



COLUMBIA VOYAGER

<http://www.TriCitiesMOAA.org>

chapter@TriCitiesMOAA.org

June 2010

THE SUMMER EVENT

THE ANNUAL SUMMER BASH WILL BE HELD AT PAUL AND MARGIE SEIPT'S ON SATURDAY, JUNE 19, AT 5:30 P.M. THIS WILL BE A PICNIC, SO BRING SOMETHING TO EAT AND DRINK, PLATES AND UTENSILS, AND LAWN CHAIRS IF YOU HAVE THEM.

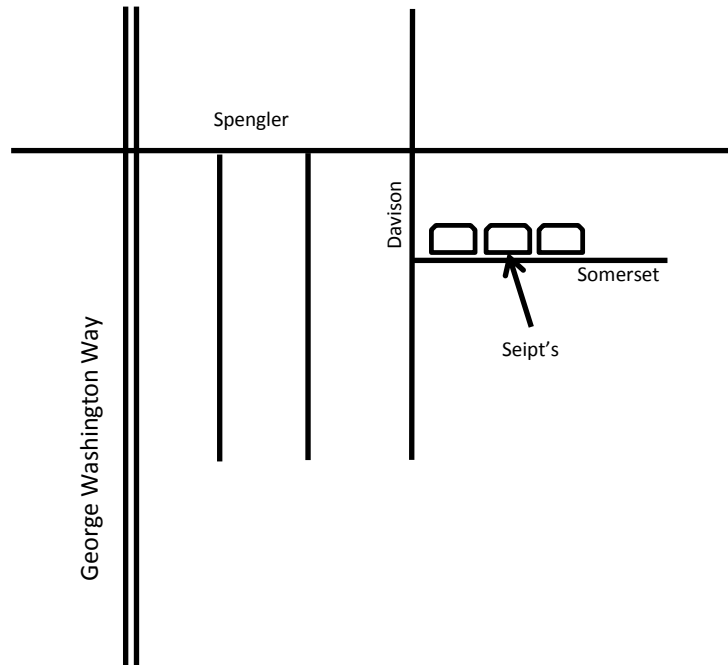
AND BRING A SWIM SUIT IF YOU ARE SO INCLINED.

ON THE AGENDA: VOTING & INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS AND A GOOD TIME.

DIRECTIONS TO 232 SOMERSET:

IN RICHLAND, NORTH OF THE DOWNTOWN AREA ON GEORGE WASHINGTON WAY TO SPENGLER (TRAFFIC LIGHT, 7-11 ON THE FAR LEFT CORNER).

RIGHT ON SPENGLER. GO 3 BLOCKS TO DAVISON.
RIGHT ON DAVISON. GO ONE BLOCK TO SOMERSET.
LEFT ON SOMERSET. 2ND HOUSE ON THE LEFT.



Chapter Officers

President
Ron Weed
LTC, USAF, Ret

1st Vice President
Ernie Bitten
Capt, USN, Ret

2nd Vice President
Wally Schlauder
CDR, USN, Ret

Secretary
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Major, USAF, Ret

Treasurer
Paul Seipt
LTCOL, USMC, Ret

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Bill Brooksher
BGen, USAF, Ret

Richard Ciccone
LTC, USA, Ret

John Hunt
Col, USA, Ret

Ed Dodd
LtCol, USA, Ret

Past President
Tom Kelley
Capt, USN, Ret

Election notice:

The slate of officers for the next term is the same as the current list of officers, shown on the front of the newsletter. Nominations for other candidates will be opened at the meeting.

Lewis and Clark Chapter
Military Officers Association of America
106 Hills West Way
Richland WA 99352-9446

The saga of the 21% cut in Medicare and TRICARE payments to doctors is about to take a turn for the worse. In late May the House of Representatives managed to pass a fix as part of the American Jobs and Closing Tax Loopholes Act.

The good news is that, unlike the month-to-month fixes Congress has adopted recently, the new House-passed plan would prevent any cuts through the end of 2011, and substitute 2% payment increases for 2010 and 2011. The bad news is that the House's delay in passing it until just before the Memorial Day recess caused the Senate to delay the start of its consideration until June 8 - a week after the June 1 implementation date for the 21% payment cut.

Medicare officials came to the interim rescue -- announcing they would exercise their administrative authority to hold up processing of new claims for the first two weeks of June, in hopes Congress could pass corrective legislation within that time.

But continued haggling over amendments and costs sent that faint hope crashing, as Senate leaders announced the Senate won't vote until next week - beyond the date Medicare is allowed to hold up claims processing. Given that scenario, Medicare will have little choice but to implement the 21% payment cut as of June 15 - retroactive for Medicare-covered service since June 1.

While that's extremely regrettable, it's not the end of the world. In fact, the same thing happened in January 2006, when Congressional dithering past the deadline caused Medicare to implement payment cuts. After Congress eventually passed a fix several weeks later, Medicare reprocessed the claims and made retroactive payment increases to doctors.

But Congress' inaction forced doctors to float an interim loan to the government for the payment differential. And the 2006 cut was only about 4% -- a far cry from the current 21% cuts, so doctors are going to be very unhappy. TRICARE beneficiaries under 65 and their doctors can take some consolation, since this is strictly a Medicare problem, at least for now. That's because TRICARE normally implements payment changes about a month after Medicare does. So as long as Congress fixes the problem within a month, payments should be seamless for TRICARE.