



**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

November 2009

The President's Forum

by LTC Gary S. Brink, USA (Ret)

I was so proud of our chapter when I received the 5-star MOAA Award of Excellence on 26 September 2009 at the Oregon State Council of Chapters Biennial Convention as it highlighted to me the impressive variety of projects that our chapter members have taken on. And, our October dinner meeting reflected that as the agenda was jam-packed with reports! I encourage you to read chapter secretary Mary Mayer's minutes on pages 2 and 3 so you can be brought up-to-date on what we have accomplished. My plans are to continue to bring to you the following: as much news as possible about local military activities, chapter involvement in local and federal legislation affecting us and our fellow military members and their families, highlights about members and their achievements, status on the growth of our Scholarship Fund, and a wide range of speakers of military and local interest at our monthly meetings. *Our chapter represents the largest concentration of military officers in Oregon.* We must continue to build on years of combined leadership to influence our community to protect and support the military community which exists in the Portland area.

In light of these goals, I really want to encourage all to attend and bring family and friends to the **MASSING OF COLORS** at **1400 hours** on **Sunday, 25 October 2009** at the **Kliever National Guard Armory** at 10000 NE 33rd Drive, Portland, Oregon 97211. This is a very

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Reminder:

Chapter Board of Directors Meeting

On Friday, 13 November 2009

***At 0930 hours at the
Colwood Bar & Grill***

NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday, 3 November 2009

Social: 1700, Dinner: 1830

The Monarch Hotel

12566 SE 93rd Avenue

Clackamas, Oregon

PROGRAM:

Guest Speaker: Donald G. Malarkey (a non-commissioned officer with E Company, 2nd Battalion, 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division of the United States Army during World War II) will speak on **“The Legendary Battles of a Sergeant from World War II's Band of Brothers.”** (Malarkey was portrayed in the HBO mini-series *Band of Brothers* by Scott Grimes.)

MENU:

Mesclun Greens w/Bleu Cheese, Dried

Cranberries and Candied Walnuts tossed in a Balsamic Vinaigrette

Caesar Salad with Garlic Croutons and

Fresh Grated Parmesan

Sliced Roasted Breast of Turkey

Sliced Pineapple Glazed Ham

Yukon Gold Mashed Potatoes served with

Turkey Gravy on the Side

Sage Dressing and Cranberry Relish

Fresh Seasonal Vegetables

Rolls with Butter

Assorted Desserts

Coffee, Tea, and Iced Tea

COST:

\$22.75 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 29 October 2009.** **No late reservations,** and please call if you must cancel as we have to pay for no-shows.

PRESIDENT'S FORUM (continued)

moving military event. In addition, your chapter encourages all to participate in as many veteran activities as you can. The more members who can attend these various events will demonstrate the resolve and commitment of our entire military family (active, reserve, national guard, and retired) to remind our Federal and State governments to keep the promises they have made to recognize the sacrifices made by the military on behalf of the nation.

Therefore, in keeping with the upcoming **Veterans Day** on 11 November 2009, I want to thank all fellow veterans and their spouses for the sacrifices you have made for your country and fellow Americans. I also want to remember the two crews that I commanded 40 years ago, who made the ultimate sacrifice. God Bless them all!!

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

On October 6, there were **51** members and guests who came out for dinner at the Monarch Hotel in Clackamas, Oregon. After the social hour, **President Gary Brink** called the meeting to order at 1830—followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, the singing of our National Anthem (led by **Mrs. Katy McAllister**), and an invocation by Chaplain, **LTC Grant H. McAllister, USA (Ret)**. Gary indicated it had been quite a while since we had gathered together as the September meeting had to be cancelled. He said that he was happy to announce his son was coming back from Iraq after his second tour. **Chaplain McAllister** also introduced his guests, a new Army lieutenant and his wife.

President Brink announced that our first Scholarship Recipient, **Heather**

Chase (a Portland Art School student), has been invited by Scholarship Committee Chair, **Captain Larry Roberts, USNR (Ret)**, to the November dinner meeting. **President Brink** also indicated that the chapter was 1/3 of the way to its goal of \$5,000 for this year, a link regarding the Scholarship Program has been put on our chapter website, and the first contributors to the Scholarship Fund were the Auxiliary members who collected over \$200 at one of their regularly-scheduled luncheons. The Portland Chapter Scholarship is the *first* one in the northwest!

President Brink said the Oregon State Council of Chapters Biennial Convention in Medford in September was the best MOAA convention he had ever attended; 7 chapter members attended (Norb Murray, Gary Brink, John Sampson, Jim Patrick, Mary Mayer, Nanci Visser, and Edie Rieken). He was impressed with **Brig Gen Paul Cohen, USAF (Ret)**, MOAA National Director, who very effectively explained what MOAA is doing every day for the troops. And, congratulations to **LtCol Nanci L. Visser, USMCR (Ret)** who was appointed to the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) Advisory Committee for a three-year term. The Portland Chapter was awarded the 5-star Award of Excellence; **President Brink** thanked the chapter members for the great job they had done—and said it was their award! At the State Convention, **Mr. Jim Willis**, ODVA Director, asked the Council to support two resolutions: (1) to strengthen state veterans home loan programs (in Alaska, Oregon, California, Wisconsin, and Texas) and provide a broader veteran benefit and (2) to provide National guard and Active Reserve Personnel with up to a 90-day “soft landing” after their combat tours. Chapter members unanimously approved supporting these two resolutions.

President Brink also announced that (1) the **Air Force Association Global Affairs Seminar** originally scheduled for 10 October 2009 has been rescheduled for 3 April 2010 and (2) the Massing of the Colors (honoring active duty and retired military) will be held on Sunday, 25 October 2009 at the Kliever Oregon National Guard Armory at 1400 hours; various veterans organizations will be participating.

Membership Committee Chair, **MAJ John Sampson, USA (Ret)**, reported that (1) the Membership Committee is considering another reception to recruit potential new chapter members. (2) Important legislative actions affecting veterans are in the works at

MINUTES (continued)

this time, and chapter members need to be kept informed. John encouraged all members to come to the chapter meetings for updates—and to bring other members (new and those who may need a ride) with them to the meetings. (3) On Sunday, 8 November 2009 there will be a Veterans' Convoy (starting at the Clark County Fairgrounds and ending with a medals ceremony in Wilsonville); anyone wishing to receive the Oregon State Honorary Service Medal at that ceremony needed to fill out an application that night. (Note: Chapter members wore their medals at the State Convention and received a lot of questions regarding how other chapters could get them.)

Mrs. Edie Rieken, our Auxiliary Liaison, said that folks at the State Convention were well aware of the Portland Chapter's Auxiliary activities; at their luncheons, Edie indicated that the ladies don't just eat; they throw out ideas and then do something about them. The next Auxiliary Luncheon will be on 20 October at Albertina's at 1:00 p.m. Wives are invited. Our webmaster, **LTC Bill Kroger, USA (Ret)**, was very proud of the fact that our website won a national award. The website is currently down as we transition to a new server; the site should be back up at the end of the week. **President Brink** introduced **Mrs. Carol Patrick** who presented her painting of the chapter members who had participated in the Skyline Memorial activities. **Lt Col Boyd Yaden, USAF (Ret)** passed around pictures send to him by our new chapter member, **1LT Sabrina Vasquez, USA** (an Army National Guard "Dustoff" helicopter pilot out of Salem), who is currently stationed in Iraq, and he read some passages from her blog.

After dinner, **President Brink** introduced our guest speakers, **Bill** and **Diane Savage**, the founders of and coordinators for Water Africa. Water

Africa is a group of volunteers in the Portland, Oregon area helping World Vision provide safe water for the people in southern Zambia by installing deep borehole wells. If you wish to contribute, please contact **Bill and Diane Savage at 4804 Heritage Lane, Lake Oswego, OR 97035 or 503-635-5228 or info@WaterAfrica.org**

After the guest speakers were finished, **First Vice President MAJ John Sampson, USA (Ret)** took over the podium as **President Brink** had to leave. In order to obtain money for the Scholarship Fund, the chapter raffled off four bottles of premium wine. Congratulations to all the winners! Each month, the chapter will continue to raffle baskets and wine to benefit the scholarship fund. In the "For the Good of the Order" portion of the meeting, **LTC Bill Kroger, USA (Ret)**, **Lt Col Boyd Yaden, USAF (Ret)**, and **CWO4 Al Drenkhahn, USAF (Ret)** told jokes. **CWO4 Al Drenkhahn, USAF (Ret)**, Personal Affairs Committee Chair, also announced that there were no chapter member deaths this month, but two members were on the sick list: **CAPT W. Parks Walker, USNR (Ret)** and **CAPT Walter Bethune, USNR (Ret)**. Al also indicated that we needed two volunteers (in uniform/any Service) to help carry the colors during the Massing of the Colors on 25 October 2009; this event means a lot to the community, and all are encouraged to take their children, grandchildren, and nieces and nephews to this venue. **President Brink** mentioned that we are working on the *2009-2010 Chapter Directory*; if you have any changes from the *2008-2009 Chapter Directory*, please let **CDR Ben Tabler, USN (Ret)** or **Col Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret)** know. Finally, **LCDR George Bickford, USN (Ret)** said he had just returned from the Tailhook Convention; he said over 4,000 attended and that the programs were good. Cooperation among veterans' organizations is very important at this critical time as benefits are being attacked.

In closing, **First Vice President Sampson** thanked **Mrs. Edie Rieken** for providing flowers and candles for the table and indicated that the person at each table whose birthday was closest to Halloween could take the flowers home with them. He also reminded chapter members that the next dinner meeting will be held on Tuesday, 3 November 2009 at the Monarch Hotel; our guest speaker will be **Captain Rick Williams, USN (Ret)** who will speak on "Submarine Operations." The business meeting was adjourned at 2050.

**OREGON STATE COUNCIL OF
CHAPTERS BIENNIAL
CONVENTION SNAPSHOTS**



Chapter attendees and guests included: (front row) Mary Mayer, Jan Brink, Edie Rieken, Judy Sampson, Carol Patrick, (back row) Norb Murray, Gary Brink, John Sampson, and Jim Patrick.



MOAA National Director, Brigadier General Paul Cohen, USAF (Ret), presents Chapter President Gary Brink with a 5-star MOAA Award of Excellence streamer for our flag.



Brigadier General Norm Hoffman, USA (Ret), Oregon State Council of Chapters President, presented an Achievement Award to Council Secretary & Treasurer, Mary Mayer, for all her hard work over the past two years.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By CAPT Larry Roberts, USNR (Ret)

Contact Your Legislators:

As shown below in the story on the Pentagon sneak attack on TRICARE fees, the power of communicating with our legislators is immense. In these days of five, count them, different bills covering Health Care "Reform," Cap and Trade, Defense appropriations and on and on, it is imperative that we make our positions known. One can utilize canned messages created by MOAA by going to www.MOAA.org. These messages can be edited as you see fit. Alternatively, you can go directly to your Senators and Congressman through their web sites. To make it really easy, I will list some addresses:

Ron Wyden, wyden.senate.gov/contact/

Jeff Merkley, merkley.senate.gov/contact

David Wu, house.gov.wu and hit "Contact us"

Kurt Schrader, house.gov.schrader and hit "Contact" (see a pattern here?)

Earl Blumenauer, house.gov.blumenauer and as above

Senator Ron Wyden is on the Senate Finance Committee, which has fielded the alleged Baucus Bill on Health Care. Senator Jeff Merkley is on the Committee which created the "Kennedy" Bill.

To reach the **White House**, use www.WhiteHouse.gov and hit "Contact us."

This is the time to be involved. Health Care and Cap and Trade will significantly affect the country for decades---if not generations.

A simple Google search by last name will almost always get you to the relevant web site.

Pentagon Sneak Attack on TRICARE Killed:

After assuring MOAA and other defense-related organizations that they would not seek any TRICARE fee increases for 2010, the Defense Department announced on THE LAST DAY OF THE FISCAL YEAR that it would be raising inpatient co-pay for retired TRICARE Standard beneficiaries by \$110, effective 1 October, from \$535 to \$645--an increase of over 20% when retirees are receiving no COLA on

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE (cont)

either Social Security or retiree pay. This increase was not discussed with any organizations--such as MOAA-- and came as a complete shock.

MOAA and other organizations swung into action, contacting legislators, the White House, and the Secretary of Defense. MOAA members contributed to the reaction with almost 20,000 messages sent to legislators.

The result was that the reconciled FY 2010 Defense Authorization Act includes a provision barring any inpatient co-pay increase.

So, we won that firefight, but it is clear that DOD is not a friend of retirees. Rather, it is Congress that has our back. Moreover, at best DOD is disingenuous in communications to the retiree community. Take heed, be watchful, and keep MOAA and The Military Coalition strong.

COLA Alternative:

Two weeks ago, Oregon Congressman Peter DeFazio introduced a bill that would authorize a one-time Social Security payment of \$250 this fiscal year to offset the lack of a COLA increase. He stated that this equates to a 1.8% COLA equivalent. I do not know what he thinks is the average SSA check, but \$250 does not come close to 1.8% for me. I have heard nothing further since the bill was introduced. I will follow the story and let you know if there is any progress. I did inquire of Colonel Steve Strobridge, head of legislative affairs at MOAA, whether there was any thought of making a parallel push for a one time COLA alternative for retirees. He quickly responded thoughtfully that such a move might open several doors that we do not want cracked, for longer term security of our retirement benefits.

Fiscal 2010 Defense Authorization Act Reconciliation Bill:

The Senate and the House Armed Services Committees have created a bill that will be voted upon by both bodies. The legislation was a mixed bag--with a 3.4% pay increase for active duty, Guard and Reserve members; an increase of 30,000 troops for the Army; and a number of health care initiatives.

However, the bill:

- Dropped the House plan to phase out the disability offset to retirement pay for medically retired members, something even the President's budget had included.
- Dropped the Senate initiative to repeal the deduction of VA survivor benefits from SBP annuities.
- Dropped the Senate provision to authorize Reserve retirement age credit for active duty service since 9/11/01 vs. current established date of 1/28/08.

Apparently, all these major priorities of MOAA were dropped due to the lack of ability to establish budget offsets, as required in Senate and House "Rules." Since these alleged rules have routinely been ignored in the Stimulus Bill, bailouts, tax reductions, and the like, MOAA is understandably frustrated with Congress and pledges to keep up the pressure on Congress.

This might be a good subject to write on to your favorite legislator.

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

by MAJ John Sampson, USA (Ret)

The **Membership Committee** will be meeting (date to be determined) to discuss the possibility of having another membership drive and to see how we can encourage current members to become more involved.

The Veterans of Oregon organization is having a **Veteran's Convoy on 8 November 2009**. The convoy will start at the Clark County Fairgrounds in Vancouver and travel down Veteran's Memorial Highway (I-205) to the Korean War Memorial in Wilsonville. There will be a free salmon bake, and the Oregon State Honorable Service Medals will be presented to veterans. The gates open at 7:00 a.m., activities begin at 8:00 a.m., and the ceremony starts at 11:00 a.m. This is an opportunity for MOAA members to showcase our organization.

**MOAA PORTLAND CHAPTER
SCHOLARSHIP FUND UPDATE**
by CAPT Larry Roberts, USNR (Ret)

As this is written, we are nearing the \$2,000 contribution mark, an impressive figure since we really started the fund at the close of our spring activities calendar.

Although I believe the most efficient method of making a contribution is on the web at the MOAA web site (MOAA.org, About us, Scholarship Fund, Make a contribution), one can write a check and either mail it directly or give it to Ben Tabler, Gary Brink, or me--and we will get it submitted. Both Ben Tabler and I have a supply of pre-addressed and pre-paid envelopes for use and will be happy to provide them to anyone. See me at meetings or call me at 503-722-1897.

The address to send checks is:

Portland Chapter Scholarship Fund
Military Officers Association of
America
P.O. Box 320190
Alexandria, VA 22320-9803

Heather Chase, our first scholarship recipient, will be at the November dinner meeting. Make it a point to meet her and see what class of individuals we are assisting with our contributions.

Charitable IRA Contribution:

Through the remainder of this year, individuals 70.5 years and older are eligible to make charitable contributions from an IRA *WITH NO FEDERAL TAX CONSEQUENCES*. If this is of interest, there is more information on the MOAA web site, or call me. To build momentum and establish continuity for the Chapter Scholarship Fund, I would like to establish a standing committee of 3 – 5 individuals who would become advocates for the fund and assist in raising the

contributions to make the fund self funding over the next several years. If you would like to become involved, please call me or email larry@rocketventures.com

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

Ladies, you still have time to call me at (503) 254-5029 if you plan to attend our **October 20th luncheon at Albertina's, 1:00 p.m. seating**. Remember to bring your old cell phones for the Cell Phones for Soldiers Program. And mark your calendars for the next luncheon: December 15th.

The (National) Auxiliary Member Advisory Committee urges us to look for and recruit new Auxiliary members. When that committee was established in 2004, their mission became "Recruiting, Retention and Representation"--knowing recruiting would be the most difficult. Keep in mind that there are eligible surviving spouses of Military Officers, who were MOAA members or were eligible to become MOAA members, out there in the community. You can find them in your church or social groups, or even when you do your shopping!

Our Chapter's Auxiliary members have supported our troops with contributions (twice) for "cooling neckties," sent a pick-up load of personal items (thanks mostly to Joyce Fiske), contributed to our Chapter's Scholarship Fund, and now we're going to give our old cell phones. Here's another challenge: We need to help each other, too. Many members have aged gracefully into their 80s and beyond, with life changes and illnesses; these members can use our help as they strive to stay independent and engaged in chapter and other activities. If you are a senior member, please let us know what type of help you would appreciate,

I attended the recent MOAA Oregon State Council of Chapters Biennial Convention and learned that not all of the eight Chapters in Oregon have an Auxiliary Liaison (or representative). Those who attended the Oregon State Council of Chapters Board Meeting on 27 September 2009 were quite impressed with what our little group has accomplished; consequently, each Chapter was urged to appoint a Liaison!

***SAVE THE DATE! GLOBAL
AFFAIRS SEMINAR POSTPONED
UNTIL SPRING***

The committee planning the **Air Force Association Global Affairs Seminar** on “The Road Ahead: the Threats We Face as a Nation” has decided, in the light of the H1N1 virus issue and its effect upon large gatherings, to postpone the seminar until the spring. Originally scheduled for 10 October 2009, the seminar will now be held on **Saturday, April 3, 2010** at the University of Portland’s Buckley Center. Moderated by **Victoria Taft** of KPAM, the panel members are: **Colonel Dan Hokanson**, Commander of the 41st Independent Brigade Combat Team, Oregon National Guard; **Colonel David T. Buckwalter, USAF (Ret)**, a former instructor at the Naval War College and presently Executive Vice President of the Air Force Association; **MSgt Patrick McDonald, USAR**, just returned in August from his second deployment to the Multi-National Force – Iraq Command Liaison to the Independent Election Commission of Iraq. His civilian position is Assistant Secretary of State for Washington; **Dr. Mark Eifler** is Professor of History and Military History at the University of Portland; and **Mr. Boyd Miller**, former Special Agent-in-Charge for the FBI in Portland.

Any questions may be directed to Brig. Gen. Art Cornelius, USAFR (Ret) at (503) 579-3082, or abcornelius@comcast.net

***Copies of the
2008-2009 Chapter Directory
are available at our chapter
meetings!***

***Or contact CDR Ben Tabler at
503-698-2974 or
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!

CHAPTER DUES FOR 2010

Yes, it is that time of year again. If you haven’t already done so, make out a \$25.00 check for your 2010 dues to *PDX-MOAA* and send it to Portland Chapter/MOAA, P.O. Box 68959, Portland, OR 97268. Or you can pay at the December Dinner Meeting. For those receiving the bulletin by mail, check the upper right corner of the mailing label. This gives the expiration date of your current membership. Still have a question? Just call the Treasurer, CDR Ben Tabler, at 503-698-2974, or send him an e-mail at betabler@comcast.net.

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

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!

November 3, 2009	Dinner Meeting w/ Guest Speaker (Location: Monarch)
<i>November 13, 2009</i>	<i>Board of Directors Meeting</i>
December 1, 2009	Dinner Meeting w/Entertainment (Location: Gray Gables Estate)
<i>January 2010</i>	<i>No Dinner Meeting Scheduled</i>
February 6, 2010	Brunch Meeting w/Guest Speaker (Location: TBD)
<i>February 12, 2010</i>	<i>Board of Directors Meeting</i>
March 2, 2010	Dinner Meeting w/Guest Speaker (Location: Monarch)
April 6, 2010	Dinner Meeting w/Guest Speaker (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 & August 2010</i>	<i>No Dinner Meetings Scheduled</i>
<i>August 6, 2010</i>	<i>Board of Directors Meeting</i>

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

NOTE 2: All Board of Directors Meetings are held at 0930 at the **Colwood Bar & Grill** at the **Colwood National Golf Course** and ***are open to all members!***

NOTE 3: All articles for the **December 2009 Brass Bulletin Newsletter** must be submitted to the editor, **Col Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret)**, at **maryjmayer@yahoo.com** by **7 November 2009**.