



## Department of Northwest

### **ANNUAL MEETING 26-28 Mar 2025**

Meeting called to order at 0911

Present: 001 Virtual, 002 Bremerton, 015 Seattle, 018 Spokane, 021 Walla Walla, 030 124<sup>th</sup> ARCOM, Peter Halver, Rickey Thomas, Gary Ausman, Margaret Cope, Linda Sowler, Judy Larson, David Foley, Ed Brock, Roberta Brockliss, Sarah Bro, Chad Bro, Terry Atchison, Allen Aclass, Bob McCoy, Judy Ford.

Pete Halver, Dept. President, commented on the nice reception last night. Chad Bro was the winner of the costume contest.

Dave Foley gave the invocation.

The minutes from the 94<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting were presented. Terry Atchison made a motion to approve as written was made and seconded Margaret Cope. Minutes approved by voice vote.

Annual meeting rules: Copies available for review. No recommended changes presented by the body.

Credentials: Everyone present was a current member of ROA.

Audit: Not available

Nominations: The current positions on the ballot JAG, Chaplain, Historian, Legislative, Newsletter Editor, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership

There was discussion on the incorporation of the Department and name change. National changed constitution to allow ROA to do business as Reserve Organization of America in 2018 and permanently changed the name to Reserve Organization of America in 2021.

#### **Report of Officers:**

ARMY-No report was available.

NAVAL SERVICES -Rickey Thomas reported the Coast Guard has confiscated one billion dollars in illegal drugs in last 3 months. Ed Brock: Navy is discussing whether the F-47 will be carrier based. Navy Reserve met its recruitment goals.

AIR & SPACE FORCE-Margaret Cope: President Trump supports the F-47 (new fighter) program designed by Boeing, but many details remain with the acquisition process. Air Force support including airlift has been used to move immigrants, but military airlift is very expensive and will be limited in the future. The Air Force has also been supporting the extinguishing of the national wildfires with the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Air Force General CQ Brown was removed along with some senior leaders of the other services.

Continue to develop the Department's ROTC and JROTC programs to recognize outstanding cadets and improve ROA's visibility.

NATIONAL COUNCIL-Judy Ford: Jeff Phillips, ROA Executive Director, gave a stable finance report for the organization to the National Council members at the Leadership Conference. Layne Wroblewski, ROA National President, talked about the ad hoc committee on Governance, Restructure, Optimization Workgroup he appointed. He informed the Council that an attorney will be consulted to combine the 4 separate 501c3

accounts ROA currently has into one 501c3 under the STARS Foundation. Many Constitution & Bylaw revisions will be based on this committee. He also stated that ballot voting will occur for elections and resolutions only this year, so it is important to make sure there are delegates for the Annual Meeting October 17-19 in Washington DC to discuss C&B proposed changes. Layne wants a hill day on the 16<sup>th</sup>. Matt reviewed legislative priorities for 119<sup>th</sup> Congress. He has two fellows, Jake and Peter and Hannah Mill will start in June. One new resolution was passed on funding for TriService Nursing Research Program.

TREASURER REPORT-Rickey Thomas: Chase bank has the daily operating funds.

Checking: \$ 883

Savings: \$10,408

Sub-Total \$11,291.

PenFed has 2 CDs that will mature in 15 June 2025.

\$16,000 CD now \$16,466

\$56,000 CD now \$57,649

Total assets of \$85,406.

The Budget and Finance Committee will review and make recommendations to confirm the best decisions made regarding the CD. They will also research the opening of an investment account and report back at the next annual meeting.

Sarah Bro raised concerns about deficit spending to keep the print newsletter going. Print delivery is provided to nearly 600 members who do not have an email, costing roughly \$1100 an issue." There was also discussion on what happens to the money if we go inactive. We have an opportunity to fund some things and possibly build the money.

Ed Brock made a motion to take interest from CDs and reinvest the base amount. Bob McCoy seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Treasurer Report attached to the original minutes.

NATIONAL EXCOM: Judy Ford – We received an update from the GROW committee. ROA will be combining the 4 separate 501(c)3s they currently have into one under the STARS Foundation in consultation with a DC attorney. The EXCOM is looking at the size of this meeting. The current proposal decreases the EXCOM board from 17 to 10 members. Constitution & Bylaws changes will be discussed at the next National annual meeting, to ensure all Departments are represented. Elections and Resolutions will be done by electronic ballot. There may be a recommendation to change the national council to be the Department presidents. The GROW Committee will make recommended C&B changes. Regarding direction forward, the EXCOM discussed whether the President or Staff will provide overall guidance.

### **Report of Standing Committees**

**CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS:** The Constitution and Bylaws Committee has recommended changes following last year's discussion. The Bylaws change requires a majority vote for approval.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Lt Col Ford has been reaching out to the ROA members that live in one of our states but don't belong to our Department. She used the postcards left from last year's effort to increase participation at the Annual Meeting. She sent out 268 postcards (68% of the list) and had 9 members transfer (4% those sent) to the Department. There were also 5 with bad addresses that were reported to National. All members had updated addresses at National and moved out of the state.

**ANNUAL MEETING:** Bremerton Chapter is hosting in 2026. Location will be decided by the Dept. VPs and treasurer. The suggested timeframe for the meeting will be 19-25 April. Looking at all options to include VFW, Elks, LaQuinta or other service organizations.

**FAMILY READINESS:** School kit program moved to Family Readiness committee. No change in school kit ordering or distribution. Yellow Ribbon is happy with them. Working with Military Children Education Coalition (MCEC) to support military student identifier and professionally collaborating with MCEC. Both the National

and State Education Departments were involved with developing the student identifier. Dept of Education federal as well as State is in the Nation Defense Authorization Act which included Reserve children. Reserve has been neglected through the process. It was not effectively implemented when the law passed and the Education Department did not put it in the code, so it is not legal. The committee requested Gen Phillips send a letter to get it into code. MCEC offers weekly webinars. Opportunities to support families.

The writing contest will launch on April 1<sup>st</sup> for 10-14 year olds. The awards are \$500, \$300, and \$200. Essay <500 words how being connected to the military has impacted your life.

AWARDS COORDINATOR: We are a large Department and could use presenters. Gary is good with the U of W. Currently ROTC receive three medals: Seniors -Gold, Juniors-Silver, Sophomore-Bronze. JROTC gets a ribbon and would like to also give medal. Judy made a motion to give medals again to JROTC. Terry seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Jim Siscel continues to do the long-timer awards. Pete received several letters of appreciation back from those who received them.

BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Lonnie Mettler stepped down as chairman the last quarter of last year. The Council adopted a budget for 2025. The annual meeting budget passed \$2500 income, got \$3380. Regular donations went down with only \$75 reported last month. The committee may have overestimated this year's conference income. A rough guess at this point is we will be \$4,000 short for expenses over income. The Budget & Finance Committee (B&F) needs to meet and have a look at CDs to see if they need to be rolled back to what they originally were. Ed Brock made a motion, seconded by Allen Aplant to have B&F look at this and report back to the Council by 15 May 2025. Motion passed.

### **Chapter Reports:**

- VIRTUAL-Milt Houghton: It has proved to be difficult gathering people virtually when there has been no face-to-face initially. He is working on setting up the next meeting, but his priority right now is managing family issues.
- BREMERTON-Judy Ford: There was a meeting in February and Waiting on meeting dates for the rest of the year.
- SEATTLE-Rickey Thomas: Inactive as far as chapter meetings but once a month, 5 or 6 get together at lunch and take care of business. Most people haven't returned since COVID.
- SPOKANE- Larry Neil: Chapter has not had a president for years. Ed Brock has moved to the Spokane area and will work with Larry to get it going again.
- WALLA WALLA-Sarah Bro: Their mission is "Never Forget a Veteran". Since we last met in 2024
  - Our membership totals stand at 106 members.
  - We continue to have monthly Executive Committee meetings, December and July excepted
  - We continue to have monthly member meetings on the first Friday of each month, January and July excepted. These take place at the Walla Walla Country Club
  - Speakers are part of our monthly luncheon meetings. Members serve as sponsors to find speakers, who talk on many topics, mostly related to the military or military history. This past year we've heard about:
    - Veterans telling their stories on the stage of a local non-profit theater under the Red Badge Project
    - US Air Force military experiences in Operation Southern Watch
    - A presentation from the WA state Army Reserve Ambassador Beau Ruff
    - Two presentations on the Second Walla Walla Treaty Council and Stevens Skirmish of 1856, one from the indigenous people's records and one from Governor Isaac Stevens, as reenacted by Ron Klicker

- Stories about the Women Airforce Service Pilots
  - A display of newspapers and photos highlighting veterans from yesteryear - from the CW to World War II
  - An update on the Washington State Veterans Home here in Walla Walla
  - We proudly recognized graduating cadets at several JROTC and ROTC programs at Wa-Hi, Kennewick High School, Washington State University, and the University of Idaho.
  - We maintain a Facebook page as well as a website, and we have an award winning newsletter that is released 3 times a year. We have a primary initiative to never forget a veteran:
  - In September we were very pleased to join with the Camp 3 for the Sons of Union Veterans, our local American Legion post, and others to replace and re-dedicate two Civil War headstones in our local cemetery. The headstones had degraded to beyond recognition
  - With the Sweet Freedom Quilters, we acknowledged ten veterans touched by war with a Quilt of Valor, a visible and tactile acknowledgment for their service
  - In December, in conjunction with the Civil Air Patrol, we served as a sponsorship group with Wreaths Across America (WAA) and placed nearly 1500 wreaths at three local cemeteries on Wreaths Across America day. For our efforts in 2024 WAA paid us ~\$2100.
  - With the City of Walla Walla we are moving forward with the next phase of replacing 270 headstones for our World War I veterans.
  - We continue to get out into our community to “advertise” ourselves, joining public events such as Fourth of July in the Park, sponsorship canvassing at local outlets, and this year we will be setting up our “booth” at a summer market for four dates. We have printed two brochures to share about ourselves and our initiatives.
- 124<sup>th</sup> ARCOM-Pete Halver: Only 3 active members. The chapter has 17 flag officers and don’t respond back. There have been multiple mergers 124<sup>th</sup> to 70<sup>th</sup> RSC which merged with 63<sup>rd</sup>.

**Service Section Meetings:**

ARMY: met and approved other nominations to address.

NAVY: Submitted a changed effective immediately. Ed Brock is Navy VP and President-Elect. Rickey will remain as Treasurer.

AIR & SPACE FORCE: Need ways to get messages out to family. ROTC program beneficial to all. AF Reserve/ANG have been fighting fires.

All sections approved a slate of officers.

VP Naval Services: Ed Brock, Judge Advocate: David Foley, Chaplain: Deborah Halver-Hanson, Historian Rickey Thomas, Legislative Chairman: Ed Brock, Newsletter Editor: Sarah Bro, Awards/ROC: Margaret Cope/Lonnie Mettler, Secretary: Judy Ford, Treasurer: Rickey Thomas, Membership: Judy Ford Sarah Bro made motion to close slate of officer; Rickey Thomas Seconded. Motion Passed.

Pete Halver made a statement that he would support Judy Ford for National Air & Space Force Committeeman

**Unfinished Business**

ROA REPORTER: Some members do not receive emails generated from the ROA website. There were only 2 issues last year with Dudley being ill. Sarah plans to have one in February, June, and November. The Reporter has moved into two forms. The modified 4-page version is mailed. The 8-page electronic version is sent to the Chapter Presidents for distribution to its members. It can also be accessed via the National Reserve Voice or website. The newsletter is currently on the Walla Walla website link. The cost for 2 newsletters being sent out is \$2500. Trey Criner uses the Walla Walla link to post on the ROA site due to restricted space.

NATIONAL ELCTIONS: MG Peggy Wilmoth has been working with Layne this last year to ensure a smooth transition. National seats available; AF VP, 2 AF committeemen, Army VP, Naval VP, 2 Naval Services Committeemen. The Department endorsed Judy Ford to run for the AF Committeeman

**ELECTRONIC VOTING:** Elections and approval of Resolutions will occur by electronic ballot this year. The ballot process has strict deadlines. July 18 all election position endorsements due to Diane. VPs will appoint the Nominating Committee. Each service section will have a town hall to allow members to meet the candidates and ask questions. Army section town hall is Aug 5, Navy Aug 6, AF Aug 7. Aug 25 section VP's will submit the names for the ballots following the Service Section Elections. The entire process will be published in the Reserve Magazine and have instructions for paper ballot options when published in April or May. Terry handed out a White Paper summarizing the process.

### **New Business**

**CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS:** 39 votes for Majority; Gary Ausman indicated the Committee recommended clarification changes to the bylaws based on last year's meeting. It defines chapter merger and dissolution of chapters. Motion made by Margaret Cope and seconded by Gary Ausman. Motion passed.

**ANNUAL MEETING 2026:** Department Vice Presidents will be on the Annual Meeting Committee. Deborah Halver-Hanson has been working on sponsorship for the Annual Meeting. It was decided it would be held East of Puget Sound to avoid any need for ferries. It was mentioned that La Quinta in Tacoma had worked out well. The committee will look at all options.

**DEPARTMENT WEBSITE:** There will be no dept. website feature in the National website update. We will lose that capability. While I was at the Leadership Conference, I spoke with NC, and they have a nice website. I had a conversation with a developer, and this is what he can offer. Setup fee is \$150, Decision and construction set up \$750, annual maintenance hosting \$180 a year. The first year would be \$1,800.00. Domain registration is wrapped into the price. The domain would belong to the organization. He uses the con-slate platform which is easier and more customizable than word press. There's a back room to log in to upload to the site. Sarah Bro will have their webmaster, Scott Kelly look at options. A report will be given at the August Council meeting

**ROA STRATEGIC PLAN:** A copy of the Strategic Plan overview was included in the packet. I am hoping to have Vision29 and Mission replace the Purpose that is in the Reporter. Judy briefly went over the pillars and explained although it may seem more National oriented, it will require Department involvement. The available graphs will allow us to see progress toward the goals. Terry also handed out information on the International Programs which is part of the goals.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER:** Pete received a Thank You from Fisher House of NW for the donation. There are 4 Fisher houses at JBLM and Vancouver. He also mentioned that Past ROA President, Curley Holtman died at the age of 99.

Sarah reminded everyone to get the new ID card by 2027 or they will be denied access to Military facilities.

Allen Alass made a motion, seconded by Sarah Bro for the Budget & Finance Committee to look into a brokerage investment account such as Schwab or Fidelity Exchange Traded Funds and report back to the membership at the 2026 Annual Meeting. Motion Passed

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS:** Slate of officers was approved and elected unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 1612.

Submitted by Judy Ford Department of Northwest Secretary