



**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**

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www.MOAAPortland.org

March 2010

The President's Forum

by LTC Gary S. Brink, USA (Ret)

FANTASTIC!! I am very proud of the amount of participation in terms of donations to our MOAA Portland Chapter Scholarship Fund. In eight months, we were able to complete our first year's goal of \$5,000. Thank you so much for your support! I was very pleased that our first recipient, **Heather Chase**, was able to attend our February Brunch. *Must reading is what our scholarship means to her.* Larry Roberts will have more to say on this subject on pages 5 and 6.

As we begin to get back together for the spring, the number of events that your chapter will be involved in will increase. As a result, I would like to offer all of you the opportunity to represent your chapter in a public event:

1. We will be asking for one volunteer each from the Army and Air Force to present the Chapter's two \$500 awards to an Army and an Air Force ROTC cadet at the University of Portland ROTC Awards Banquets in April. While we would like the chapter representative to be able to wear their uniform, it is not mandatory. If you want to have a great time and an extremely enjoyable evening, give me a call.

2. We are seeking one volunteer, who can wear their respective service uniform, from each service to participate in the Skyline Memorial Day Ceremony in late May. Each member will place their respective

(Continued on page 2)

***The Chapter Board of Directors
wishes all Chapter Members
and their Families
a Happy St. Patrick's Day!***

NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday, 2 March 2010

Social: 1700, Dinner: 1830

The Monarch Hotel

12566 SE 93rd Avenue

Clackamas, Oregon 97015-9760

Phone: 503-652-1515

PROGRAM:

Guest Speaker: Mr. Stephen Enyart from Bonneville Power will speak on "Wind Generated Power in the BPA System."

MENU:

Traditional Corned Beef and Cabbage served with Parsley New Potatoes **or**

Grandma Flanagan's Pot Roast with Guinness

Gravy served with Parsley New Potatoes and Baby Carrots

Potato Rolls with Butter

New York Cheesecake with Irish Whiskey Sauce

Coffee, Tea, and Iced Tea

COST:

**\$21.00 (Corned Beef) or \$22.00 (Pot Roast)
per person (includes 20% 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 **igbrink@comcast.net** NLT 1200 on **25 February 2010**. **No late reservations**, and **please call** if you must cancel as we have to pay for no-shows.

DIRECTIONS: From **I-205N**, take Sunnyside Exit, left on Sunnyside, cross over I-205, left on 93rd (2nd traffic signal) and left into Monarch Hotel. From **I-205S**, take Sunnyside Exit, right on Sunnyside, left on 93rd (1st traffic signal), and left into Monarch Hotel.

A **No-Host Bar** is available from 1700 to end. An **elevator** is available for those who desire to use it.

service flags in the stands and place a wreath in front of their service flag. This is an impressive memorial, which is well worth the time to attend. Again, if you would like to be a part of this memorial, give Ron Youngman or myself a call.

I would also like to draw your attention to the line up of speakers over the next four months. I really believe you will find each interesting and well worth your time to attend the meetings. This leads me to again ask for your help to suggest a meeting site on the west side of Portland. If you have an idea, PLEASE talk to Jim Patrick or Rick Gano. I really want to have a west side venue for our fellow members.

Again, I encourage all of you who have email to please sign up for receipt of your monthly Brass Bulletin Newsletter via email. With the skyrocketing postal costs vs. email, please consider using email as much as possible. For those who don't have email, we will continue to mail you a newsletter.

Finally, as I led off this column, your chapter is truly preparing its way for future growth. We have to be proactive and alive to continue our growth for the future. Yet, it is your chapter, and we want to hear from you anytime you have an idea for improvement.

See you the next chapter meeting on the 2nd of March at the Monarch Hotel. Keep in mind that we will be hosting the Columbia River (Vancouver) Chapter members at this meeting!

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

On February 6, there were 55 members and guests who came out for dinner at the Stockpot Broiler Restaurant in Beaverton,

Oregon. After the social hour, **President Gary Brink** called the meeting to order at 1000. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, the National Anthem was sung (led by Mrs. Jan Brink), and, since no chaplain was in attendance, President Brink gave the invocation. **President Brink** introduced a new chapter member, **Lt Col Roger Worrall, USAF (Ret)**, and **CAPT Larry Roberts, USNR (Ret)**, the Scholarship Committee Chair, introduced our first scholarship recipient, **Ms. Heather Chase**, and announced that in eight months we have collected \$5,762.00 and met our scholarship goal for the year. (See articles on pages 5 and 6.)

President Brink then recognized **Mrs. Nola Kidd** and her daughter; former chapter president **Major Cara W. ("Jack") Kidd, Jr., USAF (Ret)** recently passed away, and there is a service being held for him at 1330 on Monday, 8 February 2010 at Willamette National Cemetery. Gary encouraged chapter members to attend. Gary then recognized **1Lt Sabrina Vasquez, USAF**, a "Dust-Off" Medevac helicopter pilot, just recently returned from Iraq, and her mother, **Coy**.

After brunch, **President Brink** complimented the staff of the Stockpot Broiler, told some jokes, and then introduced the guest speaker, **Mr. Jim Willis**, the Director of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) since 2003. Jim spent 32 years in the law enforcement profession, but he said that his passion was serving veterans and their families. His father was a World War II veteran, his mother was on the Albany School Board, his brother served in the army during Vietnam, and he himself served in the Air Force.



Chapter President Gary Brink presents Mr. Jim Willis with Honorary Chapter Membership and a MOAA Pin

MINUTES (continued)

In the Supplemental Session to the Oregon Biennial Legislative Year, ODVA introduced no bills; these are tough economic times, and, if proposed legislation needs funding, it is likely not to pass. However, in the last session, 26 bills were passed by the Oregon legislature and 6 resolutions were sent to the U.S. Congress. These 32 bills and resolutions were a direct result of the feedback from the Governor's Task Force on Veterans' Services.

The Oregon **Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs** have initiated three bills: **Senate Bill 1000** directs DMVs to put a "V" on the driver's license of any veteran that wants it. Proof of identification is the DD214. Multiple deployments can have negative impacts on veterans, and law enforcement should be aware if they stop veterans that they are at risk for suicide. (Negative behavior could also arise due to PTSD rather than criminal motives). **Senate Bill 999**: A district attorney would have the ability to do a diversion if veterans are found to suffer from PTSD; causation can be used, referring a veteran to counseling at the VA. **Senate Bill (no number given)**: allows the Adjutant General of Oregon to continue to serve if federal recognition is withdrawn at age 66; the current law states that a major general must retire at age 66 at the federal level. Exceptions: the president can override or contingencies of war can be applied to extend.

The number one cause of death among Oregon veterans aged 18-24 and 24-44 is suicide; from 2000-2006, 1,066 veterans took their own lives in Oregon. Jim Willis is starting a Suicide Intervention Program ("Battle Buddy" Program) trial in three Central Oregon Counties; 911 centers can call individuals specially trained in suicide intervention techniques.

At the federal level, the VA budget is \$125 billion. President Bush started increasing the department's budget, but never told anyone how far behind they were in funding veterans' programs. Construction Funds are available to build the Jean and Stan Adams Veterans' Center at the Oregon Veterans' Home (OVH) in The Dalles, Oregon; it will be a multi-purpose room where all residents can get together in one place and is to open by Veterans' Day 2011. Federal monies will fund 65% of the cost, while the rest will come from matching funds. Oregon needs 800 skilled nursing beds; the current OVH has 150 beds; a second Home is being planned that will house 240-250 residents and employ 310. Jim said that he had to be careful on how he picked out the site for the second home; it is a \$40 million project. The legislation for a third Home will be presented at the next legislative session. Of the 122 veterans' homes in the U.S., one of the top 2 in the nation is the OVH in The Dalles, OR.

Jim said that MOAA has been very active in the legislative process, and is very intelligent in how they approach legislators. As for "Obamacare," it is not supposed to impact TRICARE Prime or Standard or TRICARE for Life. Jim said it is not negotiable to fiddle around with TRICARE; it is essential to preserve the benefits of our veterans (especially seniors). On 20 February 2010, Jim will go to Washington, DC to spend 10 days with fellow directors ensuring that MEDICARE and MEDICAID changes will not negatively impact veterans. Following Jim's remarks, President Brink gave him a Certificate of Appreciation, made him an Honorary Member of the chapter, and gave him a MOAA "One Powerful Voice" pin.

In the "For the Good of the Order" portion of the program, **LtCol Nanci Visser, USMCR (Ret)** announced that **Col Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret)** and she were going to the Oregon Women Veterans' Conference on 26-27 March 2010 in Canyonville, OR. She encouraged other women veterans to do the same. President Brink then said that he was looking for more board members, and encouraged chapter members to say "yes" if and when called. In closing, **President Brink** thanked **Captain Jim Patrick, USMC (Ret)** for planning the meeting and **Mrs. Edie Rieken** for providing the centerpieces of flags and chocolate candy. He also reminded everyone to come to the 2 March 2010 dinner meeting at the Monarch Hotel; the guest speaker will be **Mr. Stephen Enyart** from Bonneville Power. The meeting was adjourned at 1135.

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

Since the U.S. Senate recessed on December 25th 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 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 directions 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 have 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 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.

The sponsor, Senator Gregg, earlier in the 1990s, proposed such things as eliminating COLA before age

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE (cont.)

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 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 VA 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 UPDATE by CAPT Larry Roberts, USNR (Ret)

CONGRATULATIONS! We did it! Through December 31, 2009, chapter members contributed **\$5,762** to the fund! This surpassed the \$5000 goal for 2009, and was achieved in only 7 months. This achievement also sets us ahead on the way to another \$5,000 to be contributed in 2010, a full 12 months. Seventeen chapter members and/or their spouses made contributions, as did the chapter through periodic wine raffles and the Christmas raffle. There were a number of small \$25 and \$50 donations, which is great. If we had 100 \$50 donations, we meet the \$5,000 annual goal and anything larger is pure gravy. The total this last year was favorably affected by two contributors who donated a combined \$3,500. All in all, a fine effort for the first partial year and encouraging for the future. We should all feel good about this project.

Now that attendees at the February 6th meeting have met our first scholarship beneficiary, **Ms. Heather Chase**, in person, we can actually see the impact we have on college students in the Portland area. See the email from Heather on page 6. She is a junior in college, a very poised and mature young woman. We will make Heather and her mother, stationed at Andrews AFB, members of MOAA and the chapter and hope to have Heather at our meetings periodically.

Heather is the inaugural beneficiary of the Chapter Scholarship. She will followed later this year by the 2010 recipient, and then a long line of recipients, as the MOAA Scholarship is self-replenishing and therefore perpetual. Be proud that we initiated a process that will result in scholarships for 25, 50, and eventually 100 young persons that are children of both commissioned and noncommissioned military personnel.

Just to recapitulate: The Scholarship Fund provides interest free loans and grants for up to five years of

SCHOLARSHIP (continued)

undergraduate study at an accredited 2 or 4 year college or university. The MOAA Fund has assisted more than 10,000 students over the years. We are breaking new ground in the Pacific Northwest in sponsoring a chapter scholarship fund, another example of the chapter's leadership position.

Scholarship Committee: The Committee currently includes John Hill, Nanci Visser, Mary Mayer, and Jimmy Patrick. Anyone else who would like to participate in this effort, please let me know. Committee member duties will not be onerous, and will be very important in leading us in this endeavor.

Thanks for your commitment to the education of the future leaders of our country and to children of our nation's defenders. Pat yourselves on the back in congratulations for a first year positive result.

AN EMAIL TO CHAPTER MEMBERS from Heather Chase, first MOAA Portland Chapter Scholarship Recipient

I'm an art student at the Pacific Northwest College of Art here in Portland, and my major is Intermedia. "Intermedia" is similar to a double major, in that you pick two other majors to combine. I'm studying sculpture and video/sound, and I'd like to go into art therapy eventually.

The MOAA scholarship helps a lot with my schooling and other expenses. School is so expensive, and scholarships are very important in lightening the burden of debt that a student has to deal with upon graduation.

My mother is a Captain in the Air Force, and she lives at Andrews AFB in

Maryland. She's a nurse, and she joined the military during my senior year of high school, while I was on student exchange in the Netherlands. She had to go to "boot camp" with all of the 20-year-olds, and I'm so proud of what she's accomplished. She was recently accepted to earn her masters degree, and she will be studying to be a mental health nurse practitioner.



Chapter Scholarship Chair, Larry Roberts, welcomes Heather Chase, our first Scholarship Recipient, to the February Brunch Meeting

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

Ladies (and that includes member's wives who are more than welcome to join Auxiliary members), we are having another wonderful luncheon at Albertina's on **February 16th, 1:00 p.m. seating**. Please call Edie (**503-254-5029**) immediately if you can attend. There are no dues, no minutes, just a few announcements; price of lunches depend on number attending: \$12 minimum, plus wine and tip.

For those of you who have never been to Albertina's Restaurant and Shops, that last word indicates they have more than just good food! Located at 424 NE 22nd Avenue, this beautiful, colonial two-story building that once housed orphans, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a Portland Historic Landmark. Our group chose to continue patronizing Albertina's because their profits are used to help challenged children and families in stress. And almost all their "employees" are volunteers.

AUXILIARY CORNER (continued)

We have a new representative from the (national) Auxiliary Member Advisory Committee (AMAC) with whom I've recently had a delightful phone conversation. Her name is Barbara Robertson, a resident of Orange County, California, and she is amazed at our accomplishments. She encourages us to:

1. Remain involved with and helpful to our currently serving military and our surrounding community.
2. Check out the Auxiliary Liaison page (www.moaa.org/survivors).
3. Most importantly, keep hounding our congressmen to repeal the unfair requirement to deduct Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) payments from Survivor and Benefit Plan annuities. *

Barbara herself, whose husband died in Vietnam, is affected by this; her Survivor Benefit Plan payment was reduced by the DIC deduction. Even if this doesn't affect your income, we can try to bring about change to help other survivors.

*Note: As before, you will find Congressional addresses listed near the front of the *Portland Chapter Directory*.

DO YOU STILL OWE 2010 DUES?

There are still many members who have yet to pay their 2010 Chapter dues (still at \$25). Reminders have been sent on to those whom the records show are still remiss. Also, if you received this Newsletter by mail, the upper right corner of the mailing label shows your current expiration date. That date should be Dec 2010 or later. Dues can be mailed to Portland Chapter/MOAA, PO Box 68959, Portland, OR 97268, or paid at the March dinner meeting. Of course, if you have a question just contact the Treasurer, **CDR Ben Tabler**, either by e-mail at betabler@comcast.net, or by phone at **503-698-2974**.

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!

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

Portland Chapter Board of Directors**Army Reps**

MG Curtis A. Loop: 503-579-6297

LTC David E. Hill: 503-579-9684

Navy Reps

CAPT James H. Main: 503-793-8499

CAPT Larry Roberts: 503-722-1897

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
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

MOAA PORTLAND CHAPTER UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark your calendars!

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)
May 7, 2010	<i>Board of Directors Meeting</i>
June 1, 2010	Dinner Meeting w/Guest Speaker & Installation of Chapter Officers (Location: Gray Gables)
July & August 2010	<i>No Dinner Meetings Scheduled</i>
August 6, 2010	<i>Board of Directors Meeting</i>
September 7, 2010	Dinner Meeting w/Guest Speaker (Location: Monarch)
October 5, 2010	Dinner Meeting w/Guest Speaker (Location: Gray Gables Estates)
November 2, 2010	Dinner Meeting w/Guest Speaker (Location: Monarch)
November 12, 2010	<i>Board of Directors Meeting</i>
December 7, 2010	Dinner Meeting w/Entertainment (Location: Gray Gables Estate)

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 **April 2010 Brass Bulletin Newsletter** must be submitted to the editor, **Col Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret)**, at maryjmayer@yahoo.com by **6 March 2010**.