

## The Surviving Spouses of MOAA

### The Heart Behind One Powerful Voice



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**TO:** Washington State Chapter Auxiliary Liaisons

**FROM:** Washington State Council of Chapters Auxiliary Liaison  
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Want to let you know that I met with State Senator Mike Padden for 15 minutes on September 30<sup>th</sup>, about items that did not pass the state legislature this year. My talking points came from the WDVA office via Heidi Audette. Seems there are three RCW's that have varying definitions of veterans that are confusing to some of the counties, thereby stopping some of our deserving heroes from receiving benefits set aside for them. I left him the email from Heidi and he plans to see what he can do about it.

My meeting was very enjoyable because I used to go to Olympia each February (2003 to 2010) representing the Court Appointed Special Advocate/Guardian Ad Litem (CASA/GAL) for the Spokane County Juvenile Court. Back then I met with some of the senators and representatives from the five districts that are in Spokane County or partially in Spokane County. The late Bob McCaslin was my senator and I always enjoyed talking with him. I was delighted to meet up with Mike, his aide who took such good care of all of us.

One of my points to make here is that I didn't do this visiting alone. The first year the manager of the CASA/GAL program asked me to go. I met with the other CASA's from western Washington in Olympia and got direction and "leave behind materials" from the WA-CASA office and our lobbyist. The second year I had one other CASA go with me, the third year there were three of us, the fourth year we had four, then we had six to eight each year going at their own expense for transportation and WA-CASA paid for our hotel rooms.

The point I am making here is that we can do something to help our veterans and enjoy working together. Senator Padden had mailed out a large post card saying he would be available at a loca-

tion here in the valley and to call and make an appointment if we wanted to talk with him. I am about the only MOAA widow in the Spokane Valley but I'll try and get some other ladies to go with me next year. No need to travel to Olympia. If you have a legislative person in your chapter, see if they can help you get setup to meet with your state legislators when they are in town and what items need to be addressed. Do we have a MOAA lobbyist in Washington State? Sure, we have Heidi at WDVA.

November 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> are going to be fun days for MOAA members. We are meeting at the Doubletree Suites Hotel by the Southcenter mall and near SeaTac. Registration starts at 11:00 on Saturday, Meeting called to order at 13:00 – 17:00, Cocktails at 18:15 and dinner at 19:00. Sunday breakfast on your own, which is a free buffet at the hotel, Break-out sessions from 09:00 – 10:00, break for 15 minutes and then gather back for reports from the break-out sessions. I will be holding a session for auxiliary liaisons with handouts. When we hold this state conference, national MOAA will have changed our identification to Surviving Spouses Liaisons. Now that we are full members with voting rights and places on the board of directors we drop the title of "auxiliary." I hope to meet all of our liaisons or their representative.

*Beth Ann*