



COLUMBIA RIVER CHAPTER

NEWSLETTER

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION of AMERICA

P.O. BOX 1872 VANCOUVER, WA 98668

ESTABLISHED 1970

website www.moaacolumbiariver.org

October 2014

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

President:

Dave Casteel
360-834-2448

1st Vice-President:

Paul Crosby
360-666-8871

2nd Vice-President:

& Membership:
Evelyn Brady
360-696-1592

Secretary:

Treasurer:

Ron Pastor
360-882-1275

Immediate Past President:

Rod Williams
360-891-5605

Army Rep:

Jon Frederick
360-576-9078

Marine Rep:

Terry Babin
360-608-7789

Navy Rep:

Rich Wersinger
360-901-1915

Air Force Rep:

Beth Brown
360-260-9845

Coast Guard Rep:

Public Health Rep:

Roger DeRoos
360-835-5450

Auxiliary Rep:

Marie Wolfe
360-574-6675

Legislative Affairs:

Roy Korkalo
360-892-7189

Personal Affairs:

Terry Babin
360-608-7789

Public Affairs:

John Donnelly
360-904-8966

Scholarship:

Paul Crosby
360-666-8871

Chaplain:

Rev Max Metcalf
541-961-0869

Fall is here and none too soon. The Fall rains are nourishing parched lawns and plants and greatly assisting the firefighters battling out of control fires. We thank and appreciate the dedication of all the firefighters who put their lives at risk to save others--just as our brave volunteer military has done for our country for decades.

We pray that our volunteer military will not be put directly into harm's way to control the ISIS, Khorasan, and other yet to evolve threats--especially those that might materialize on our own soil! The U.S.A. has prevailed in the past and we pray our country has the determination and fortitude to do it yet again. We know that our brave men and women in our country's armed forces are up to the challenge.

The Commander-in-Chief has promised not to send combat troops into Iraq, but they are still in harm's way and still putting their lives on the line for us around the world. So, why then, is he proposing to cut their January 2015 pay raise by from the measly 1.8% (based on the ECI metric established by Congress in the FY 2004 Defense Authorization Act) to 1.0%? This is the same raise federal civilian

employees (who don't endure separations and harsh conditions our military endures) will receive. Oh, by the way, Social Security annuitants and military retirees will receive an estimated 1.6% to 1.8% COLA. Now is



not the time for him to cut their pay and it sends the wrong message. Congresswoman **Herrera Beutler** and the House of Representatives have rejected the proposed cut, but to my knowledge, our two U.S. Senators and the Senate Armed Services Committee are supporting the cut. It is up to us to contact our U.S. Senators to ask them to reject this cut.

[Continued on page 2]

16 Oct - Luncheon Clark County Skills Center

1130 – Gather
1200 Lunch

\$15 per person

RSVP: Dave Casteel
at 834-2448 or
MOAACRCpresident
@comcast.net

Details on page 10

Newsletter Highlights

| | |
|------------------------------|---------|
| President's Message | Page 1 |
| Membership Update | Page 3 |
| Chapter Programs | Page 3 |
| POW/MIA Dedication..... | Page 4 |
| Immunizations Reminder | Page 5 |
| CRC 5-Star Excellence..... | Page 6 |
| October Speaker Bio | Page 7 |
| Congressional Contacts | Page 8 |
| Legislative Affairs..... | Page 9 |
| Chapter Calendar..... | Page 10 |

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE continued

Senator **Patty Murray** recently made a statement on the eve of the 13th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks that states..."*our men and women in uniform continue to confront new threats both at home and abroad...Let us never forget those who have fallen since that September morning. And as long as there are those who wish to harm the country we so love, let us recommit to our unwavering support for those who protect and defend.*" (emphasis added) "Unwavering support" to me means that she does not support the President's proposed pay cuts, but instead supports our troops receiving the full 1.8% pay raise they have earned. I plan to ask her, and I hope you will also.

On a related note, I recently had a fruitful visit with Senator Murray's Vancouver Veterans Affairs representative, **Amie Cullop**. Please see the full article in the Legislative Affairs section.

I had the honor of attending the best POW-MIA ceremony I've seen. It was put on by CMAC and emceed by our very own **Larry Smith** at the Armed Forces Reserve Center. If you missed it, you really missed a unique opportunity to pay tribute to honor those who were captured and those we never heard from again. It was a real privilege for me to shake hands and thank WWII POW **Eugene Liggett** who escaped from a Berlin POW camp on his second attempt. Hundreds of others who did not escape were sent to Siberia and never heard from again...You can find his 60 page memoir entitled, "*NO—NOT YET*" The Gene Liggett Story Military Memoirs by F. Eugene Liggett, on the internet. See: <http://tinyurl.com/ou3htg3>

If you missed our September barbecue you missed a great event. (I was having such a good time I forgot to take photos.) If I remember correctly, **Betsy Brinkley** and **Rod Williams** (substituting for Jon Frederick who was undefeated in three matches) are the new Bocce champs. Of special note and special thanks, attendees donated \$1125 to our scholarship fund. This was in addition to \$350 already donated prior to the event. These donations cover a little over half of our annual out-of-pocket scholarship costs. We hope you see you at our December 7th Scholarship Christmas program.

We have great programs for you this fall starting with "**Alfie**" **Lourdes**, Director, Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs on Thursday, October 16th at the Clark County Skills Center. I will be accepting your "Yes" RSVPs at 360-834-2448 or MOAACRCpresident@comcast.net. If you send me an e-mail I will acknowledge your RSVP. See you there.

Dave Casteel
President

Newsletter Editor

Newsletter Editor: Rich Wersinger. You can contact him at 360-901-1915 or e-mail him at rich@rjwconsulting.org.

Our Chapter Secretary coordinates calendar inputs and newsletter distribution.

Newsletter Distribution

We continue to distribute our newsletter by e-mail, so if you are receiving this via postal service and would prefer e-mail please notify our Chapter Secretary,



Membership Update by Evelyn Brady

Columbia River Chapter has once again been awarded a 5 star rating from MOAA! Thank you for all your recruiting efforts. As all our members know, the stronger our membership, the stronger our voice, and every voice counts. When you are asked “Why should I join MOAA?” your reply may include that in addition to representing our interests before Congress, MOAA offers personal and financial services available only to members. And don’t leave out the nice social interactions that local chapter membership offers. Looking forward to seeing you on October 16.

You can reach me at evelynbrady@rocketmail.com or 360 696-1592.

Evelyn Brady
Membership Recruitment Committee

Membership Services: by Terry Babin

A big “Thank you” to everyone who accepted or returned our calls this spring and during this September to help get the Chapter records updated, and ensure you were receiving information on Chapter programs and activities. The call program sponsored by the Membership Services Committee also helps the Chapter leadership “keep connected” with many of our members who are unable to personally attend our events. Because of the cooperation and support of you, our Columbia River Chapter members, we have made significant progress in having better contact information and awareness of the welfare of our members.

The key to the success of the Membership Services Committee is the support and time given by the Services’ and Auxiliary Representatives, and especially the support and time given by the members and spouses making the calls to keep connected with all of you.

The committee will continue its transition from the Personal Affairs Committee to a more robust organization focused on service to our members and spouses throughout Chapter membership. In June before the summer break we hosted our first “New Members’ Orientation” in conjunction with wine tasting at Bethany Vineyards. Forgot this last time,

but next time we will take pictures to include in the Newsletter. Next Orientation is tentatively scheduled in November.

Areas of emphasis by the Committee during the next ten months include strengthening our Greeters’ program for Chapter events, establishing a more formal “sponsor” link for new members as well as hosting one or more new member orientations, and continuing to improve our “connectivity” with members and spouses. Service Representatives will be receiving training to assist with personal affairs and retention activities.

The program for the Chapter’s November luncheon meeting will feature the Membership Services Committee—role and functions. The program will include Personal Affairs checklists (and updates), MOAA publications, and real lessons learned when settling the affairs of deceased members and spouses. Other parts of the program will feature the “retention” functions of the committee—a new area where this Chapter is a leading innovator among the overall MOAA organization. Plus, “what is it like to be a caller for the Chapter?”--we will hopefully have one of members share their experience and what it involves.

We hope to see you at one or more of the Chapter’s events this autumn and early winter. If you need a ride to attend, or have question about, Chapter activities and services, let your personal “phone caller contact” know. You can also call me, a Service Representative, or the Auxiliary Representative. Our phone numbers are on the front page of this Newsletter.

Terry Babin
Membership Services Committee



Vancouver POW/MIA Monument Dedicated by Beth Brown

The monument was dedicated in a very moving ceremony on September 20, 2014, national POW/MIA recognition day, at the Vancouver Armed Forces Reserve Center. The Community Military Appreciation Committee (CMAC) hosted the event and masterminded the monument. The monument commands attention in a prominent spot before the entrance to the Armed Forces Reserve Center which opened in 2011 at 15005 NE 65th Street. Committee co-chair and our own Larry Smith, emceed the proceedings and reminded everyone CMAC includes many veterans but is a civic nonprofit organization open to all.

Project manager, Kelly Putney who oversaw the construction of the new POW/MIA monument in east Vancouver stated each stone is unique and storied, and each was shown meticulous care and dedication. Just like each member of the military who was honored and remembered at the ceremony. The mission of the monument is to remind our community about American soldiers who were imprisoned by the enemy and remembering the ones who never came home.

Wounded WW11 Veteran and guest of honor, Dale Bowlin, recounted his experience as a prisoner of war in Germany in 1945. Bowlin introduced two of his peers and friends also wounded WW11 prisoners of war in Germany especially Eugene Liggett, who escaped before being sent to a labor camp in Siberia where prisoners were never seen again. Please see President's Message to reference the Eugene Liggett memoirs.

This ceremony was a very special and humbling experience due to the opportunity to meet and hear the stories of prisoners of war living in our community and the poignant reminder of those "unaccounted for." The walkway to the stage and monument was lined with POW/MIA flags and the flags of each of the 50 states. Towards the end of the ceremony there was a strong breeze and all the flags were vigorously waving in the wind. The spectacle, like the ceremony, was awesome and one to Remember.



FLU IMMUNIZATION REMINDER: ***submitted by Roger DeRoos, Ret. USPHS***

It is time to start thinking about getting your annual flu immunization. I receive several email health-related newsletters, and the recent one from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) included the most up-to-date advisories for flu immunizations. There are two new advisories; one for the nasal administered, live attenuated influenza vaccine (called LAIV) which is sprayed into the nostrils, and the other for the “inactivated” or “recombinant” vaccine, which is administered via injection. The nasal vaccine is recommended for ages 2 to 49.

So those of us who are more advanced in age will need to continue with the injectable version. The link to the CDC “Vaccine Information Statement” update is provided below. The links to the two statements for influenza are provided in the “Routine” section about half way down the page. Perhaps you will want to pass copies on to some family and friends for their benefit.

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/current-vis.html>

Note that it takes about 2 weeks for protection to develop after the vaccination, and that protection lasts several months to a year.

The LAIV version (nasal) protects against 4 different influenza viruses. You are getting a live, attenuated influenza vaccine (called LAIV), which is sprayed into the nose. “Attenuated” means weakened. The viruses in the vaccine have been weakened so they won’t give you the flu. In contrast, an injectable flu vaccine, is either an “inactivated” or “recombinant” vaccine. This vaccine does not contain any live influenza virus. They are given by injection with a needle, and often called the “flu shot”.

Even though flu vaccine will not prevent all cases of flu, it is the best defense against the disease.

Leaving Active Duty? Don't Forget to Meet MEC: ***submitted by John Donnelly***

Transitioning from active duty status may leave some beneficiaries with questions about their health care. Military families are offered several options to transition from active duty as smoothly as possible. Once you leave active duty status, you will need to take be proactive to ensure that you and your family have health care that meets minimum essential coverage (MEC) as required by the Affordable Care Act.

The first program in place for military members and families leaving active duty status is the Transitional Assistance Management Program (TAMP). This program offers 180 days of

premium-free transitional health care benefits and begins the day after you separate from active duty. TAMP eligibility is determined by the services and reflected in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). While you are using the TAMP benefit, you meet the MEC requirement. During TAMP, you may enroll or reenroll in a TRICARE Prime, including US Family Health Plan, or TRICARE Overseas Prime, where available. For more information, visit www.tricare.mil/TAMP. You can also download the TAMP Fact Sheet.

After TAMP eligibility ends, or if you’re not eligible for TAMP, you may be eligible for the Continued Health Care Benefit Program (CHCBP), another option for transitional health care coverage. This program allows beneficiaries to continue health coverage by providing 18 to 36 months of temporary premium-based coverage. CHCBP begins the day after you lose your active duty TRICARE coverage or TAMP and also meets the MEC requirement. For more information about purchasing health care coverage through CHCBP, go to www.tricare.mil/CHCBP and download the CHCBP Fact Sheet. Keep in mind, you are not required to purchase CHCBP, but it is an option.

To ensure continuity of coverage during the TAMP period, you need to keep your information updated in DEERS. For CHCBP, beneficiaries enrolled in a premium-based plan must have been covered at least one day before the loss of TRICARE eligibility to qualify to purchase CHCBP when that coverage ends.

Whether you are using TRICARE Prime, TRICARE Standard or the US Family Health Plan, leaving active duty requires thought and planning; don’t forget to plan for your health care. If you enrolled in the TRICARE Plus program, meaning you are enrolled at a military hospital and only eligible for care there, you’re not covered by a TRICARE plan that meets the requirements for minimum essential coverage. If you don't have minimum essential coverage, you may have to pay a fee for each month you aren’t covered. For more information about TRICARE plans that meet MEC, visit www.tricare.mil/ACA.

Columbia River Chapter MOAA 2013 Five Star Level of Excellence Award Winner!

You might have seen this in MOAA's October 2014 issue of "Military Officer" magazine!

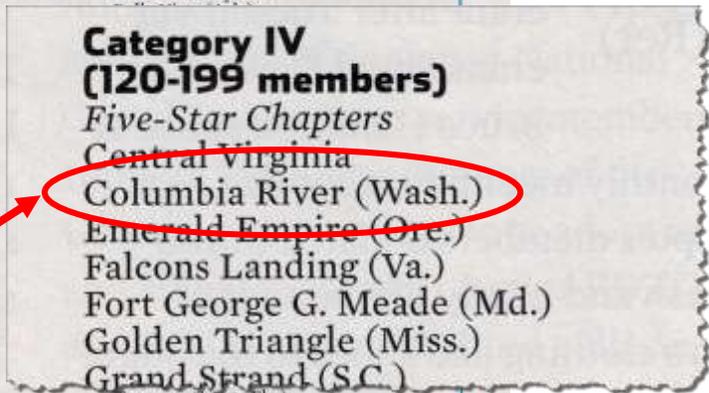
chaptersinaction

2013 Levels of Excellence Award Winners

Every year, MOAA's affiliates compete to receive a four- or five-star Levels of Excellence Award. The very best councils and chapters receive five-star awards, while above-average councils and chapters receive four-star awards. The winners listed below will receive special streamers at MOAA's annual meeting in Arlington, Va., in October. By-name invitations are being sent to the winning council and chapter presidents, who are invited to attend with their spouses. Congratulations to the winners!

| Council Category | Category III (200-299 members) | Category IV (120-199 members) | Category V (fewer than 120 members) |
|---|---|---|--|
| Five-Star Councils Arizona Colorado Florida Kansas Maryland Oregon Virginia | Five-Star Chapters Arizona Atlanta Coronado (Ariz.) Fort Knox (Ky.) Area Inc. Greater Cincinnati Heartland of America (Neb.) Luke (Ariz.) Mayport (Fla.) Inc. Memphis (Tenn.) Middle Tennessee Mile High (Colo.) Mount Rainier (Wash.) Pittsburgh New Jersey Lakes & Pines Portland (Ore.) Southwest Virginia St. Petersburg (Fla.) Area Tucson (Ariz.) | Five-Star Chapters Cape Fear (N.C.) Capitol (Mich.) Area Sandhills (N.C.) | Charlotte Harbor (Fla.) Coastal Carolina (N.C.) Fort Benning (Ga.) Area Greater Rome-Utica (N.Y.) Halifax (Fla.) Area Kingdom of the Sun (Fla.) Lee Coast (Fla.) Orange Empire (Calif.) Southwest Oklahoma Susquehanna (Md.) Upper Potomac (Md.) Ventura County (Calif.) |
| Four-Star Councils California Illinois New Jersey | Four-Star Chapters Cape Fear (N.C.) Capitol (Mich.) Area Sandhills (N.C.) | Five-Star Chapters Columbia River (Wash.) Emerald Empire (Ore.) Falcons Landing (Va.) Fort George G. Meade (Md.) Golden Triangle (Miss.) Grand Strand (S.C.) Greater Birmingham (Ala.) Jayhawk (Kan.) Kaw Valley (Kan.) Kitsap (Wash.) Lone Star Officers Club Inc. (Texas) Monterey County (Calif.) Northeast Arkansas Northeast Florida Northern Arizona Northern New Jersey Ohio Western Reserve Olympia (Wash.) Area Olympic Peninsula (Wash.) Palm Beach-Martin Counties (Fla.) South Jersey Southern Maryland Southern Tier (N.Y.) Southside Virginia Southwest Illinois Superstition Mountain (Ariz.) Wichita (Kan.) | Five-Star Chapters Treasure Coast (Fla.) Western Colorado Yuma (Ariz.) |
| Large Category (600 or more members) Five-Star Chapters Alamo (Texas) Cape Canaveral (Fla.) Minnesota New Hampshire Pikes Peak (Colo.) Richmond (Va.) Area | Category IV (120-199 members) Five-Star Chapters Central Virginia Columbia River (Wash.) Emerald Empire (Ore.) Falcons Landing (Va.) Fort George G. Meade (Md.) Golden Triangle (Miss.) Grand Strand (S.C.) Greater Birmingham (Ala.) Jayhawk (Kan.) Kaw Valley (Kan.) Kitsap (Wash.) Lone Star Officers Club Inc. (Texas) Monterey County (Calif.) Northeast Arkansas Northeast Florida Northern Arizona Northern New Jersey Ohio Western Reserve Olympia (Wash.) Area Olympic Peninsula (Wash.) Palm Beach-Martin Counties (Fla.) South Jersey Southern Maryland Southern Tier (N.Y.) Southside Virginia Southwest Illinois Superstition Mountain (Ariz.) Wichita (Kan.) | Five-Star Chapters Central Virginia Columbia River (Wash.) Emerald Empire (Ore.) Falcons Landing (Va.) Fort George G. Meade (Md.) Golden Triangle (Miss.) Grand Strand (S.C.) Treasure Coast (Fla.) Western Colorado Yuma (Ariz.) | Four-Star Chapters Aiken (S.C.) Athens (Ga.) Area Catawba Valley (N.C.) Clearwater (Fla.) Flint Hills (Kan.) Gen. William Smallwood (Md.) Kings Bay (Ga.) Mahoning and Shenango Valleys (Ohio) The Military Officers Club of Volusia County (Fla.) Mojave Desert (Calif.) North Dallas-Fort Worth (Texas) Pendleton (Calif.) Quad Cities (Ill.) Santa Fe Trail (Kan.) Suncoast (Fla.) Sweetwater (Calif.) Venice (Fla.) Area |
| Four-Star Chapter Ark-La-Tex (La.) | Four-Star Chapters Cape Fear (N.C.) Capitol (Mich.) Area Sandhills (N.C.) | Four-Star Chapters Cape Fear (N.C.) Capitol (Mich.) Area Sandhills (N.C.) | |
| Category I (400-599 members) Five-Star Chapters Hampton Roads (Va.) Huntsville (Ala.) MOAA Central Ohio MOA of Sarasota (Fla.) Tampa (Fla.) | Category II (300-399 members) Five-Star Chapters Charleston (S.C.) El Paso (Texas) Greater Dallas Miramar (Calif.) Montgomery (Ala.) Area Mount Vernon (Va.) Northern Virginia Pensacola (Fla.) Riverside March Field (Calif.) Southern Nevada Spokane (Wash.) Virginia Peninsula | Four-Star Chapters Albuquerque (N.M.) Northwest Florida | |

44 MILITARY OFFICER OCTOBER 2014



October 16, 2014 Luncheon Guest Speaker

Lourdes E. ‘Alfie’ Alvarado-Ramos



Alfie Alvarado serves as the Director of YOUR Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs. The Department serves as the statewide advocate for the benefits and services veterans and their families earned.

Alfie was born in Puerto Rico and served 22 years on active duty retiring in August 1993 as Command Sergeant Major of Madigan Army Medical Center and Troop Command, Joint Base Lewis McChord. During her military career, she was the recipient of awards and decorations that include the Legion of Merit, Order of Military Medical Merit, Expert Field Medical Badge and Meritorious Service Medals.

Her experience and education center in the management of medical service delivery and human resources. She is an alumni of the Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government Executive Program, the University of

Washington Executive Management Program and holds a Bachelor’s Degree from the University of the State of New York Regent’s Program.

Alfie Alvarado serves on the boards of directors of the Patrick Madigan Foundation, National Association of State Veterans Homes, National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs and the Association of Washington Generals.

She has received local, state and national awards including the Governor’s Distinguished Management Leadership Award and the Lifetime Achievement Award for women in the military from the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) and the VA Secretary’s Leadership Award.





Legislative Contacts

MOAA Legislative Action Center

<http://www.moaa.org/Legislative/>

MOAA Capitol toll free hotline at 1-866-272-6622

White House

Comments: 202-456-1111 Switchboard: 202-456-1414
FAX: 202-456-2461 E-mail: comments@whitehouse.gov

The U.S. Government's Portal: <http://www.usa.gov/>
U.S. Senate: <http://www.senate.gov/>
U.S. House of Representatives: <http://www.house.gov/>

**Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler
Washington's 3rd Congressional District**

<http://herrerabeutler.house.gov/>



| | |
|---|---|
| Washington, DC Office: U.S. House of Representatives 1130 Longworth House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 Phone: (202) 225-3536 Fax: (202) 225-3478 | Vancouver, WA Office: O.O. Howard House 750 Anderson Street, Suite B Vancouver, WA 98661 Phone: (360) 695-6292 Fax: (360) 695-6197 |
|---|---|

Contact Congresswoman Herrera Beutler via email:
<https://herrerabeutler.house.gov/contact-me/email-me>

U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell <http://cantwell.senate.gov/>

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| WASHINGTON, DC 511 Dirksen Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510 202-224-3441 202-228-0514 - FAX 202-224-8273 - TDD | SW WASHINGTON The Marshall House 1313 Officers Row Vancouver, WA 98661 360-696-7838 360-696-7844 – FAX | SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 915 Second Avenue Suite 3206 Seattle, WA 98174. 206-220-6400 206-220-6404 - FAX |
|---|--|---|

Contact Senator Cantwell via email: <http://cantwell.senate.gov/contact/>

U.S. Senator Patty Murray <http://murray.senate.gov/>

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| WASHINGTON, DC 173 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510 Phone: (202) 224-2621 Fax: (202) 224-0238 | SW WASHINGTON The Marshall House 1323 Officer's Row Vancouver, Washington 98661 Phone: (360) 696-7797 Fax: (360) 696-7798 | SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 2988 Jackson Federal Building 915 Second Avenue Seattle, WA 98174 Phone: (206) 553-5545 Toll Free: (866) 481-9186 Fax: (206) 553-0891 |
|---|---|--|

Contact Senator Murray via email: <http://murray.senate.gov/email/index.cfm>

Vancouver Area Washington State Legislative Districts and Representatives

| Legislator | District 49 | District 17 | District 18 | District 14 | District 20 |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Senator | Annette Cleveland 786-7696 | Don Benton 786-7632 | Ann Rivers 786-7634 | Curtis King 786-7626 | John Braun 786-7638 |
| Representative, Position 1 | Sharon Wylie 786-7924 | Monica Stonier 786-7994 | Brandon Vick 786-7850 | Norm Johnson (509) 454-7210 | Ed Orcutt 786-7990 |
| Representative, Position 2 | Jim Moeller 786-7872 | Paul Harris 786-7976 | Liz Pike 786-7812 | Charles Ross 786-7856 | Richard DeBolt 786-7896 |

Note: All phone numbers are 360 area code, except where otherwise noted. Toll free **1-800-562-6000**
* Party Caucus Phone Number until Official Swearing-in. More info at www.leg.wa.gov/legislature

Legislative Affairs: by Roy Korkalo

During the past few months, inflation has varied. It was 1.9% in June and 1.6% in August. The September average inflation in the cost of goods and services will determine the final inflation for the last three months of the fiscal year according to the Army Times Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) watch.

But no matter the numbers. The Military Times said President Obama formally notified Congress he wants to cap next year's military basic pay raise to 1.0%. The 2014 pay raise was also only 1.0%, the lowest since 1973.

The law says the raise is to match the private-sector, unless Congress says otherwise. So far, the House has voted for a 1.8% raise while the Senate backed President Obama's 1.0%. Just recently, three amendments to the defense authorization bill were introduced in the Senate. One to reject President Obama's pay cap. Another to reject DOD's proposed TRICARE pharmacy copay increases. And the third to strike cuts to Basic Allowance for Housing benefit. The Senate may act on these amendments after the November elections.

You are encouraged to contact our U.S. Senators requesting their support of these amendments.

On a local legislative note, MOAA Columbia River Chapter President, David Casteel, recently met with Amie Cullop in U.S. Senator Patty Murray's office to discuss MOAA's national legislative concerns. See David's report following this article.

Roy Korkalo
Chapter Legislative Chair

**Legislative Meeting Report by Dave Casteel**

In September, I met with Amie Cullop, Senator Murray's Southwest Washington Representative including Veterans Affairs.

I told her I was there to provide accurate information and advocate for those serving and those who served as well as their families. I started the conversation with the "A Bargain--Not a Liability" MOAA brochure which disputes the faulty DOD assertion that personnel costs are 50% of the budget (you can find a copy of it online at www.MOAA.org) and discussed the MCRMC Interim report which validated the information in the brochure. I then talked about three issues in the FY 15 Def Auth Act -- 1.8% pay raise issue, 5% BAH out of pocket increase, and proposed TRICARE pharmacy increases. I left the brochure with her as well as the three talking papers prepared by MOAA.

I was impressed. She's sharp and knowledgeable with five years prior service (Army MOS was counterintelligence) including two tours in the Gulf. She was medically retired (@ 70%) with two damaged/ruptured vertebrae and fibromyalgia (presumptive for Gulf veterans).

She uses the Government offered health plan off the exchange and TRICARE so, besides being a veteran, she is well versed with TRICARE. She also recently enrolled with the Portland VA and likes her care.

Her father was an E-6 in the Navy and deployed over 18 months at one point when she was young. She said her mother was on WIC (food stamps then I presume) due to low pay. I asked her how her mother would have felt/coped on food stamps having had to pay 5% more out-of-pocket for housing and forfeiting nearly half of a measly 1.8% raise (for up to eight years) as authorized Congress but cut by the President.

I also mentioned Senator Murray's 9/11 anniversary remarks (see President's remarks) and I said I hoped this meant Senator Murray would vote against the pay cut and BAH out of pocket increase.

2014 – 2015 CHAPTER CALENDAR

16 October
Thursday **Luncheon Meeting at the Clark County Skills Center**
1130 Gather, Luncheon at 1200
Program: Veteran Affairs in Washington State
Speaker: Lourdes E. Alvarado Ramos (Alfie) Director WA Department of Veterans Affairs
Details below:

20 November
Thursday **Luncheon Meeting at the Clark County Skills Center.**
Program Membership Services: More than just Personal Affairs
Speaker: Terry Babin

7 December
Sunday **Holiday Christmas Party honoring scholarship recipients**
Details: Buffet Dinner at the 40 et 8 Chateau, 1500 – 1800

2015
22 January
Thursday **Luncheon Meeting**
Touchmark at the Fairway Village Restaurant Retirement Community
The Officers Wives Club is inviting MOAA members for the 15th Annual Joint Luncheon

21 February
Saturday **Brunch** at the Club Green Meadows
Annual Business Meeting

Luncheon Meeting

at the Clark County Skills Center

12200 NE 28th Street
Vancouver, WA 98682

1130 Gather, Luncheon at 1200

Cost: \$15 per person

RSVP:

Call or e-mail Dave Casteel NLT 9 October
834-2448 MOAACRCpresident@comcast.net

Donations for raffle drawing welcome!

Program

Veteran Affairs in Washington State and National Highlights

Speaker: Lourdes E. Alvarado Ramos (Alfie)
Director WA Department of Veterans Affairs

