



COLUMBIA RIVER CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

4-Star Excellence Chapter



MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION of AMERICA
P.O. BOX 1872 VANCOUVER, WA 98668

ESTABLISHED 1970

website: www.moacolumbiariver.org

June 2021

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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& Membership:**

**2nd Vice-President:
& Programs**

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360-433-5605

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Rod Williams

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Chaplain:

Roster Manager:

My headline for this newsletter is – I can announce a date when our chapter can meet in person again. It has been a long time coming. Before that, I would be remiss for not thanking all of you who kept in touch and participated in our remote activities. I must also recognize the strong leadership of your executive board and the Columbia River MOAA Foundation. Through them our chapter community support and advocacy programs are thriving. We are coming out of the prolonged pandemic era in good shape.

So, for the good news of meeting together again, we have selected an urban winery, Burnt Bridge Cellars at 1500 Broadway Street in Vancouver to host a wine tasting event on June 19th, 2021, from 3 to 5 PM. Burnt Bridge Cellars has been in Vancouver since 2010 and crafts compelling wines in small lots from "Washington's Best Vineyards." They also have a unique menu that pairs well with the wines. The facility does request you wear a mask when not tasting wines and moving about. See details on page 10. This will be our last event before our summer break in July and August. We will be back in September with another in person event – our traditional BBQ and scholarship fund raiser. I look forward to seeing many of you at these events.

Another bit of good news, the newsletter you are reading and our chapter website were again recognized by national MOAA for the Colonel Marvin J. Harris Communications



Awards. Both received five-star recognition. Each year, MOAA holds a communications award contest to identify those councils and chapters that do an outstanding job communicating with their members and community. A big thank you and much deserved recognition go to our newsletter editor, **Rich Wersinger**, who pulls together inputs from a set of great contributors whose names you can see throughout the newsletter. I must note that mine is almost always late so a personal thanks to **Rich**. Our Webmaster, **Dave Casteel**, has kept our site current and informative.

Have you visited it lately? It is a great resource at www.moacolumbiariver.org for you to stay in touch.

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**Hooray!
In-person social
June 19th
See Page 10**

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President's Message continued

I know a few of you were able to attend the Memorial Day observance at the Fort Vancouver Artillery Barracks on May 31st. No, it was not the large public affair of years past, but it was a great first step back in that direction. The event was hosted by the Community Military Appreciation Committee (CMAC), the city of Vancouver, Clark County, National Park Service and The Historic Trust.

The highlight for me was the emotional comments from a local Gold Star Mother. Our chapter provided coffee, cookies, and doughnuts starting at 8:30 AM for the workers putting the event together, and then for VIPs and attendees as they gathered and tried to find a spot of shade or a bit of breeze. Thanks to **Dave and Marilyn Casteel** for organizing and picking up the coffee donated by various local Starbucks locations. As the crowd size was purposely kept small by a limited advance notice and publicity, the **Casteels** and I were able to handle the service line. I was assured by CMAC's (and chapter member) **Larry Smith** the event will back to full size in 2022, which means we will need to call on a crew of volunteers as we have in the past.

Rod Williams
President



Chapter Volunteers Needed

by Rod Williams

Presently we have **one opening** on the board:

Vice President.

All our members have leadership experience and could capably fill any vacant roles.

Many of our spouses also bring skills and experience which make them excellent candidates. We encourage you to volunteer, too.

The frequently repeated idiom "it takes a village" is especially true about our chapter. It takes many hands to carry the load and not be a heavy burden on any one person.

- **Vice President** – can be tailored to fit any willing and able applicants to help us with programs, membership, recruiting, and advocacy activities.

If you think you can help, contact me, **Rod Williams** (503) 317-2273 or rodwill50@hotmail.com

We need you!



CRMF April 2021 Update*by Dave Casteel*

Dave Casteel (shilohcamas@comcast.net or CRMFpresident@comcast.net)

Summer is officially here and things are opening up. Despite COVID, your Foundation has been active. We are currently in the process of negotiating mutually beneficial terms and conditions of the WSU-V Col Paul and Ivadell Crosby / MOAA Endowment Gift Use Agreement with the WSU-V foundation.

As you know, we have an established endowment at Clark College that we have been contributing to for years. The corpus of the endowment is around \$86,000 -- the annual earnings of which currently funds all but about \$500 of the three \$1,000 annual scholarships we award.

At WSU-V, the prospective endowment balance financially kick-started by Paul and Ivadell, now stands at approximately \$14,600 due to some matching and growth, but needs another \$10,400 to be fully endowed. WSU-V is offering to grandfather us before they raise the minimum endowment donation level to \$50,000. The draft agreement requires the CRMF to contribute \$2,080 a year over a five-year period starting next year, which we believe is doable with your continued support.

We thank you again for your very generous response to the January dues letter and want you to know how appreciative we are of your support. While you can make a donation at any time, for those of you who are not able to join us in-person at the barbecue, the next formal appeal will be the September mail appeal in conjunction with our post COVID in-person annual September scholarship kick-off barbecue.

We continue to receive quarterly checks from your participation in the Fred Meyer Rewards program and the www.Smile.Amazon program. We very much appreciate these, although not huge, they do help and we know they can grow with your continued use and support. If you need sign up "how to" information, please let me know.

Fisher House is opening back up to guests and by the time you read this, will be at 50% capacity. In the past, through the Support The Troops fund, the CRMF has donated physical items (such as door room number

plates, room alarm clocks and suitcase stands, patio umbrellas and stands, barbecue grill covers, and benches for those waiting for the VA shuttle, just to name a few). We have also donated gifts cards for the staff to use to fund emergency or urgent needs of the guests (such as Uber fares to/from the VA hospital in Portland after the shuttle has stopped running) and food needs when there are not enough volunteer meals prepared. We have contacted them again to inquire about their current needs.

RMDs. You can make Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) directly from your IRA RMD. The benefit to you is that the QCD reduces your AGI on the front of your IRS Form 1040 dollar for dollar, thereby reducing the amount of tax you owe.

Stock transfers. If your portfolio has increased recently, you can tell your financial institution to DTC "xxx" number of shares or "\$xxx" to our Vanguard Brokerage account. The benefit to you is that you will avoid paying capital gains tax on the transfer of securities held long term (which you would have owed if you cashed them in and then donated the resultant cash).

I consider it an honor and a privilege to serve as your foundation president and on behalf of our officers and board of directors, want to thank you for all you do to support our veteran community.

Feel free to contact me by email or phone (360-834-2448) if you have any questions or need any additional information.

The Columbia River MOAA Foundation (CRMF) is an IRC 501(c)3 public charity to which donations are tax deductible. Our Federal tax ID# is 47-4776049.



Scholarship Corner By Paul Crosby

The chapter recently renewed its commitment to a WSU scholarship endowment when it agreed to a Gift Use Agreement. What this means is when our Current Use Fund at WSU-Vancouver reaches \$25,000 it becomes an endowment.

The chapter currently has \$14,600 in our Current Use Fund, \$10,400 short of the \$25,000 needed for an endowment for the Colonel Paul S. and Ivadell M. Columbia River MOAA Foundation Scholarship. To reach \$25,000 the Gift Use Agreement commits the chapter to five annual payments of \$2,080 beginning in April/May 2022. We can complete this commitment early if funds allow

The reason I am providing this information is there is a sense of urgency to fulfill this agreement. At WSU-Vancouver there is an expectation that the minimum needed to start an endowment with the WSU Foundation will increase from \$25,000 to \$50,000 sometime later this year. This is the reason the chapter has agreed to the Gift Use Agreement, we want to beat this increase.

Chapter members are probably wondering what they can do to help meet this agreement. Member contributions have sustained our three Clark College endowment scholarships for over 23 years and for our WSU scholarship since 1992. Through member support our Clark College Foundation endowment is almost self-sustaining. This is another opportunity to reach a long-term goal by creating an endowment at WSU. The board asks that you remember this endowment when you are asked to contribute at our annual barbeque in September and at our holiday social in December.



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Chapter Travel Forum Update

By Dan Sockle and Terry Babin

The Chapter's second *Travel Forum* was held the evening of May 13th as a Zoom meeting. Nine members plus several spouses participated during the hour discussion.

Much of the second Forum continued the discussion about planning trips and traveling during the pandemic. Despite relaxing mask requirements and increasing vaccinations, travel restrictions and constraints mostly remain. The following advice from the first Forum remain applicable even though changes in guidance and rules are rapidly changing:

- Do your research for travel and destinations early before booking to determine testing requirements and timelines; then, frequently check for updates.
- Give yourself plenty of time to obtain the test, set up and do the test, and get the results back before commencing travel
- Airline and cruise websites are a good source of information about COVID-19 tests, and other requirements and restrictions.
- Many hotels and resorts can help arrange tests for the return trip to the U.S.A.—costs vary—but expect a \$100 or more.
- Make sure you have a copy of all test results and other required COVID documentation on your cell phone as well as carrying printouts.



Other items of interest and discussion:

- Rental car prices are going up—significantly in some locations. Rental car companies reduced their fleet sizes. Now, demand is greatly exceeding supply. In several cases cited, prices have at least doubled in some places. Some recent post-forum sources have noted that prices in Europe are likewise ticking up. Costco was recommended as a source for finding the best rates.
- Some travel agents are continuing to report surging interest and reservations for tours and cruises for later this year and 2022. Key factor right now is “when” and “how” the European Union will reopen to tourism from the U.S.
- The following website was added to the recommended list of websites to research future travel: vantagetravel.com.
- Favorite travel destinations included in the discussion during the May 2021 Forum include:
 - ** Patagonia
 - ** Sacred Valley of Peru
 - ** Hawaii
 - ** Turkey

Next Forum Zoom meeting is 7:30 PM on Thursday, July 22nd.

Whether reminiscing or planning, you are invited to participate in the “Travelers’ Forum.” Contact **Terry Babin** (tbear06@comcast.net) or **Dan Sockle** (dsockle@gmail.com).

The CRC has not validated and does not promote or endorse any web sites or references provided by travel forum members. They are included solely as examples for the reader's research with appropriate caution.

Chapter ~ Membership Eligibility

Chapter membership is open to active duty, National Guard, Reserve, retired, and former commissioned officers and warrant officers of the following uniformed services: Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, Coast Guard, Public Health Service, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Surviving spouses of deceased officers are also eligible to join.

Columbia River Chapter ~ Affiliate

Our chapter is an affiliate of the 350,000 member national MOAA which is the nation's largest and most influential association of military officers. MOAA and the chapter are nonprofit, politically nonpartisan organizations. Our chapter is an IRC 501(c)19 war veterans organization.

Newsletter Editor

Our Chapter Secretary, **Jim Morse**, coordinates calendar inputs and newsletter distribution. You can contact him at 360-433-5605 or email him at jlmorse77@gmail.com

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

Newsletter Distribution

We continue to distribute our newsletter by e-mail. If you are receiving this via postal service and would prefer e-mail please notify **Jim Morse**, our Chapter Secretary at 503-360-433-5605 or jlmorse77@gmail.com.



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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 1107 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/	

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

WASHINGTON, DC 511 Hart 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: https://www.cantwell.senate.gov/contact/email/form		

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

WASHINGTON, DC 154 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: https://www.murray.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contactme		

Vancouver Area Washington State Legislative Districts and Representatives

Legislator	District 49	District 17	District 18	District 14	District 20
Senator	Annette Cleveland 786-7696	Lynda Wilson 786-7632	Ann Rivers 786-7634	Curtis King 786-7626	Peter Abbarno 786-7638
Representative, Position 1	Sharon Wylie 786-7924	Vicki Kraft 786-7994	Brandon Vick 786-7850	Chris Corry 786-7810	Richard DeBolt 786-7896
Representative, Position 2	Monica Stonier 786-7872	Paul Harris 786-7976	Larry Hoff 786-7812	Gina Mosbrucker 786-7856	Ed Orcutt 786-7990

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

Federal Legislative Update: **by Buck Marr**

What season is it??? Baseball? Golf? Tennis? Fishing? Boating? Graduation? No way, it is "Lobby" Season (aka advocacy)! And, I know all of you have mailed the letters in the April MOAA magazine and/or called/mailed your legislators and/or their staffers on the three Advocacy in Action (AIA) campaign issues. **Dave Casteel** is our state advocacy leader. He has tirelessly organized the entire effort for Washington's ten chapters! He will likely have talked to 11 legislative offices by campaign's end. Well done!! Individually, we need to follow his lead.

To give you some measure of the magnitude of the campaign, as of 28 May, over 400 MOAA volunteers in every state conducted over 200 meetings with Congressional members and/or their staff members. Over 10,000 letters on the three advocacy topics were sent to congressional offices. Given the delayed submission of the President's proposed budget, there is still time to send messages on these Advocacy in Action topics. The MOAA website can give you all the information you will need. [Welcome to MOAA's Take Action Center](#)

(<https://takeaction.moaa.org/moaa/?1>)

Let's take a quick look at the President's FY22 proposed budget submitted on 28 May. It's important to note that the budget has several elements combined: The American Jobs Plan (\$2.3T), the American Families Plan (\$1.8T) which when added to discretionary and mandatory spending will total close to \$6T. Defense, including Defense Agencies, is a discretionary spending item increased in this proposal by 1.7%. Nondefense spending is proposed at +16%. VA mandatory and discretionary spending is elevated by about 10%.

The \$715B Pentagon budget is advertised at +1.6% but is about +.4% when adjusted for inflation. Some savings will accrue by a total force end strength reduction of around 5300. The proposal includes a 2.7% pay raise for both uniformed military members and civilian defense department personnel with a directive to raise the minimum hourly pay for civilians to \$15/hr. It proposes to add approximately

50,000 full time equivalent federal employees to the books.

A final note, the long standing Overseas Contingency Account (OCA) is canceled in this budget proposal. According to a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee, rolling contingency expenses into the budget baseline will make the defense budget \$38B short. Adding to the debate will be a proposal by another legislative caucus to cut defense spending by 10%. Combining early congressional reaction with a quick peek at a legislative crystal ball hints the road to a defense budget will be filled with acrimony and finger pointing. The MOAA Nation must stay intensely focused on our issues.

Beyond the budget and under the heading of "good news," MOAA has been pushing the VA to re-adjudicate veterans claims previously denied service connection for a herbicide related condition. The VA reversed their position and announced in April that they would automatically review these claims.

And, in an over the horizon look at new or ongoing issues: MOAA is building a plan to advocate for premium free health and dental care for reserve component members. This is valid given the incredible changes in the nature of their service in recent years.

Next, is the ongoing saga of a military housing tenant bill of rights, MOAA is closely watching to see that the last four, all important, provisions are implemented. The other 14 were implemented in 2020 but the remaining four are the most important tenants. They deal with dispute resolution, rent withhold, leases and transparency of maintenance history. These provisions have been delayed while negotiating with privatized housing companies.

And, finally, MOAA continues to lead the effort to cancel the proposed 18,000 medical billet cuts representing an 18% cut to uniformed medical personnel. Stay tuned.

Continued on page 9

Federal Legislative Update continued

So, what is the status of the defense-oriented legislation process? Most of the combatant commanders and equivalents have testified to the Defense committees and subcommittees. In theory, these testimonies establish the “requirements” baseline. With the testimonies complete, the committees will continue to meet to form their individual inputs to the NDAA. A key lawmaker said recently that the President’s priority is delivery of The American Plan which is on target for a vote just before the August recess. That will push the defense authorization act to after the recess making a continuing resolution almost a sure thing.

We can’t influence the topline President’s budget but we can continue to follow **Dave Casteel’s** example pressing our legislators to support our veteran community.

Buck Marr
Federal Legislative Affairs



Columbia River Chapter Membership 2021 Calendar Events

Date	Program	Speaker
June 19 th 3 to 5 PM	Summer Social at Burnt Bridge Cellars 1500 Broadway Street, Vancouver	Social gathering See details below.
July & August	No meeting	Enjoy Summer Break
September 18	Annual Fall Scholarship Fund Raiser – Social and BBQ	Social gathering at the Williams home 15305 SE Rivercrest Dr, Vancouver, WA
October 21	Membership Luncheon Touchmark 2927 SE Village Loop Vancouver, WA	Speaker TBD
November 18	Traditional Thanksgiving	Program TBD
December 5 3 to 6 pm	Annual Christmas Scholarship Dinner at Club Green Meadows	Meet our four scholarship recipients



June Wine Tasting Outing
Saturday - 19 June 3-5 PM
 at
Burnt Bridge Cellars
 1500 Broadway, Vancouver WA

Established In 2010, Burnt Bridge Cellars Is Named After The Creek That Runs Through The Heart Of The Town We Call Home. We Craft Compelling Wines In Small Lots From Washington's Best Vineyards. And We Do It All In Our Converted 30'S-Era Auto Garage In Downtown Vancouver.

There are a number of new wine tasting rooms in the County since our last outing pre-Covid.

Burnt Bridge Cellars is right on 15th & Broadway in downtown Vancouver and they have a nice covered patio out back they we can reserve. When you enter you must have a face mask on and they will direct you thru the bottle room to the patio out back.

Come out and join us for our 1st Outing!!

- Food Menu:**
Small charcuterie (1-2 people): with manchego and cheddar cheese, salami, grapes, crackers: \$8
Medium charcuterie (2-4 people): with 3 cheeses, salami, grapes, almonds, pickled asparagus, crackers: \$16
Large Charcuterie (3+ people): 3 cheeses, Brie and preserves, salami, olives, almonds, pickled asparagus, tomatoes, hummus, grapes, crackers: \$24
Hummus Plate: served with carrots, olives, tabbouleh, tomatoes, pita chips: \$12
Chicken Salad Sliders (2): grapes & chips: \$12
Salmon spread: grapes, crackers: \$10
Caprese: Tomatoes, mozzarella, balsamic glaze. \$8

CRC Newsletter Schedule
First week of month
September
November
December

