



**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 2**

**www.MOAAPortland.org**

**October 2019**

**PRESIDENT'S FORUM**

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

The Chapter Board of Directors met on 1 August 2019 to start off the new program year. One of the top priorities was to review the EOY financials, and I am happy to report that we ended the 2018-2019 year in the black. Fortunately, the Board was able to pass a balanced budget for 2019-2020, due in some measure to the fact that we raised our chapter membership dues from **\$25 to \$30** a year, starting **1 January 2019**.

However, once again, the membership area is where we are losing revenue. Our MOAA Portland Chapter needs to grow if we are to provide more quality programs and services for the military community in the greater Portland Area. Our goal this year is recruiting **30** new members (and not losing more than **11**) by **31 December 2019**. Since January 2019, our chapter membership has recruited only **9** new members, but, unfortunately, we lost **10** for failure to pay their 2019 dues.

So, please be proactive in contacting potential members, bring them with you to the chapter meetings, and don't be afraid to **ASK** them to join—by filling out the MOAA National and Portland Chapter Membership Application Forms and paying their dues. Or, if you prefer, ask Second Vice President and Membership Chair, **Major Bill Tidd, USAF (Ret)**, to send a prospective member a recruiting package—either by mail or email. Bill's email address is [wtidd96218@aol.com](mailto:wtidd96218@aol.com). We **can** make our membership goal--if all of us work together as a team!  
*(continued on page 2)*

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**The Chapter Board of Directors Meeting  
will be held at 0945 on  
Thursday, 7 November 2019  
at the Colwood Golf Center  
(Full Breakfast will be served at 0900.)**

**OCTOBER BRUNCH MEETING:**

**Saturday, 5 October 2019**

Social: 0900, Brunch: 1000  
Hayden's Lakefront Grill  
8187 SW Tualatin-Sherwood Road  
Tualatin, Oregon 97062  
Phone: (503) 885-9292

**PROGRAM:**

**Mr. Mark Newell**, Veteran Volunteer Coordinator at the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA), will speak to us on the new **"ODVA State-Wide Volunteer Program."**

Chapter member, **Mrs. Rita Owens**, will speak about her experiences as a volunteer.

**MENU:**

Eggs Benedict  
Muffins and Pastry  
Pepper Bacon and Breakfast Sausage  
Fresh Fruit Bowl with Mint  
Assorted Juices and Milk  
Freshly Brewed Stumptown Coffee  
Assorted Numi Hot Teas

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

*Please make checks payable to **PDX-MOAA**.*

**RESERVATIONS:** To make your reservations, please contact **CDR Michael J. Seiwald, USN (Ret)** at [mjseiwald@comcast.net](mailto:mjseiwald@comcast.net) or **503-381-2620** **NLT 1100 on Wednesday, 2 October 2019**. **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 OCTOBER MEETING:** Raffle tickets are available for several scholarships for lodging and gas for first-time attendees at the Biennial Oregon Women Veterans Conference in May 2020 in Bend, OR. Bring in diapers and baby wipes--and donate your old cell phones.

**PRESIDENT'S FORUM (continued)**

As your Chapter President, I am extremely grateful for the dedicated and enthusiastic team of officers, board members, and committee chairs with whom I have the pleasure of working during the 2019-2020 program year.

However, these volunteers are carrying a heavy load, and, if we are not careful, we will "burn them out." Our MOAA Portland Chapter needs more people to volunteer to help. "Many hands make light work," and it isn't fair to expect just a handful of people to do all the work year after year.

Right now, the chapter needs your help in the following areas:

- **Communications Committee:** Need volunteer(s) to:
  - Send out an already formatted news release before each chapter meeting;
  - Work with the webmaster and chapter president in ensuring the chapter website is up to date.
- **Photographer:** Need a volunteer to help **LTC Gary Battles, USAR (Ret)** with ensuring pictures are taken at each chapter meeting.
- **Decorations:** Need a volunteer to help **Mrs. Betty Richard** with ensuring there are table decorations for each chapter meeting.
- **Second Air Force Representative on the Chapter Board of Directors:** Need volunteer to attend the 4 board meetings and as many chapter meetings as possible.
- **Joke:** Need volunteer(s) to tell a joke at the end of each chapter meeting.

**Bottom line:** Besides the volunteer needs mentioned above, I am making an ardent appeal for more chapter members to "step up" and serve 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). Remember MOAA's motto: "Never Stop Serving!"

Turning to the Program for the October brunch meeting, our guest speaker is the dynamic and very accomplished **Mr. Mark Newell**, the Veteran Volunteer Coordinator for the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) (*see picture below*)



Mark Newell has implemented a new state-wide volunteer program. He is training volunteers to educate Veterans about their earned benefits and then connecting them to their County Veteran Service Officers to explore those benefits. Mark was raised in a military home; his dad retired from the Air Force after 30 years as a Major. Mark was raised in Montana, lived in Alaska for 20 years, and ran long distance dogsled races. For the last 10 years, he has lived on 17 acres in the foothills of the Cascades with his wife, two German Shorthair Pointers, and a flock of Homing pigeons.

**MEMBERSHIP CORNER**

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

The MOAA Portland Chapter has had **NO** new members join since the September issue of the *Brass Bulletin*.

As we head into the fall, we now must increase our efforts to recruit new members. I have said many times, here in the membership section, that new members and the retaining of current members is the life blood of this chapter. So far this year, we have added only 9

members to our chapter while losing 10. This trend must be reversed, or our chapter is going to slowly die. It is everyone's responsibility to shake the bushes and find new members; so, let's get out there and do a little shaking.

In August this year, MOAA National implemented a new process of advising the Chapter of potential new members in our area. Each month, National will send an Excel listing to me that will list potential new members and members that have recently moved to our area. The August listing had 12 names on it; 3 were over 90 and 8 were listed on the "No Contact" list--leaving one remaining viable candidate. I forwarded her a Welcome Package via snail mail. In September, the listing provided 13 potential new members with 5 being "No Contacts"--leaving 8 to whom I sent Welcome Packages. Hopefully, these efforts will succeed in gaining us some new members.

Here is a heads-up. Watch for the October issue of the *MOAA Military Officer Magazine*. With a little luck, our chapter will have a couple of articles included.

See you all at the October meeting!!

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

**Strait of Hormuz Crisis Exposes European Defense Weakness: USA To the Rescue!** This summer has been very interesting in the Near East. Iran has taken an aggressive stance in essentially hijacking oil tankers in and near the Strait of Hormuz, causing the U.S. Navy to deploy an Amphibious Readiness Group comprised of three ships and an

embarked, combat-ready 2,500 Marines. Additionally, we deployed a Carrier Strike Group of one carrier, three guided missile destroyers, and one guided missile cruiser. Now, there is some fire power!

The Strait of Hormuz handles tankers carrying 20% of the world's oil, to the tune of 27 million barrels of oil per day.

Originally, the sole source of warships protecting the tankers in the Strait was the United States. The British Navy contributed 1 frigate in July, joined by a Destroyer shortly thereafter, soon to be joined by a third vessel.

While the United States attempted to engage other NATO parties to participate, that effort has failed to date. This seems to reflect a lack of willingness of the European nations attempting to salvage the Iran nuclear deal, and the abject lack of seagoing resources to draw upon.

My wife and I took a cross-channel trip from Portsmouth, England to France several years ago. Portsmouth appeared at first glance to have a substantial number of warships tied up there. On our way out of the harbor, it became clear that virtually all the ships were under major repair or in mothballs. Currently, the Royal Navy has nearly half of its frigates and destroyers undergoing major repairs or upgrades. Additionally, the number of ships in the fleet has diminished from 130 during the Falklands War to just 80 today, a reduction of 1/3. At least England is spending its required 2% of GDP on defense.

Germany refused to send any ship to the Strait of Hormuz. It is spending only 1.2% of GDP on defense, despite the strongest economy in Europe. The new German Defense Minister has called for the country to make good on its 2% commitment, but she was booed by her fellow lawmakers for her effort.

The French La Royale boasts of only a single aircraft carrier, and it would be limited to a patrol mission if they would commit; France cancelled plans for a second carrier a year ago.

In essence, Europe has neither the will nor the means to project a naval force in any meaningful way.

In comparison, our Far East allies, Japan, Taiwan and Australia are all beefing up their military in the face of an assertive China.

Now one can understand why the President hectors our NATO Partners to increase military spending. When called upon, they do not have the forces to meet commitments.

At least, the United States is rebuilding the forces that were left to deteriorate for 8 years. Now the challenge is to get the hardware built and recruit/retain the personnel to staff increased assets.

**We Withdrew from the INF Medium Range Nuclear Missile Ban Just in Time!** Early in August, Russia suffered a test failure of an intermediate range nuclear missile that resulted in the deaths of 5 Russian engineers. Our officials believe the failed missile was the much-touted Skyfall, powered by a nuclear power source and reputed by Vladimir Putin as able to dodge U. S. Defenses and strike anywhere in the world.

Immediately after the missile exploded, stations reporting nuclear radiation went off the air, and they are still silent, the equivalent of the cover-up of the Chernobyl nuclear reactor 36 years ago. The truth about that disaster emerged after decades of misinformation, while thousands of Russians were poisoned. This is of a piece with the disastrous Russian nuclear submarine program over the years.

The August failure validates the Trump Administration decision a month earlier to withdraw from the INF Treaty after years of clandestine cheating by Russia. Vladimir Putin has a long history of lies regarding foreign adventures, including poisoning a former Russian spy on English soil, shooting down passenger aircraft without as much as a “by your leave,” and creating scenarios to justify invasion and taking Crimea.

At least the United States has not been sitting idly by. We tested an intermediate range missile of our own last week! Russia is ignoring arms control constraints and developing new weapons and the means to deliver them. At the same time, China, which was not a signatory to the INF, has been developing, testing, and, presumably, fielding missiles of its own. It is high time that we respond actively to both Russia and China before they gain a military advantage.

**The Secure Act is a Mixed Bag:** Last Spring I mentioned a bill moving through Congress, the Secure Act, and commented favorably on it. The Bill is a multifaceted revision of rules covering Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs). Many of the changes in the Bill are positive for account holders. However, one change, not widely discussed, is a definite negative to IRA beneficiaries after the death of the owner or the owner’s spouse. The Bill passed the House on a 417-3 vote, and it has yet to be taken up by the Senate. It may have trouble getting attention during the run up to the 2020 election, but it is worth watching closely.

On the good side:

- The dreaded Required Minimum Distribution will take effect at age 72 rather than currently at age 70 ½ (what they really need to do is issue updated mortality tables reflecting increasing longevity, but that would be too expensive; so, it is not on the table).
- The current age limit on new contributions, 70.5 years, will be totally rescinded. If you work at age 90 and want to contribute to your IRA, that will be allowed. I had W-2 income through age 75 and would have been happy to add to my IRA.
- Early withdrawals, normally involving a substantial tax penalty, will be allowed in the amount of \$5,000 per childbirth or adoption. What happens with twins or triplets, I have no idea.

So far, so good, but each of these provisions reduces the amount of money gathered each year from taxes on Required Minimum Distributions and the like.

So, now the bad side:

- Currently an IRA owner or the surviving spouse can distribute funds on death tax free. The recipient, suppose it is a teenage grandchild, can invest those funds and distribute assets according to a schedule

based on his or her age, extending the use of the funds way into the future.

- The Secure Act requires that assets distributed to children, grandchildren, and other non-spousal heirs be **EMPTIED FROM THEIR INHERITED IRA** within 10 years. This could result in very large taxes on inherited funds, truncate the advantage of tax-free investing for say 70 years, and likely push taxpayer inheritors into higher tax brackets. Assuming the bill is passed, the new rules would take effect for those who die in 2020.
- There are broad exemptions in the bill for surviving spouses and distributions from minor children that do not commence until they reach the age of majority.

Sounds like the Certified Financial Planner full employment act to me, and it upends years of inheritance planning for many. I am not a CFP, and this is a complex Bill. However, it feels as if our heirs are giving up a lot to accommodate the needs, perceived or real, of IRA owners.

As one paper editorializes, “The political class wants more control over America’s individual savings and investments.” As an example, note what Congress did over the years, hijacking our Social Security payroll contributions for their favorite social spending.

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

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

What an enjoyable summer we have had! We hope you were able to take advantage and enjoy the beautiful Oregon weather.

Please make plans and mark your calendars for our **Surviving Spouses Luncheon** to be held on **Tuesday, October 22, 2019 at 12:00 noon** at **Albertina Kerr’s Restaurant**, 424 NE 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Portland 97232. Please call **Mrs. Carol Patrick** at **503-654-1511** or e-mail her at [jymbo@earthlink.net](mailto:jymbo@earthlink.net) if you would like to attend.

Chapter wives are always welcome.

If you have food restrictions, please call Albertina’s two days before the luncheon at **503-231-0216** to arrange for an alternate meal.

The luncheon will be informative and enjoyable as we will have a special guest speaker, **Mrs. Cheryl Toland**, who is the Surviving Spouse Liaison for the MOAA Rainier Chapter in Rainier, Washington.

The Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial Fund, Inc. (VVMF) is the nonprofit organization authorized by Congress in 1980 to fund and build the Vietnam Veterans’ Memorial in Washington, D.C. The organization sought a tangible symbol of recognition from the American people for those who served in the war. There are many thousands who died as a result of the Vietnam War, but their deaths do not fit the Department of Defense criteria for inclusion on The Wall, so the **“In Memory” Program** was created in 1993, and the first ceremony was held in 1999.

**Cheryl** will tell about her trip on Father’s Day Weekend in 2019 to attend the **“In Memory” Program** honoring those veterans, many of whom came home to fight a whole new battle and never fully recovered either physically or emotionally.

Remember to bring diapers and wipes for Operation Homefront and old cell phones for the Cell Phones for Soldiers Program.

Looking forward to hearing about your summer!



***CALLING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO SERVE ON SENATOR MERKLEY'S SERVICE ACADEMY NOMINATION PANELS! By Mr. Josh AG Laurente, State Scheduler and Assistant to the State Director from the Office of Senator Merkley***

Every year, members of Congress are required to nominate individuals to attend the nation's Service Academies. As part of his nomination process, Senator Merkley invites military veterans from diverse backgrounds to advise him by participating in interviews of selected applicants from Oregon. In 2018, MOAA Portland Chapter members made up the majority of interview panelists, and we would like to duplicate last year's success.

Basically, the event will involve volunteer participants coming to our **World Trade Center Office at 121 SW Salmon, Suite 1400, Portland 97204** on either **Saturday, December 7, 2019** or **Saturday, December 14, 2019** to do phone interviews with young adults who have applied to the Service Academies and are seeking Senator Merkley's nomination.

Our office will run only these two sessions on the two different Saturday mornings this year. Interviewers are asked to report to Senator Merkley's Office at **0830**. Interviews will be conducted from **0900 to 1200 noon**. Each shift will have three panels of two or three volunteers each (so we'd likely be asking for 12 to 18 people to volunteer, so we have alternates in case we lose a couple of folks to illness, etc. at the last minute). Each panel will be asked to conduct 10-15-minute phone interviews with a slate of applicants. Our office will provide complete information on each applicant to be interviewed, and instructions as needed. Of course, some of my colleagues and I will be on hand to orchestrate

everything and answer panelists' questions. The panels' recommendations will inform Senator Merkley's decision on whom to nominate.

We'll have coffee, pastries, a veggie tray, and other snacks during the panel interviews, and we will be ending in time for folks to grab lunch on their own. I'm already planning to contact panelists (once the schedule is firmed up) to see if they would like to grab lunch together afterwards. And if so, I'll make reservations for all of us at a suitable place.

If you have any questions or are interested in serving on one of these panels, please contact me by **31 October 2018** at either **503-326-3386** or at **State\_scheduling@merkley.senate.gov**



Colonel Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret.) presents the 2019 MOAA TPU Field Grade Officer of the Year Award to Major Michael J. Mosso, 483rd Terminal Transportation Battalion at the MOAA Portland Chapter Meeting on 3 September 2019. MAJ Mosso was nominated for this award by BG Rodney J. Fischer, his Commander while serving with the 650th Regional Support Group, to recognize his epitome of the Army Values during CY18; answering the call twice in CY19 in support of a Canadian multi-national exercise; and deploying in support of the USCENTCOM area of operation on short notice.

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

**Treasurer**

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

**Immediate Past President**

*Vacant*

***BOARD OF DIRECTORS*****Army Reps**

MG Curtis A. Loop: 503-579-6297  
LTC Gary Battles, USAR (Ret): 503-739-3334

**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**

CAPT Doug Brown: 503-631-7769

**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 S. Owens, USMC (Ret): 503-951-1805

***CHAPTER COMMITTEE CHAIRS***

**Programs:** 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:** *Vacant*

**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)

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

November 2, 2019	Brunch Meeting with Guest Speaker (Location: Hayden's Lakefront Grill)
<b><u>November 7, 2019</u></b>	<i>Board of Directors Meeting (Location: Colwood Golf Center)</i>
December 3, 2019	Dinner Meeting with Entertainment (Location: The Monarch Hotel)
<i>January 2020</i>	<i>No scheduled chapter brunch or dinner meeting</i>
February 1, 2020	Brunch Meeting with Guest Speaker (Location: Hayden's Lakefront Grill)
<i>February 6, 2020</i>	<i>Board of Directors Meeting (Location: Colwood Golf Center)</i>
March 7, 2020	Brunch Meeting with Guest Speaker (Location: Hayden's Lakefront Grill)
April 7, 2020	Dinner Meeting with Guest Speaker (Location: The Monarch Hotel)

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**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 **November 2019 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 October 2019**.