



# AZ Council of Chapters

**Date:** October 2015

**President:** Col Ron Perkins



## President's Message

This has been another outstanding year for the council and all nine chapters. This month, at the Annual Membership Meeting in Orlando, Florida, National MOAA will present the Five Star of Excellence award to all nine chapters and the council. I don't want to brag but.....I will anyway. This is the second year that Arizona Council and all chapters received this distinguished Award and the only state in the union to do so.

This recognition is due to the outstanding leadership we have in all of our chapters across the state. Their programs have shown growth, increased membership, and increased community service. It is worth mentioning that Arizona MOAA has added another satellite chapter, Central Arizona Satellite sponsored by the Superstition Chapter led by Ed Mangan. The other three satellites, Catalina Mountains, Payson and Mohave are doing very well.

I would like to thank Ed Mangan for his orchestrating Arizona MOAA chapters visit to Chase Field in Phoenix to see the Arizona Diamond Backs play the Los Angeles Dodgers. Ed arranged for the chapters to have their colors present as well as a Color Guard for the opening

ceremony. We had total of 75 attendee's including chapter members and their families from around the state. **Well Done Ed!**

I want to reemphasize the importance of recruiting and bringing in new members. Our total numbers in our grass roots effort will impact the decisions our representatives are making in Washington. Keep up the hard work. The Arizona Council will hold their semi-annual conference at the Chaparral Resort in Scottsdale, Arizona on November 13th. Our guest speaker will be Colonel Barry Wright, National MOAA's Director of Council and Chapters. See his biography on page ??????? We look forward to hearing the successes National has had at lobbying congress on veterans' benefits; the value and importance of affiliate chapters to National's goals; the new Council and Chapter Policies and Procedure Guide; and many other benefits found on MOAA.org

*Ron Perkins, President AZ COC.*



## Secretary's Message

The 2015 Fall Arizona Council of Chapters meeting, hosted by the Arizona Chapter, is scheduled for Friday, 13 November at 9 a.m. The location is Chaparral Suites, 5001 N. Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale, Arizona. The guest

speaker will be COL Barry Wright, MOAA Director Council and Chapter Affairs. Lunch will be at each person's expense in the Chaparral Suites restaurant.

A block of rooms has been reserved for 12 November at a group rate of \$99 per night, plus tax, for a double. The group rate is available three days before and for three days after the meeting date, subject to availability. For those of you staying at the hotel, a complimentary two-hour reception in the evening and a complimentary made-to-order breakfast in the morning are available to all hotel guests. Meeting attendees not staying at the hotel may purchase a voucher for the reception for \$24.95 per person and/or breakfast for \$17.95 per person (needed to be purchased by 30 September). The price for the reserved block of rooms is guaranteed through 13 October. Reservations made after 13 October are subject to availability and billed at the prevailing retail rate. If you plan to book a room, call Chaparral Suites, toll free, 1-800-528-1456. In order to get the \$99 group rate, be sure to refer to **Arizona Trails Travel Services**.

The day after the meeting, the Arizona Chapter's monthly members' luncheon will take place and the members of the council have been invited to attend the luncheon. The luncheon will be held at McCormick Ranch Golf Club in Scottsdale. COL Barry Wright will be the guest speaker. The price for the luncheon is \$22 per person and is a full 3-course lunch. The menu is salad, turkey with stuffing, mashed potatoes and pumpkin pie. If you will be attending the luncheon, please RSVP to Jim Cullison at [cullison30@q.com](mailto:cullison30@q.com).

An optional activity for spouses will be planned during the council meeting time.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Lt Col Jim Cullison, President, Arizona Chapter, at [cullison30@q.com](mailto:cullison30@q.com) or phone him at 602-482-3838.

*Pam Wojtas, Secretary AZ COC*



### Treasure's Report

The Council's finances remain in excellent shape with the addition of \$250 in recruiting incentives received in July. This amount was earned through Arizona chapters' strong support of the 2015 Chapter Recruiting Program during the period February 1 - June 30, 2015. In other news, preparation of a proposed 2015-2016 budget for consideration at the November council meeting is underway. Later this year, the council will apply for a grant from the MOAA/USAA council and chapter sponsorship program as we have the past several years. If approved, the funds will be used in 2016 to help with chapter costs associated with hosting the two planned council meetings.

Don't forget that the MOAA/USAA sponsorship program also supports chapter programs. MOAA, in partnership with USAA, will provide up to \$300 per year to support qualified chapter programs. Applying for the program is a four step process and requests are submitted using an online form found on MOAA's website.

The most important step is to determine whether your project or program meets the established guidelines for USAA/MOAA sponsorship funding support. Generally, the event must be something that serves the community at large or benefits individuals outside your immediate chapter. Some examples which would meet the spirit and intent of the program would be chapter events which recognize JROTC/ROTC students or provides support to JROTC/ROTC programs. Support for golf tournaments/other fundraising events for chapter scholarship or awards programs are other examples that would receive favorable consideration.

Examples which do not meet the criteria for funding support include political candidate forums, stand-alone chapter recruiting activities, request for funds to offset chapter member meal costs at chapter meetings, and direct

contributions to your chapter scholarship program. MOAA asks for requests at least 45 business days out from the date of the event. Click on this link for more information. <http://www.moaa.org/Content/Chapters-and-Councils/Council-and-Chapter-Management/USAA-Sponsorship-for-MOAA.aspx#sthash.Qlp7fx2h.dpuf>

Lastly, please provide your membership numbers as requested by the council Secretary in her October 4 email to chapter leaders. As in the past, these numbers will help me prepare the 2015 – 2016 council budget to be discussed at the November meeting. Thanks for your support

*Lee Lange, Treasurer AZ COC*

### [Guest Speaker for AZ COC Meeting](#)



COL. Barry Wright, USA (Ret), National MOAA  
Director, Chapter and Council Affairs

COL. Barry Wright will be our Guest Speaker at the upcoming AZ COC Meeting.

COL. Wright was commissioned a second lieutenant in the infantry from Middle Tennessee State University in 1974. As an infantry officer, he served in a variety of staff positions and commanded infantry units at both the company and battalion levels.

He also served for more than nine years in personnel assignments from brigade to theater levels in a variety of Army and joint commands. His last assignment before retiring from the military in 2003 was at the National Defense

University in Washington, D.C.

COL. Wright is a graduate of the Army War College in Carlisle, Pa. He earned a master's degree in human resources from Central Michigan University.

Prior to joining MOAA, Wright was an instructor and a course director at the Army Force Management School at Fort Belvoir, Va.

In November 2006, he joined the MOAA staff as deputy director of the Council and Chapter Affairs Department, and in January 2013, he was appointed as director of the Council and Chapter Affairs Department.

## **Positions Held at MOAA:**

- Director, Chapter and Council Affairs



### [VETERAN LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS](#)

Per the 18 Sep 2015 MOAA Update, the August 2015 Consumer Price Index (CPI) was at 233.366, dropping to 0.4 percent below the 30 Sep 2014 COLA baseline. So the chances of a positive FY 2016 COLA look slim. If there is no significant growth in CPI in September, annuitants (military retirees and Social Security, DIC recipients, etc.) will not receive an annual COLA Effective 1 Jan 2016.

### [Military Family Relief Fund \(MFRF\)](#)

#### **Reminder:**

Donations to the MFRF were \$259,274 as of September 28, 2015. With a cap of \$1,000,000 annually there is still time to make that 'donation' as an Arizona tax credit (AZ Tax Form 340 - up to \$200/individual or \$400/couple). However, that donation must be received by 31 Dec 2015 to be credited to your

2015 AZ Tax Return, so don't hold off too long. **And remember, that donation costs you nothing** if you have an Arizona Tax obligation of that amount or more. The amount of the contributions are credited to your tax obligation or is refunded to you after you file your Tax Return if you have prepaid your estimated tax or have withholdings that cover your obligation.

And also remember, this **MFRF** Tax Credit can be taken in addition to other Tax Credits such as "Credit for **Contributions to Qualifying Charitable Organizations**" (up to \$400/couple or \$200 per individual); "Credit for **Contributions Made or fees Paid to Public Schools**" (up to \$400 per couple); "Credit for **Contributions to Private School Tuition Organizations**" (up to \$1,070/ per couple for 2015); etc. as long as the total amount of all of your Tax Credits do not exceed your total 2015 AZ Tax obligation.

To make a donation, they need your name and address (for mailing your donation receipt) and the last four digits of your Social Security number (for tax credit reporting purposes). For more information and to download the MFRF Donation Form, go to AZ DVS link: <https://dvs.az.gov/military-family-relief-fund-2015> and click on: **Find the 2015 MFRF Donation Form online here** at the bottom of the first paragraph. Or copy, cut out, or make a facsimile of the donation form below. **Fill it out and mail to the address on the form with your check made out to: "Military Family Relief Fund"**

**MFRF c/o Arizona Department of Veterans' Services  
3839 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> St., Ste. 209  
Phoenix, AZ 85012**

All donors will be mailed a receipt for tax purposes.

Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

Last Four Digits of  
SS# \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone  
Number \_\_\_\_\_

This Tax Credit donation can be claimed using AZ Form 340

**And by the way, to Help Stamp out Veteran Homelessness** in Arizona you can also make a Tax Credit donation. To do so you can use AZ Form 321 "Contributions to Qualifying Charitable Organizations" (as mentioned briefly above).

Checks can be made out to to the 'Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness' (AZCEH) that is an Arizona **Qualifying Charitable Organization**. You can note on your check for example: 'For Cochise County StandDown' or other county as desired.

Click on: <http://www.azceh.org/donation> or copy and paste that website in your browser to see and print out a form to accompany your donation, where at the bottom you can designate the County StandDown that you want your donation to go to. AZCEH will also provide a receipt for your tax credit donation.

*Gene Fenstermacher, Legislative Affairs AZ  
COC*



*Members of the SMC and others presenting the Nations Colors at the opening Ceremony Diamondbacks game.*

### [MOAA Diamondbacks Game](#)

On September 13, 2015 the Superstition Mountain Chapter hosted their second annual MOAA Diamondbacks game. The Superstition Mountain Chapter along with other MOAA members were honored to present the Nations Colors along with our MOAA Colors from numerous Chapters from across the state. This was a great opportunity for fellow MOAA members throughout the state to mix and mingle in a relaxing social environment. MOAA members statewide attended the game and a good time was had by all. We will look forward to this event next year if it can be arranged.

### [Northern Arizona Chapter News](#)

**Stand Down** Many thanks to the eleven NAC volunteers who helped out with this year's Stand Down on 18 & 19 September at Frontier Village in Prescott. Services and items of clothing and living necessities were provided to 150 veterans on Friday, and likely almost that many on Saturday. The veterans were also able to bring their dogs for exams and shots. We had a veterinarian during parts of both days. The event was a great success. We hope to have NAC participating again next year.

### [ROTC Recruiting](#)

The Northern Arizona Chapter recruits Junior and Senior ROTC cadets at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University each fall in October. Mike Damiano and Dick Jonas signed up 13 Army cadets and 24 Air Force cadets this month. The cadets get Basic membership status in both National and NACMOAA. We think it's important to sign up youngsters. There's a good chance they will, after commissioning and later on in their military careers, upgrade their status to Premium and Life memberships.

*Dick Jonas, AZ COC Chapters Affairs Director*



### [Transitions Liaison](#)

#### **Job Postings:**

During this report period we posted 159 job openings since July 1, 2015. 65 of these jobs were located in the Maricopa County/Phoenix Area, one (1) from Yuma, six (6) were located in the Pima County/(Tucson Area, 85 were within the Cochise Count/Fort Huachuca, Sierra Vista, Bisbee, Benson, Douglas and Tombstone) Areas with three (3) Nationwide.

#### **Job Fairs:**

There were 21 Job/career fairs identified for veterans, down 4 from last period. The most interesting fact was that opportunities were well mixed between commercial, education, health care, and Federal Government contracting. Of the **21 job fairs posted** this past 5 ½ month period; **13 were in Maricopa Phoenix, 4 in Sierra Vista, 4 in Tempe, 2 in Douglas, 2 in Tucson, 2 in Mesa, and 2 in Glendale.**

#### **On-going Activities:**

We continued to provide support to the Transition Assistance Programs (TAP) office at Fort Huachuca and the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserves (ESGR) to provide

information on TAP activities around Arizona as well as providing information on MOAA for any officers going through the system (2).

It is requested that any chapter hearing of an upcoming event of special interest for transitioning member personnel to pass this information to the MOAA Transition Liaison Coordinator for consolidation and publication to the membership.

**Issues:**

One issue that we became aware of dealt with the email address for the TL Coordinator. There was, and continues to be, an issue with that email address. As a temporary fix, we have changed the default address for the Coordinator to my personal one until such time as we can resolve the problem. That email address will continue to be [harrybowen@aol.com](mailto:harrybowen@aol.com) for the time being. I should point out that the website is fully functional and does not have, to my knowledge, and glitches. If anyone does have an issue, please let me, as the coordinator, know.

*Harry Bowen, Transition Liaison*



**Personal Affairs**

I have finally received National MOAA's new Survivor's Planning Guide. This new guide was designed by surviving spouses who have experienced the loss of a loved one. It is much more compact than the previous editions and is a living document that starts with details of funeral and burial, followed by subjects that require immediate attention and those less urgent but necessary.

I will bring copies to hand out to each Chapter President or Representative along with copies for the Satellite Representatives. I would ask that you pass it along to your Chapters Personal Affairs Officer so that can obtain copies from

National to hand out to your organizations general membership.

*Steven Abel, Personal Affairs*



**ESGR News**

ESGR conducted the 2015 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award ceremony August 21 at the Pentagon. Keynote speaker Deputy Secretary of Defense Robert Work presented the honors to 15 supportive civilian employers from around the Nation. Emceeding the event was Leon Harris, an award-winning former CNN journalist, and entertaining at the ceremony were Mark Wills and Johnny Myers, award-winning country music singers.

The 15 recipients of the 20<sup>th</sup> annual award were chosen from among the 2,960 nominations submitted by appreciative National Guard and Reserve members from all 54 ESGR committees and all seven RCs. Two Arizona employers, City of Glendale and Snell and Wilmer were among the 15 to be honored by the Secretary of Defense.

*Darren Venters, ESGR Chairman*



**AUXILIARY NEWS**

**SURVIVING SPOUSES ADVISORY COMMITTEE:**

In April this year members of the MOAA Auxiliary voted overwhelming to change their name to Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee

(SSAC). This new title better defines the status of the 60,000 auxiliary members to the MOAA Executive Board.

With our benefits in jeopardy because of military defunding and sequestration we need to get our surviving spouses to sharpen their pencils and get letters out to their favorite national legislator to defend those benefits. While the commissary is funded for the next fiscal year it is on the table for future cuts. Let's not think of just ourselves here. The younger military families depend on the commissary to help make ends meet. Remember that at every military installation there are military families that are on food stamps or other assistance.

The President has capped a military pay raise at 1.3%. This for our finest young men and women who have volunteered to keep us free and safe. Their pay raises are not keeping pace with the private sector so they fall even farther behind. I urge you all to get letters out as quickly as possible to express your displeasure on this measure. By now you should have received information from Tricare that all maintenance prescriptions must be filled by either Express Scripts or a military installation. If you have been getting your meds from a local pharmacy beginning 1 October you could be charged full price for refills. There are very few exceptions to this ruling but you can call your local Tricare office for full information. We've been given a year "heads up" on this change, it's here and don't get caught. Before seeing a doctor at an urgent care facility ask if they will accept Medicare and Tricare or you may be charged for the visit. Using a hospital ER is best. Yesterday we found out that medical codes have grown by 165K making your doctor's computer notes more complicated and time consuming. They are spending more time entering codes than they are talking to patients. Because of that many are opting to retire much sooner than they anticipated and finding new medical care is not easy...key words are Medicare or Tricare.

We have to register our complaints with our elected officials to not cut funding to our medical professionals. One of our goals is increasing our membership. As SSAC members we have to make an effort to find new members. Each year MOAA sends the local chapters the names of members who belong to the national MOAA but not to our local chapters. Get a copy of that list and identify the SSAC members and send them a note or a quick call regarding your chapter and invite them to your next lunch or dinner meeting. If I can help any Chapter SSAC representatives please let me know.

*Shirley Phillips, SSAC Rep*

### **2015- 2016 AZ COC Meetings**

- 1) Nov. 13th, 2015 AZ COC Meeting, Arizona Chapter Hosting
- 2) Nov. 14th, 2015 Arizona Chapter Luncheon Meeting, National MOAA BOD Speaker
- 3) Spring 2016: AZ COC Meeting, Tucson Chapter Hosting.
- 4) Fall 2016: AZ COC Meeting, Superstition Mountain Chapter Hosting.

### **Important upcoming Dates**

- 1) October 28-31 2015 National MOAA Annual meeting, Orlando Fla. (4/5 Star LOE awards).





*The 2015 Council of Chapters MOAA meeting is sponsored in part by a USAA/MOAA grant*