



OASFAA NEWSLETTER

A publication of the Oregon Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators

SUMMER 2022

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello OASFAA Members!

I know you're all very busy, but I would like to take a moment to remind you how special you really are and how much your hard work means to so many. You are deeply appreciated!

It does help that FSA recognizes the administrative burden for schools, so I'm sure you were all as excited as I was when FSA announced waiving many of the Verification requirements again for 2022-23. Not to mention the extension of the student loan repayment pause until August 31, 2022.

Your Executive Council is working diligently to finalize the 5-year Strategic plan. We are also working on a grant from WASFAA to help us bring in a powerhouse presenter for the 2023 OASFAA Conference. Wish us luck!

Remember we are here for you-please feel free to reach out to me or other members of the EC if you have any questions, concerns or feedback.

Let's keep our fingers crossed for a warm summer!

Lois DeGhetto
OASFAA President



INSIDE EVERY ISSUE:

Volunteer Spotlight.....	2
School Profile.....	5
The Watercooler.....	6
Save the Date.....	7
Crossword Puzzle.....	9
Funny Pages.....	10

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Student Debt Forgiveness.....	3
OIG Report.....	5



Volunteer Spotlight: Layton Spence

The OASFAA Volunteer Spotlight shines on Layton Spence, Financial Aid Advisor at Oregon State University located in Corvallis.

Volunteer activities with OASFAA: I began volunteering with some of the high school outreach events and have since helped with the 21-22 FAFSA/ORSA mentor training videos and joined the annual conference planning committee for this past year. I'm excited to now be one of the annual conference chairs for the upcoming conference in 2023!

How long have you been in financial aid? I'll be coming up on my 3-year anniversary this August.

How did you get your start in financial aid? I had been an AmeriCorps VISTA at Oregon Coast Community College (Go Sharks!) when a permanent position opened up as their financial aid specialist. I was lucky enough to be hired in that position as OCCC was going through independent accreditation and learning to run financial aid independently. It gave me a great opportunity to learn a lot of the different touch points of financial aid.

What is the most rewarding part of your job?

There are a lot of rewarding parts of financial aid, but I think the most rewarding is when you're able to get someone additional funding or fix something holding back someone's disbursement and you can actually see the student's stress levels go down.

What case/student will you be most likely to remember for the rest of your life?

We had a student at OCCC actively trying to escape a domestic violence situation that I'll always remember. Being able to help them get access to funding independently from their partner and helping them create a student checking account their partner couldn't get into to see or use the funds helped grant them independence and safety. Being able to know we could connect them with resources benefitting them beyond just getting their education was really incredible.

What is the most difficult aspect of your job?

Parents. Some parents are great and working really hard to be a good partner and support for their students, but the most exhausting files almost always involve a parent in some way. Be it a parent upset about FERPA or not understanding we don't have buckets of money to give their student just because they asked or getting upset because their student hasn't done something that needs to be done. I think the extra degree of separation makes the issues that involve parents just that much more difficult. *(Volunteer...continued on page 6...)*

VP-Community College Report

By Layla Solar, Central Oregon Community College

Welcome summer...or pre-summer depending on where you live! This time of year is a bit funny to me- it is both a beginning and an end (almost like the transition from Dec 31 to Jan 1 but in the middle of the year). I think of the happy endings: high school graduations (elementary and middle school as well sometimes) and all of the college graduations. Then I think of the new beginnings: new financial aid years for most (summer headers) and even fall term for all. New beginnings for our graduates either moving into their career or on to a four-year college. As financial aid professionals we are wrapping up one aid year and starting another with the new opportunities, and challenges, that beginnings and endings bring.



Speaking of beginning and endings, we just ended (well, a few months back) a very successful annual conference. One that allowed us to see each other in person after a very...very long time! We are beginning (well, technically have begun) to think about the next round of opportunities to meet in person for trainings (think FA101/201 and the 2023 annual conference). *(VP Report...continued on page 4...)*

Aligning Policy with Principle: NASFAA's Take on Student Debt Forgiveness

By Justin Draeger, NASFAA President

Student loan forgiveness has been front-and-center in the news recently, and for good reason. President Joe Biden signaled a willingness to tackle student loan debt as a part of a larger effort to combat the ongoing pandemic, but recently panned the prospect of using executive action to provide \$50,000 in forgiveness to each borrower, as proposed by a number of congressional Democrats. Listen to NASFAA's [recent podcast episode](#) on student loan forgiveness.

With such a significant higher education policy change being discussed at the national level, NASFAA recently recorded a [special episode](#) of our "Off The Cuff" podcast where we invited Tamara Hiler of Third Way, Preston Cooper of the Foundation for Research on Equal Opportunity, and Persis Yu of the National Consumer Law Center to dive into all angles of student debt forgiveness. Our guests shared their perspectives on how much, if any, student loan debt should be forgiven, as well as who it should be targeted toward, the main benefits of widespread debt forgiveness, and what should happen with the students who will take on loans again next year.

These are topics NASFAA's Board of Directors has been mulling over as well. In fact, this last January, just before the inauguration, we had a robust conversation where we looked at the pros and cons of widespread student loan forgiveness, and delved into datasets to see who would and wouldn't benefit. Perhaps most importantly, we scrubbed these policy proposals against [NASFAA's Core Advocacy Principles](#). On the surface, forgiving student debt seems like a no-brainer, but to make it effective, there's more we need to consider.



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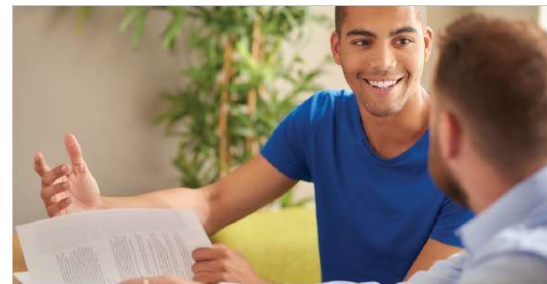
Insured by NCUA.

(VP Report...continued from page 2...) As we think about some upcoming opportunities I posed the question to some of our community college colleagues: "What does OASFAA mean to you and how do you benefit from membership?" The responses were heartwarming! Here are a few snippets that I'd like to share:

- "OASFAA brings together like-minded hard-working people who support one another in one of the hardest jobs on a college campus. Our jobs are packed full of emotions and sometimes rigid rules which can be an explosive combination. OASFAA creates a network for support, ideas, guidance across all types of financial aid programs, information systems and school types." Ryan West, Chemeketa
- "Being a member of OASFAA I feel that I have been able to grow and learn to network with people more. Without my participation in OASFAA I felt as if I was in the education field by myself as I didn't have the network that I do now. By attending OASFAA conferences or other training, I am able to make friends from other schools and if I need something or have questions regarding financial aid, I can also contact them to bounce ideas off of." Anny Hawkins, PCC
- "One of the things I've been thinking of is that OASFAA provides a unique opportunity to connect with other financial aid administrators in the state. It helps to share ideas or ask questions of other FAA folks in the state if we're trying to develop a process. But it also creates better opportunities for us to connect students with resources as they transfer, etc." Lena Leksunkin, PCC
- "I think OASFAA membership is one of the main reasons Oregon has such a close group of supportive financial aid administrators. The networking and connections I have made through OASFAA over the years has made all the difference to me in my financial aid career." Breana Sylwester, COCC
- "OASFAA has been an essential contributor to my professional networking opportunities over the years." Shannen Chwekun, PCC

While that is only small sample of the contributions my favorite came from Ryan and sums it up perfectly: "The colleagues I've met in OASFAA have become treasured friends."

What does OASFAA mean to you? How do you benefit from your membership? Most importantly, what do you need from OASFAA? As your Community College VP, I look forward to hearing from you: lsolar@cocc.edu.



YOU'RE READY TO HELP AND SO ARE WE

We're here for answers to student loan questions

Student loans can be intimidating to students and their families. Let us help you guide them through the loan process and find the best option for them. Our School Services team is ready to help at **888-333-0169** or email us at schoolservices@citizensbank.com.

For more information, visit citizensbank.com/collegestudent or reach out to your Relationship Manager.

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The 2022 NASFAA National Conference will take place both virtually and in-person this year!

- June 26-29 – In-person at the Austin Convention Center in Austin, TX
- July 11-14 – Virtual Conference

More information available at <https://www.nasfaa.org/conference>.



School Profile: Western Oregon University

by Kella Helyer, Director of Financial Aid

School's Mission statement:

Western Oregon University creates lasting opportunities for student success through transformative education and personalized support

What year was your institution founded? 1856

What is your current undergraduate and/or graduate enrollment? 4,019

What types of degrees do you offer and what's your largest or most popular program? We

offer undergraduate and graduate degrees with several doctoral programs coming soon! Our largest and most popular programs are Education, Criminal Justice, and Business with our most exclusive being Sign Language Studies

Is your campus primarily residential, commuter, or online? Prior to the pandemic we were mostly a residential campus, but like others, we are evolving

What is your school mascot? Wolves

What are your school colors? Red and White

Do you offer institutional grants and/or scholarships? Yes

Do you run on semesters, quarters, trimesters, or another schedule?

Quarters

Do you offer programs using credit hours or clock hours? Credit hours only

What type of financial management system do you use? PowerFAIDS but currently in the process of transitioning to Banner

What is one thing EVERYONE should know about your institution or one

little-known fact? WOU is working toward becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) and is the oldest state institution founded in 1856, just a couple of years before Oregon became a state!



OIG Report Highlights \$73 Million in Duplicative HEERF Awards

by Hugh T. Ferguson, NASFAA Senior Staff Reporter

The Department of Education's (ED) Office of Inspector General (OIG) has issued new findings concerning duplications totaling \$73 million in the awarding process for the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF), along with recommendations to prevent, identify, and correct grant awards.

In total the [report](#) found 25 duplicate awards made to 24 schools by ED. Eight of those institutions drew down their funds and it took the department between four and 16 months to recoup those draw downs.

Some of the issues concerned the application process and stemmed from a number of schools submitting two applications for the same HEERF subprogram, with OIG determining that the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act allocation table for the Student Aid Portion and Institutional Portion subprograms may have caused some confusion.

A second instance of institutions receiving duplicates in their award totals was due to ED processing duplicate HEERF awards under a single application.

In total, 16 of the 24 schools that were awarded duplicate HEERF grants did not draw down any of their over-allocated funding. (*OIG Report...continued on page 6...*)

(OIG Report...continued from page 5...) The awards were made through ED's Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE), which said that due to the department's [HEERF](#) review process having "evolved over time" there were instances of duplicative awards that were later identified and corrected.

"We found that OPE's processes did not always prevent or timely identify and correct duplicate HEERF grant awards, and that OPE did not consistently document activities taken to correct duplicate awards," OIG said. "Overall, OPE could improve its quality assurance review process for HEERF and other future emergency Federal education programs to lessen the risk of making overpayments to schools and of schools drawing down more funds than they were allocated."

The report underscored the scope of the overpayments, which represent less than 0.1% of the more than 30,000 HEERF awards made by all three pandemic relief laws.

In response to OIG's findings, OPE said it would continue to make improvements to quality control procedures to prevent, identify, correct, and document erroneous grant awards.

"Regarding OPE's statement that Department officials were aware of all but one of the duplicate awards that we identified, we did not receive evidence showing when OPE became aware of the duplicate awards," OIG said in response to the report. "As noted in our finding, OPE did not consistently document the existence of duplicate awards that it had identified. In addition, OPE corrected most of the 25 duplicate awards we had identified after we brought them to its attention."

In order to prevent oversight in future relief programs, OIG recommended that OPE address its application and award verification, quality assurance reviews, as well as its correction and documentation of erroneous awards in a timely manner.



If it's happening in OASFAA, it's happening at...

The Watercooler

Genevieve Wittman retired from Chemeketa Community College after more than 30 years of service.

Heather Hall-Lewis left her position at University of Portland after 15 years. She will start her new, fully-remote position with the U.S. Department of Education as a Program Specialist on Policy Implementation on June 20th.

Jennifer Bell left her position as Associate Director for Advising at the University of Oregon. She is now the Director of Financial Aid at Webster University in St. Louis, Missouri!

Joe "Junior" Bazan left a PT position at Chemeketa Community College to join Lane Community College as a FT advisor.

Kurt Segrist was welcomed to Central Oregon Community College as their Financial Aid Specialist: Verification.

Lloyd Mueller retires from Clatsop Community College on June 30th after 35 years in financial aid service.

Melinda Leiva was promoted to Financial Aid Advisor at Portland Community College.

Nick Dikas, Financial Aid Outreach Counselor at the University of Oregon, welcomed his first child, a baby boy, in March. Mom, Dad, and baby are all doing well, though of course mom and dad are not getting as much sleep as they would like! It's scary to think how much college will cost 18+ years from now, but don't worry - Nick already opened a college savings account.

Rebecca Lewis became Portland Community College's Interim Associate Director for Advising.

Shannen Chwekun joined Portland Community College as a Financial Aid Technician II.

Stephanie Youngs joined Portland Community College as a Veterans Specialist.

If you or someone you know has received a promotion, taken a new job, or experienced a significant life event, email feverett@roquecc.edu

(Volunteer...continued from page 2...) **Who has been the biggest influence/mentor on you & your career?**

There are a lot of people I owe thanks to for helping me to grow as a professional. If I had to narrow down to a singular one, it would Dede Williams Vann who is now the Director of Student Organizations, Learning, and Development at TCU. She was in charge of several different leadership programs I was involved in as an undergraduate student and helped connect me and plug me when she knew I was qualified and would be successful. I think the biggest thing she's helped me with is my perspective on failure and to not let the idea of it scare me into inaction.



What is/was your favorite volunteer experience?

I really enjoyed the mentor training video series on OASFAA's YouTube channel. I was still very new to the field when we recorded the videos and unsure of if I would be helpful or not. However, some of the more experienced folks in OASFAA were able to help create a script and talking points and helped me to get a really solid understanding of the part I was presenting on. And now there's a well put together video series I can share with folks and have shared pretty regularly!

What do you do when you are not working?

I'm Lebanese and love to cook, so often times I'll be stuffing grape leaves or making other dishes that require extra time to prepare I grew up on. I've also gotten more into painting, sketching, and print making since the pandemic began.

What do you like about Oregon?

As a native Texan, Oregon weather is incredible. I love being able to plan a day with being outdoors and not have to schedule around the worst of the heat. I also really love the diversity of agriculture produced here, there are so many berries, nuts, and other goodies produced locally in Oregon that are delicious!

What is the most unusual place you have vacationed?

I got to spend a week going around Altoona and Hershey Pennsylvania when my aunt lived there for a year, surprisingly really cool little places!

What is your favorite restaurant?

The Noodle Café in Newport is phenomenal! Highly recommend giving them a shot next time you're at the coast.

What was the last book you read?

I just finished re-reading Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream. Last book I read that was new to me is We Should All Be Feminist by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

If you could change anything in our industry, what would it be?

Currently the biggest change I would love to see go into effect is the movement to double the Pell Grant and ensure it continues to increase relative to inflation and the price of education.



SAVE THE DATE

6.26-6.29 – NASFAA (Austin, TX)

7.11-7.14 – NASFAA Virtual Conference

2.8-2.10, 2023 – NASFAA Leadership & Legislative Expo

Check the OASFAA calendar for webinars & training events available to our membership at: www.oasfaaonline.org

Do you have any advice for your fellow financial aid administrators?

Keep a folder with thank-yous you get from students you've helped. It's always nice to be able to come back and look at them when you're in the weeds with difficult problems or having a bad day in general.

If you were not in the financial aid industry, what would you be doing now?

If I wasn't in financial aid, I think I would really enjoy teaching in middle or high school instead. I like the age groups of those students and think it would be rewarding for a lot of the same reasons I enjoy financial aid. And it would be a lot easier to explain to people what I do for a living!

The OASFAA VPs advocate for YOU and your sector!



[Anel Trujillo](#), VP 4-Year Public
Western Oregon University

[Layla Solar](#), VP 2-Year Public
Central Oregon Community College



[Shauna Wing](#), VP Proprietary
American College of Health Care Sciences

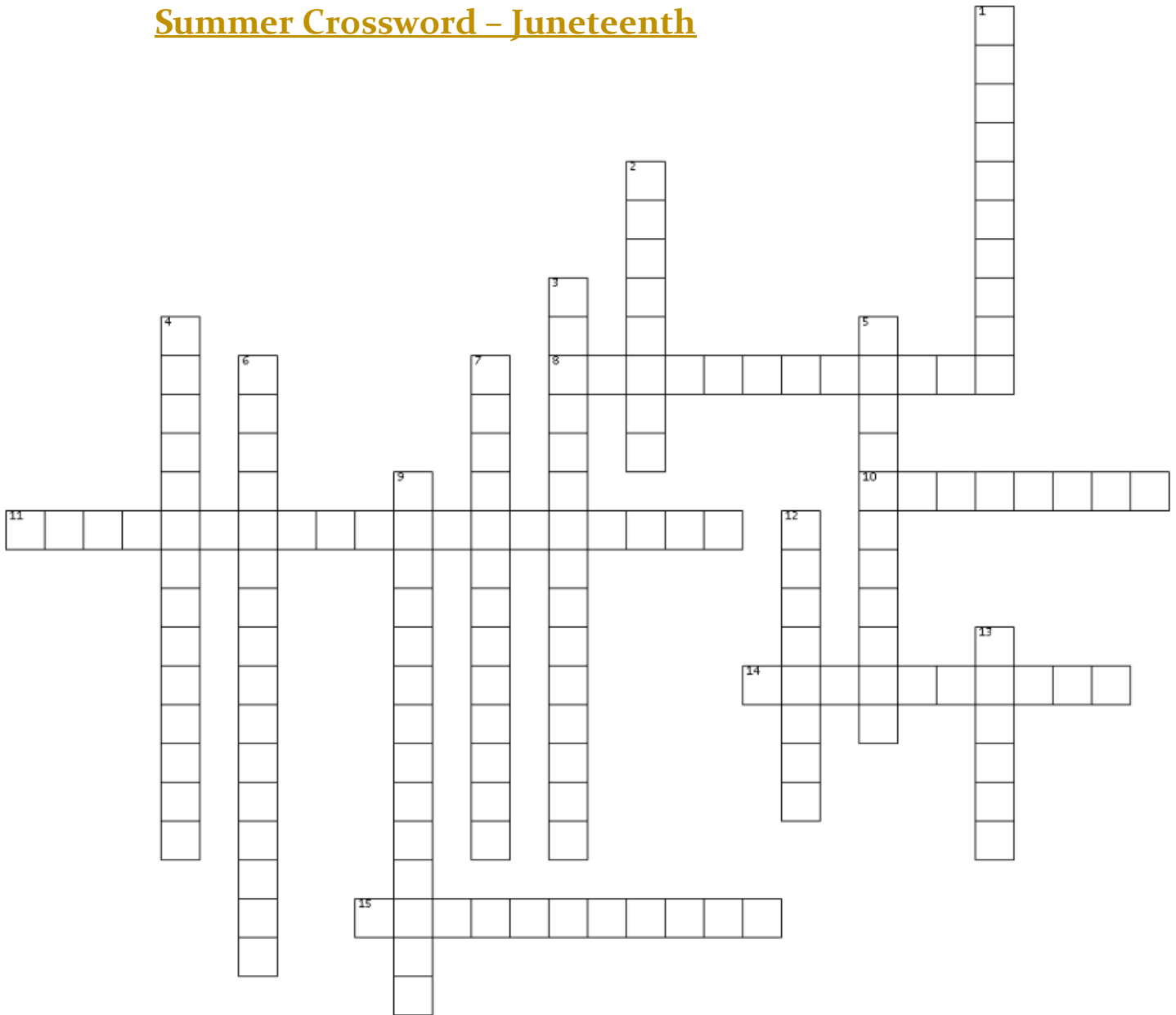
[Leslie Limper](#), VP Private
Pacific University



**Update your
volunteer preferences
[here!](#)**

- ** Get involved ** Be a leader in Oregon financial aid ** Bring fresh ideas ****
- ** Share your skills & passions ** Chair a committee ** Serve on a committee ****
- ** There's something for everyone! ****

Summer Crossword – Juneteenth



ACROSS

- 8. ___ Proclamation issued on 1/1/1863
- 10. John Mercer ___, 1st Black man to become a lawyer (1854)
- 11. legendary soprano, 1st Black musician to sing at White House (1878)
- 14. amendment that formally abolished slavery
- 15. last state to abolish slavery

DOWN

- 1. 1st Black woman admitted into NASA’s astronaut training program (1987) & first to fly into space (1992)
- 2. Thurgood ___, 1st Black man appointed to Supreme Court (1967)
- 3. 1st Black woman to win Pulitzer Prize (1950)
- 4. 1st Black athlete to place Major League Baseball (1947)
- 5. 1st Black performer to appear on TV (1939)
- 6. computer for NASA to send astronauts into orbit (1969)
- 7. 1st Black author to publish a novel (1859)
- 9. 1st Black performer to win an Academy Award (1940)
- 12. Shirley ___, 1st Black woman elected to the House (1968)
- 13. Hiram Rhodes ___, 1st Black man elected to the Senate (1870)



“If you guys give me another chance I will get up early in the morning to eat breakfast because it’s the most important meal of the day.”

“Waiting for the Feds to enact the “Can You Call My Mama?” reg... allows FAAs to bypass FERPA, talk to whoever...”

“I am convinced that no one works and they all just got separated during the tax year the FAFSA is asking for.”

Got one to share? Send it to feverett@roquecc.edu. All submissions will be published anonymously.

**Interested in volunteering for OASFAA?
Contact a committee chair below...**

2022 Committee Chairs

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Archives	Shauna Harper	Funds Development	Suzie Petersen
Communications	Frankie Everett	Membership	(vacant)
Community Partnership	Jenn Satalino Breana Sylwester	OSAC Liaison	(vacant)
Corporate Liaison	Wendy Papkoff	Site Selection	Ryan West
Equity, Diversity & Inclusion	Hallie Jo Price Rylan Wall	Technology	Frankie Everett
		Volunteer Coordinator	Ingrid Baker

OASFAA Newsletter Editorial Staff:

🐾 Frankie Everett 🐾 Ashley Coleman 🐾 Spencer Smith 🐾 Layla Solar 🐾 Ryan West 🐾

Editorial Policy: OASFAA welcomes all views and invites submissions of articles, essays, photographs, or information of general interest to all members. Submissions should be brief and may be edited. It may not be possible to publish all articles submitted. Contact the Editor with questions.

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