Historic Site Parade Ground. Honor our nation's military at this special ceremony, then interact with costumed reenactors and learn about the history of Vancouver Barracks.
Our Chapter will have a table. Setup 0800-0930
Outside activities at 1100; The main event starts at 1000..



10 June
Sunday **Chapter Social Event: Save the Date!**
Social at Rusty Grape from 1200 to 1500.
Please come and enjoy wine, food, mirth and hilarity.



8 September
Saturday Save the Date!
Scholarship Barbecue at the Casteel Home!

May Dinner Meeting

17 May 2018
Thursday

La Costa Mexican Restaurant,
4708 NE Thurston Way,
Vancouver, WA 98662
Near Vancouver Mall

Begin Socializing 1730 (5:30 pm)

Buffet begins: 1815 (6:15 pm)

Program: Guest Speaker: Judy Russel, Executive Director of the Clark County Veterans Assistance and Dan Kern; Clark County Veterans Assistance Center

Cost: \$20.00 per person

RSVP:

To Dan Sockle by Sunday, 15 May.

Call 360-624-4478

or e-mail dsockle@gmail.com



Columbia River Chapter
MOAA
P.O. Box 1872
Vancouver, WA 98668

