



COLUMBIA VOYAGER

<http://www.TriCitiesMOAA.org>

chapter@TriCitiesMOAA.org

September 2022

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Communication Response to a Crisis

Summer is coming to an end and the chapter will start meeting again. The meeting will feature a great meal at a familiar restaurant, an interesting presentation, and the chance to talk about summer activities with friends



Mike Paoli

Our September speaker will be chapter member Mike Paoli. Mike will talk about his team's 1998 response, from Aviano Air Base, Italy, to the collision of a temporarily assigned Marine EA-6B Prowler (a 4-seat electronic warfare jet) into ski gondola cables at Cavalese, Italy, that killed 20 people. He'll share his experiences immediately following the accident, and discuss how those experiences shaped his future communication approach to crisis situations. He'll

also describe some key aspects of the investigation that have shaped his opinion on both the investigation process and its resulting disciplinary actions.

Mike retired from the Air Force in 2009, at which time he moved to the Tri-Cities, spending the next decade in the energy industry with Energy Northwest. He currently owns Tri-Cities Public Relations in Kennewick. While in the Air Force, he supported 20 peacekeeping, humanitarian relief and disaster response operations, and later, while at Energy Northwest, created an Issue Management and Crisis Communication training block for the Nuclear Communications Academy. At the time of his retirement, he was the most decorated Air Force public affairs officer in his grade (O-5) and considered the Pentagon's foremost expert in crisis communication. He holds two masters degrees, and is a graduate of both the Air War College and MIT Nuclear Reactor Course. He currently serves on the Pasco-Kennewick Rotary board of directors, and has been a MOAA member since 2008.

Our meeting will be at the Clover Island Inn on September 20. Please get your reservations in by Thursday, September 15.

Future Meetings

At our last meeting in June, some of us discussed what the chapter could do to increase attendance. Please think about this and be ready to share your ideas at the September meeting. If you won't be at the meeting what would make you want to attend? You can send your ideas to moaa.tricities@charter.net.

Hq MOAA sends . . .

Record Pay Increase Likely for Military Retirees in 2023

Military are likely to see record monthly check increases for the second year running thanks to the pace of inflation, according to new estimates.

The annual VA disability pay and military retirement cost-of-living pay adjustment, known as COLA, is typically tied to the Social Security rate change, which will likely be announced in October. An early projection based on national inflation data by The Senior Citizens League (TSCL), a nonpartisan senior advocacy nonprofit, estimates rates will rise by 9.6%.

The annual Social Security COLA increase is based on the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers

(CPI-W), which is measured by the Department of Labor. The department takes a snapshot of the costs of a select group of goods and services and compares those costs to the previous year. If there is an increase, retirees and many others receiving government benefits see a bump in their monthly payments for the upcoming year. If those costs go down, the government payments will remain the same in the upcoming year.

TSCL's estimate is based on the CPI-W through July. But with several months left to go, the ultimate increase could vary slightly from the projection. For example, if inflation continues to increase, the COLA raise could be as high as 10.01%, they said. If inflation falls below the recent average, the increase could dip to 9.3%.

The anticipated record increase would be the second year running of such bumps. For 2022, the raise was 5.9%, which followed an average 1.5% increase over the 10 years prior.

Commissary: How much savings?

The Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) strives to meet two primary objectives: To be a benefit to servicemembers and their families by providing the target savings rate to its

customers, and to operate like a business to reduce its reliance on appropriated funds. DeCA operates 236 commissaries worldwide, all funded by both appropriations and revenue from the sale of goods. As commissary sales have fallen from about \$6 billion in FY 2015 to about \$4.4 billion in FY 2021, DeCA has worked to implement business reforms such as variable pricing and sale of private label goods.

Since 2016, DeCA has had a global target customer savings rate of 23.7%, which it says has been met or nearly achieved over the last several years. The average savings for CONUS patrons in FY 2021 was 17.7%, compared with 42.5% for OCONUS patrons. When calculated to reflect the 81% of CONUS commissary sales and 19% of OCONUS sales, the average savings rate was 22.4%. In this time of inflation and DoD's efforts to reduce food insecurity among military families, the commissary benefit is especially important.

September Meeting

Tuesday, Sept 20

Clover Island Inn
Clover Island
Kennewick

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

*A reservation made
is a reservation paid*

Reservations by
Thursday, Sept 15 to
Bob Allen
(509) 554-6992 voice or text
moaa.tricities@charter.net

Menu

Sliced Prime Rib
in Au Jus
Baby Red Potatoes
Steamed Vegetable Medley
Tossed Salad
Pasta Salad
Warm Rolls
Chef choice dessert
Coffee, Decaf, Tea, Milk