



**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 XXXV, Numbers 8 & 9 www.MOAAPortland.org May and June 2019

MAY CHAPTER **DINNER MEETING:**

Saturday, 4 May 2019

Social: 1700, Dinner: 1830

The Monarch Hotel

12566 SE 93rd Avenue

Clackamas, OR 97015-9760

Phone: (503) 652-1515

PROGRAM:

Lt Gen Dana T. Atkins, USAF (Ret), President and CEO of MOAA, will give us an **“Update on MOAA National Initiatives.”**

MENU:

Northwest Salad

Beef Bourguignon

Potatoes Au Gratin

Sautéed Green Beans

Rolls and Butter

Strawberry Shortcake

Coffee, Tea, Decaf, or Iced Tea

COST: \$26.00 per person (includes 21% gratuity)

Please make checks payable to PDX-MOAA.

RESERVATIONS: Contact **CDR Michel Seiwald, USN (Ret) NLT 1100 on Wednesday, 1 May 2019**. See Michael’s contact information and more info at the **bottom of the second column on this page**.

Reminder:

**The Chapter Board of Directors Meeting
will be held at 0945
on Thursday, 2 May 2019
at the Colwood Golf Center
(Full Breakfast Starts at 0900)**

JUNE CHAPTER DINNER MEETING:

Tuesday, 4 June 2019

Social: 1700, Dinner: 1830

The Monarch Hotel

12566 SE 93rd Avenue

Clackamas, OR 97015-9760

Phone: (503) 652-1515

PROGRAM:

CAPT Almond Smith III, USN, Commander, Navy Technology Acquisition Group Portland, will speak on **“Satisfying Rising Personnel Requirements for the Modern Navy.”**

MENU:

Caesar Salad

Chicken Champignon

Rice Pilaf

Seasonal Vegetables

Rolls and Butter

Assorted Pies

Coffee, Tea, Decaf, or Iced Tea

COST: \$26.00 per person (includes 21% gratuity)

Please make checks payable to PDX-MOAA.

RESERVATIONS: To make your reservations, please contact **CDR Michael Seiwald, USN (Ret)** at **503-381-2620** or **mjseiwald@comcast.net** or online at our chapter website **NLT 1100 on Wednesday, 29 May 2019**. **No late reservations**, and **please call** if you must cancel as we have to pay for no-shows. (*Note: Please indicate if you have any dietary restrictions or if you need transportation to the meeting!*)

DURING MAY AND JUNE MEETINGS: Raffle tickets are available for bottles of fine wine to benefit the chapter charity to be selected at the 2 May 2019 Chapter Board of Directors Meeting. And, please bring in your old cell phones and packages of diapers and baby wipes!

PRESIDENT'S FORUM

By Colonel Mary J. Mayer, USAF
(Ret)

The **Program Committee** has provided two extremely interesting guest speakers for the May and June chapter meetings.

In May, **Lt Gen Dana T. Atkins, USAF (Ret)**, the President and CEO of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), will speak to us on "**MOAA National Initiatives.**" (See picture below.)



Lt. Gen. Atkins is a native of Portland, Oregon. He earned his bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Portland and holds two master's degrees, one in aeronautical science from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and another in national security strategy from the National War College.

A command pilot with more than 4,000 hours in fighter aircraft, Atkins has served in a number of key command and staff positions, including commander, 20th Fighter Wing, Shaw AFB, S.C.; commander, 35th Fighter Wing, Misawa, Japan; vice commander, 7th Air Force and U.S. Air Force Korea; director of operations, U.S. Pacific Command; and special assistant to the supreme allied commander Europe during the air war over Serbia. During his career, he flew as a demonstration pilot for both the

European A-10 Demonstration Team and the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds.

At the time of his retirement from the Air Force, Atkins served as commander, Alaskan Command, U.S. Pacific Command; commander, 11th Air Force, Pacific Air Forces; and commander, Alaskan North American Defense Region, Elmendorf AFB, Alaska.

He and his wife, **Laura**, were the 2004 recipients of the General and Mrs. Jerome F. O'Malley Award, which recognizes the wing commander and spouse whose contributions to the nation, the Air Force, and the local community best exemplify the highest ideals and positive leadership of a military couple.

Before becoming the ninth president of MOAA, Atkins served as president of Chronicle Media, a print and digital media company based in Augusta, Ga., that serves the southeastern U.S.

In June, **CAPT Almond Smith, III, USN**, Commander Navy Technology Acquisition Group Portland, will speak on "**Satisfying Rising Personnel Requirements for the Modern Navy.**" (See picture below.)



Commander Smith entered the Navy in July 1987. He completed recruit training in Orlando, Florida, yeoman "A" School in Meridian, Mississippi, basic enlisted submarine school in New London, Connecticut, and later officer indoctrination in Pensacola, Florida. Commander Smith's enlisted tours were onboard USS *Spadefish* (SSN 668) supporting Desert Storm/Desert Shield, a shore duty tour at Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Georgia, a leading yeoman tour onboard

USS *Pasadena* (SSN 752), and was hand-picked to serve on the staff of Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program in Arlington, Virginia. While at Naval Reactors, he was advanced to chief yeoman (submarines), and selected for commission as a limited duty officer (admin).

Following commission, he served as educational services officer, personnel officer, ship's secretary and BULL onboard USS *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70). While assigned, he participated in the first strikes against Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom following the cowardly terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In August 2002, he reported as officer in charge, Personnel Support Activity Detachment, Kings Bay, Georgia. During this tour, the detachment was twice awarded the transient monitoring unit's certified pipeline mover award; a distinctive honor within the Pay/Personnel Administrative Support System (PASS), marking the first time the detachment had been recognized by TMU in over five years. Additionally, PSD Kings Bay was twice awarded the Secretary of the Navy letter of commendation. From July to September 2005, he additionally served as officer in charge, PSD Jacksonville. In October 2005, he reported to Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet as staff executive officer and flag secretary. He served in this position until October 2008, when he volunteered for a tour in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In December 2008, he reported as the deputy J1, to Combined Joint Special Operations Air Component in LSA Anaconda, Balad, Iraq (a.k.a. "Mortaritaville"). In August 2009, he reported to Commander, Navy Personnel Command where he served for a year as division director, administrative selection boards (PERS-84) and then as branch head, shore special programs detailers (PERS-4010). In March 2012, he reported

as administrative officer, USS *Nimitz* (CVN 68) homeported in Everett Washington participating in RIMPAC 2012 and again deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He was the *Nimitz* 2012 nominee for the VADM James Stockdale visionary leadership award. In July 2013, he reported as OIC, PSD San Antonio where he served until July 2015. In August 2015, he reported as section head, base support, and deputy senior navy liaison officer on the staff of the Supreme Allied Commander Transformation in Norfolk, Virginia and ended his assignment at SACT, NATO in November 2017. During this tour, he received the NATO Certificate of Commendation for Meritorious Service.

In December 2015, he was selected for Commander Command (Ashore). He is a two-time (1997, 2006) recipient of the Honolulu Council Navy League of the United States Award for Outstanding Military Service. Authorized to wear the Surface Warfare Officer Breast Insignia and the Enlisted Submarine Warfare Breast Insignia. His personal awards include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal (Two Awards), Meritorious Service Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (Seven Awards), Joint Service Achievement Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (Five Awards), as well as numerous expeditionary and service awards. Commander Smith earned a Bachelor of Science Degree (Cum Laude) in Education (Technical, Trade, and Industrial (Post-Secondary Option)) from Valdosta State University and an Associate of Arts Degree.

Finally, since this is the last newsletter of the 2018-2019 program year, **I want to thank all of you for your continued support** to make the Portland Chapter one of the best in MOAA!

We have a great team of officers, board members, and committee chairs—and I would like to see more chapter members “step up to the plate” and get involved in the chapter activities!

Here's wishing you a thoughtful Memorial Day and a fun, happy, and safe summer!

See you at our September meeting! Remember: “Never Stop Serving.” *Mary*

TREASURER'S REPORT**By LTC Myrna Trull, USA (Ret)**

As of 3 April 2019, the **MOAA Portland Chapter** has a total of **185 members**: 20 members have paid chapter dues through 2018, 77 members have paid through 2019, 10 members have paid through 2020, 4 members have paid through 2021, 6 members have paid through 2022, 11 members have paid through 2023, and 1 member has paid through 2024. There are 4 Surviving Spouses who have paid dues for 2018; 16 have paid for 2019, and 1 paid for 2020. 29 Surviving Spouses have not paid (but are not required). Our three Voices for America's Troops have paid their dues for 2019. Finally, we have three Honorary Members who are not required to pay dues.

If you are one of the chapter members who has not paid your 2019 dues, please pay your dues as soon as possible. At its 2 May 2019 meeting, the Board will vote to drop all those members who have not paid their 2019 dues from the membership roster.

Please send your **\$30** check (plus a **\$5** late fee), made out to "Portland Chapter - MOAA" (memo line should read "2019 Dues") and mail it to: Portland Chapter – MOAA, P.O. Box 18206, Portland, OR 97213.

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

The MOAA Portland Chapter is pleased to welcome the following new members:

1LT Sophie McDevitt, USAR

Mrs. Nancy Menagh,
Surviving Spouse

I got up bright and early this morning in hopes that I would be inspired with some new words for the Membership Corner. I fixed myself a cup of coffee, put on my coat and went out to the porch, and sat down. The lake was just losing its morning haze and was as flat as a mirror. The male mallards were attacking the female mallards with increased vigor. Then the idea dawned on me – it was the beginning of spring, time for new beginnings.

Spring is one of the most beautiful times of year. The landscape is shaking off the effects of winter, turning from a brownish, grey pallor to a brighter shade of green. Trees are showing the first signs of budding, and the daffodils are everywhere. By now you may be asking what all of this has to do with membership. It means that each and every one of us needs to get revitalized and make a conscientious effort to obtain at least one new member for the chapter. Just look at how much MOAA has been able to accomplish over the past year with the support of over 350,000 members.

- MOAA successfully lobbied for the full pay raise of 2.6 percent for the active duty force.
- MOAA made significant progress in getting the Widow's Tax eliminated.
- MOAA defeated the 1 percent COLA reduction for retirees
- MOAA defeated proposals to establish TRICARE for Life premiums.

I could go on, but I am sure by now you get my drift. Basic, Premium, and Life Members are the life-blood that gives MOAA its hammer at the Capital. It is imperative that we keep the numbers strong so that MOAA National can continue to advocate for all military members and their families.

Therefore, go brush your teeth, comb your hair, and put on your best smile. It's time to venture out and find some new members for our chapter. You can only fail if you don't try.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact me at wtidd96218@aol.com or **443-996-1011** (cell).

SURVIVING SPOUSE CORNER

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

Our next **Surviving Spouse Luncheon** will be held at **12:00 noon** on **Tuesday, April 16, 2019** at **Albertina Kerr's Restaurant**, 424 NE 22nd Avenue, Portland, OR 97232. Our guest speaker will be **Ms. Sara Rizzo**, the Area Manager for Operation Homefront.

Sara is going to tell us about Operation Homefront's "Star-Spangled Babies Shower" for new and expectant military parents and will ask us to donate as much as we can of the following baby items: diaper packs (sizes 1-3), wipes, baby lotion, baby wash, diaper cream, baby hygiene products, burp cloths, bottles/pacifiers, teething, and white onesies (3 months and up). Only new items can be accepted.

If you can bring some of the items listed above to the luncheon, it would be much appreciated. You can also contact **Sara** directly at **425-412-4317** or **Sara.rizzo@operationhomefront.org**

To make reservations for the luncheon, please call or e-mail **Mrs. Carol Patrick** at **503-654-1511** or **jymbo@earthlink.net** **NOTE:** If you have food restrictions, please call Albertina's at **503-231-0216** two days before the luncheon to arrange for an alternate meal.

AN OPINION PIECE: MY TAKE ON POLITICS, LEGISLATION, AND REGULATION ISSUES

By CAPT Larry Roberts, USNR (Ret)

The Continued Erosion of Your TRICARE Benefit: As I point out periodically, the Office of the Secretary of Defense is not your friend. This is most recently evident in the Administration's

Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Proposal. It continues a succession of years when this and the previous Administration proposed (and in some cases passed by Congress) a series of fee hikes for TRICARE and TRICARE for Life beneficiaries that substantially raised costs borne by the beneficiary. What was an excellent benefit earned through decades of service has been morphing into an adequate but increasingly-expensive benefit.

The most recent Administration proposal is to reduce the number of uniformed medical personnel by an amazing 22%, or 17,991 individuals, beginning in October of this year. DOD says that such reductions will be primarily through attrition, but, if compensation is axed from the coming fiscal year budget, the drawdown is likely to be fairly abrupt. MOAA reports that the Budget Proposal includes adequate funding for expanding electronic health records and for research activities. But records and research do not treat patients.

The supposed good news is that the budget does not call for increased fees. But Congress, especially the House under new leadership, may have different ideas.

Allegedly, the reduction in uniformed medical personnel will be at least partially offset by hiring civilians and depending more upon TRICARE. Sounds suspiciously expensive and unreliable to me. You are not going to see civilians in the sick bays of an aircraft carrier or embedded with the infantry on the ground.

MOAA expects that implementation of the proposed force reductions will have an adverse impact on a large percentage of beneficiaries, especially where individuals are reliant on Military Treatment Facilities.

Good thing we have MOAA looking out for us. Stay tuned for developments as Congress gets rolling on the new budget. Our Chapter Legislative team will be discussing this topic with our Senators and Representatives this Spring.

Some Potentially Good News on the Legislative Front - Retirement Taxation: There actually may be some helpful legislation moving through Congress this year. A bipartisan group within the House Ways and Means Committee this week announced planned legislation that will make it easier for employers to sponsor 401(k) plans and make other changes that

benefit owners of Individual Retirement Accounts and 401(k) Accounts.

Chief among the proposals are to:

- Repeal the current age cap on making contributions to an IRA, currently at age 70 1/2. Given the desire of many individuals to work into their 70s, this would be a significant advantage to a portion of the work force that works even part-time into their 70s.
- Of even greater impact to a wide range of older citizens, increase the age at which individuals must start taking the dreaded Required Minimum Distribution, or RMD. Currently, one must commence taking assets out of tax-deferred retirement accounts in the year in which they turn 70 1/2 at a rate of 3.8% of assets. The proposed legislation delays the onset of RMD distributions to age 72, recognizing increasing longevity.

The pernicious aspect of RMD distributions is that the required distribution percentage of assets rises to 5.3% at age 80, 6.8% at age 85, and a ridiculous 8.8% at age 90. Even in a successful investment portfolio in your IRA and/or 401(k), it is extremely difficult to increase your assets by 6.8% in the longer term. That means under current law you will be likely to reduce your retirement assets after probably age 85, leaving a smaller asset base for your heir or heirs. Note that currently one individual in a couple has a 25% probability of living to age 90 or longer.

It would be helpful, but unlikely, that Congress would also mandate using updated IRS life expectancy tables. I have not seen such a change in the last 25 years, and, clearly, we are living longer than we were 25 years ago.

The proposed legislation was also on the table in 2018, but it was unable to make it through the gauntlet of legislative

priorities, such as the Tax Reform Bill. Because the measure has support from key legislators, at least one outside observer believes that it is “fairly likely” to pass this year.

I completely missed this issue last year but will attempt to track it this year. I suggest that we as individuals communicate with our Representatives and Senators. I will get a Bill number from each branch of Congress and get it to all.

The House Ways and Means Committee is slated to vote to approve the measure in early April, and then pass it to full House.

It is nice to be able to report on a positive legislative proposal, especially one that is currently bipartisan.

If you have questions or comments, feel free to contact: **Larry Roberts** at **503-722-1897**.

SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE REPORT

By Captain Doug MacEllven, USAF (Former)

- **ROTC Connections** – As reported in the last issue of the *Brass Bulletin*, Annual Dinings-Out for the University of Portland ROTC Detachments will be held in the coming weeks: *Air Force* – 16 April with our Chapter President, **Colonel Mary Mayer, USAF (Ret)**, presenting our MOAA Award, scholarship check, and Gold Bars; *Army* – 3 May with our committee members, **Captain Doug MacEllven, USAF (Former)** and **Captain Doug Brown, USCGR (Ret)**, presenting our MOAA Award, scholarship check, and Gold Bars.
- **Junior ROTC (JROTC) Connections**
 - **Oregon City High School:** Detachment Commander and Chapter member, **Major Doug Thomas, USA (Ret)**, invited MOAA to the Army JROTC Awards Ceremony to be held on 23 April 2019. **Doug MacEllven** will present our MOAA Leadership Award (medal & certificate) to **Cadet Matthias Armstrong**.
 - **Reynolds High School** Detachment Commander and Chapter member, **CWO4 Rick Fernandez, USA (Ret)**, invited MOAA to the Army JROTC Awards Ceremony on 30 May 2019. **Doug MacEllven** will present our

MOAA Leadership Award (medal & certificate) to **Cadet Kali Curtis**.

- **Veterans Law Handout Sheets** that were discussed at the 2 April Chapter meeting:
 - “*Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) – 38 CFR Diagnostic Code 8045*”.
 - There was discussion about the five steps in determining a VA TBI disability %. The talk stressed the importance of obtaining the Diagnostic Codes for your VA disabilities.
 - *38 CFR section 4.25 – Table 1 “Combined Ratings Table”*
 - There was discussion of how VA disability percentage ratings differ from VA compensation percentage rates. An example was given citing the calculation of five 50% disabilities yielding a 90% VA compensation rate.
 - Diagnostic Codes and the *Combined Ratings Table* were related back to last month’s discussion of 70% additional benefits and I/U paid at 100%

First Vice President

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

Second Vice President

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

Correspondence Secretary

LTC George M. Peters, USA (Ret): 503-659-0834

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

PORTLAND CHAPTER COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Program: CAPT Lawrence W. Roberts, USNR (Ret)

CAPT Tony Sebbio, USN (Ret)

Membership: Major William J. Tidd, USAF (Ret)

Legislative: CAPT Lawrence W. Roberts, USNR (Ret)

LTC Gary D. Battles, USAR (Ret)

Personal Affairs: Col Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret)

Communications: LTC William Kroger, USAR (Ret)

Surviving Spouse: Mrs. Genevieve (Jean) Hillman

Mrs. Carol Patrick

Decorations: Mrs. Betty Richard

Fundraising: CAPT Lawrence W. Roberts, USNR

(Ret)

Special Events: Capt Doug MacEllven, USAF (Frm)

ESGR Outreach: COL Herbert L. Hirst, USA (Ret)

COL Robert L. Windus, USA (Ret)

Chaplains: LTC Grant McAllister, USA (Ret)

Lt Col James Warnock, USAF (Ret)

PORTLAND CHAPTER OFFICERS

President

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

Note: More contact info on Chapter Officers, Board Members, and Committee Chairs may be found on the chapter website, www.moaaportland.org

RETURN ADDRESS:

**PORTLAND CHAPTER
MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION
OF AMERICA (MOAA)
P.O. BOX 18206
PORTLAND, OR 97213**

**FIRST
CLASS
POSTAGE
REQUIRED**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

MOAA PORTLAND CHAPTER UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark your calendars!

<i>May 2, 2019</i>	<i>Board of Directors Meeting (Location: Colwood Golf Course)</i>
May 3-4, 2019	MOAA Pacific Northwest Council and Chapter Leader Workshop (Location: Portland, OR)
May 4, 2019	Dinner Meeting with Guest Speaker (Location: The Monarch Hotel)
June 4, 2019	Dinner Meeting with Guest Speaker (Location: The Monarch Hotel)
<i>July-August 2019</i>	<i>No chapter meetings scheduled</i>
<i>August 1, 2019</i>	<i>Board of Directors Meeting (Location: Colwood Golf Course)</i>
September 3, 2019	Dinner Meeting with Guest Speaker (Location: The Monarch Hotel)
October 5, 2019	Brunch Meeting with Guest Speaker (Location: Hayden's Lakefront Grill)

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

NOTE 2: All Board of Directors Meetings are held at 0945—and ***are open to all members!*** Location is indicated.

NOTE 3: All articles for the **September 2019 Brass Bulletin Newsletter** must be submitted to the editor, Col Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret), at maryjmayer@yahoo.com by 4 August 2019.