



**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

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www.MOAAPortland.org

May 2022

PRESIDENT’S FORUM

By Colonel Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret)

It was wonderful to see so many members and guests turn out for the 5 April 2022 chapter dinner meeting, the first in-person meeting we have held in two years. By all accounts, everyone had an excellent time re-connecting after such a long time. I encourage all of you to bring some potential new members to the Saturday, 7 May 2022 chapter brunch meeting at our new venue, The Aerie at Eagle Landing. It is a beautiful property, with good food and experienced staff.

Once again, we are going to ask everyone attending the May 2022 chapter meeting to bring with them their “COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card” to show proof of vaccination. And we will follow all the pandemic protocols in effect on that day.

I want to thank **LCDR Christopher Gale, USCG (Ret)** for stepping up to take over the Special Events Committee Chairmanship – arranging events with the Air Force and Army ROTC Detachments at the University of Portland and the AROTC Detachments at Oregon City High School and Reynolds High School. Kudos also goes to **Mrs. Nancy Menagh** who has volunteered to help Decorations Committee Chair, **CAPT Sharon Sebbio, USN (Ret)**, with providing seasonal decorations on the tables at our chapter meetings. I am also looking to fill the second Air Force Representative and Director-at-large positions on the Chapter Board of Directors.

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**Reminder:
The Chapter Board of Directors Meeting
will be held at 0900
on Thursday, 5 May 2022
via Zoom Video Teleconference**

MAY CHAPTER DINNER MEETING:

Saturday, 7 May 2022

Social: 0900, Brunch: 1000
The Aerie at Eagle Landing
10220 SE Causey Avenue
Happy Valley, Oregon 97086
Phone: 503-698-8020

PROGRAM:

LtCol Ara E. Barton, USMC (Ret), Manager of the Blackjack/Integrator Product Line at Insitu, Inc. (a Boeing Subsidiary), will speak on “**What is New in Drone Technology?**”

MENU:

Scrambled Eggs with Tillamook Cheddar Cheese
Bacon and Sausage
Potatoes O’Brien
Seasonal Sliced Fruit
Assorted Breakfast Pastries
Orange Juice, Coffee, Decaf, and Hot Tea

COST: \$27.00 per person (includes 23% 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, 4 May 2022. No late reservations, and please call if you must cancel as we must pay for no-shows. (Note: Please indicate if you have any dietary restrictions.)**

DURING THE MAY MEETING: Raffle tickets are available for several bottles of fine wine to benefit the chapter charity to be selected at the May 2022 Chapter Board of Directors Meeting. Please bring in packages of diapers, baby wipes, and other baby items for **Operation Diaper Bag** and **Operation Homefront**—and old cell phones for the **Cell Phones for Soldiers Program**.

PRESIDENT'S FORUM (cont.)

The **Program Committee** has provided an extremely interesting and dynamic guest speaker for the May 2022 chapter meeting. He is an experienced warfighter and industry executive, **Lieutenant Colonel Ara E. Barton, USMC (Ret)**. (See photo below.)



A native of Walker, Minnesota, LtCol Barton enlisted in the United States Navy in 1987 and trained as a Machinist Mate at Nuclear Power School in Orlando, Florida. After a short time in the Nuclear Navy, he was accepted to the United States Naval Academy in July 1989. While at the Academy, he majored in Aerospace Engineering.

Following graduation, he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the Marine Corps and attended The Basic School in Quantico, VA, followed by flight school in Pensacola Florida. In June 1994 he completed Naval Flight Officer flight training and was then assigned to VMFA(AW)-225 "Vikings" at MCAS Miramar, California.

In August 2000, Captain Barton reported to China Lake, California, for duty as an Operational Test Director with Air Test and Evaluation Squadron Nine (VX-9). While assigned to VX-9, Major

Barton completed Command and Staff School and completed a Master of Science Degree in Systems Engineering from Southern Methodist University.

In July 2004, Major Barton reported to Marine Aircraft Group 11 at MCAS Miramar, California and was assigned as the Group Training Officer. He deployed with 3d Marine Aircraft Wing to Al Asad, Iraq in November 2004 and augmented VMFA(AW)-242 flying combat missions in support of OIF II. Upon his return from Iraq in March 2005, Major Barton was assigned to VMFA(AW)-225 as a department head. During the next three years Major Barton served as the Operations Officer, Maintenance Officer, Administration Officer, and Logistics Officer for the "Vikings" through two deployments, first to the Western Pacific and then to Al Asad, Iraq.

He returned from his final deployment in March of 2008 and reported to 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, Okinawa, Japan, in June 2008. While at 1st MAW, he was assigned as the lead operational planner. During the next two years, Lieutenant Colonel Barton wrote operational plans for 1st Marine Aircraft Wing missions in the Western Pacific and Korean Theater. He additionally served as the Exercise Officer for operations in the Republic of Korea. In June 2010, Lieutenant Colonel Barton was reassigned to Marine Air Control Group 18 as the Executive Officer, and upon return to the MCAS Miramar, was assigned as the Marine Aircraft Group 11 Executive Officer, a unit with 125 F/A-18's, 15 KC-130J's, and approximately 5000 Marines. He retired from the Marine Corps in December 2012.

Following retirement, he embarked on a career in unmanned aircraft engineering and design and was hired by Insitu, Inc (a Boeing Subsidiary), in Bingen, Washington. Insitu is a leading manufacturer of military unmanned aircraft systems including the RQ-21 Blackjack and the MQ-27 ScanEagle.

During his first years at Insitu, Ara led the Reliability Engineering group, and the Airworthiness Certification Group as Insitu was in the lead with the Federal Aviation Administration efforts to open US national airspace to safe unmanned aircraft operations.

In 2018, as Chief Engineer, Ara led the technical efforts for development and production of Insitu aircraft systems, then moved into the Defense Chief Engineer

role, spearheading customer technical engagements, and ensuring Insitu systems met the needs of our DoD and foreign partners. In 2022, Ara took over management of the Blackjack/Integrator product line, responsible for all product lifecycle efforts for that platform.

Lieutenant Colonel Barton's personal decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal with numeral 8, Navy Marine Corps Commendation Medal with 4 Gold Stars in Lieu of fifth award, Navy Marine Corps Achievement Medal with 3 Gold Stars in Lieu of fourth award.

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

By Major William J. Tidd, USAF (Ret)

Well, for the first time in almost two years, we may finally have a new member – **Major Adam Lulay**. He seemed to enjoy our April dinner meeting and showed a lot of enthusiasm about joining our chapter. I sent him a membership package, so now it is up to him.

After seeing all the happy faces at the dinner meeting, I am convinced that we have turned the corner on the potential of our members meeting new prospective members. Obviously, we are getting out of our homes more frequently, attending more functions, and, therefore, are having more opportunities to recruit new members. At the dinner meeting, the Sebbios brought three guests – Tom and Mary Accettura and Dennis Condon. I would like to challenge the membership to bring at least one guest to our May meeting at our new venue, The Aerie at Eagle Landing.

To finish my thoughts for the day, I thought I would leave you with this little piece of advice.

*When you're up against a trouble, meet it
squarely, face to face;
Lift your chin and set your shoulders,
Plant your feet and take a brace.*

Have a great summer!



SURVIVING SPOUSE CORNER

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

As the buds of May are slowly starting to bloom, it is hard to believe that summer is right around the corner.

And I have some good news as the pandemic seems to be letting up a bit. We are planning a **Surviving Spouse Luncheon** as restaurants are now allowing dining without wearing a mask.

(Of course, if you feel more comfortable wearing a mask and removing it while eating and drinking that is completely up to you.)

Here are the particulars for our first SS Luncheon in two years:

- **Date:** Wednesday, April 20, 2022
- **Time:** 12:00 noon
- **Location:** Claim Jumper Restaurant, 18000 SW Lower Boones Ferry Road, Portland, OR 97224 (Exit 290 off I-5)(Phone: 503-670-1975)

To make reservations to attend the SS Luncheon, please call Mrs. Jean Hillman at **503-819-1042** or text or call her at **503-819-1042**.

The April luncheon is planned for the west Side of town. The next luncheon will be on the east side of town. This practice may give more spouses a

better chance to attend a luncheon.

TREASURER'S REPORT

By LTC Myrna Trull, USA (Ret)

As of 11 April 2022, the **MOAA Portland Chapter** has **163** members:

- 113 Regular Members
- 47 Surviving Spouse Members
- 3 Honorary Members

Of the 113 regular members, **21** members have NOT paid their 2022 dues.

Dues are the lifeline of the chapter. 2022 Annual Chapter dues are \$30 covering the calendar year and are due on or before 1 January every year. There are several ways you can pay this year:

- mail a check to our post office box (P.O. Box 18206, Portland OR 97213),
- have your bank mail us a check, or
- you can have your bank send dues by electronic funds transfer (EFT). An EFT must be scheduled with your bank. If you wish to do this, please call me at (971) 226-7103 for the necessary account and routing information.

AN OPINION PIECE:

MY TAKE ON LEGISLATION, REGULATION, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

By CAPT Larry Roberts, USNR (Ret)

Defense Spending Languishes, Threats Rise: It is hard to remember that U.S. defense spending in the late 1980s oscillated around 6% of GDP. Over the next decade, the spending as a percentage of GDP declined until it bottomed at 3% in the early 2000s, rose back to the mid 4% level, and then began a 10-year

decline until the advent of the Trump administration, which boosted spending to 3.5% of GDP. If the recent Biden budget is passed intact, our spending will decline to 3.1% of GDP, although there is a small nominal increase in actual spending, albeit in a 7% inflation rate environment. Alarming, the Office of Management and Budget predicts that spending will continue to decline steadily until we reach 2.5% in 2030 or so.

This is occurring in an environment where the Chinese are ramping up their spending and producing ships, planes, and the like while the United States is actually shrinking the number of ships in service, the number of fighter aircraft we are procuring, and the number of soldiers in our army. Does that sound alarming? It does to me, and it will change only if there is a change in Administrations and/or Congressional leadership and representation.

Moreover, budgets are adversely affected, and procurement even more so when Congress relies on Continuing Resolutions to fund the government rather than passing a budget at the October beginning of the fiscal year. This year, for instance, the spending bill was passed in March, 5 plus months in arrears of when it should have been approved. Note that with continuing resolutions, no new initiatives may be started before the budget is approved, and time is often of the essence in development, recruiting, and strategic initiatives.

The current fiscal year Defense budget is \$813 billion, which is positioned by the Administration as a real increase after inflation of 1.5%. That is a bald-faced lie given the current and accelerating rate of inflation.

More important than aggregate numbers is what is occurring in the individual services. The Navy entered the fiscal year with 298 ships. This number will decline as we commission 9 new ships and decommission 24, bringing the total to 283. The Navy estimates that it needs 500 ships to engage China, so we are 43% shy of estimated needs.

Even worse, the Navy is planning to decommission 8 of 10 Freedom class Littoral Combat Ships (LCS) with an average age of 7 years out of a projected life cycle of 25 years. Incredible! The LCS program has been a profound disappointment, but such a mass decommissioning is unprecedented. This is a scandalous waste of taxpayer dollars.

As for the Air Force, the Air and Space Forces Association (AFA) recently pronounced that it was the “smallest, oldest, and least ready in its 75-year history.” In light of that assessment, it is baffling that the budget calls for acquiring only 33 F-35 aircraft, compared with its “normal” acquisition of 48 planes, a reduction of 1/3. This, of course raises the cost per plane, although the interest by our allies in acquiring the F-35 may soften the monetary blow.

Despite the Ukraine incursion, the Army will reduce its end strength by 2.5%, going from 485,000 personnel to 473,000. The Army budget is proposed to rise 1.6% to \$178 billion. Again, this is a real-world reduction in an inflationary environment.

My position is that the Administration has its priorities wrong when it comes to national security. If you agree, let your Congressman and Senators know of your concern. My belief is that China leaders are watching us closely, and they see us diminishing our warfighting capability as they continue to roll out a larger and more modern military.

Real ID is Coming in Just Over a Year! In January of 2020, I posted an article entitled “REAL ID Licenses Coming This Year.” Well, COVID knocked that schedule out of the park. Here we are over two years later, and Real ID is still not required.

However, on May 3, 2023, a Real ID compliant driver’s license will be required for an individual aged 18 or older to board an aircraft in the United States. So, we have just over a year to:

- Gather required documents
- Make an in-person appointment with an Oregon DMV office
- Hopefully bring acceptable documents to the DMV office the first time and receive a Real ID from them.

A year may sound like a long time, but I would not procrastinate! Get it done! There is, however, a **BACKUP PLAN!**

In lieu of a Real ID compliant driver’s license, the following documents will suffice to get you on a plane:

- Valid Passport
- Passport Card
- Trusted Traveler Card (Such as Global Entry-although I am informed that there is a yearlong waiting list to get such a card at this time)
- DOD ID Card
- Veteran Health ID Card
- There are other alternatives; you can look them up

Bring the following to the DMV appointment:

- Proof of citizenship
- 2 Proofs of address
- Proof of your Social Security Number
- Passport or an original or certified copy of your birth certificate

I think this is all that is required, but I suggest that you go to the DMV web site to be sure.

I will be checking on the situation as we go through the next 12 months and will update requirements if they change.

WE HAVE OUR SHARE OF OLIGARCHS, TOO
A Book Review by CAPT Tony Sebbio, MSC, USN (Ret)

There has been a lot of press lately about Russian oligarchs. However, America’s oligarchs have created a great deal of the problems many Americans face on a daily basis. In his book “*The System: Who Rigged It, How We Fix It,*” Robert Reich minces no words when he describes America’s ‘system of corruption.’ He describes the disconnect between American voters and their government by citing a 2014 study by Gilens and Page that analyses 1,799 policy issues in detail and finds that the preferences of the typical American have no influence at all on legislation emerging from the US Congress. Reich’s thesis is that large American corporations have consolidated power in the US since 1980 at the expense of other interest groups like labor unions, farmers, and small retailers which Galbraith

called ‘countervailing power’. Consequently, America’s vast middle and working classes no longer get a share of the gains from economic growth which has been garnered by big corporations and the wealthiest 1 per cent over the last four decades.

Toward the beginning of the book, the author shares Beto O’Rourke’s observation that “Our current system favors those who can pay for access and outcomes.” An oligarch is one of a small number of wealthy and powerful people (usually men) and large corporations which control a country’s government for their own ends usually involving increased wealth and power. The oligarchs band together to control a country and then are known as an oligarchy controlling government “for, of, and by the oligarchs.” Reich describes our current American ruling class as an oligarchy. He sees our country as no longer a democracy in practice.

He sees wealth and power as intertwined within the same group of wealthy individuals and corporations which have largely taken over the direction of our country. The division between Democrats and Republicans, left and right, or liberal and conservative have lost their importance and yielded to the struggle between oligarchy and democracy holding our way of life in the balance. This struggle pits the few ultra-rich individuals, families, and corporations against the great majority of the rest of us.

Reich describes three periods in our history when oligarchs held significant power. These include the founding fathers, all men and mostly wealthy landowners and slave owners; the years of the steel, oil, railroad, and financial empires in the early twentieth century;

and our current state where a very few control most of the wealth and power while the rest of us maintain the status quo if we are lucky. Those in the middle and at the bottom have gradually lost ground while the oligarchs have become obscenely wealthy and powerful.

Jamie Dimon, CEO of JP Morgan Chase appears prominently throughout the book, mostly as an example of a major oligarch. Oligarchies do donate to charities and public organizations but do so based on their own priorities while they strongly resist government control of how they operate. Conservatives view those at the other end of the economic spectrum receiving money they did not earn as socialism. Yet the greatest example of giveaways is bailing out the wealthy and corporations in ways not accessible to the rest of us.

Reich dismisses the usual explanations of technological change, globalization, free trade, and the transformation of Asia as a manufacturing hub as insufficient. He argues that, unlike other advanced economies (Europe and Japan), there have been trends unique to America that have caused a power shift which “profoundly altered the American system. It created a jaw-dropping wealthy and powerful oligarchy. It shafted just about everyone else.” As a result, “between 1999 and 2018 the United States economy grew 48 per cent, but the typical household’s income did not grow at all, and the bottom half of America ended up with less wealth than it had before the financial crisis. The richest 1 per cent, however, ended up with twice as much wealth as it had before the financial crisis.”

Reich points out the social consequences of rising inequality in America by writing that “standard economic indicators don’t reflect the economic insecurity most Americans continue to feel, nor the seeming arbitrariness and unfairness they continue to experience.” Much of the political establishment still denies what has occurred. They prefer to attribute Trump’s rise solely to racism. In fact, “In 2016 Trump galvanized millions of blue-collar voters living in communities that never recovered from the tidal wave of factory closings. He understood what resonated with these voters.” The problem is that both Democrats and Republicans drink from the same campaign funding trough — big corporations, Wall Street, and the very

wealthy.” Despite this dismal state of affairs, Reich sees us as a society capable of reining in the oligarchy as has been done in the past when our populace has risen up and restored balance. He sees positive signs in upcoming generations and young more balanced thinkers are elected to public office. Yet the question remains how much we are willing to tolerate. We cannot defeat authoritarian populism without an agenda of radical democratic reform, a palpable anti-establishment movement... “Unless everyone stands squarely on the side of democracy against oligarchy, much of America will continue to believe... any future politician who uses authoritarian demagoguery.” This is indeed a stark prediction of America’s future, akin to Madeleine Albright’s warning about impending Fascism (2018) in the modern world’s oldest democracy.

2020-2021 PORTLAND CHAPTER OFFICERS

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

First Vice President

LTC Gary D. Battles, USAR (Ret): 503-739-3334

Second Vice President

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

Recording Secretary

CDR Doug J. Sheehan, USCGR (Ret): 503-653-6058

Reservations Secretary

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

Treasurer

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

Senior Director (in lieu of Immediate Past President):

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

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MG Curtis A. Loop: 503-579-6297

MAJ Shaun Benson, USA (Ret): 503-309-7458

Navy Reps

CAPT Tony Sebbio: 503-936-5896

CDR Dave Bredemann: 503-974-9335

Air Force Reps

Vacant

Colonel Rick Gano: 503-651-2044

Marine Corps Rep

MajGen Christopher Owens: 503-951-1805

Coast Guard Rep: CAPT Doug Brown: 503-631-7769

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

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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)

Vacant

2020-2021 CHAPTER COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Program: CAPT Tony Sebbio, USN (Ret)

CAPT Lawrence W. Roberts, USNR (Ret)

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

Legislative: LTC Gary D. Battles, USAR (Ret)

CAPT Lawrence W. Roberts, USNR (Ret)

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

Communications: CDR Dave Bredemann, USN (Ret)

Surviving Spouse: Mrs. Genevieve (Jean) Hillman

Vacant

Decorations: CAPT Sharon Sebbio: 503-936-5896

Mrs. Nancy Menagh: 503-951-8634

Fundraising and Scholarship: CAPT Lawrence W.

Roberts, USNR (Ret)

Special Events: LCDR Christopher Gales, USCG (Ret)

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

COL Robert L. Windus, USA (Ret)

Chaplains: LTC Grant McAllister, USA (Ret)

Reverend Karyn Dix

Lt Col James Warnock, USAF (Ret)

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**

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MOAA PORTLAND CHAPTER UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark your calendars!

Some meetings may be held virtually!

May 5, 2022	Board of Directors Meeting (Location: Colwood Golf Center)
May 7, 2022	Brunch Meeting with Guest Speaker and Officer Elections (Location: The Aerie at Eagle Landing)
June 7, 2022	Dinner Meeting with Guest Speaker and Officer Installation (Location: The Monarch Hotel)
July-August 2022	No chapter meetings scheduled
August 4, 2022	Board of Directors Meeting (Location: Colwood Golf Center)
September 6, 2022	Dinner Meeting with Guest Speaker (Location: The Monarch Hotel)
October 1, 2022	Brunch Meeting with Guest Speaker (Location: The Aerie at Eagle Landing)

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

NOTE 2: All Board of Directors Meetings are held at **0930**—and **are open to all members!** Location is indicated.

NOTE 3: All articles for the **June 2022 Brass Bulletin Newsletter** must be submitted to the editor, **Col Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret)**, at **maryjmayer@yahoo.com** by **7 May 2022..**