



**Military Officers Association  
of America (MOAA)  
*Brass Bulletin* Newsletter  
“Never Stop Serving”**

**Portland, Oregon  
Chapter  
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P.O. Box 18206  
Portland, OR 97213**

**Volume XXXVI, Number 9**

**www.MOAAPortland.org**

**June 2020**

**PRESIDENT’S FORUM**

**By Colonel Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret)**

We live in interesting times. Who would have guessed that a pandemic would sweep our nation and we citizens would be effectively “quarantined” in our homes while the economy goes into freefall and 33 million Americans find themselves out of work? This scenario seems to come right out of the pages of a science fiction thriller!

Raised by parents who endured the Great Depression gave me a much better appreciation of the “greatest generation” and their resilience in the face of adversity. But I am equally impressed by my fellow Americans today and bolstered by the constant heartwarming and brave stories of ordinary people every day doing extraordinary deeds helping their fellow men and women in all walks of life. We are in this together, and together we will overcome. Our chapter leadership is genuinely concerned about the well-being of our chapter members and their families. We reach out to all of you to let you know that we pray that you are safe and well; if there is anything you need, please let us know! Nobody should feel alone during this crisis. You can depend on your MOAA family!

Our way of life has changed dramatically in just a few short weeks, and our chapter leadership has had to adjust. For instance, the Chapter Board Meeting on 7 May 2020 was the first virtual board meeting ever held by our chapter since its chartering in 1956. And, as you can see from this *Brass Bulletin*, we will be holding our first-ever  
*(continued on page 2)*

**Reminder:**

**The Chapter Board of Directors Meeting  
will be held at 0900  
on Thursday, 6 August 2020  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom Video Teleconference**

**JUNE VIRTUAL CHAPTER MEETING:**

**Saturday, 6 June 2020**

Starting Time: 0930

Virtual Meeting: via Zoom Video Teleconference

**PROGRAM:**

**Major Kelly Fitzpatrick, USA (Ret)**, Senior Policy Advisor for Veterans and Director, Oregon Department of Veterans’ Affairs (ODVA), will speak on “**Governor Brown’s Phases for Reopening Oregon.**”

**RESERVATIONS:** To make your reservations, please contact **CDR Michael Seiwald, USN (Ret)** at **503-381-2620** or [mjseiwald@comcast.net](mailto:mjseiwald@comcast.net) **NLT 1100 on Wednesday, 3 June 2020** so he can advise the Zoom Host to allow you access to the virtual meeting. Once you have reservations, join the Zoom Meeting one of two ways (see below).

**TO JOIN THE ZOOM MEETING:** Please use one of the two following methods:

1. **For video teleconference**, click on the following link (or put the link in your computer’s browser), then add Meeting ID and Password:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89145749422?pwd=TkVGSzhyOE1GNkxvUVZzTU9GUUIRdz09>

Meeting ID: 891 4574 9422 - Password: 910465

2. **For audio only**, dial the phone number below, then add Meeting ID and Password:

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 891 4574 9422 – Password: 910465

**NOTE:** If you have any problems joining the meeting, please call our Zoom Host, **CAPT Tony Sebbio, USN (Ret)**, at **503-410-1843 (cell)**.

**PRESIDENT'S FORUM (continued)**

virtual chapter meeting, as well, on 6 June 2020 via Zoom.

**GUEST SPEAKER:**

Our guest speaker for the **Saturday, 6 June 2020** virtual chapter meeting is our own Portland Chapter member, **Major Kelly Fitzpatrick, USA (Ret)**, the Governor's Senior Policy Advisor for Veterans and the Director, Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA). Kelly will be presenting "**Governor Brown's Phases for Reopening Oregon.**"



Appointed by Governor Kate Brown and confirmed by the Oregon Senate on 26 September 2018, she became the first woman to lead the agency since its founding in 1945. She has been a veteran's case worker, legislative policy supervisor, human resources director, and congressional liaison.

From 2016-2018, Kelly worked for U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley, D-Oregon, as his constituent services representative for veterans and military affairs. In this role, she fielded calls from veterans or their families who were dealing with various problems, including housing insecurity and health issues. Her work also allowed her to create relationships with the many organizations in the state that work to support military members and veterans.

Kelly joined the Army in 1980 through the ROTC program at Boston University and worked in command and staff positions until 1996. She spent time as an assistant professor at West Point, a human resources director in South Korea, and a public affairs officer for an infantry division in Georgia. After retiring from the military, she earned a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Maryland School of Law. She then spent a couple years on Capitol Hill, before going to the Congressional Activities Office of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence within the Department of Defense. She worked there from 2004 to 2016, eventually becoming director.

**CHAPTER ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

The MOAA Portland Chapter can be extremely proud of its accomplishments this program year. We submitted the **MOAA National Five Star Levels of Excellence Award Application** for the thirteenth consecutive year—and should receive the results in July or August. We provided chapter members to serve on **Senator Jeff Merkley's Service Academy Interviews**, and the Legislative Committee in the summer **lobbied our Oregon legislators** for those issues MOAA considered critical. We provided **ROTC** scholarships of \$500 each for the AFROTC cadet and AROTC cadet who won the MOAA National Awards for Outstanding Leadership at the University of Portland. We gave a set of Gold Bars to each of **33** commissioning AFROTC and AROTC cadets at the University of Portland. We heard from a variety of diverse, interesting, and educational guest speakers at our brunch and dinner meetings. In calendar year **2019**, we welcomed **15** new members to the chapter. The Surviving Spouse and chapter members continue to support Operation Homefront and the Cell Phones for Soldiers Program. We raised **\$2,500** to donate to the **2020 Oregon Women Veterans Conference** in May 2020 as scholarships to help first time women veterans with lodging and gas costs; due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been rescheduled for May 2021. In December 2018, member donations allowed the chapter to endow a second **MOAA Portland Chapter Scholarship**. In January 2020, the chapter embarked on funding our third scholarship. Our chapter "never stops serving!"

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:**

We really need volunteers to help in the following areas:

- **Recording Secretary:** Need one or two people to take notes for the 4 Chapter Board Meetings and 9 Chapter Meetings. Taking minutes is easy as the format is already established.
- **Membership Committee:** Major Bill Tidd needs a few more volunteers to contact current members from the MOAA Portland Chapter—reaching out to them during this COVID-19 pandemic to see how they are doing.
- **Decorations Committee:** I need one or two people to step forward to handle the table decorations for each Chapter meeting. We have most of the items for these meetings already.

### 2020-2021 CHAPTER OFFICERS:

I look forward to continuing to serve as your Chapter President for the 2020-2021 program year and leading our dynamic and innovative chapter leadership team. A big thanks to the following slate of officers who will be voted into office during the June Virtual Chapter Meeting:

- **First Vice President:** LTC Gary Battles, USAR (Ret)
- **Second Vice President:** Major William J. ("Bill") Tidd, USAF (Ret)
- **Recording Secretary:** *Vacant*
- **Reservations Secretary:** CDR Michael Seiwald, USN (Ret)
- **Treasurer:** LTC Myrna Trull, USA (Ret)

Stepping down from the office of First Vice President after many years of faithful service, **CAPT Larry Roberts, USNR (Ret)** was appointed by the Chapter Board to fill the position of Immediate Past President [left vacant by the untimely death of **LTC Gary Brink USA (Ret)**] but will be known as "Senior Director." He will also continue to Co-Chair the Program and Legislative Committees and Chair the Scholarship and Fundraising Committees.

Stepping down from the office of **Recording Secretary**, I want to thank **LTC Roy Raat, USA (Ret)** for the outstanding job he did taking the minutes of the board and chapter meetings! It was a herculean effort!

### NEVER STOP SERVING!

Finally, "many hands make light work," and I would like to see more members "step forward" to help on our various committees. If you would like to volunteer, please contact me at [maryjmayer@yahoo.com](mailto:maryjmayer@yahoo.com) or **310-897-1902** (cell).

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### *TREASURER'S REPORT*

*By LTC Myrna Trull, USA (Ret)*

As of **7 May 2020**, the MOAA Portland Chapter has overall assets of **\$26,017.42** and a total of **179** members: 75 members have paid chapter dues through 2020, 25 members have paid through 2021, 16 members have paid through 2022, 6 members have paid through 2023, and 1 member has paid through 2024. There are 8 Surviving Spouses who have paid dues for 2018; 44 Surviving Spouses have not paid (but are not required). And, finally, we have four Honorary Members who are not required to pay dues.

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### *MEMBERSHIP CORNER*

*By Major William J. Tidd, USAF (Ret)*

First and foremost, I wanted to express my sincere hope that each and every one of you is staying safe and healthy during these troubling times.

The MOAA Portland Chapter has not recruited any new members since the April/May 2020 *Brass Bulletin*. Normally, at this time of year, I am pleading with each member to get out there and find some new members. With the economy and the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic, I am sure that most of you are not primarily interested in venturing forth to obtain a potential new member. So, I have decided to highlight some of the GREAT things that have occurred over the past year.

In March of this year, the MOAA President and Chief Executive Officer, **Lt. Gen. Dana Atkins, USAF (Ret)**, submitted his assessment of the organization's performance to the MOAA National Board of Directors:

- MOAA National membership increased by 3.75% at the end of 2019.
- There has been a steady increase of BASIC memberships being upgraded to PREMIUM over the past three years.
- The number of new BASIC memberships exceeded projections by more than 5,000.

As you can see, overall, the National efforts of advertising and expanded communications links have had a major impact on our recruitment initiatives, however, there are some additional factors that must be considered in the very near future if we are going to continue to succeed. Think about the impact of these trends:

- The “try-before-you-buy” or incremental buying is being felt as our newest members question why they pay up-front with a promise of value, why they have only one option, and why they can’t customize the membership.
- The overall size of the U.S. military population has declined by nearly 50% since the late 1960s.
- Chapter membership has declined over 15% in the last five years.
- Less than 12% of MOAA National members are members of chapters.
- 10% of the members of a volunteer-based chapter typically do most of the work running the chapter.
- Due to volunteer burnout and multiple obligations, fewer members are stepping into leadership positions.

If we are to remain an active and vibrant chapter, we all must maximize our chapter support efforts. Let us all find a reason to contribute instead of waiting for the other person to do it. Recognize the major factors of why you should retain your chapter membership dues instead of taking the easy way out and just leaving.

We, as officers, have a life-long obligation to serve, so I challenge all of you to be a MAJOR factor in reversing the trends. Stay safe and healthy!

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***AN OPINION PIECE:  
 MY TAKE ON LEGISLATION, REGULATION,  
 AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS  
 By CAPT Larry Roberts, USNR (Ret)***

**A Ray of Good News from the Pandemic: Real ID is Postponed:** There has to be some positives to emanate from the current COVID-19 pandemic. Here is one. The Federal Government has delayed the implementation of Real ID a full year until October 1, 2021.

You may recall that Real ID requires that passengers on domestic flights, and those seeking to enter secure government and military locations, will be required to hold a driver’s license in the federally approved format of Real ID. To acquire such a new license, regardless of whether or not your current license is expired, one must present oneself at the DMV with a pile of paperwork attesting to your provenance, your home location, and so forth. While the state of Oregon has been unable to issue such licenses, stories from around the country attest to the difficulty of bringing acceptable paperwork to the DMV to support your license issuance. That normally means extra trips to the DMV, and you know how efficiently the DMV operates.

Oregon is one of only two states that has not been able to commence issuing such licenses, which may indicate how well we are prepared. The DMV previously had planned to start issuance in July 2020, which allowed just 3 months to issue millions of licenses. I have seen nothing to indicate that the July date has been changed, but note that the DMV offices have been almost completely closed, which means that the extra employees needed to accomplish this Herculean task have yet to be trained, possibly even hired.

Fortunately, many of our MOAA members and families have at least two workarounds. First, one can utilize a passport in lieu of a Real ID license for access to domestic flights. So, if you do not have a passport, or, if yours is expiring shortly after October 2021, either apply for a passport now or get it renewed now. As the

Real ID date approaches, a rush of people is expected to apply for a passport. Get to the head of the line.

A second alternative is a military ID, which many of us have. Since retired military ID cards no longer expire, it is a valuable card to own. We will keep you updated on this issue.

**Oregon Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) in Trouble, Thanks Legislators:** The Oregon PERS spent the past two decades recovering from the market dot com meltdown from 2000-2003, and the Great Recession of 2008 and 2009. By the end of 2019, PERS had a deficit of around \$25 billion.

The System also has a new mandate passed by the Oregon legislature in 2019, a law that allows the system to DEFER beginning to reduce that deficit by a full TEN YEARS. That decision was a wonderful gift to the cities, counties, school systems, and every organization that participated in PERS. It allowed the contributors to PERS to enjoy lower contribution rates than would otherwise have been the case.

That legislation was misguided and shows that politicians/legislators are clearly neither viable financial advisors, nor effective crystal ball readers. A financial advisor who was Chair of the PERS Board until 2019 noted that the legislative decision to delay repayment “was significantly misguided.” He called the move “hocus pocus” accounting.

After all, we had just enjoyed a 10-year bull market, the longest on record. The Legislature was hallucinating if it believed that a historically long bull market would extend 10 years into the future.

So, what happened once the Legislature weakened the strategic position of the PERS Trust Fund? Well, the Covid-19

pandemic sucked the wind out of the economy and the Equity Market.

By mid-March, broad equity investment indexes had declined by 25%. Within the PERS Portfolio, almost 40% of assets are in Private Equity positions, where valuations are not established on a daily basis. However, you can be sure they also suffered substantial losses. We will not know specifics until late in the summer. As the state Chief Investment Officer, John Skjervem, noted regarding the early 2020 loss incurred: It’s big!”

As of March 19th, the fund’s publicly traded stocks had declined 24.5% year to date, erasing some \$6.7 BILLION in value. You can add in another roughly \$5 BILLION in private equity investments, and the total is in the range of \$11 - \$13 billion (my guess).

Since the March lows, the equity market has rebounded smartly, but the uncertainty surrounding the potential of a resurgence of the virus related to reopening the economy means there easily could be another leg down. For now, we are dealing with huge uncertainty which is unlikely to be fully resolved in the near future.

Both reassuring and unsettling is the fact that PERS contribution rate adjustments will next occur in over a year from now, in July 2021. Rates will be determined based on end-of-year 2019 data, which was quite positive. Thus, rates will be determined on the basis of out-of-date data and may not closely track the “real” data--taking into consideration the 2020 data. Still we know that the Trust Fund has been, at least temporarily, impaired. The State should be addressing that impairment.

The day of reckoning then becomes the July 2023 rate adjustment, which will be based on December 31, 2021 data. Unless the market stages a robust and sustained rebound, a significant increase in contribution rates could be expected. 2023 may look distant but is coming at us quickly. The message is to look out for new, higher taxes to repair any damage incurred during this year, and even later. Remember, the dot.com stock retreat lasted an excruciating three years. It was debilitating to portfolios everywhere.

So, stand by for heavy seas! And, remember that those pulling the legislative levers are also beneficiaries of the PERS system. It is clear to me that there is a huge special interest group that just does not care that the system is basically broken and should be revamped. They want their pensions, and are they willing to hang the taxpayers out to dry?

The corporate world over the past several decades has replaced the pension plan model with the defined contribution model utilizing 401K plans and their many derivatives. Such a move should be seriously considered in Oregon!

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### ***SURVIVING SPOUSE CORNER***

***By Mrs. Jean Hillman, Liaison to the Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee***

This MOAA Portland Chapter Surviving Spouse article for our *Brass Bulletin* is different than any I have ever written before. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the “stay at home” orders, we had to cancel both our April and June 2020 Surviving Spouse Luncheons.

During this difficult time, please take good care of yourselves and stay current on the information provided by a myriad of sources regarding the Coronavirus. I will continue to send out information from MOAA as they update us on current issues.

Watch for the September issue of the *Brass Bulletin* which will come out in August 2020 as there will be information regarding our October 2020 Surviving Spouse Luncheon.

I know the coming months will be different and challenging for us, but please try to enjoy our beautiful Oregon summer.

Please continue to collect diapers and wipes for **Operation Homefront** and used cell phones for the **“Cell Phones for Soldiers Program.”** Bring them with you to the October 2020 Surviving Spouse Luncheon.

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### ***WHAT EVERYONE IN THE US CAN LEARN FROM THE USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT*** ***By CAPT Tony Sebbio, MSC, USN (Ret)***

The US Navy and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention launched an investigation into the coronavirus outbreak aboard the *USS Theodore Roosevelt* aircraft carrier that left one sailor dead and saw nearly 700 other crew members test positive for the virus.

"This is a stealthy virus in many ways, and this outbreak investigation is an important medical weapon to understand its behavior so that we can better protect the crew, their shipmates on other vessels, and ultimately the nation," Rear Adm. Bruce Gillingham, the US Navy Surgeon General, said on April 17th .

In addition to testing all 4,800 crew members, volunteers were asked to complete a survey and provide two new specimens -- blood and nasal swabs -- for laboratory testing, according to the Navy. It hopes to get 1,000 volunteers which is what it believes is needed for representative sampling. One of the reasons for the questionnaire is to try to connect the dots. When you combine that questionnaire with the serology and the nasal swabs, medical teams get a picture of how the disease was transmitted throughout the crew, or at least a pattern.



While the military would routinely conduct a medical investigation of any outbreak of infectious disease, understanding the rapid spread on the *Roosevelt* is a top priority for senior military officials. The carrier may prove to be a unique laboratory for understanding how

the virus transmits and how to control its spread. "We have had significant numbers on the *Roosevelt* who originally tested negative and later tested positive, so there is a timing factor there," said General John Hyten, USAF, the vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Military medical investigators are also examining numerous cases where sailors who at first were asymptomatic later exhibited symptoms. Officials calculate that approximately 10% of the positive cases on the carrier originally tested negative, and 60% of those who tested positive had no symptoms at all. "It appears that pre-symptomatic transmission was a factor of transmission aboard the ship. That is truly one of the secret weapons of this virus. Individuals can transmit before they know they have it," said the Navy Surgeon General.

The *USS Theodore Roosevelt* had a 14% infection rate. As of April 22, only about 1% of the US population had been tested, with nearly 860,000 positive cases and 48,000 deaths. We need to provide more aggressive testing throughout the US so that Americans can understand where the virus is and is not. We need to track active cases and contacts and isolate those infected. Only then can we adjust our lives accordingly.

(Sources: *CNN* and *Newsweek*)

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## **PORTLAND CHAPTER OFFICERS**

### **President**

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

### **First Vice President**

CAPT Lawrence Roberts, USNR (Ret): 503-722-1897

### **Second Vice President**

Major William J. Tidd, USAF (Ret): 1-443-996-1011

### **Recording Secretary**

LTC Roy Raat, USA (Ret): 503-723-5175

### **Reservations Secretary**

CDR Michael Seiwald, USN (Ret): 503-381-2620

### **Treasurer**

LTC Myrna Trull, USA (Ret): 971-226-7103

**Immediate Past President:** *Vacant*

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## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **Army Reps**

MG Curtis A. Loop: 503-579-6297  
LTC Gary Battles: 503-739-3334

### **Navy Reps**

CAPT Tony Sebbio: 503-936-5896  
CDR Dave Bredemann: 503-974-9335

### **Air Force Reps**

Colonel Eric Leshinsky: 503-744-1292  
Captain Doug MacEllven: 503-397-5253

### **Marine Corps Rep**

LtCol Herb Richardson: 503-691-6711

### **Coast Guard Rep**

CDR Doug Sheehan: 503-297-8474

### **USPHS**

CDR (Dr.) Robert Steelman: 503-333-4565

### **Women in Service Rep**

CAPT Sharon Sebbio, USN (Ret): 503-936-5896

### **Liaison, Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee**

Mrs. Jean Hillman: 503-692-5571

### **Director-at-Large (in lieu of NOAA)**

MajGen Christopher Owens, USMC (Ret): 503-951-1805

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**Note:** More contact info on Chapter Officers, Board Members, and Committee Chairs may be found on the chapter website, [www.moaportland.org](http://www.moaportland.org)

**RETURN ADDRESS:**

**PORTLAND CHAPTER  
MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION  
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P.O. BOX 18206  
PORTLAND, OR 97213**

**FIRST  
CLASS  
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**MOAA PORTLAND CHAPTER UPCOMING EVENTS  
Mark your calendars!**

*July and August 2020*    *No scheduled chapter brunch or dinner meetings*

*August 6, 2020*            *Virtual Board of Directors Meeting (via Zoom Video Teleconference)*

*September 1, 2020*        *Virtual Meeting with Guest Speaker (via Zoom Video Teleconference)*

*October 3, 2020*            *Brunch Meeting with Guest Speaker (Location: Hayden's Lakefront Grill)*

*November 7, 2020*        *Brunch Meeting with Guest Speaker (Location: Hayden's Lakefront Grill)*

*November 5, 2020*        *Board of Directors Meeting (Location: Colwood Golf Course)*

*December 1, 2020*        *Christmas/Holiday Dinner Meeting with Entertainment (Location: The Monarch Hotel)*

*January 2021*                *No scheduled chapter brunch or dinner meeting*

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**NOTE 1:** All monthly chapter meetings are held at the locations indicated or held virtually via Zoom Video Teleconference.  
**NOTE 2:** All Board of Directors Meetings are held at **0930**—and ***are open to all members!*** Location or Virtual is indicated.  
**NOTE 3:** All articles for the ***September 2020 Brass Bulletin Newsletter*** must be submitted to the editor, **Col Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret)**, at **[maryjmayer@yahoo.com](mailto:maryjmayer@yahoo.com)** by **7 August 2020**.