

MOAA



VOICE

Military Officers Association of America
Redwood Empire Chapter

Post Office Box 2801
Santa Rosa, CA 95405-0801

VOLUME 50, NUMBER 6

"Serving Those Who Serve America"

JUNE 2020



PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

Members and associates

Serving Veterans

As we shelter in place, we continue to suffer cancellation of all our normal meeting events. But the extra time "in place" gives all of us time to reflect and take care of many long-delayed tasks. Recently, a major personal development has reminded me of a major purpose of our organization; it has given me some new insights that I want to share with you.

Last week I learned that my ten year journey with the VA resolved very successfully. In the process I have learned many valuable lessons that can assist our chapter in its mission to support veterans. I want to share those lessons with you in the goal of increasing the effectiveness of our chapter's support of veterans.

I suspect that if we surveyed our chapter membership about their knowledge of VA benefits prior to leaving the service, their experience would be virtually identical to mine: there was no counseling or information provided about what was available from the VA. We were aware of the GI Bill and VA loans, but little else. We thought VA healthcare was only for veterans in wheelchairs or those who lost limbs. Did any of us realize the full range of assistance available? I know I did not. So millions of veterans suffered for decades with service-connected injuries and conditions without realizing that help was available, even for conditions already reflected in their service medical records. VA and service outreach and education about veteran benefits were virtually non-existent. And in the post-Vietnam era, the lack of information was compounded by a common feeling among veterans that they wanted nothing to remind them of their service.

However, thanks to Gary Meagher's persuasion, I decided to join MOAA REC. Later, while waiting for one of parades, I was talking to Lee Hoskins and after observing my difficulty hearing, he gave me the life-changing advice: "Bill you lost hearing from Navy aviation; go to the VA and get hearing aids." That started me on the ten year trek that resolved last week. I will always be grateful to Lee for that advice. However, I also wonder where the Navy and VA were, as my hearing loss was recorded in my 1972 flight physical.

Continued on Page No. 3 →

JUNE PICNIC IS CANCELLED.
THERE IS THE POSSIBILITY OF July 23rd LUNCHEON WILL ALSO BE CANCELLED

**** POSSIBLE CANCELLATION****
THURSDAY, JULY 23rd, LUNCHEON
At The Flamingo Resort & Spa

NOTE: The Redwood Empire Chapter normally awards and honor our Col Brey Scholarship winner(s) at our June Picnic. Our Board will have to work out what we are going to do. We will notify our members at a later time..... rrs

COL BREY SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

The Col Brey Scholarship Committee reported that we had received four (4) applications for scholarships. The committee received all of the submissions after they all had their names removed. Three (3) of the submissions were outstanding. We hope to print the names of the winners in the July publication of the *MOAA VOICE*. The Board will be determining the amount of money to be awarded and amounts to the winners, before the next publication.

"Sunshine Lady"

Call Myrna Hurst, 707-468-0146, if you know of anyone in the chapter who might enjoy a get well or sympathy card.

JUNE BOARD MEETING CANCELLED.
THERE IS THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE JULY 7th BOARD MEETING WILL ALSO BE CANCELLED

JUNE IS CANCELLED

JULY MAY BE CANCELLED ALSO

MOAA BOARD MEETINGS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Tuesday, July 7, 2020, 11:30am, In the Santa Rosa Vet's Bldg Conference Room.

Chapter members are always welcome at these meetings. Refreshments will be served.

Legislative Affairs – June 2020

LEGISLATION:

Federal:

I believe that it's safe to say that we are in a state of flux during this COVID -19 crisis. Changes are coming out daily and there is no way to publish these changes in this Voice without misstating what is happening. However, I will try to put forth a couple of cogent items of significant interest.

- 1. TRICARE Beneficiaries Co-pays:** If you have made a copayment related to receiving a COVID-19 test, or to an office visit connected to that test, you may be able to get your money. Call your TRICARE Customer Service Office for more information.
- 2. TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy:** MOAA is asking Congress to temporarily waive all TRICARE mail-order pharmacy copays during the COVID-19 crisis as a way to encourage beneficiaries to avoid in-person visits as well as unexpected medication costs. Please request Representative Hoffman to support H.R 6573.

State:

As I said before, with our state legislators being told to reduce the number of bills they are authoring and to restrict the remaining few to issues that relate to COVID-19.

While this looks like a real uphill battle, I feel we need to keep our priorities on top. Otherwise, they will die of corona virus quickly. It's the case of the squeaky wheel getting oiled.

Military Retired Pay Exclusion. We will try again to get some form of tax exemption for military retirement. Granted that this idea is a long term wishful thinking. However, there are now only TWO states, California and Vermont that do not grant, at least a partial exemption to military retirees and/or SBP recipients.

SB 1071 (Sen Wilk) proposes a phased in exemption over several years and SB 1007 (Sen Huseo) which will phase in in 2021.

AB2380 (Choi) Proposes exclusion of military survivor benefits for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2020, and before January 1, 2025.

AB 2688 (Cervantes') This bill proposes \$11 million for county VSO support. This is a vitally important need since budgets have sacrificed the county VSOs, particularly in the northern counties.

CALMOAA has requested our support to oppose the following three ballot initiatives which you will see in November:

Dialysis: This measure was a on the November 2018 ballot as Proposition 8 and was opposed by most major veterans' groups. It was defeated by 20 percentage points. The sponsor intends to try again in November 2020. This proposal will seriously affect access to treatment by retirees.

Rent Control: This measure also was on the November 2018 ballot as Proposition 10 and it was opposed by most major veterans' groups. It was de-

feated by 20 percentage points. The sponsor intends to try again in November 2020.

Proposition 13: This measure is a real estate broker's dream to put much more money in his pocket as it proposes to change the iconic 36-year-old Prop 13 protections by changing property taxes only on commercial property which would be reassessed at full market value.

Currently, under Proposition 13, property taxes for homeowners and business properties are capped at 1% of the initial purchase price and annual tax increases are capped at 2% annually.

This measure claims it is only aimed at business properties - don't believe it – they are after YOUR money.

This \$12 billion tax increase is the largest tax increases proposed in California's history. California already has one of the highest cost of living in the nation. This measure will raise it even higher at a time when California has the highest poverty level in the nation.

STAY TUNED! There will be more information as the election gets closer.

Vern McNamee, Legislative Chair

Redwood Empire Chapter member WILLIAM ANDERSON

Has made an offer

He realizes that the country is presently going through a rough time, because of the present COVID-19 virus, and there are a lot of people with many different needs. He is offering to our members and any veterans organizations his help.

As a landlord he can repair many house issues for our their members. **FREE!** They only need to pay for parts.

He can transport supplies. He lives in Santa Rosa. He owns 46 properties in this state alone and is his own maintenance service. He does many kinds of things.

Anyone can call him and he will give you more details. Call: William Anderson at 707-331-0366

~~~~~  
**NOTE:** Your Editor, Robert Safreno, needed a toilet repaired, because it had come loose from being bolted down. I could not lift the toilet out. He came to my house with his son and they removed the toilet put a new seal down, new bolts and reinstalled the toilet. He was only at my home for about one hour, that includes getting a part. They did a great job and left and I only needed to pay for the parts.....rrs

## Chapter Event Refund Policy

By Tim Morgan, Treasurer

Over the past year, due to several different reasons, no shows at chapter events (Luncheon, Dinners, etc.) have become a problem for accounting. For events held at the Flamingo Hotel, we are required to provide the hotel an estimate of the expected attendance at the event. We are typically charged by the Flamingo a fee based on our estimate of this number. When a prepaid member is unable to attend the event, for whatever reason the Chapter is expected to pay the Flamingo for that meal. If we know ahead of time (any time prior to 10am on Wednesday before the Thursday event), that the member can't make it (and/or the number of guests change), we can adjust the head count estimate to the Flamingo and avoid this problem. At the February 2020 Board meeting, a policy on no show refunds was determined. The policy is as follows:

### RECMOAA – Event Refund Policy

For members who have paid in advance for an event and for any reason, determine that they will be unable to attend that event, a refund will be provided to the member, if the chapter Secretary is contacted prior to 10am on the Wednesday before the event. Upon request the member also may optionally indicate to the Secretary that funds be directed to the Col. Brey Scholarship Fund in lieu of a refund. After 10am Wednesday, should a prepaid member fail to show at the event, the funds will be directed to the Chapter General Fund.

If there are any questions about this policy, please contact Tim Morgan, Treasurer (707-695-9293).

---

### MAY BE LAST MOAA VOICE FOR SOME MEMBERS THAT HAVE NOT PAID DUES FOR 2020

There are **17** members that have not paid their dues. Initials listed below:

RNC,HFC,SDiii,RBD,LE,DE,WJH,HWH,  
BPK,LDC,JAM,JAP,RAR,AS,DLT,MGW,  
NDW.

Call Secretary for more information

**NOTE:** I had only one member renew their dues last month.

Bob Safreno ~ 707-795-3963 / 707-479-9374

← Continued from page No. 1

Once in the VA health system, additional diagnoses continued to pile up (none life-threatening). But never was I advised that any of them were ratable conditions. It was not until I spoke to Bob Safreno two years ago that I learned of additional claims. (*In last year's Townhall SF VA management expressly rejected any responsibility to advise veterans in their care of conditions or injuries that might be ratable.*) As a result, I filed a new claim.

My new claim resulted in the top rating. But the process has helped me realize how many veterans will never realize or obtain the assistance. Even if they belatedly get their benefits, they are only retroactive to the date of the claim, not the date of the injury or onset, which shortchanges many veterans of decades of benefits they deserve. Based on this realization, I want to maximize the ability of our chapter to reach out to veterans and make them aware of potential benefits and the resources that can help them obtain the benefits for which they qualify as soon as possible. To that end I encourage our members to:

- Read the veterans benefits section of the VA website [or VA book], [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov);
- Volunteer at Sonoma County Vet Connect (many members already do);
- Join organizations that help with VA claims, such as Disabled American Veterans;
- Attend our MOAA-REC meeting with our County Veteran Service Office update;
- I plan to arrange a separate VSO workshop to better equip us as eyes/ears to veterans;
- Ask your other organizations to arrange for a VSO presentation on veteran benefits;
- Attend the annual VA Townhall meeting (next year?);
- When meeting anyone new, find out if s/he is a veteran, and refer as appropriate;
- Talk with veterans who have gone through the VA system for tips, ideas.

The foregoing are just some of the ideas that can help our chapter be a better resource for veterans. The goal is not to make us veteran counselors; the VSO and other veteran organizations can do that. Rather, I hope to increase our awareness so that we can better recognize when and where to refer veterans for in-depth review. In the process we also increase awareness of our chapter and potentially attract new members. If you have any other suggestions, please write them up and submit them to Bob for the *MOAA Voice*. We will discuss all the suggestions when we can resume our meetings. As officers, we were responsible for those serving under us. Let us continue to carry out that responsibility with our service to the veteran community.

**LT William P. Matz, USN , President**  
707-837-2161 - matz@sonic.net

---

**IMPORTANT NOTICE TO CHAPTER MEMBERS**  
**VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED TO BE FUTURE OFFICERS OF THE CHAPTER TO SERVE ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS. PLEASE CONTACT ONE OF THE MEMBERS ON OUR BOARD AND GIVE THEM YOUR NAME AS A POSSIBLE**

## 2020 DATES TO REMEMBER

May:  
 5<sup>th</sup> BOARD MEETING - 11:30 am – Scholarship winners  
 10<sup>th</sup> Deadline for submission of MOAA-VOICE information  
 16<sup>th</sup> Armed Forces Day – Rose Parade, Santa Rosa  
 25<sup>th</sup> Memorial Day Ceremonies  
 CNX, United Veterans Council meeting  
 CNX, Luncheon, Flamingo Resort & Spa

June:  
 UNK, 2<sup>nd</sup> BOARD MEETING - 11:30 am  
 10<sup>th</sup> Deadline for submission of MOAA-VOICE information  
 CNX, Picnic at Two Rock. Honor Brey Recipients  
 CNX, United Veterans Council meeting

\*\*

July:  
 7<sup>th</sup> BOARD MEETING - 11:30 am – Pick a nominating committee  
 4<sup>th</sup> Parade in Calistoga  
 10<sup>th</sup> Deadline for submission of MOAA-VOICE information  
 22<sup>th</sup> United Veterans Council meeting  
 23<sup>rd</sup> Luncheon, Flamingo Resort & Spa

August:  
 4<sup>th</sup> BOARD MEETING - 11:30 am  
 10<sup>th</sup> Deadline for submission of MOAA-VOICE information  
 15<sup>th</sup> Riverfront Regional Park, Annual BBQ  
 26<sup>th</sup> United Veterans Council meeting

September:  
 1<sup>st</sup> BOARD MEETING - 11:30 am – Approval of 2020 officers  
 10<sup>th</sup> Deadline for submission of MOAA-VOICE information

\*\*

\*\*

19<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> Air Show at CMS Airport?  
 23<sup>rd</sup> United Veterans Council meeting  
 18<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup> ?? Friday, Luncheon, Two Rock USCG (\$10.00?)

October:  
 6<sup>th</sup> BOARD MEETING - 11:30 am  
 10<sup>th</sup> Deadline for submission of MOAA-VOICE information

\*\*

22<sup>nd</sup> Luncheon or Dinner?, Flamingo, Election of Officers for 2021  
 28<sup>th</sup> United Veterans Council meeting

November:  
 3<sup>rd</sup> BOARD MEETING - 11:30 am  
 10<sup>th</sup> Deadline for submission of MOAA-VOICE information

11<sup>th</sup> North Bay Veterans Day parade (Wednesday)  
 20<sup>th</sup> Friday, Lobster Feed, Santa Rosa Veterans building  
 25<sup>th</sup> United Veterans Council meeting  
 26<sup>th</sup> Thanksgiving Day

December:  
 1<sup>st</sup> BOARD MEETING - 11:30 am  
 7<sup>th</sup> Pearl Harbor Survivors program ??  
 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday, Holiday Social Flamingo Resort & Spa  
 10<sup>th</sup> Deadline for submission of MOAA-VOICE information  
 NO United Veterans Council meeting  
 25<sup>th</sup> Christmas

\*\* Not Confirmed at this time ~ CNX = Cancelled ~ UNK = Unknown  
 All Meals at Flamingo will be Buffets 06/32/06

**“GOOD SPEAKERS ARE NEEDED”**

Chapter members:  
 Who do you want to hear from?  
 Please send your suggestions to  
**Don Nowacki, (707)528-2895,**  
 or by e-mail: [nowacki@sonic.net](mailto:nowacki@sonic.net)

## MOAA WIVES CLUB

(Sonoma County Main - All members welcome)

### 2020 Officers

|                                |              |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| President: Dayle Johnson       | 408-466-6764 |
| Vice President: Liz Warren     | 707-763-6957 |
| Secretary: Tina Lewis          | 707-539-5546 |
| Treasurer: Florence Wall       | 707-837-7389 |
| Parliamentarian: Donna Poulter | 707-576-0513 |

Once again, it looks like no activities in the month of June.

It's a good feeling to stay in touch with each other by way of emails, texts, and phone calls.

If you know of any of our members who have become ill with the virus or who are dealing with any issues, please let Dayle Johnson know so we can reach out to them. Her phone number is listed above.

Hopefully we'll get back to some kind of normal soon.

Stay safe and well, everyone!

**Tina Lewis, Publicity 707-539-5546,**  
[tinalewis31@comcast.net](mailto:tinalewis31@comcast.net)

## Redwood Empire Chapter Officers and Directors for 2020

|                              |                               |              |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| <u>President:</u>            | William P. Matz, USN          | 707-837-2161 |
| <u>1st Vice President</u>    | Maj Ken Johnson, USAF         | 408-466-6764 |
| <u>2nd Vice President</u>    | 1/Lt Donald J. Nowacki, USANG | 707-595-1047 |
| <u>Secretary:</u>            | Cpt Robert R. Safreno, USAF   | 707-795-3963 |
| <u>Treasurer:</u>            | LCDR Tim Morgan, USNR         | 707-695-9293 |
| <u>Imed. Past President:</u> | CPT Lee P. Hoskins, USA       | 707-328-2316 |

### CAL-MOAA Director, Area I

Cpt Tom Walther, USAF 530-673-5499

### Directors-at-large - Term 2020

|                           |              |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| CDR Donald D. Confer, USN | 707-763-8198 |
| Martina Lewis             | 707-539-5546 |
| LTC Gary Meagher, AUS     | 707-544-4089 |
| Mary-Gwen Neisingh        | 707-481-7614 |

### Directors-at-large - Term 2020-2021

|                          |              |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| LTC Robert L. Ayers, Jr. | 707-230-2571 |
| Col Jack L. Krout, USAF  | 707-762-8613 |
| Donna Poulter            | 707-576-0513 |
| CPT Lewis Wall, USA      | 707-837-7389 |

### Directors Representing Sub-Chapters:

|                       |                             |              |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| <u>Lake:</u>          | CAPT Daniel W. Christensen, | 707-263-3297 |
| <u>Mendocino:</u>     | Mrs. Myrna M. Hurst, AUX    | 707-468-0146 |
| <u>Sonoma Valley:</u> | Maj B. K. White, USMC       | 707-996-1335 |

## MOAA VOICE

|                          |                                                                                     |                            |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Co-Editor                | Tim Morgan                                                                          | 707-695-9293               |
| E-Mail                   | Tim Morgan                                                                          | blackcloudbrew@comcast.net |
| Editor Mail Distribution | Bob Safreno                                                                         | 707-795-3963               |
| E-Mail                   | Bob Safreno                                                                         | Shadowbob1@juno.com        |
| Online                   | ..... <a href="http://www.redwoodwmpiremoaa.us">http://www.redwoodwmpiremoaa.us</a> |                            |