



# COLUMBIA VOYAGER

<http://www.TriCitiesMOAA.org>

[chapter@TriCitiesMOAA.org](mailto:chapter@TriCitiesMOAA.org)

## January 2011

### MOAA the Topic

We will kick off the new year with a meeting about MOAA, its role in protecting veterans' issues in Congress and the Executive branch, challenging national defense issues, and veterans' support in the State of Washington. Our speaker, Merl Gorton, is highly qualified to speak on these issues. He enlisted in the National Guard in 1945, was commissioned in 1953, went on full time active duty in 1955, and retired as a Colonel in 1985.

After retiring, he has been active in MOAA and veterans' affairs. He's been secretary and president of the Spokane chapter, where he is currently 1st vice president, and he is the immediate past president of the Washington State Council of Chapters. He also serves on the Governor's Veterans Affairs Advisors Committee and the Veterans Advisory Committee to Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rogers.

Merl and his wife Diane have 7 grown children, 16 grandchildren, and 3 great grandchildren. They live in the city of Spokane Valley.

While serving with the WSCOC, Col Gorton spoke to our chapter at the October 2007 meeting. It will be a pleasure to welcome him back.

Our meeting will be at the Clover Island Inn. We've met there several times in the past and have always enjoyed good meals. The meeting will be on January 25, which is the 4th Tuesday of the month. We delayed the meeting a week to accommodate Col. Gorton's schedule.

Reservations and entrée choice by **Thursday, January 20**, please.

### Membership renewals

Membership dues of \$15 are payable in January. Bring your dues to the January meeting or send your check made out to "Lewis & Clark Chapter," to:

Paul Seipt  
232 Somerset Street  
Richland WA 99354-1964

### Chuck Carlisle

Long-time chapter member Chuck Carlisle passed away on December 31. Chuck had been active in the chapter and served on the board for many years. Services were held on January 8. Our thoughts are with his wife, Dutch, and family.

### Officials explain proposed TRICARE cost increase

(from the American Forces Press Service)

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates is seeking modest premium increases for working-age military retirees who use the TRICARE Prime health plan.

Secretary Gates unveiled sweeping cost-cutting initiatives on Jan. 6, including a recommendation to increase TRICARE Prime premiums for working-age retirees in fiscal 2012, the first increase in the plan's 15-year history.

"Many of these beneficiaries are employed full-time while receiving their full pensions, and often forego their employers' health plan to remain with TRICARE," he said. "This should not come as a surprise,

### Chapter Officers

President  
Ron Weed  
LtCol, USAF, Ret

1st Vice President  
Ernie Bitten  
Capt, USN, Ret

2nd Vice President  
Wally Schlauder  
CDR, USN, Ret

Secretary  
Bob Allen  
Major, USAF, Ret

Treasurer  
Paul Seipt  
LTCOL, USMC, Ret

### Directors

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

given that the current TRICARE enrollment fee was set in 1995 at \$460 a year for the basic family plan, and has not been raised since." Federal workers pay roughly \$5,000 a year for a comparable health insurance program.

"We will propose . . . modest increases to TRICARE fees for . . . working-age retirees." These initiatives could save the department as much as \$7 billion over the next five years, he said.

Military retirees automatically are enrolled in one of two TRICARE plans: TRICARE Prime, the system's managed-care option that covers active-duty members, with an annual enrollment fee of \$230 per year for an individual or \$460 for a family, and TRICARE Standard, a fee-for-service plan, no enrollment fee or premium, a yearly deductible of \$150 per person or \$300 per family, as well as co-payments or cost shares for inpa-

tient and outpatient care and medications, up to a \$3,000 annual cap on out-of-pocket expenses.

TRICARE Prime, the managed-care option that covers all active-duty members and many retirees, costs the government \$4,202 per beneficiary per year, TRICARE Standard costs \$3,584 per beneficiary per year. TRICARE for Life, for beneficiaries age 65 and older, costs the government \$3,874 per patient per year.

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

Clover Island Inn  
Clover Island  
Kennewick

Social hour at 6:30  
Dinner at 7:00  
\$25 per person

***A reservation made  
is a reservation paid.***

## ***January Meeting***

**Tuesday, January 25**

Reservations by  
**Thursday, January 20**

Bob Allen  
627-6226  
MOAA.TriCities@charter.net

### ***Menu***

Pecan Pork Loin  
*or*  
Chicken Cordon Bleu

Garden salad  
Potatoes  
Fresh steamed vegetables  
Warm rolls  
Coffee, Tea, dessert

Indicate choice when making reservation