

A message from our President, Lonnie Mettler



ROA leads the nation's efforts to ensure the Reserve Components are strong and ready, and Reserve Component families are well cared for.

Since 1922, the Reserve Organization of America (ROA) has been America's only national military organization solely and exclusively focused on support of the Reserve and National Guard. As ROA moves into the Second Century of Service to America, your role becomes more critical.

Support begins by ensuring your member profile has been set up on the ROA website, www.roa.org.

- Once logged into the site, look for "Sign In" in the blue banner at the top of the page. Follow the instructions on the Member Login page. If you are a regular user of this site, there may not be a need to sign in each time.
- Make sure your contact information is accurate, especially your e-mail.

Periodically you will receive Legislative CALLS TO ACTION, from the National ROA Office, <https://www.roa.org/page/CallToAction>, which allow you to share your support of proposed congressional actions with your elected Federal Officials. There currently are nine sets of Call to Action.

Each of these actions are intended to bring equality to our Reserve forces with their Active-Duty counterparts; equality of training funds, equality of equipment, equality of pay, equality of benefits not only to the service member but the family members as well. The Reserve force has always been a part of this nation's national security. However, in the more recent global conflicts the Reserves and National Guard have become an integral and critical component of our national security.

Walla Walla Team

Walla Walla Chapter Officers

PRESIDENT

MAJ Lonnie Mettler, USA (Ret.)

EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT

LTC Allen Aplash, USA (Ret.)

SECRETARY

Capt William Howard III, USAF (Ret.)

TREASURER

CSM Terry Atchison, USA (Ret.)

Walla Walla Chapter Committees

INVESTMENTS

LTC Allen Aplash, USA (Ret.)

VETERAN HEADSTONE PROJECT

LTC Allen Aplash, USA (Ret.)

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

PO3 Gene Gossett, USNR
SGT Ted C. Hanson, ARNG

Walla Walla Chapter Advisors

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

1LT Michael Howell, USAR

CHAPLAIN

RDML Darold Bigger

FLAG PROGRAM

CSM Terry Atchison, USA (Ret.)

HISTORIAN

MSgt David Raappana, USAF (Ret.)

LEGISLATION

LTC Ben Morris, USA (Ret.)

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

CSM Terry Atchison, USA (Ret.)
MAJ Lonnie Mettler, USA (Ret.)

PROGRAMS

MSgt David Raappana, USAF (Ret.)

PUBLIC OUTREACH

LTC Sarah Bro, USA (Ret.)

Activities Calendar

Executive Committee Meeting

Everyone is welcome to attend the Executive Committee meetings. It takes place at the Fort Walla Walla Museum Conference Room at 9:30 a.m. See dates below:

Jan 22, 2024,

Mar 25, 2024

Feb 19, 2024,

Apr 22, 2024

Upcoming Lunch Speakers

12 Noon Walla Walla Country Club

February 2, 2024 – MAJ Kyle Wiberg, USAR
Military Chaplain

March 1, 2024 – Open

April 5, 2024 – Ms. Rebecca Hom, USAF
Women's Airforce Service Pilots (WASP)

May 3, 2024 – SrA Rocco Shanks USAF
Saudi, Dhahran, Riyadh AF Bases

Walla Walla ROA Chapter 2023 New Members!

LCDR Theodore L. Cad, USCG (Ret.)

LCDR Kent R. Catlin, USCG

LCDR John E. Colbath, USCG (Ret.)

Maj Lester W. Johnson, USAF (Ret.)

CW04 Nathan D. Patton, USCG (Ret.)

PO2 Tye L. Watts, USN

SFC Robert E. Radke, USA (Ret.)

SM Sgt Steven J. Heinzman, USAF (Ret.)

CDR Scott C. Ames, USN (Ret.)

MG Raymond F. Rees, USA (Ret.)

PVT Kelly G. Mattocks, ARNG

COL James R. Baker, USA (Ret.)

Public Outreach

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Disclaimer

Opinions expressed herein are those of the editor or columnist and are not Walla Walla Chapter, Department of Northwest, or of ROA.

Program Speakers

By Capt. William Howard III



Archway

Fort Walla Walla Post Cemetery Archway

**September 1, 2023, Guest Speaker
CSM Terry Atchison**

Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Terry Atchison, USA (Ret.) illustrated the concept of the archway envisioned by the Veterans Headstone committee to create a structure that would not only be visually stunning but also functional.

He also addressed the old trees at the cemetery that create a problem with the veteran headstones and the cemetery fence that surrounds the cemetery, and he said the committee is working with the City of Walla Walla Parks and Recreation Department regarding the trees.

CSM Atchison said the construction of the Archway required a comprehensive team effort, involving multiple stakeholders across various stages of the project. This collaborative effort with the City of Walla Walla Parks and recreation ensured that the concept, design, construction, and installation of the Archway were successfully executed.



Walla Walla High School JROTC Program

**October 6, 2023, Guest Speaker
CSM Anthony Marrero**

Command Sergeant Major Anthony Marrero provided a comprehensive update on the various initiatives undertaken by the Walla Walla High School JROTC program. Emphasizing its core principle of student leadership, the program aims to inspire its Cadets to become exceptional American citizens. CSM Marrero also highlighted the potential benefits of the ROTC program in college, which offers financial assistance to individuals aiming for military commissions.

CSM Marrero acknowledged the extensive tradition of Walla Walla High School's Cadets engaging in the program since its establishment in 1918 after the enactment of the National Defense Act of 1916. Presently, more than one hundred students at the High School actively partake in JROTC.

CSM Marrero expressed that the expansion of this invaluable training is ongoing. Hanford High School is in the process of establishing an Army Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) program, while Kennewick High School already has an Air Force JROTC program. It has been disclosed by the Department of Defense that they are looking to support a total of 2,000 JROTC units, whereas currently, there are 1,700 units actively functional. The limitation on the program continues to be the shortage of qualified Instructors, who must apply within two years of discharge.



Gold Star

Never Forget Our Fallen Heroes

**November 3, 2023, Guest Speaker
LTC Hank Cramer, USA (Ret.)**

Lieutenant Colonel Hank Cramer shared his personal experience on the Gold Star Program, a valuable initiative designed to extend support to the families of military personnel who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our nation. LTC Cramer proudly served both on active duty and in the reserve capacities.

He was born an Army brat at Fort Bragg, North Carolina where his father was one of the Army's original Green Berets. Hank's father, Harry Griffith Cramer Jr., was killed in Vietnam October 21, 1957, the first Special Forces soldier to die in that conflict. Additionally, LTC Cramer shared his thoughts on the Congressional Gold Star Family Fellow program during his presentation. Serving as a dedicated supporter of Gold Star families, he actively fulfills this important duty while collaborating with Congressman Dan Newhouse in the Washington District 4.

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Program Speakers Continue

He shares stories about the team of scientists from agencies, Armed Forces Medical System, military personnel, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Army Casualty Office, as well as volunteers, who work together to provide the fullest possible accounting of soldiers who served our country, ultimately intending to bring them home to their families and to the nation.



Walla Walla Chapter Annual Business

December 1, 2023, Chapter Luncheon MAJ Lonnie Mettler, President

MAJ Mettler, President opened the meeting by taking a moment to thank everyone for coming out and supporting the Chapter!

SMSGt Steve Heinzman led the Pledge of Allegiance and RDML Darold Bigger led a prayer in thanks for our members.

MAJ Mettler stated before we moved into the business of the chapter we will begin with the first agenda item - Quilts of Valor presentation. MAJ Mettler introduced Dr. Pam Murray, Chapter Quilts of Valor coordinator.

Dr. Murray introduced Mona Himmel and Jan Eaton representatives of the local chapter Walla Walla Sweets Quilters. The Quilts of Valor organization includes 9,400 quilters that have created over 362,000 quilts that have been presented to the veterans. It is awarded to Service Members or Veterans who has been touched by war.



Five veterans were presented with beautiful Quilts: left to right SSgt Scott Keller, CSM Terry Atchison, RDML Darold Bigger, COL Jim Baker, and LTC Rodney Thompson.

It was inspiring to see the beautiful quilts awarded. If you know of a Service Member or Veteran that should be honored with a quilt, please contact MAJ Mettler or Dr. Pam Murray.



Capt Bill Howard introduced the candidates for 2024 Executive Committee: MAJ Lonnie Mettler, President, LTC Sarah Bro, Vice President (not in photo) Capt Bill Howard, Secretary and CSM Terry Atchison, Treasurer. Members unanimously approved all present.

Wreaths Across America:

LTC Allen Alass addressed the Wreaths Across America by thanking everyone who had a part in the fundraising project for the Chapter. Placement of the Wreaths will occur December 16, at 9:00 a.m. and locations are:

- Mountain View Cemetery
- Fort Walla Walla Post Cemetery

Invited all your friends and neighbors.

Committee Reports:

CSM Atchison provided the membership with the 2023 year-end financial Report.

Speakers Program:

MSgt Dave Raappana reported on the Speaker Program for 2024. February through May. Are listed on page 2, of the December Chapter Forte.

Program Speakers Continue Page 9

National News

Support ROA's Top 10 NDAA Priorities

Join ROA's Minute Man Movement by persuading Congress to support ROA's top 10 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) priorities for Fiscal Year 2024.

Background Information

Both chambers of Congress have passed their versions of the FY 2024 NDAA. Now, the differences must be reconciled.

On September 20, ROA's executive Director, retired Army General Jeff Phillips, put forward ROA's top 10 FY 24 NDAA priorities in a letter to Chairs and Ranking members of the US House and Senate Armed Services committees.

While not inclusive, ROA's 10 represent many of the most critical issues concerning readiness and the care of the reserve component service members and their families.

ROA's Top 10 FY 2024

1. Provide cost-free dental care for all Selected Reserve members.
2. Increase the nurse officer accession bonus from \$20,000 to \$40,000.
3. Improve healthcare benefits for Reserve and National Guard survivors.
4. Amend the funding structure and amount for the Tri-Service Nursing Research Program.
5. Fully fund the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account.
6. Endorse ROA's "Replenishing the Ranks Act."
7. Oppose the retirement of the A-10 Close air Support Capability.
8. Enable the Air National Guard to purchase two additional F-15EX Eagle II aircraft in 2025.
9. Ensure parental leave parity between components.
10. Ensure Hazardous Duty Incentive Pay and Aviation Incentive Pay parity between components.

Now it is your turn to support our Reserve and National Guard members and families. Write to your elected officials asking for their support:

<https://www.roa.org/page/CallToAction>.

Chapter News

ROA Sword & Pen Award Recipient

CSM Terry Atchison and MAJ Lonnie Mettler were recognized for their outstanding work on the Chapter newsletter. With the ROA Sword & Pen award during the ROA National Convention this year.

The Sword & Pen award is presented each year to the editors of Chapters whose communication efforts effectively communicate the purpose of ROA and cater to the Chapter's needs for valuable information.

Tri-State Veterans Stand Down & Resource Fair



Resource Fair ROA Booth

The Tri-State Veterans Stand Down & Resource Fair occurred on September 16, 2023, at the VFW.

These types of fairs bring together various organizations and resources in one location, making it easier for veterans to access the assistance they need. It allows them to connect with service providers, seek medical and mental health assistance, receive free meals and clothing, and interact with fellow veterans.

Our attention was centered on the activities the Walla Walla Chapter (ROA) is undertaking in the community, with a particular emphasis on the opportunity to have meaningful conversations with veterans.

Community Activities

By CSM Terry Atchison, USA (Ret.)

POW/MIA Day

*Friday, September 15, 2023
Walla Walla High School*

Volunteers Love Serving Veterans hosted the annual POW/MIA Day on September 15, 2023. SFC Mark Mebes, Walla Walla High School JROTC Instructor and Walla Walla Chapter ROA Life Member, served as the emcee.

SFC Mebes was honored to introduce Lieutenant Nancy Willison, a distinguished member of the U.S. Navy Nurse Corps, who served from 1964 to 1969. Lieutenant Willison's exceptional service and unwavering dedication were particularly -



Nancy Willison

evident during her tenure, which coincided with the intensified conflict of the Vietnam War, specifically from 1968 to 1969. Her remarkable contributions were invaluable aboard the USS Repose. After serving, Wilson earned a master's degree in nursing and a family nurse practitioner certification.



James McCloughan

SFC Mebes introduce SP5 James McCloughan an admired guest speaker and Vietnam War Medal of Honor recipient. Drafted into the U.S. Army in 1968 right after completing his bachelor's degree bachelor's degree in sociology.

McCloughan served as a combat medic with the Americal Division where he rose to the rank of Specialist Five. SP5 McCloughan is credited with moving into the "Kill Zone" on ten occasions in one battle alone, receiving two Purple Hearts and saving 10 American lives and the life of one Vietnamese interpreter. In 2017, he was awarded our nation's highest military commendation – the Congressional Medal of Honor.

In 1970 he returned from service and resumed his contract with South Haven Public Schools, earning an M.A. in counseling in 1972. He taught psychology and sociology for 38 years while coaching football, wrestling and baseball.



Honoring and Respecting Those Who Fought and Served

The Veterans Day assembly was held on November 9, 2023, at the Walla Walla High School. The event was hosted by the JROTC Battalion and associated student body to pay tribute to the fallen and to honor the men and women from all military branches for their services to the nation.



CPO Cummins

Walla Walla Grand Marshal Veterans Day Parade

Navy veteran CPO Jerry Cummins served aboard the USS Firm; a minesweeper oceangoing ship that was smallest ocean-crossing vessel used by the Navy. The vessel was 173 feet long and made entirely of wood except for its brass engine.

CPO Cummins a ROA Walla Walla Chapter member, was the Grand Marshal for the November 11, Veterans Day Parade, an annual event celebrating and honoring Walla Walla 's Veterans.

Walla Walla High School JROTC

Save the dates – upcoming events and drill meets!

Battalion Events

Holiday Party – December 15, 2023
Booster Benefit Dinner – March 2, 2024
Military Ball – May 18, 2024
Annual Review – May 22, 2024

Drill Meets

West Valley – January 27, 2024
Kennewick, WA – February 24, 2024
Conference Championships, Redmond, OR March 16, 2024

By Maj. Gen (Ret.) Jeffrey E. Phillips

Could a Presidential Commission Solve America's Military Readiness Crisis?

Part 1 – Military Readiness

Facing virtually unprecedented threats abroad, with an all-volunteer military unable to meet recruiting goals, America's security is imperiled. Given mixed messages from the Pentagon in the face of persistent recruiting shortages, some may not realize the severity of the program.

The Air Force just announced that it will fail to make its goals for the first time since 1999. We have been told that readiness will not be affected – what, then, is the significance of the targets, one might ask? Some may assume the Department of Defense (DoD) will work its way through this crisis, or that in time the crisis will subside. Yet, the Pentagon has not solved – and evidently cannot solve – this growing crisis on its own. Unaddressed, the program will worsen. These shortages and challenges to readiness extend into the Reserve and National Guard. A generation ago, that would be of less concern, but since Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm, with no let-up since, these “reserve components” have been used at a rate unprecedented since World War II. Today, the reserve components constitute about 40% of the total military and more than half of the army's total strength. Truly, our military cannot operate without the Reserve.

Augmenting and undersized and overcommitted active force, the reserve components contend with increasing “operations tempo.” The men and women who step forward to serve as “twice the citizen,” as Winston Churchill called the Reserves, are finding it increasingly difficult to balance their civilian careers, family responsibilities and military duty.

Employers, who have shown tremendous support for their employees in uniform, are telling the Reserve Organization of America (ROA) that, although they value military experience and excellent character found in those hired who have military backgrounds, the repeated and often lengthy absences can cause problems.

The difficulties the military faces by missing recruiting goals are not of its making; the reasons by now are fairly well known. ROA does not see these pressures abating anytime soon, so time for bemoaning is over; it is time for solutions.

One potential solution is a program championed by Gen. George C. Marshall after World War I and during the Cold War: Universal military training. Essentially, all eligible citizens of military age would get a year or so of training “in the basic.” Upon completion, further service would be an option but not compulsory. Explaining the value of such training, Marshall wrote in his 1945 biennial report to the Secretary of War: “In another national emergency, the existence of a substantial portion of the Nation's young manpower already trained, or in process of training, would make it possible to fill out immediately the peacetime ranks of the Navy, the Regular Army, the National Guard, and the Organized Reserve. As a result, our Army Forces would be ready for almost immediate deployment to counter initial hostile moves, ready to prevent an enemy from gaining footholds from which he could launch destructive attacks against our industries and our homes. By this method we would establish, for the generations to come, a national military policy: (1) which is absolutely democratic in its nature, and (2) which places the military world and therefore the political world on notice that this is vast power, linked to our tremendous resources, wealth, and production, is immediately available.

Part 2 History of the Dog Tag (Continued from the August 2023)



The outcome of the World Wars I, showed that concerns about identification were valid, and the practice of making identification disks caught on.

The first official request to outfit service members with ID tags came in 1899 at the end of the Spanish-American war. Army Chaplain Charles C. Pierce, who oversaw the Army Morgue and Office of Identification in the Philippines, recommended the Army outfit all soldiers with the circular disks to identify those who were severely injured or killed in action.

It took few years, but in December 1906, the Army put a general order requiring aluminum disc-shaped ID tags be worn by soldiers. The half-dollar size tags were stamped with a soldier's name, rank, company and regiment or corps, and they were attached to a cord or chain that went around the neck. The tags were worn under the field uniform.

The order was modified in July 1916, when a second disc was required to be suspended from the first by a short string or chain. The first tag was to remain with the body, while the second was for burial service record keeping. *The tags were given to enlistees, but officers had to buy them.* The Navy did not require ID tags until May 1917. By then, all U.S. combat troops were required to wear them. Meanwhile, the Marines had been required to wear ID tags since late 1916. *There was a mix of the Army and Navy Styles.*



By 1917 specifications were put in place, and the tags also included each man's Army-issued serial number. Toward the end of the World War I, American Expeditionary Forces in Europe added religious symbols to the tags – C for Catholic, H for Hebrew and P for Protestant, but those marking did not remain after the war. Regulations have gone back and forth regarding whether the two tags should stay together or be separated. In 1959, procedure was changed to keep both dog tags with the service member if they died. But by Vietnam, it was changes back to the original regulation of taking one tag and leaving the other.

By 1969, the Army began to transition from serial numbers to Social Security numbers. That lasted about 45 years until 2015, when the Army began removing Social Security numbers from the tags and replacing them with each soldier's Defense Department identification number. The move safeguarded soldier's personal information and helped protect against identity theft. The technological advances have come along since Vietnam, including the ability to use DNA to identify remains.

But despite these advancements, dog tags are still issued to service members today. *They are reminder of America's efforts to honor all those who served, especially those who made the ultimate sacrifice.*

Source: Katie Lange, DOD News September 2020.

Chaplain Corner

By RDML Darold Bigger, USN (Ret.)

Gratitude

At this holiday season there is much to raise concern and make us unhappy. You can easily make a significant list of personal, relational, local, and global things that worry and upset you.

A recent report from “The Gottman Institute,” renowned for its research about skills that create happy and lasting marriages, emphasized the importance of the “5:1 ratio.” All marriages have conflicts, but stable and happy marriages have at least five positive interactions for every negative interaction.

Might that principal apply to other life situations too? If we recognized and acknowledged five times as many positive things as negative ones, might our life be more enjoyable? Would choosing to be grateful, even in difficult or painful situations, help us be more optimistic and generate a more positive point of view?

One of the most cheerful people I have ever met was bedfast. Excruciating pain from arthritis kept her from moving around, even in her own home. Her full-time caregiver fed her, bathed her, and took care of her most basic bodily functions. Despite her negative circumstances, every time we went to see her, she greeted us with an enthusiastic smile and talked about how grateful she was for sunshine and friends and visitors. Her optimistic gratitude did not change her reality, but it helped her cope with her situation. She lived out the Apostle Paul’s advice, paraphrased in “The Message” Bible:

Summing it all up, friends, I would say you will do best by filling your minds and meditating on things true, noble, reputable, authentic, compelling, gracious—the best, not the worst; the beautiful, not the ugly; things to praise, not things to curse. Philippians 4:8

Program Speakers Continue

Annual Business Meeting – from Page 4



MAJ Mettler presented a Letter of Appreciation to PO3 Gene Gossett – for his ability to communicate the importance of the JROTC youth development for the future leaders.



MAJ Mettler presenting LTC Aplass with the Minuteman Statue

MAJ Mettler presented LTC Allen Aplass with the ROA’s Minuteman Award.

LTC Aplass has been a member since June 1, 1976, with 47 years with this organization. During this time LTC Aplass has had a role in making the Walla Walla Chapter a successful organization!

ROA Walla Walla Chapter Wreaths Across America



Wreaths Across America is a non-profit organization that aims to honor and remember fallen veterans by placing wreaths on their graves during the holiday season. The sponsorship funds are used to purchase the wreaths and cover the cost of transportation and coordination to ensure that the wreaths are placed at the designated location.

The Reserve Organization of America, Walla Walla Chapter has joined as a sponsoring organization to ensure those veterans laid to rest at Fort Walla Walla Post Cemetery receive proper honors and recognition.

Fort Walla Walla Post Cemetery holds great historical significance, as it is one of the oldest military cemeteries in the Pacific Northwest. The Walla Walla Chapter is committed to preserving this important piece of history and providing a place for families, historians, and the community to honor and remember the veterans and their families. You can assist your local Chapter's efforts by being a wreath sponsor. For every wreath you sponsor, the Chapter receives \$5.00 which will be put back into the cemetery to improve the appearance of the cemetery. *We need your help and support to honor and preserve the legacy of veterans buried at Fort Walla Walla Post Cemetery for generations to come.*

Next Generation Uniformed Services ID Card



The Department of Defense is transitioning from its legacy paper-based Uniformed Service Identification (USID) card to a more secure next generation USID card. If you currently have some form of USID card, you should review the attached web link to determine if you should get your card updated.

<https://www.cac.mil/Next-generation-Uniformed-Services-ID-card/>

TAPS



Robert Brinker

Robert Charles "Bob" Brinker of Milton-Freewater passed away on August 10, 2023, at the age of 92 years. Robert was born in College Place, WA on January 9th, 1931. There he attended College Place Grade School and graduating from Walla Walla High School in 1949, he attended the University of Washington, graduating in 1953 with a degree in aeronautical engineering and an officer's commission in the Air Force. Forty-five days later he was in flight school in Texas. While in the Air Force, Robert flew an F84F jet fighter in England, French Morocco, and Western Europe. *More about Robert see Union-Bulletin | August 20, 2023*



Donna Casebolt

Donna Casebolt Civilian Spouse, a Chapter member recently passed away. More information <https://obituaries.union-bulletin.com/obituary/donna-casebolt-1088832752>