



COLUMBIA RIVER CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

5-Star Excellence Chapter



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

ESTABLISHED 1970

website: www.moaacolumbiariver.org

April 2026

President's Message

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As America celebrates a family centric time of Easter, America is at war again in the Middle East. Over 50,000 members of the US armed

forces are on duty in harm's way within the Persian Gulf region. Additional Marine Expeditionary Units (MEUs) are in transit as well as soldiers of the US Army 82nd Airborne Division. This follows a massive Air

Campaign against Iran lasting since the 28th of February. As the casualties mount, a grateful nation respects those joining our armed forces and understanding the inherit risks.

The drums of this war ring closer to families with servicemen now serving. Our hearts and prayers are with them. This includes our chapter's own **Colonel Tannis Mittlebach, US Army Oregon Guard**, who has two nephews, both Marines, trained and a part of amphibious assault units. Both young Marines enlisted after completing high school locally following in the footsteps of their father.

Returning now to local Columbia River Chapter (CRC) news, last month's luncheon included the annual business meeting for our chapter and the CRMF. The chapter officers were sworn in for another year by **MGen Buck Marr, USAF, Retired**. And, once again, I remind membership of the critical importance to develop new chapter leadership. The long-term health of our chapter is fully dependent on recruitment and leadership. To that end, our chapter has received a new list of MOAA national members living within SW Washington that we are contacting for interest in chapter affiliation.

Last week 17 members of our chapter were hosted for a delightful lunch and VIP tour of Cascadia Tech where the Culinary Academy prepares and serves our savory monthly luncheons. An impressive group of students and faculty striving to add the necessary skilled workforce to our local community. Jim Morse provides a separate article keynoting this chapter event.

Thursday, April 16th

Membership Meeting
Cascadia Tech Center
Culinary Academy
12200 NE 28th Street
Vancouver, WA
11:30 AM
RSVP NLT 8 Apr
See Page 11 for details

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President's Message continued

Looking ahead, this month our chapter has the distinguished opportunity for two of our senior retired officers, and their wives, to give impressions of the responsibilities of command. **MGen Buck Marr (USAF)** and **BGen Bob McFarlin (US Army)** both had long and distinguished service to their respective services. In advance, thank you for sharing your insight.

Our chapter continues to plan monthly luncheons focused on topics of interest relevant to our membership and community. And as spring approaches, the annual Memorial Day program at Fort Vancouver brings community together in remembrance of out fallen comrades.

LATE BREAKING NEWS:

MOAA National recently announced that our Chapter was awarded the 5-Star Level of Excellence Award for 2025.

And, our Newsletter was awarded the Col. Marvin J. Harris Communications Award for 2025.

Well done by everyone! Congratulations all!

Roger "Ramjet" Rosenberry



2025 Chapter Awards



Federal Legislative Priorities:
By Roger Rosenberry

I am taking this opportunity to address the 4 top actions that MOAA National has identified as priorities later this month when chapters and state councils will take part in Advocacy in Action (AIA). The original name of “storming the hill” was replaced after the 6th of January 2021 violent occupation of our US Congress building. AIA is an important annual event to carry significant legislative priorities directly to our legislative representatives in Washington DC. Washington State will have two representatives, one of whom is a former US Navy Officer, Dana Clay, our State Council President, and will be attending our CRC luncheon on the 20th of May. A great opportunity for firsthand feedback.

The 4 top priorities of MOAA are the: Shutdown Fairness Act (Senate 3168), the Military CARE Act (HR 6796), the Guard VA Benefits Act (HR 732) and the Major Richard Star Act (HR 2102 and Senate 1032).

At first glance, not all 4 priorities are relevant to our chapter but bear in mind, as members of MOAA, is the strong voice for active duty service members, families, veterans and spouses.

The Shutdown Fairness Act, as you might expect, is focused on future avoidance of military members having their pay and benefits impacted by the failure in Washington DC to get timely budget approval. These obviously create family hardships.

The Military Care Act is a complex piece of legislation addressing health care priorities, access to VA facilities, and direct care at DOD facilities. A brief history you might recall is the rapid and massive reduction of medical facilities in the post-Cold War Era. To help offset this loss, Tricare provided increased access to non-DOD facilities.

The VA Benefits Act addresses the concerns that, in the reported absence of sufficient VA administrative assistance, agents have sometimes been hired to assist VA claimants. Uncertified agents hired by individuals are paid fees for their services. This is considered predatory and negatively impacted Guard members.

And lastly, the familiar Major Richard Star Act remains for final legislative action. This is the third

year MOAA lobbies for equity in retirement pay and disability for combat related injuries. Simply put, benefits in one category should not impact the other, but they do. This has created a recognized inequity MOAA has championed for our disabled veterans.

This brief summary is by no means a comprehensive analysis of the legislative complexities. Hopefully, however this reinforces the importance of the voice MOAA carries in Washington DC, with approximately 350,000 members, to effectively lobby for our service members, families and veterans.

Please remember the access to the MOAA National Website is always available. And please use the [Legislative Action Center \(moaa.quorum.us\)](https://moaa.quorum.us) to easily and effectively send your support for all related issues.

Roger "Ramjet" Rosenberry



Legislative Contacts

MOAA Legislative Action Center

<https://moaa.quorum.us/>

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

White House

Comments: 202-456-1111 Switchboard: 202-456-1414
TTY/TTD: 202-456-6213 E-mail: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/>

Congresswoman Marie Gluesenkamp Perez Washington's 3rd Congressional District

<https://gluesenkamppez.house.gov/>

Washington, DC Office: U.S. House of Representatives 1431 Longworth House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 Phone: (202) 225-3536	Vancouver, WA Office: 1053 Officers Row Vancouver, WA 98661 Phone: (360) 695-6292
Contact Congresswoman Gluesenkamp Perez via email https://gluesenkamppez.house.gov/contact	



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/>



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

WASHINGTON, DC 511 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510 Phone: (202) 224-3441 Fax: (202) 228-0514 TDD: (202) 224-8273	SW WASHINGTON The Marshall House 1313 Officers Row Vancouver, WA 98661 Phone: (360) 696-7838 Fax: (360) 696-7844	SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 915 Second Avenue Suite 3206 Seattle, WA 98174. Phone: (206) 220-6400 Fax: (206) 220-6404 - FAX
Contact Senator Cantwell via email: https://www.cantwell.senate.gov/contact/email/form		

U.S. Senator Patty Murray <https://www.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/write-to-patty/		

Vancouver Area Washington State Legislative Districts and Representatives

Legislator	District 49	District 17	District 18	District 14	District 20
Senator	Annette Cleveland 786-7696	Paul Harris 786-7632	Adrian Cortes 786-7634	Curtis King 786-7626	John Braun 786-7638
Representative, Position 1	Sharon Wylie 786-7924	Keven Waters 786-7994	Steph. McClintock 786-7850	Gloria Mendoza 786-7810	Peter Abbarno 786-7896
Representative, Position 2	Monica Stonier 786-7872	David Stuebe 786-7976	John Ley 786-7812	Deb Manjarrez 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

Attention Spouses and Surviving Spouse:

by Leah Davis, Surviving Spouse Liaison

The MOAA National Surviving Spouse Council Board of Directors is reaching out to all MOAA spouses and surviving spouses to join their MOAA Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter. They meet monthly via ZOOM, and one of their goals is to have all 50 states represented.

These meetings are VERY interesting and informative on many topics concerning spousal exposure to agent orange, dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC), Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP), insurance and many more subjects. This site provides information on being better informed and up to date on all issues for all spouses, surviving spouses and beneficiaries.

PLEASE JOIN US. Attached below are a welcome letter and application for joining this GREAT group.

You may download a copy of the below to your computer: [DOWNLOAD Letter & Form](#). If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Email: leah@sanfill.com or Cell: 310-491-8891

NEVER STOP SERVING!!!!

Leah Davis
Surviving Spouse Liaison
310-491-8891
leah@sanfill.com



Dear Surviving Spouse and Spouse:

Thank you for your interest in the MOAA Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter. We are very excited about this venture and look forward to having you join! Our purpose is to provide:

- A national forum for surviving spouses of uniformed service officers
- A common space to communicate with each other
- An arena to share information and concerns pertinent to surviving spouses and spouses.
- A platform to advocate for the protection of rights for our members and our family members.

Additionally, we want to be a reliable source for surviving spouses and spouses who live in remote areas, who are housebound, who have jobs and children, or who may be unable to participate in a local chapter.

MOAA's Board of Directors chartered its second virtual chapter for Surviving Spouses March 5, 2018. It is an "affinity group," with members who can share information in a virtual environment with colleagues seeking to work together as we each adjust to a new life. We want to make a difference locally, statewide, and nationally, because as members of national MOAA and its local chapters and councils, we "never stop serving."

Some of the topics we will address include information on where to go, who to talk to, how to take the first steps, and what to do next.

- If your spouse served in Vietnam, he/she may have been exposed to Agent Orange, PACT Act
- Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)
- Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) and your benefits
- Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance (SSI)
- Rules on remarriage
- TRICARE, dental and vision care

We would like to invite you to join us in this exciting venture. We meet monthly via ZOOM, and one of our goals is to have all 50 states represented. We all have busy lives, and we ask only that you participate to the degree you can. For additional information or to join the MOAA Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter, contact us at mssvc02@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you and welcome your participation in our virtual chapter. Attached is a membership application.

We look forward to meeting with you.

Pat Green	Gail Joyce	Roy Yenchesky	Viviane Wersel	Cheryl Toland
President	Vice President	Membership	Newsletter	Treasurer



APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE
MOAA SURVIVING SPOUSE VIRTUAL CHAPTER

Yes! I would like to be part of this exciting venture! Please accept my application. I understand I must certify I am a member of National MOAA.

NAME (LAST, FIRST & MIDDLE): _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____ CELL PHONE # _____

MOAA Number: _____ MBRSHIP TYPE: Life _____ Premium _____ Basic _____

If not a MOAA member, join online at MOAA.ORG/JOIN

(if you are a spouse or a Surviving Spouse Liaison, spouse's MOAA #) _____

Chapter _____ Council _____ Leadership Position _____

Please check which category applies to you:

(a) A surviving spouse of a uniformed service officer (CWO and above).

Date of spouse's death: _____

(b) Currently serving as a MOAA Surviving Spouse Liaison. Chapter _____

(c) The spouse of a uniformed service officer of MOAA. Rank _____ Branch of Service _____

(d) A uniformed service officer currently serving as a MOAA Surviving Spouse Liaison.

Rank _____ Branch of Service _____

Birthday (day & month): _____

Spouse's Name (if applicable): _____ Spouse's Rank: _____ Branch of Service _____

I have access to the internet, and I feel comfortable using ZOOM and Microsoft TEAMS.

I agree to allow my contact information to be shared with members of this Virtual Chapter

Please initial: Yes No

a. Complete this form on your computer, save it, and then email it as an attachment to mssvc02@gmail.com or Print the form, fill it in by hand, and mail to: Roy Yenchesky, Membership Chair, 5112 S 247 St W, Goddard, KS 67052

Revised 01/2026

Columbia River MOAA Foundation (CRMF) Spring 2026 Update *by Dave Casteel CRMF President*

Wow, It's hard to believe Spring has sprung (I can tell by the pollen in the air). April also means the tax man cometh again. By now, most of you have filed your 2025 taxes. Hope the new senior bonus gave you a little unexpected boost in the form of a tax refund! Also hope you took advantage of making a donation from your RMD in the form of a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) thereby lowering your Adjusted Gross Income by the amount of your QCD. (A nice win-win for you and the CRMF).

Thanks to your on-going generosity, 2025 was a good year with your CRMF donating \$12,700 to Clark College and WSU-V in the form of current use scholarships and increased endowment growth. Our Clark college endowment fund balance stood at \$107,376 (with a \$6,537 reserve) as of 6-30-2025 and our WSU-V endowment fund balance was \$ \$36,337 as of 6-30-2025 (an increase of about \$10,000 from the year prior). Clark College offers donation matches up to \$500 for scholarships and the Veterans Center for Excellence during Penguins Give. We always take advantage of these opportunities. This April is no exception as we will also maximize our donations to take advantage of these matches.

Later this month we will not only take advantage of gift matches at Clark College, but we will also give \$5,000 now to WSU-V to increase our endowment balance there and \$2,500 later in the year (this is in addition to our \$2,000 current use scholarship) and \$1,500 to Clark College for endowment growth. As these balances continue to grow, we will be able to increase our scholarships.

In 2025 our Support The Troops fund donated over \$6,700 to the following organizations: Clark County Veterans Assistance Center (\$1,500 that will be

increased to \$2,000 this year--half of which is earmarked for the annual homeless veterans Standdown in September); \$1,000 to the VA transplant lodge in Vancouver (same in 2026); \$1,000 to the Vancouver Fisher House (\$1,500 this year). This May is their 10th Anniversary—stay tuned for Open House information—it is well worth the visit to tour the House); \$1,000 (onetime donation) to the Sea Scouts for boat hull refurbishment; \$750 to Military Night (another onetime donation); a \$1,000 matched donation to the Clark College Veterans Center of Excellence; and \$250 each to Battle Ground and Prairie HS AFJROTC programs. Regarding the JROTC programs, we are making progress ensuring our donations are timely deposited and we are learning (and gaining confidence) how their booster clubs use the funds to support JROTC needs,

Thank you to the 13 families who have linked their Fred Meyer Rewards card to the CRMF. Every time you shop and enter your phone number or scan your FM Rewards card, the CRMF receives a small percentage of your purchase at no cost to you. In 2025, this added \$129 to our funds. Just think what this could mean if every household linked their card...please know, your support does make a difference and is appreciated by our recipients!

If you have questions or need additional information please contact **Dave Casteel** at 360-834-2448, shilocamas@comcast.net or CRMFpresident@comcast.net, or **Frank Hill** at 360-241-8252, hillhouse2@comcast.net.

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. We encourage you to consult with a tax advisor for complete information about the tax deductibility of your gift.



**Cascadia Tech Academy 25 March VIP
Tour Submitted by Jim Morse**

Seventeen Columbia River Chapter members, as part of over 100 SW Washington education and business leaders, attended a VIP Tour of Cascadia Tech Academy on 25 March 2026.

The tour, conducted by the management and staff of Cascadia Tech, was comprehensive--walking us through several of their 20 training areas, including aviation technology, culinary arts, automotive technology, and medical/dental assisting.

This training center serves 29 high schools in SW Washington, allowing students to receive 1 - 2 years of practical training to equip them to be employable following graduation or prepare them to continue their education at the college level or various apprenticeship programs.



Some significant features of this program include a very high rate of student class attendance (92% vs about 60% in the typical high school), a high rate of graduates finding employment or continuing at the college level in their chosen field (72%), competitive progression based on student competition and ability to meet high standards--no automatic completion certification regardless of performance.

A key point made was that students are very focused on successful completion of their training such that disciplinary or poor attendance issues are infrequent,



suggesting that this alternative educational approach serves to help our youth succeed and fills a national need for applied education.

An observation of our CRC members was that the students we observed were well-spoken, polite, knowledgeable, and (amazingly) *never* on cell phones!

Following this excellent tour, the Cascadia Tech Academy provided visitors with an excellent luncheon prepared by the Culinary Arts students.

In summary, The Cascadia Tech Academy tour was a very interesting, eye-opening, and worthwhile event!

Donate to CRMF Online by Larry G. DeVries

NEW in 2025 and continuing in 2026 is our Online Donations method.

To Donate to the CRMF Foundation simply enter <https://columbia-river-chapter-moaa.cheddarup.com/> in your browser window and it will take you directly to our Columbia River chapter donation portal.

Or scan the QR below! What could be easier?



This is the MOAA-approved online payment option using a credit or debit card for payments throughout the year 2026. **NO** transaction fees are charged to either the donor or the Chapter.

Our chapter is joined by other Washington chapters using this MOAA-approved online payments method: Kitsap, Olympic Area, and Olympic Peninsula.





MOAA SIGNATURE GROUPS

Join MOAA Leadership and your fellow MOAA members
on these hosted cruises and land tours.

AFFORDABLE TRAVEL — Every MOAA Signature Group is a negotiated special which is not available to the general public – only MOAA members and their guests can attend. You can, however, bring as many friends and family members with you as you like.

EASIER, SAFER TRAVEL — Vacations are meant to be an escape. It is your time to relax and unwind, explore, and discover. So, let us take care of the details. This is valuable time that doesn't have to be spent worrying about how you're going to get there or, what you're going to do when you get there

INCREASE THE FUN FACTOR — Being surrounded by like-minded people offers you the chance to share experiences and make new memories together. Group travel can give you the chance to meet people and make new friends. You'll meet individuals who are also passionate about travel and have experiences that are similar to your own. With shared military backgrounds and values, camaraderie forms naturally and often leads to lasting friendships.

2026 & 2027 SIGNATURE GROUPS

July 12-21, 2026	Highlights of Eastern Europe River Cruise	9-nights from \$3,999
October 1-10, 2026	Western Europe Yacht Cruise	9-nights from \$4,999
April 25-May 2, 2027	Castles Along the Rhine River Cruise	7-nights from \$4,199
July 19-27, 2027	France & Spain Yacht Cruise	8-nights from \$5,799
September 14-25, 2027	Circle Iceland Yacht Cruise	11-nights from \$8,999
Sept. 25-Oct. 4, 2027	Battlefields of WWI & WWII Tour	10 days from \$6,495

GUARANTEED LOWEST PRICES *from* The Official Travel Agency of MOAA



Toll-Free Telephone: **1-800-211-5107**

Email Address: **mail@MOAAvac.com**



For complete details, including detailed day-by-day itinerary, please visit us online

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.

To Join our Chapter: Visit our [How to Join page](#).
Download our [Application Form](#).

To learn about joining MOAA (National);
Visit [Why Join MOAA](#)



Columbia River Chapter ~ Affiliate

Our chapter is an affiliate of the more than 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 editor@moaacolumbiariver.org.

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 360-433-5605 or jlmorse77@gmail.com.



Jump to Our Chapter Website



Columbia River Chapter Membership 2026 Calendar Events

Date	Event	Program/Speaker
April 16 th <u>Thursday</u>	Chapter Luncheon Cascadia Tech Center Culinary Academy 11:30 am	Speakers: MG Buck Marr and Sherry ; BG Robert McFarlin and Barbara Topic: "Reflections of Our Years Past."
May 20 th <u>Wednesday</u>	Chapter Luncheon Cascadia Tech Center Culinary Academy 11:30 am	Program: Peter Vogelaar , Director, Lutheran Community Services Northwest (LCSNW) "Settling of Refugees into Communities in US"
June 17 th <u>Wednesday</u>	Wine Tasting	Join us at 6:30 pm Location: Uptown Barrel Room, Vancouver, Washington
September 13 th <u>Sunday</u>	MOAA-CRC BBQ	At the home of MOAA/CRC President Roger Rosenberry. 2-5 pm

YOU ARE INVITED TO

Columbia River Chapter/MOAA Luncheon Meeting

WHEN: Thursday April 16, 2026 @1130

WHERE: **Cascadia Tech Center Culinary Academy** 12200 NE 28th Street, Vancouver, WA. 98682

Speakers: Our speakers will be **MG Buck Marr** and **BG Robert McFarlin** and their respective spouses, **Sherry** and **Barbara**. Our General Officers and their wives will share their reflections of their years past and take a few questions from our members.

The Culinary Academy will provide us with a complete lunch including a main course, salad, warm bread, dessert, tea, and coffee. The cost continues to be \$25 per person, all inclusive.

We will have our customary raffle, the proceeds used to help defray our luncheon expenses. So please bring an item, e.g., a book, goodie, DVD, or nicknack to donate to the raffle. (Alcoholic beverages are no longer allowed.)

Please contact Jim Morse, Co-Secretary, by phone or text at 360.433.5605 or by email at jlmorse77@gmail.com. **All RSVPs are needed by 8 April 2026.**

Note that for the **April meeting** we are **reverting back to a Thursday** meeting day at the request of the Culinary Academy. As is typical for Thursday meetings, parking will be limited--carpooling or early arrival is recommended...

CRC Newsletter Schedule First week of month		
February	June	November
April	September	December

