



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

**Portland, Oregon
Chapter**
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**P.O. Box 68959
Portland, OR 97268**

Volume XXXV, Number 1

www.MOAAPortland.org

September 2018

PRESIDENT’S FORUM

By Colonel Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret)

The summer has literally flown by, and, having chaired the 2 August Board Meeting, the 2018-2019 program year has officially begun. And, what a way to start our year! On 2 August 2018, I received the word from MOAA National that the **MOAA Portland Chapter** had won the **Five Star Level of Excellence Award** for the **11th straight year**. Congratulations to all who have contributed to making our chapter so successful!

Thank you for your confidence in electing me as your Chapter President once again. I am extremely grateful for your support, and I look forward with pleasure to working with the dedicated and enthusiastic team of officers, board members, and committee chairs during this 2018-2019 program year.

There have been quite a few changes in our leadership team over the summer. On 27 June 2018, **LTC Gary S. Brink, USA (Ret)** passed away from cancer. Gary was a stalwart in the chapter—serving in many capacities over the years and culminating as the Chapter President (2008-2010) and Immediate Past President (since 2010). We owe a great deal to his leadership and vision in starting the Portland Chapter MOAA Scholarship, the first in the Northwest. Gary would be proud to know that the chapter has almost finished endowing our second scholarship. We will sorely miss Gary’s dedication and loyalty---but look forward to keeping **Jan** and his son **Jack** in our chapter family!

(continued on page 2)

**IN MEMORIAM:
May They Rest in Peace!**

LTC Gary S. Brink, USA (Ret)
LTC Everett O. Sanburn, USAR (Ret)
Mrs. Eve Walker, Surviving Spouse
Mr. Peter Candelin,
husband of COL Ramona Lewis, USAR (Ret)

SEPTEMBER DINNER MEETING:

Tuesday, 4 September 2018

Social: 1700, Dinner: 1830

The Monarch Hotel

12566 SE 93rd Avenue

Clackamas, Oregon 97015-9760

Phone: (503) 652-1515

PROGRAM:

MajGen Christopher Owens, USMC (Ret),
Former Director of Expeditionary Warfare
Division (OPNAV N95), who will speak to us on
“**Expeditionary Warfare.**”

MENU:

Tossed Greens with Tomatoes & Cucumber with
Ranch Dressing
Roasted Breast of Turkey with Cranberry Relish
Roasted Garlic Mashed Potatoes with Gravy
Seasonal Vegetables
Rolls and Butter
Pumpkin Pie with Whipped Cream
Coffee, Tea, Decaf, or Iced Tea

COST: \$26.00 per person (includes 20% 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** or at **503-381-2620 NLT 1100 on Wednesday, 29 August 2018. 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 or need transportation to the meeting.)**

DURING THE SEPTEMBER MEETING: Raffle tickets are available for several bottles of fine wine to endow the second **Portland Chapter MOAA Scholarship**. And please continue to bring in packages of diapers and baby wipe for **Operation Homefront**—and donate your old cell phones for the **Cell Phones for Soldiers Program**.

PRESIDENT'S FORUM (continued)

CDR Ron Youngman, USCG (Ret) has resigned as the Coast Guard Representative on the Chapter Board. The chapter owes Ron—and his wife **Jan**—a huge debt of gratitude for his dedicated service over the years, most notably as Chapter President (2004-2006), Immediate Past President (2006-2008), and Coast Guard Representative. **CAPT Doug Brown, USCG (Ret)** will replace Ron as the Coast Guard Representative on the Chapter Board.

Due to health issues, **Colonel Rick Gano, USAF (Ret)** has resigned as the second Air Force Representative on the Chapter Board. The chapter owes Rick a great deal, as he has volunteered more than once to serve on the Chapter Board. **Captain Doug MacEllven, USAF (Former)** will replace Rick as the second Air Force Representative on the Chapter Board.

And, finally, since **CDR Michael Seiwald, USN (Ret)** was elected as a chapter officer (Reservations Secretary), his position as the second Navy Representative was vacant. **CDR Dave Bredemann, USN (Ret)** will fill the position of second Navy Representative.

Since January 2018, our chapter membership has grown by **6 new members**, but, unfortunately, we lost **12** for failure to pay their 2018 dues. Our goal this year is **30** new members, while not losing more than **11**. So, please contact potential members and **ASK** them to join MOAA and our chapter! Working together, we can reach our goal!

At the 2 August 2018 Board meeting, the 2018-2019 budget was passed, but serious revenue shortfalls were discussed. Without a generous donation this year by a chapter member, the budget would not have been essentially balanced—and the Board would have had to cut vital

programs. So, after a lengthy discussion on how to raise revenue, it became obvious that we needed to raise our dues from **\$25 to \$30 a year, starting on 1 January 2019**. Dues have not been raised since at least 2006, and costs have done nothing but go up. It was time to make this difficult but necessary decision. To cushion the blow, the Board decided that regular chapter members who pay their 2019 dues before 1 January 2019 will pay at the \$25 rate; they may also pay dues at the rate of \$25 for up to 5 years if they choose to do so, as long as they are paid by 1 January 2019. **Any dues paid on or after 1 January 2019 will be \$30.** (NOTE: Surviving Spouses and Honorary Members are still not required to pay dues but are *strongly* encouraged to do so.)

Turning to the Program for the September dinner meeting, our guest speaker is a dynamic and knowledgeable warfighter and MOAA Portland Chapter member, **Major General Christopher Owens, USMC (Ret)** (*see photo below*).



Major General Owens grew up in Eastern Oregon, graduated from Portland State University, and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps in 1982. Following flight school and qualification in the AH-1 helicopter, he served in a number of tactical squadrons, as a flight instructor, weapons and tactics instructor, and as a forward air controller.

General Owens commanded Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 169, Marine Aircraft Group 29, 2d Marine Expeditionary Brigade, 1st Marine Aircraft

Wing, and U.S. Marine Corps Forces Korea. He participated in various overseas operations--including Restore Hope, Vigilant Warrior, Southern Watch, and Iraqi Freedom.

General Owens attended USMC Command and Staff College, The Marine Corps' School of Advanced Warfighting (SAW), and the Marine Corps War College. He later served as Director of SAW.

Staff assignments included I Marine Expeditionary Force Pacific Region Plans Officer; Chief of Staff, Joint Concept Development and Experimentation Directorate in Joint Forces Command; Chief of Staff, Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO; and Chief of Plans, Policy and Strategy for United Nations Command, ROK-US Combined Forces Command, and US Forces Korea.

In his final assignment, General Owens served on the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations as Director of Expeditionary Warfare Division (OPNAV N95). He retired in September 2017 and is currently a doctoral student at Portland State University.

As I close my comments, I would like to see more members "step forward" to help on our various committees. If you would like to volunteer, please contact me at maryjmayer@yahoo.com or 310-897-1902 (cell). Remember: "Never Stop Serving!"

TREASURER'S REPORT

By LTC Myrna Trull, USA (Ret)

As of 2 August 2018, the MOAA Portland Chapter has overall assets of **over \$18,000** and a total of **200** members. 117 regular members have paid dues through 2018, 12 regular members have paid dues through 2019, 3 regular

members have paid through 2021. 8 Surviving Spouse members have paid dues for 2018. There are 43 Surviving Spouses who have not paid (but are not required). Our two Voices for America's Troops have paid their dues for 2018. And, finally, we have three Honorary Members who are not required to pay dues. Twelve (12) regular members have been dropped for lack of paying their 2018 dues—after numerous reminders from the Treasurer and Membership Chair.

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

By Major William J. Tidd, USAF (Ret)

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

It's a sad state-of-affairs when I have to report in the very first newsletter of the new program year that, in the last six months, our 200 members have only been able to acquire 6 new members. Obviously, everyone is having a great vacation and has forgotten that the life blood of the MOAA Portland Chapter is the members. We are directly impacted in the programs and services we can provide when membership drops—we lost 12 members who did not pay their 2018 membership dues by March 2018. We are also going to lose significant reimbursements from MOAA National because we have not met the recruitment and retention objectives established by the Association.

This dismal picture was presented to the MOAA Portland Chapter board members at the August 2nd board meeting. At that meeting, every board member unanimously agreed to recruit **TWO NEW MEMBERS EACH** by the 30 June 2019 deadline. If the members of the board can accept this challenge, it is well within the reach of EACH CHAPTER MEMBER to accomplish the same. We have six more months to correct this decline and lack of participation, so let's get out there and find some new members!!!

I thought that the chapter membership might be interested in an on-going effort I am pursuing with the MOAA Chapters and Councils Committee. Here is an excerpt from the letter I sent to Lieutenant General Ed Hanlon and COL Terri Coles after attending the 2018

Oregon Women Veterans Conference in Sunriver in April:

The MOAA Portland Chapter had a great location in the facility and an information table covered with the current legislative white papers, benefit magazines, and application information. I immediately noticed that attendees would stop and talk to the representative at the Air Force Association table next to ours but would not stop at the MOAA table. Attempting to determine the problem, I intentionally stopped numerous passersby and asked them why they were bypassing the MOAA table. The answer was simple and direct, "Why should I stop? Since I'm not an officer, what can your Association do for me?"

I decided to take a realistic look at our display and concluded that a table cloth with the MOAA logo and stacks of papers and magazines laying on the table gave no insight as to who or what we were.

*I believe that we need to visually change our display above and beyond simply our logo and the tag phrase "Never Stop Serving" when in the public sector. The "Never Stop Serving" is a great line to motivate fellow officers and the organization to keep serving, leading, and maintaining their professional involvement. It is a great tool when associated with maintaining membership retention or acquiring new members, but it does not address the mission of our organization when it stands alone. As stated, our mission is "**Never stop serving and advocating on behalf of America's uniformed services.**"*

MOAA enthusiastically concurred with my assessment and is assisting me in the attainment of an "Advocacy" banners which can display at our activities.

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

Power to the People: Fiscal 2019 National Defense Authorization Act: The NDAA recently approved by both the Senate and House sets the spending limits for the Armed Forces for the coming fiscal year. Over the last 21 years, until this summer, the NDAA was NEVER passed and signed before the beginning of the fiscal year, October 1st. Since each Service Appropriations Bill derives from the parameters established by the NDAA, the result of delayed packages over 21 consecutive years was to force the Congress into Continuing Resolutions, which meant significant delays in funding and a lack of planning and responding to changes in the national security environment. **Essentially,** legislative failure leads to chaotic management of our armed forces.

I believe that the loss of life and major damage to combat ships that occurred in two recent Navy collisions is in part directly attributable to the past 21 years of Congressional legislative failure.

However, passage of the FY 2019 NDAA is a ray of hope. Additionally, as MOAA trumpeted in late July, the bill that came out of the Conference Committee and is now on the way to the White House was a significant win for MOAA members, cooperating Veterans organizations, and the entire armed forces. The MOAA headline on its announcement read: "Military Pay Raise, No New TRICARE Fees or BAH Cuts: A win for MOAA Advocacy." This win resulted from active lobbying efforts by MOAA of both houses of Congress throughout the budget setting legislative process AND the impact of more than 17,000 messages to individual legislators sent by MOAA members and their spouses.

These messages apparently were most important with regards to the Senate version of the bill which contained significant Tricare for Life fee increases in prescription co-pays directed at retirees younger than 65. This issue had been resolved in the FY 2018 legislation, but the Senate crumbled to pressure from the Department of Defense to abrogate the grandfathering agreement. The House bill did not

include the new fees, but many thought the battle had been lost. The messaging campaign and the backbone of House members saved the day!

We should congratulate MOAA, and we should congratulate ourselves! Keep up the pressure. That is why our chapter actively communicates with our Oregon federal legislators on a consistent basis.

In addition to the Tricare win, the NDAA includes: (1) A full 2.6% Military Pay Raise, the largest in 8 years and in accordance with the law. However, the last administration left the armed forces with a residual pay-raise gap of 2.6% incurred in fiscal years 2011, 2012, and 2013 which need to be addressed in the out-years. (2) Increases in end strength were included for each of the Services, as each Service is especially under-manned with war fighters. (3) No reduction in the Basic Allowance for Housing, as had been proposed by the Senate.

MOAA reports that the Armed Services Committees were focused on assisting in the implementation of the new defense strategy as published by Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis in January. This is just a start on repairing our national security position after 8 years of cutbacks, but it is a start.

Restoring Military Strength – A Long Climb Back: Congress passed a two-year budget deal in February which reversed the lengthy decline in Defense spending, and the recently passed NDAA (*see above*) further improved the fiscal outlook. However, it is clear from the comments from Defense leaders, both military and civilians, that there is a long way to go to restore our Armed Services. Comments by leaders indicate that the extent of the decline in readiness has been greater than commonly acknowledged.

As an indicator, the Air Force at the beginning of this year was short 2,000 or

10% of available billets for fighter pilots alone. This did not count pilots of transport, helicopters, bombers, and others. 2,000 net new fighter pilots need to be recruited, trained, serve time in grade, and be replaced after attrition. This is not an easy task in a period of full employment. The Air Force Vice Chief of Staff noted that “we were too small for all the missions we were asked to do...”, an admission that the decline has been very steep and will be a challenge to reverse.

Likewise, Navy senior leaders said that annual budget cuts in the previous Administration had led to delayed maintenance and extended deployments. In turn, the Navy was brought to a breaking point, culminating in the two ship collisions and the death of 17 sailors. In response, the Navy is working to add 4,000 net new sailors this year. Again, these additional sailors need to attend A Schools in their specialty, gain experience at sea, advance in rank, and be retained--a long, long process.

Reflective of the personnel shortage in the Navy, a term new to me, “cross-decking,” has emerged. It means that an individual qualified on a class of warship in a particular skill can and is transferred to a similar but different ship and is immediately qualified. Unfortunately, there are significant differences among systems even if the ships are of the same general classification. Cross-decking was directly involved in one of the collisions, in which an E-7 boatswain’s mate lost control of the steering system, leading to the collision. Essentially, cross-decking reflects a degraded service and must be eliminated, but it will take time.

The Marine Corps, Army, and Coast Guard all mirror the situations described by the Air Force and Navy. We really face a major challenge. Sustained spending on our Armed Forces will be required to re-establish our previous position of capability. In that regard, even the mid-term elections are pivotal to our military readiness.

Bleeding Us Dry - The PERS Sinkhole and Craven Leadership: Here we go again! Despite posting investment returns of 15.4% in 2017 (2.1 times the projected returns), required contributions for the 2019-2021 period will explode!

The total projected required contribution in the forthcoming period will rise from \$2.9 billion to \$4

billion, an increase of 38% in a 2.5% inflation rate economy. Moreover, with much less certainty, contributions in the following two-year period are projected to rise a similar amount. After we have been sucked dry for 4 years, the contributions required are projected simply to remain at these high levels for “several decades.” Do you want to bet that out-year needs will rise from projections? You bet.

To put these figures in perspective, PERS contributions equal roughly \$1,000 per man, woman, and child in Oregon over a two-year period. The Governor continually complains that the state has a revenue problem. I submit, again, that the state has an overwhelming spending and waste problem, compounded by a leadership problem.

Note that the Governor explicitly refused to address the PERS issue during the short 2017 legislative session, supposedly because it was too complex to be addressed. They call that approach “kicking the can down the road,” way down the road. Bet that you have heard nothing on the subject leading up to 2019. It is easier to stick your head in the sand.

In reality, the Governor, the Legislature, and even the State Supreme Court have little interest in really solving the PERS mess. They all benefit from the system at the expense of citizens. Further, the Governor is a wholly owned subsidiary of government unions, so she is doubly conflicted.

There is a simple answer to the issue. Convert the PERS system from a defined benefit program, which is hopelessly outmoded and has been largely abandoned by industry, into a Defined Contribution Program, similar to the 401(k) widely available in the commercial sector.

A Defined Contribution Program would have costs that are not dependent on

financial market performance and entail no long-term liabilities. A change likely would be applicable to new hires but would have increasing cost control impact over the years. Then we could begin to address other legislative needs, of which there are many. Keep this in mind as you consider your options in the November elections.

SURVIVING SPOUSE CORNER

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

Our 20 June 2018 **MOAA Portland Chapter Surviving Spouse Luncheon** at Albertina Kerr’s Restaurant was small but delightful, as usual. We had six in attendance. It was our last luncheon for the 2017-2018 program year. **Ms. Jill Murphy** (from Soldier and Family Assistance, US Army Recruiting Battalion in Portland, Oregon) was our guest. She is also our Operation Homefront local representative. She spoke about the Back-to-School Backpack Brigade coming in early August—to help our military children be prepared for school.

It was nice to have **Mrs. Agnes Smith** attend our luncheon after being absent for a while. She won the “special gift” which was very appropriate as it was her birthday! Albertina’s gave Agnes a special dessert and even had their “Birthday Bunny” sing “Happy Birthday” to her.

We look forward to seeing all you Surviving Spouses at our next luncheon at **12:00 noon on Tuesday, October 16, 2018** at Albertina Kerr’s Restaurant, 424 NE 22nd Avenue, Portland, 97232, in the Main Dining Room. Wives of chapter members are always welcome to attend. For reservations, please contact **Mrs. Carol Patrick** at **503-654-1511** or **jymbo@earthlink.net**. If you have food allergies or issues, call Albertina’s two days before the luncheon at 503-231-0216 to determine a menu which will work for you.

Operation Homefront is still needing diapers and wipes. Please bring them to the October luncheon. Ask friends and family if they are purchasing new cell phones; have them save the used cell phones for you, then give them to our Chapter President to give to the Cell Phones for Soldiers Program. Have a wonderful, relaxing last few weeks of summer!

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

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*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS**Army Reps**

MG Curtis A. Loop: 503-579-6297
LTC William G. Kroger: 971-645-6889

Navy Reps

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

Air Force Reps

Col Lynn Guenther, 541-354-1771
Captain Doug MacEllven: 503-397-5253

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)

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

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)

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 68959
PORTLAND, OR 97268**

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

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| October 6, 2018 | Brunch Meeting with Guest Speaker (Location: Hayden's Lakefront Grill) |
| November 3, 2018 | Brunch Meeting with Guest Speaker (Location: Hayden's Lakefront Grill) |
| <i>November 8, 2018</i> | <i>Board of Directors Meeting (Location: Colwood Golf Course)</i> |
| December 4, 2018 | Dinner Meeting with Entertainment (Location: The Monarch Hotel) |
| <i>January 2019</i> | <i>No scheduled chapter brunch or dinner meeting</i> |
| February 2, 2019 | Brunch Meeting with Guest Speaker (Location: Hayden's Lakefront Grill) |
| <i>February 7, 2019</i> | <i>Board of Directors Meeting (Location: Colwood Golf Center)</i> |
| March 2, 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 **October 2018 Brass Bulletin Newsletter** must be submitted to the editor, **Col Mary J. Mayer, USAF (Ret)**, at **maryjmayer@yahoo.com** by **6 September 2018**.