



**Military Officers Association  
of America (MOAA)**

***Brass Bulletin Newsletter***

“One Powerful Voice”

**Portland, Oregon  
Chapter**

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**P.O. Box 68959  
Portland, OR 97268**

**Volume XXVI, Number 5**

**www.MOAAPortland.org**

**February 2010**

***The President's Forum***

**by LTC Gary S. Brink, USA (Ret)**

Happy New Year! Can you believe the New Year, 2010, is already over a week old and we will be meeting in less than a month? It will be hard to match the fun we all had at the Christmas dinner meeting. I have not been to a meeting in a long time where we, as a group, have shut down the facility. It really made my heart feel good that so many attendees enjoyed themselves. We are on to a new year, and I am very pleased that the chapter membership will be able to meet and greet **Mr. Jim Willis**, the Director of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) at our next meeting. I have heard Jim speak on several occasions, and I assure you that his presentation will be one of the highlights of the year. His accomplishments during his tenure have been significant. This meeting is one of the few events that we will have had on the west side in a while, and I encourage all those from this area to attend.

This brings up another subject that I need your assistance on. We have been looking for a venue to conduct more meetings on the **west side**. Jim Patrick and I need your help to find an area. If there is a venue that you or an organization have used over on the west side, PLEASE provide their names and contact information to either Jim or myself. We will more than appreciate them!

Again, I ask any chapter member who has an email address and is **not** receiving the newsletter via this

*(continued on page 2)*

**NEXT MEETING:**

**Saturday, 6 February 2010**

Social: 0930, Brunch: 1000, Speaker: 1100

The Stockpot Broiler

8200 S.W. Scholls Ferry Road

Beaverton, Oregon 97008-6615

Phone: 503-643-5451

**PROGRAM:**

**Guest Speaker: Mr. Jim Willis**, the Director of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs, will speak on "Veterans' Issues in Oregon."

**MENU:**

Scrambled Eggs with Cheese and Onions

O'Brian Potatoes

Hickory Smoked Bacon

Bagels

Assorted Pastries

Cheese on Granite

Juice

Coffee and Tea

**COST:**

**\$19.50 per person (includes 18% gratuity)**

*Please make checks payable to **PDX-MOAA**.*

**RESERVATIONS:**

To make your reservations, please contact **LTC Gary Brink** or **Jan Brink** at **503-659-3347** or **[jgbrink@comcast.net](mailto:jgbrink@comcast.net)** **NLT 1200 on 3 February 2010**. **No late reservations**, and **please call** if you must cancel as we have to pay for no-shows.

**DIRECTIONS:** From **Hwy 217 North:** Take 2<sup>nd</sup> Washington Square Exit, then left on Scholls Ferry Road for 2 blocks; restaurant will be on the right. From **Hwy 217 South:** Take Hall Blvd/Progress Exit, then left on Scholls Ferry Road for 2 blocks; restaurant will be on the right.

**"No Host" Bar** Available for Blood Marys and Mimosas.

***Reminder:***

***Chapter Board of Directors' Meeting on  
Friday, 12 February 2010  
at 0930 hours at the  
Broadmoor Golf Course***

***PRESIDENT'S FORUM (continued)***

**method** to contact the chapter newsletter editor, Col Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret), at [maryjmayer@yahoo.com](mailto:maryjmayer@yahoo.com) and ask her to send the chapter newsletter to you electronically. For each newsletter we mail, it costs the Chapter about \$1.00 a copy, while sending a copy via email is free. We need your help in cutting the cost of the chapter newsletter.

Finally, if you **change email addresses**, please let Mary know!

Thank you, and see you all in February.

***MINUTES FROM THE  
DECEMBER DINNER MEETING  
by Col Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret)***

On December 1, there were **56** members and guests who came out for dinner at the Gray Gables Estate in Milwaukie, Oregon. During the social hour, raffle tickets were sold for gift baskets; the proceeds will be split between the MOAA Portland Chapter Scholarship Fund and the Portland Police Bureau Sunshine Division. After the social hour, **President Gary Brink** called the meeting to order at 1835. The **Oregon City High School Junior AROTC Color Guard** posted the colors; the Pledge of Allegiance was recited, the National Anthem was sung (accompanied by the **John Bennett Trio**), and Chaplain **LTC Grant McAllister, USA (Ret)** gave the invocation.

**President Brink** introduced **MAJ Thomas**, the new JROTC Commander, and the members of the Color Guard—including **Matt Gunderson** who was our chapter award winner.

**President Brink** then wished everyone a Merry Christmas and said that he had made a promise to his board members that he would provide them each with a

MOAA pin. Gary called all the board members in attendance up to the front and gave each of them a pin.

**President Brink** then encouraged everyone to buy raffle tickets! He said that the program for this evening was going to be fun: playing a game called “Name That Tune,” First Vice President **MAJ John Sampson, USA (Ret)** playing his saxophone, and dancing to the tunes of the **John Bennett Trio**.

After dinner, **President Brink** introduced a new chapter member, **CW3 Richard R. Jacobi, USA (Ret)**. And then the winners of the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine, and two other baskets were selected! Winners included: **MG Curtis Loop, USA (Ret)**; **Lt Col Jim Dixon, USAF (Ret)**; **MAJ Jim Simpson, USMC (Ret)**; **Col Rick Gano, USAF (Ret)**; and **Mrs. Carol Patrick**.

**USS Ranger** Foundation Board member, **Mr. Ron Brockelman**, then gave an update on bringing the USS Ranger aircraft carrier to Portland. He said that the project has made solid progress over the last two months; they have had a good response overall. A final parking spot for the carrier has not been identified yet.

Ron said that in the February-March time frame, there should be some good news! However, they still need more signatures on petitions destined for the politicians; Multnomah County is now being targeted! And funding is needed. For more information, please visit the following website: [www.ussranger.org](http://www.ussranger.org)

First Vice President **MAJ John Sampson, USA (Ret)** then conducted a game called “Name That Tune” where various members of the audience vied to see who could name the tunes played by the John Bennett Trio. Winners received prizes!

The Personal Affairs Committee Chair, **CWO4 Al Drenkhahn, USAF (Ret)**, said to keep the following chapter members in our prayers as the New Year begins: **COL Marc Polz, USAF (Ret)**; **CAPT W. Parks Walker, USNR (Ret)**; **LTC Al Opdenweyer, AUS (Ret)**; and **Maj Cara Kidd, Jr. (and his wife Nola)**.

In the “For the Good of the Order” portion of the program, **CWO4 Al Drenkhahn, USAF (Ret)** and **LTC Bill Kroger, USA (Ret)** told some jokes. Then, the final winners of the Air Force, Navy, Army, and

**MINUTES (continued)**

other four baskets were selected. Among the winners were: **Mrs. Edie Rieken** and **Col Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret)**.

The final part of the program involved First Vice President **MAJ John Sampson, USA (Ret)** playing a Christmas song on his saxophone (accompanied by the **John Bennett Trio**); John has recorded several albums and had some available for sale at the meeting.

In closing, **President Brink** thanked all for coming and wished the attendees a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. He reminded them that there would be no dinner meeting in January; the next meeting will be a brunch on 6 February 2010 at The Stockpot Broiler. He thanked the **John Bennett Trio** for the entertainment for the evening, and thanked **John Sampson** for playing his saxophone. The business meeting was adjourned at 2030, but **President Brink** encouraged all to stay and dance a while.

**MEMBERSHIP CORNER**

by **MAJ John Sampson, USA (Ret)**

The Portland Chapter would like to welcome the following new member:

**2LT Wesley H. Lucas II, USAR**

The Membership Committee met 20 November 2009 and has decided not to have a cocktail social membership drive at this time. We will, however, target the 41st National Guard Unit upon its return to the U.S., as well as individuals on the list received from MOAA National.

**MEMORIES FROM THE 2009 CHRISTMAS DINNER MEETING AT GRAY GABLES**

*Junior AROTC Honor Guard Members from Oregon City High School Posted the Colors*



*First Vice President John Sampson Prepares to Play his Saxophone, accompanied by the John Bennett Trio*



*Chapter Secretary, Mary J. Mayer, Greets Revelers at the Christmas Dinner Meeting*

**LEGISLATIVE UPDATE****By CAPT Larry Roberts, USNR (Ret)**

Since the U.S. Senate recessed on December 25<sup>th</sup> with passage of its version of health care overhaul, the pace of legislative activity slowed dramatically, thankfully. Congress will not fully reconvene until later in January, but activity and news are both picking up almost daily.

**Health Care:** With passage by the Senate, there are now two substantially different bills in play, that of the House of Representatives, and that of the Senate. These two need to be reconciled, and that process is underway in secrecy--involving the White House, the Senate, and the House. Since these are multiple thousand page bills, there are innumerable issues to be resolved, each involving costs and sources of revenues (meaning either direct or indirect taxes and fees to be paid by the citizenry). Since we have no way to judge the progress or direction of these inside discussions, each member of this chapter is encouraged to make your thoughts and concerns known to your representatives before the bills are cast in stone and passed.

To reach your elected representatives, you can send emails you create, emails created for you by MOAA or other organizations, letters, and phone calls.

All Oregon legislators have web sites that provide phone numbers for both local and Washington offices. They also have the ability to communicate with the legislator by email and provide addresses for snail mail letters. My experience is that an email will generally be acknowledged by a return note thanking you for your input. Who knows how such emails are utilized, but MOAA says the cumulative effect of communications has an impact. MOAA recommends that any

communication be on a single subject and be courteous in tone.

Given that only a minority of the populace favors health care overhaul in its present form, our representatives should hear that from us directly, whether or not you support or do not support current efforts. Both of our Senators and the relevant Congressmen related to our chapter currently support the legislation.

**TRICARE for Gray Area Reservists:** Retired Reservists under age 60 are now eligible for TRICARE benefits, albeit at a significantly higher cost than for the TRICARE Reserve Select Program. The program was authorized for the beginning of fiscal 2010, but will not be implemented until late summer or fall of this year; do you see a pattern here? MOAA is monitoring the program, and we will provide details as they emerge.

**Medicare/TRICARE Reimbursement Cuts Are DELAYED:** Provider reimbursement rates were scheduled to be reduced by 21% on January 1, 2010 (part of the supposed \$1/2 billion "savings" included in both health care bills). The Senate voted late in December to delay such reductions, but since they did not have the votes to kill them, the delay only puts off the date until the end of February. Now you absolutely know that such reductions would be ruinous to Medicare and TRICARE beneficiaries as doctors and others would stop accepting them as patients. So, you can be relatively assured that, before the end of February, something more permanent will be accomplished. This is another terrible example of Congress in action. As MOAA puts it, "[Congress] continuing squabbles over how to fund a fix--and their continuing games of last minute budget "chicken"--continue to put millions of beneficiaries at risk."

**"Entitlements Commission" Fig Leaf:** Senator Judd Gregg (R-NH) is proposing an amendment to the debt ceiling bill to create a special commission that would recommend changes to Social Security, Medicare, and other entitlement programs--to include military retirement and health programs. Similar to the Base Closing Commission, this new commission would create a comprehensive series of recommendations that would be submitted to Congress. Congress would be required to vote yes or no on the entire package, without the ability to amend at all.

***LEGISLATIVE UPDATE (cont.)***

The sponsor, Senator Gregg, earlier in the 90s, proposed such things as eliminating COLA before age 62, capping COLA below inflation, and means-testing COLA.

MOAA rightly views this proposal with great suspicion and asks that we each send our senators a MOAA suggested message to stop this in its tracks. Go to [www.MOAA.org](http://www.MOAA.org) and register your opinion with your Senators.

**Worst or Least Efficient Charities:**

Oregon Attorney General John Kroger has published, and the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs republished, a list of the "worst" national charities. Worst is defined as the smallest percentage of dollars raised going to the charitable program; the inference is that most of the contributions are used for staff salaries, commissions, and general overhead.

Below is a select listing that includes charities that might otherwise tug at our hearts. I will list others next month:

Korean War Vets National Museum & Library: 7.25% direct contribution

Foundation for American Veterans: 8.7%

National Vietnam Veterans Foundation: 9.62%

Association for Firefighters and Paramedics: 3.65%, the worst of all

Firefighters Charitable Foundation: 10.86%

**MOAA Legislative Goals for 2010:**

Below is a partial list of national organization goals for this calendar year. We may wish to discuss whether the chapter and state MOAA could find ways

to focus several of these goals for state implementation:

- Strengthen financial, legal, reemployment protections for mobilized Guard/Reserve
- Upgrade TRICARE to attract more providers and improve beneficiary access
- Allow 3 years of active duty level health care for disability retirees and families
- Fix Medicare/TRICARE payment rate formula to promote provider participation
- Preserve full-inflation cost of living adjustments
- Authorize pre-tax payments of health, dental and long-term care premiums

***MOAA PORTLAND CHAPTER SCHOLARSHIP FUND UPDATE***

*by CAPT Larry Roberts, USNR (Ret)*

With a strong showing at the end of calendar year 2009, the Chapter Scholarship Fund is about 2/3 of the way to our first year contribution goal of \$5,000. MOAA is gathering final numbers right now, so I will update the chapter at the February meeting. We do know that December contributions exceeded \$1,200.

We are now in a new calendar year in which to plan and make charitable contributions that will provide tax benefits for 2010 tax filings.

Note that 100% of all contributions go directly to the Scholarship Fund. That is virtually unprecedented! Please see the legislative update where I identify a number of charities that send on only 10% or less to the designated program! MOAA absorbs ALL the overhead associated with managing the fund!

Contributing to the Chapter Scholarship Fund is of direct benefit to children in the local community, of great benefit to the parents of those children, many of whom are still on active duty, and is incredibly efficient use of your charitable contributions.

Thanks for your 2009 support, and thanks in advance for any contributions you submit in calendar year 2010!

This reflects well on the chapter and on MOAA nationally. Our hope is that other Pacific Northwest chapters will emulate our leadership and charitable nature.

***AUXILIARY CORNER by Mrs. Edie Rieken, Liaison to the Auxiliary Member Advisory Committee***

Welcome to the New Year, which for us will start on **16 February 2010** with another wonderful luncheon at Albertina's--1:00 p.m. seating. **Please** call me if you plan to attend at **(503) 254-5029**.

We Auxiliary members can be very proud of our accomplishments in 2009: Early last year, we spearheaded contributing to the **HUGS Project**, to help with the cost of making and sending 6,000 cooling "neckties" to our 3,000 Oregon National Guard soldiers who were deployed to Iraq last spring. With additional giving by the Board of Directors and those attending the March Chapter meeting, that totaled \$533. Then you gave many great items for the **TROOP CARE PACKAGES**. Next, those attending the June luncheon, plus others, gave \$225 toward our Chapter's **SCHOLARSHIP FUND** goal. Chapter Secretary, Colonel Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret), got us started bringing in unused **cell phones** (and chargers), an ongoing program that provides free "talk time" to soldiers abroad. And to top it all, for our Christmas Project, you gave \$355 that I forwarded to the Oregon National Guard **EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND** (held in Salem) to provide assistance to our National Guard families when a financial emergency arises. (That total may be more if some members mailed directly to the Fund.) Thank you all!

The (national) Auxiliary Member Advisory Committee asks if our DEERS personal information needs updating. (Call 1-800-538-9552 and have your ID card ready). Have you moved or changed your phone number? Call MOAA in Washington DC and contact our Chapter's Secretary at **(310) 897-1902** or **maryjmayer@yahoo.com**

***THANK YOU LETTER TO THE MOAA PORTLAND CHAPTER FROM THE PORTLAND POLICE BUREAU SUNSHINE DIVISION!***

On behalf of the Portland Police Bureau Sunshine Division, I would like to thank you for your generous donation of \$108.00. Your contribution makes it possible for us to provide emergency food and clothing to Portlanders in need.

Since its inception in 1923, the Sunshine Division continues to provide food and clothing to those in need 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. In August 2009 we directly helped 868 kids and their families by giving them 39,208 pounds of food and 1,741 pounds of clothing. This is only possible because of thoughtful contributions from people like you.

Over the past fiscal year, we have directly helped an average of 800 families a month. As you know, the cost of providing free emergency food and clothing does not go away. We hope for your continued support in the future.

Once again, thank you for your generous donation.

Sincerely,  
Officer Phil Kent  
Portland Police Bureau Sunshine Division

***HELP BRING THE USS RANGER TO PORTLAND!***  
**by LCDR George H. Bickford, Sr., USN (Ret)**

Help bring the *USS Ranger* to Portland as a floating museum, veteran's memorial, and a cultural and education center. Without your help, this great ship will be lost forever. Please see below for information on how you can help save her!

The **USS Ranger Foundation** is a privately funded project, with individual and corporate support; and therefore will not be utilizing public funding as a revenue base. This project will generate revenue and jobs. It just makes good sense! The project is in Phase Two of the four phase process. This phase has a 12 month timeline, during which the exact location of the museum complex will be finalized; environmental,

***USS RANGER (continued)***

marketing, business, **neighborhood support**, and other studies will be completed and updated. Now is the time for you to support the USS Ranger Foundation and help bring Ranger to Portland. Please do your part to ensure this magnificent ship and the history she represents will be preserved on behalf of her super-carrier sisters, some of which are or will be sunk or scrapped. We won't succeed without **your support**. Letters expressing support for the project are needed from individuals, organizations, businesses and corporations that want to see this historic ship saved and see the substantial economic benefits it will bring to our area. Please send your letters of support to the Foundation Office (**1505 SE Gideon St. Suite 650 Portland, OR 97202**) or e-mail them to **rangerinfo@ussranger.org**. These letters are extremely important to show that the Ranger Foundation has the overwhelming support of the community in bringing the USS Ranger CV-61 to our metropolitan area. Please visit the web site: **www.ussranger.org**, and see the economic benefits that come with this project!

**CHAPTER DUES FOR 2010**

Another reminder that the time to pay your annual Chapter dues of \$25.00 is **NOW**. Just make out your check to **PDX-MOAA**. You can pay at the February brunch meeting or by mail to Portland Chapter/MOAA, P.O. Box 68959, Portland, OR 97268. Remember, if you received the *Brass Bulletin Newsletter* by mail, the mailing label shows your current dues expiration date.

Any questions? Just call the Treasurer, **CDR Ben Tabler**, at **503-698-2974**, or send an e-mail to **betabler@comcast.net**.

***SUPPORT THE CELL PHONES FOR SOLDIERS PROGRAM***

*If you have any used cell phones (and chargers), please bring them with you to our Chapter meetings!* Our secretary, **Colonel Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret)**, will ensure the phones are sent through the proper channels so our deployed service men and women receive *prepaid calling cards* in exchange for these used cell phones. What a wonderful gift we can give to these warriors—helping them keep in touch with their families!

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***Portland Chapter Officers*****President**

LTC Gary S. Brink, USA (Ret): 503-659-3347

**First Vice President**

MAJ John Sampson, USA (Ret): 503-632-5265

**Second Vice President**

Capt Jimmy L. Patrick, USMC (Ret): 503-654-1511

**Secretary**

Col Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret): 1-310-897-1902

**Treasurer**

CDR Ben Tabler, USN (Ret): 503-698-2974

**Immediate Past President**COL John Hill, USA (Ret): 503-653-9524

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***Portland Chapter Board of Directors*****Army Reps**

MG Curtis A. Loop: 503-579-6297

LTC David E. Hill: 503-579-9684

**Navy Rep**

CAPT James H. Main: 503-793-8499

**Air Force Reps**

Col Geoffrey W. McCarthy: 503-241-8468

Col Richard A. Gano: 503-651-2044

**Marine Corps Reps**

Maj James F. Simpson: 503-233-9341

LtCol Nanci L. Visser: 503-614-8463

**Coast Guard Rep**

CDR Ron Youngman: 503-439-3014

**Women in Service Rep**

CDR Jami Mason, USN: 503-285-4566 x510

**Liaison, Auxiliary Member Advisory Committee**

Mrs. Edie Rieken: 503-254-5029

**RETURN ADDRESS:**

**PORTLAND CHAPTER  
MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION  
OF AMERICA (MOAA)  
P.O. BOX 68959  
PORTLAND, OR 97268**

**FIRST  
CLASS  
POSTAGE  
REQUIRED**

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**MOAA PORTLAND CHAPTER UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Mark your calendars!**

February 6, 2010	Brunch Meeting w/Guest Speaker (Location: The Stockpot Broiler)
<i>February 12, 2010</i>	<i>Board of Directors Meeting (Location: Broadmoor Golf Course)</i>
March 2, 2010	Dinner Meeting w/Guest Speaker (Location: Monarch)
April 6, 2010	Dinner Meeting w/Guest Speaker & Nominations for Chapter Officers (Location: Gray Gables Estate)
May 4, 2010	Dinner Meeting w/Guest Speaker & Election of Chapter Officers (Location: Monarch)
<i>May 7, 2010</i>	<i>Board of Directors Meeting</i>
June 1, 2010	Dinner Meeting w/Guest Speaker & Installation of Chapter Officers (Location: Gray Gables)
<i>July &amp; August 2010</i>	<i>No Dinner Meetings Scheduled</i>
<i>August 6, 2010</i>	<i>Board of Directors Meeting</i>

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**NOTE 1:** All monthly chapter meetings are held at the location indicated.

**NOTE 2:** All Board of Directors Meetings are held at 0930—usually at the **Colwood Bar & Grill** at the **Colwood National Golf Course**--and are open to all members! Alternate locations will be indicated.

**NOTE 3:** All articles for the **March 2010 Brass Bulletin Newsletter** must be submitted to the editor, **Col Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret)**, at [maryjmayer@yahoo.com](mailto:maryjmayer@yahoo.com) by **6 February 2010**.