



**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 XXXVII, Number 3

www.MOAAPortland.org

November 2020

PRESIDENT’S FORUM

By Colonel Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret)

Happy Veterans Day! During this time of the year, we veterans can look back on our careers with pride and a bit of nostalgia and count our blessings during this COVID-19 pandemic. It is certainly not easy to navigate through the numerous restrictions on our day-to-day activities. Lots of our friends, colleagues, and family members are feeling isolated, lonely, and have a need to connect with their fellow human beings. It is especially important for our chapter members to stay connected with each other. One way to do this is to participate in our virtual chapter meetings. We are fortunate to be able to use the Zoom Video Teleconference technology (or your own telephone) to join in fellowship and camaraderie once a month – and support our chapter charity through the wine raffles. Last month, we had 32 attendees at our chapter meeting; I would like to encourage more of you to consider “joining” the November chapter meeting to hear General Prigmore update us on the Oregon Air National Guard. You don’t have to drive, pay for meals, or dress up! You can join us from the comfort of your own home. And remember, **recruiting new members** is the lifeblood of the chapter, and I ask you to be proactive! Reach out to potential chapter members and ask them to “Zoom” into our chapter meetings.

I encourage you to get ahead of the power curve and pay your **2021 Annual Chapter Dues of \$30** as soon as possible but **no later than 1 January 2021**. (NOTE: Surviving Spouses and Honorary Members are not required to pay dues but are *strongly encouraged* to do so.) Please pay your dues by sending a check for \$30 (addressed to “MOAA Portland Chapter”) to our Chapter Treasurer, **LTC Myrna Trull, USA (Ret)**, at MOAA Portland Chapter, P.O. Box 18206, Portland, OR 97213. *Please do not wait for an invoice!*

(Continued on page 2)

Reminder:

**The Chapter Board of Directors Meeting
will be held at 0900
on Thursday, 5 November 2020**

Virtual Meeting via Zoom Video Teleconference

NOVEMBER VIRTUAL CHAPTER MEETING:

Saturday, 7 November 2020

Starting Time: 0930

Virtual Meeting: via Zoom Video Teleconference

PROGRAM:

Brig Gen Donna M. Prigmore, Commander, Oregon Air National Guard (ORANG), who will speak on “**The ORANG Today: F-15EX, Wildfires, Protests, and Deployments.**”

RESERVATIONS: To make your reservations, please contact **CDR Michael Seiwald, USN (Ret)** at **503-381-2620** or **mjseiwald@comcast.net** **NLT 1100 on Wednesday, 4 November 2020** so he can advise the Zoom Host to allow you access to the virtual meeting. *If Michael has not confirmed your reservation in two days, please follow up with him.* 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/81801264557?pwd=U2RuOENOdUtvG0zN011WlZ2eJJBdz09>

Meeting ID: 818 0126 4557 Passcode: 671929

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

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 818 0126 4557 Passcode: 671929

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)

PROGRAM: Turning to the **Program** for the November virtual brunch meeting, our guest speaker is **Brigadier General Donna M. Prigmore, OANG**, the first woman commander of the Oregon Air National Guard. *(See photo below.)*



General Prigmore is responsible for the mission readiness and operational effectiveness of more than 2,400 military and civilian personnel assigned to the 142d Fighter Wing in Portland, Oregon; the 173d Fighter Wing in Klamath Falls, Oregon; and Joint Forces Headquarters (Air) in Salem, Oregon. In this role, General Prigmore oversees development and deployment of operationally trained, equipped, and mission-ready forces in support of Federal mission requirements, to include a 24/7 Aerospace Control Alert posture in support of North American Aerospace Defense Command, the 125th Special Tactics Squadron, an F-15 training school-house responsible for producing approximately 30 pilots each year, and the 270th Air Traffic Control Squadron. She also oversees State missions related to emergency response operations and support to civil authorities throughout Oregon.

Prior to her current assignment, General Prigmore was the Assistant Adjutant General-Air for the Oregon National

Guard and she also served as the Executive Officer to the Vice Chief of the National Guard Bureau at the Pentagon in 2017. As the Executive Officer, she provided support to the Vice Chief and helped ensure 447,000 Army and Air National Guard members were ready to fight and win America's wars, protect the homeland, and build enduring partnerships as an integral part of the Joint Force and the primary combat reserve of the Army and Air Force.

General Prigmore's military career began as an enlisted member of the Air Force prior to joining the Air National Guard and obtaining her commission in 1990, where she graduated at the top of her class from the Academy of Military Science in Knoxville, Tennessee. Since being commissioned, she has acquired more than 14 years of command and deputy/vice command experience at the flight, squadron, group, and wing levels. She has served as the 137th Airlift Wing Cost Analysis Officer; 176th Services Flight Commander; Chief of Public Affairs (176th Wing and Oregon JFHQ-level); Deputy Commander, 173d Mission Support Group; 142d Fighter Wing Inspector General; Commander, 142d Force Support Squadron; Deputy Commander, 142d Mission Support Group; Commander, 142d Mission Support Group; Vice Commander, 142d Fighter Wing and Vice Commander, 173d Fighter Wing.

General Prigmore has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration from Arizona State University and a Master of Business Administration from Oklahoma State University. She is a graduate of the Squadron Officer School Distance Learning Program, Air Command and Staff College Distance Learning Program, and Air War College Distance Learning Program.

Her major awards and decorations include: Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Meritorious Service Medal with four bronze oak leaf clusters, Air Force Commendation Medal with one bronze oak leaf cluster, Air Force Achievement Medal with one bronze oak leaf cluster, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with four oak leaf clusters, Air Force Good Conduct Medal, and the Air Reserve Forces Meritorious Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal with one bronze oak leaf cluster, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, Air Force Overseas Ribbon (Short Tour)

Air Force Longevity Service with one silver oak leaf cluster and one bronze oak leaf cluster, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with one bronze oak leaf cluster, USAF NCO PME Graduate Ribbon, and Air Force Training Ribbon.

Her state awards and decorations include Alaska Commendation Medal with one bronze oak leaf cluster, Oregon Exceptional Service Medal, Oregon Faithful Service Ribbon, Oregon National Guard Superior Unit Citation with one bronze oak leaf cluster, and Oregon National Guard Thirty-Year Medal.

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

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

The MOAA Portland Chapter has had no new members since the June 2020 *Brass Bulletin*.



Last month I told you I was going to try a new incentive to obtain some new members. If they were interested but wanted to delay signing-up, they could virtually attend one of our regularly scheduled meeting for a small donation. I sent the invites to 8 potential members and have received NO returns so far. However, I am going to try again this month with the new listing from MOAA.

As for membership, I know the prospects of gaining new members in a COVID-19 pandemic is daunting, but it can be done with a little creativity and persistence. The only option is to take advantage whenever the opportunity

presents itself. Call prospective members, tell them about our guest speakers, send them the latest *Brass Bulletin* newsletter, have them check out the chapter website at www.moaaportland.org, and invite them to “Zoom” or call into our chapter meetings. Remember, I am more than willing to send any potentials a welcome package with additional information on reasons why one should join and support their fellow military members.

I would also like the membership to stand up and start supporting the on-going efforts of the dedicated few who are still trying to keep the chapter viable and alive. One of the ways that you can show your support is to “attend” the virtual chapter meetings. The original sign-up for the 3 October 2020 chapter meeting was only 15 members, but, with a personal appeal from our Chapter President, that number was increased to 32.

There is no excuse for not attending these virtual events: you can “attend” the meetings via Zoom Video Teleconference or by calling in on your telephone. It is embarrassing for a guest speaker to take his/her valuable time to make a presentation to a limited audience.

Attending a virtual meeting is so simple even I can attend without any difficulties. Another virtual chapter meeting is scheduled for 7 November, so get prepared now to “attend” and show your continued support for our chapter. Let’s double the number from last month!

TREASURER’S REPORT

By LTC Myrna Trull, USA (Ret)

As of **7 October 2020**, the MOAA Portland Chapter had overall assets of **\$26,138.01** and a total of **168** members. 112 regular members have paid dues through 2020, 8 Surviving Spouse members have paid dues for 2020. There are 44 Surviving Spouses who have not paid (but are not required). And, finally, we have four Honorary Members who are not required to pay dues.. .

Remember: Your dues for calendar year 2021 are due by **1 January 2021**, so please plan to pay your **2021 dues** as soon as possible. Send your **\$30 check**, made out to “Portland Chapter - MOAA” (memo line should read “2021 Dues”) and mail it to: Portland Chapter – MOAA, P.O. Box 18206, Portland, OR 97213.

***AN OPINION PIECE:
MY TAKE ON LEGISLATION,
REGULATION, AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENTS***

By CAPT Larry Roberts, USNR (Ret)

Metro Tax Proposal Update: In the October 2020 *Brass Bulletin*, I penned an article raising several questions regarding the proposed \$7 billion payroll tax bill on the November ballot. Recent questions suggest that Metro may not have been fully forthcoming regarding the scope of the measure, although Metro calls the questions and assertions “blatant lies.”

I question the need for such a tax, especially one that does not include a sunset provision.

Specifically, does the metropolitan area NEED another light rail system that almost assuredly will be over budget, and, from experience, will underperform significantly in ridership and frequency of departures? Further, is there really a need to transport riders from downtown Portland to the high-end Bridgeport Shopping Center? Bridgeport is not a “destination,” except for shopping. The Bridgeport Light Rail project is budgeted to cost \$977 million. It had better bring in lots of riders to justify that sum.

Is it really in the purview of Metro to fund \$1 billion (and more throughout the future) for transportation passes for high school students? Why just high school? And why Metro?

Should your tax dollars be spent on replacing cheaper and more reliable current buses with more expensive electrically driven buses?

The recent release of a study regarding the tax by the Moss Adams CPA firm raised interesting questions. Moss Adams is a respected, mid-size accounting firm. It was engaged by the “Stop the Metro Wage Tax” coalition, consisting largely of those large metro area employers that will

be directly affected by the tax of 0.75% of “wages.” Intel has some 20,000 employees in the Metro area. If the average wage is \$80,000, the direct hit to Intel would be in the range of \$12 million annually. So, Intel is materially affected. So is Nike, with 13,000 local employees; Portland General Electric with 3,000; Columbia Sportswear with 1,700 employees; and so on and on.

What Moss Adams discovered and contends is that the tax as written goes beyond taxing just W-2 income. It is purportedly broader and more complicated than previously disclosed.

The tax includes such employee benefits as health insurance, retirement plan contributions, bus pass allowances, and stock options.

Moss Adams also found that the tax would be levied on entities located outside Metro Boundaries that perform services inside the boundaries.

Metro responded by saying that “The measure was more broadly written than the REFINED version will be if it passes.” To me, possibly a cynic, that sounds like “oh, darn, we got caught.” Why would they submit a measure for a vote that they expect to change/“refine” once it is approved by the voters?

Metro supporters continue to use a tired line that “Ninety-one percent of businesses will be exempt.” That may be correct, but it is irrelevant. A much larger percentage of the people employed in the region will be indirectly affected because there are so many employees of the entities noted above--plus the large law firms, large accounting firms, large/medium groceries, and so forth. Just consider the thought process of firms thinking about expanding or even locating major assets in the metro area facing a new and extensive “jobs tax.”

In polling conducted this summer and released mid-September, Multnomah County residents approved of the tax proposal 46%-32%, Washington approved 40%-39% ,and in Clackamas a majority of voters were in the no camp. Of course, this was before advertising and mailers and the like appeared.

For your consideration, the Metro proposal does not allocate any funds to improve I-5, I-205, I-405, or Highway 217.

Of interest, in the same polling, just 1/3 of respondents viewed Metro favorably.

So, read the plus and minus statements you will find in your voting pamphlet. Good luck!

SURVIVING SPOUSE CORNER

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

The MOAA Portland Chapter Surviving Spouse Luncheons are still on hold until the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. The next luncheon will be our **Christmas Luncheon** at **12:00** noon on **Tuesday, December 15, 2020**. Our choice of the restaurant will be decided when and if we can meet. Prayers and caring thoughts are needed.

We would like to bring to your attention **Operation Diaper Bag**, a program that was started in 2009 by the Portland VA Health Care System Women's Committee to express the VA's appreciation to Veterans for their service to our country. This was extended beyond VA healthcare to participate in the celebration of a Veteran's new family member.

Operation Diaper Bag Care Packages celebrate this exciting time in a veteran's life, made possible through donations from Service Organizations, community organizations, and individual donors. These care packages are put together by the Portland VA Health Care Women's Voluntary Service Staff and Volunteers, then sent to the Veteran by mail or given in person when the notification of a birth is received from the VA medical or social work staff. ***Handmade items*** such as baby blankets, clothing, burping clothes, and the diaper bags themselves add an extra special touch. In addition to handmade items, ***new*** purchased items are added to the packages.

Because of the positive impact the program has had, as well as the support

from the community, Operation Diaper Bag has expanded beyond women veterans to include our male Veterans and their families. Veterans face challenges in their readjustment to civilian life and the VA continually seeks ways to support their transition, and Operation Diaper Bag is just one way the VA provides a much-needed delivery of vital supplies to veterans for their newborns.

For more information and instructions on how to donate to Operation Diaper Bag Voluntary Services, go to: www.portland.va.gov or call **503-273-5042**.

For now, keep saving baby diapers and wipes for **Operation Homefront** and old cell phones for the **Cell Phones for Soldiers Program**. For questions or suggestions, please contact me at **budjean@aol.com**

UPDATE ON ESGR FROM THE AREA 2 CHAIR By COL Robert L. (Bob) Windus, USA (Ret)

Nationally and regionally, the Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Program has been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. In late March State ESGR programs received notice from the Department of Defense that all contact with units and individual service members would be suspended until further notice. Therefore, direct contact with units and service members here in Oregon has ceased. The last communication indicated a possible program restart in October. At the moment, we have not received any notice. The West Region has sought a partial restart for the states in the west. No decision has yet been reached. It should be noted that, even with the lockdown here in the Portland Area, there has been a few occasions where ESGR has been able to provide assistance virtually and by telephone. We will continue in this vain until further notice.

There may be some light at the end of the tunnel. On September 30, while visiting units at the 41st Armed Forces Reserve Center, I was informed that units will begin their monthly Battle Assemblies again on October 3-4. I suspect this will be closely monitored to make sure there is no reoccurrence of COVID. I expect the ESGR Program will again be functional soon.

IMPROVEMENTS IN FEDVIP FOR PLAN YEAR 2021

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has selected insurance carriers to provide comprehensive, accessible, and competitively priced dental and vision coverage through the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Program (FEDVIP), effective January 1, 2021. The contract term is seven (7) years.

The competitive application process allowed OPM to strengthen the FEDVIP program through increased focus on wellness and education. OPM improved quality assurance, financial reporting processes, and enhanced fraud waste and abuse (FWA) requirements. In the 2021 plan year, the number of FEDVIP dental carriers will increase from 10 to 12. The number of vision carriers will increase from 4 to 5. OPM anticipates no disruption of enrollee's continuity of services.

Eligible individuals may enroll, cancel, or change their enrollment during the Federal Benefits Open Season this year, November 9 to December 14, 2020. For more information, check out the following website: <https://www.benefeds.com/>

2021 Dental Carriers

- Nationwide/International
 - Aetna Dental PPO
 - Delta Dental PPO
 - BCBS FEP Blue Dental
 - GEHA Dental PPO
 - MetLife Dental PPO
 - United Concordia PPO
 - United Healthcare Dental PPO (New)
- Regional
 - Dominion Dental EPO (New)
 - Emblem Health
 - HealthPartners (New)

- Humana EPO/PPO
- Triple S Salud

2021 Vision Carriers

- Nationwide/International
 - Aetna Vision
 - BCBS DEP Vision
 - MetLife Vision (New)
 - United Healthcare Vision
 - VSP

The Federal Employees Dental and Vision Program (FEDVIP) has 3.3 million unique enrollees. This includes 1.7 million enrollees enrolled in both programs. In total, the program provides dental and vision benefits to a total of 6.9 million Federal employees, uniformed service members, retirees, and their family members. It provides comprehensive dental and vision insurance at competitive group rates with leading dental and vision carriers. FEDVIP enrollees give the program high marks for quality and value.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR AVAILABLE!

The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs has submitted its Advisory Committee Annual Report to the Governor, which provides an overview of ODVA's programs and accomplishments in fiscal year 2019-20.

While maintaining core internal operations and existing programs, FY 20 was marked by the creation of new programs funded by Measure 96 Lottery dollars and the unprecedented COVID-19 health crisis and resulting economic impact on veterans.

“As a network of veterans helping veterans, we consider it nothing less than an honor and privilege to play a role in caring for those who served our nation and their families,” said ODVA Director Kelly Fitzpatrick. “Although much has changed since ODVA began in 1945, our commitment to those who sacrificed for our state and nation has never wavered. The work we have accomplished this past year is important, and just as critical as ever.”

The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs' Annual Report can be found here: www.oregon.gov/odva/Connect/Pages/Reports.aspx

2020-2021 PORTLAND CHAPTER OFFICERS**President**

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

2020-2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**Army Reps**

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

Captain Doug MacEllven: 503-397-5253
Vacant

Marine Corps Rep

LtCol Herb Richardson: 503-691-6711

Coast Guard Rep: *Vacant***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

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
Mrs. Carol Patrick

Decorations: *Vacant*

Fundraising and Scholarship: 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)
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**

**FIRST
CLASS
POSTAGE
REQUIRED**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

MOAA PORTLAND CHAPTER UPCOMING EVENTS: Mark your calendars!

(NOTE: These meetings may be held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic!)

December 1, 2020	Dinner Meeting with Entertainment (Location: The Monarch Hotel)
<i>January 2021</i>	<i>No scheduled chapter brunch or dinner meeting</i>
<i>February 4, 2021</i>	<i>Board of Directors Meeting (Location: Colwood Golf Center)</i>
February 6, 2021	Brunch Meeting with Guest Speaker (Location: Hayden's Lakefront Grill)
March 6, 2021	Brunch Meeting with Guest Speaker (Location: Hayden's Lakefront Grill)
April 6, 2021	Dinner Meeting with Guest Speaker (Location: The Monarch Hotel)
May 1, 2021	Brunch Meeting with Guest Speaker (Location: The Monarch Hotel)
<i>May 6, 2021</i>	<i>Board of Directors Meeting (Location: Colwood Golf Course)</i>

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 **December 2020 Brass Bulletin Newsletter** must be submitted to the editor, **Col Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret)**, at maryjmayer@yahoo.com by **6 November 2020**.