



AZ Council of Chapters



Date: October 2016

President: Col Ron Perkins



President's Message

Arizona MOAA Excels Again!!!!!!.....Wow!

The Arizona Council and all nine chapters will receive the distinguished “*Five Star of Excellence*” Award for the third straight year at the Levels of Excellence Awards Dinner and MOAA's Annual Meeting on October 24th, 2016 in Washington D.C. What is so unique is that Arizona is the ***only state in the union*** to have achieved this once but now has accomplished it ***three times in a row***. I am extremely proud of this recognition, which is due to the outstanding leadership found in all of our chapters across the state. Their programs have shown growth, resulting in higher attendance at meetings and they have increased their community service. They are truly following National MOAA’s motto of “Never Stop Serving.”

I want to thank Tom Owens, President, and the Tucson Chapter for hosting the semi-annual MOAA State Council meeting at the Tucson Hilton East Hotel in Tucson, Arizona

on May 26th. The accommodations and room set up were excellent. Many thanks to Shirley Phillips who worked with the Tucson Hilton East Hotel and setting everything up. We had two very interesting speakers, **Lt. Col Mark Schwartz**, (Civil Military Relations in the 20th Century),



and **Lt. Col Grasky**. (214th Reconnaissance Squadron Operations).



Their presentations were very informative and well received. They each took extra time to answer several questions from the chapter presidents.

I want to pre thank Ed Mangan, President and the Superstition Chapter for hosting the upcoming fall semi-annual MOAA State Council meeting at the Embassy Suites in Tempe, Arizona. For more information on the meeting details look on page 4 & 5.

As I complete my two-year term as president, I want to thank you for allowing me to serve as your Council President. I have enjoyed working with all of you. I believe that the council's and the nine chapter's health is overall very good. I know there will be challenges from time to time and, as in the past, the chapter leadership has always stepped up and handled them very well. Keep up the outstanding work supporting our veterans and their communities. You do make a difference and our voices do influence our elected leaders in Washington D.C.

Ron Perkins, President AZ COC.



Guest Speaker: Director Wanda Wright



Arizona Department of Veterans' Services Director Wanda Wright is the third generation of her family to serve in the U.S. Military. She has three decades of military experience. As a 1985 United States Air Force Academy graduate, Colonel Wright began her military career as Deputy Budget Officer with the Tactical Air Command at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina with a follow-on assignment to Davis-Monthan AFB as the Budget Officer.

Leaving active duty in 1990, Col Wright joined the Arizona National Guard. During the next 21 years, she served in various positions including accounting and finance officer, communications officer, executive officer and,

finally as the Director of Staff for the Adjutant General in Phoenix. Among her proudest achievements was to serve as Air Commander of Operation Jump Start from June 2006 — December 2008 during which she commanded more than 4,000 airmen from 52 states and territories on our Southwest border.

Col Wright holds a B.S. in Management from the U.S. Air Force Academy, a M.B.A from Webster University in South Carolina, a M.P.A from the University of Arizona and is completing her M.A. in Educational Leadership from Arizona State University.

Colonel Wright's decorations and awards include the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal with oak leaf cluster and the Air Force Commendation Medal.



Nominating Committee Report

Colonel Allen Rossow and Mrs. Pam Wojtas were asked to head the nominating committee. Mrs. Wojtas contacted Lt Col Dick Jonas, who is currently serving as Vice President of the Council, to see if he would be willing to become the Council President. Lt Col Jonas has agreed, if elected. Mrs. Wojtas then contacted COL Peter Kloeber to see if he would accept the nomination to Vice President. COL Kloeber agreed, if elected. Nominations from the floor will be accepted at the Council of Chapters meeting on 14 November 2016. A vote will then take place.

COL Ron Perkins called all the currently serving appointed representatives to see if they would like to continue in their current positions if the newly elected President would like them to continue. There are a few changes, but for the most part, currently serving appointees will continue. They are: Treasurer – COL Lee Lange, Secretary – Mrs. Pam Wojtas, Legislative Liaison – CW4 Bob Delker (replaced COL Gene Fenstermacher), Newsletter Editor – Mrs. Mary Jonas, Webmaster – COL Ron Perkins (will do, but would like to find a replacement), Membership – Mrs. Pam Wojtas, Transition Liaison – CW3 Harry Bowen, Surviving Spouse Advisory Council – Mrs. Shirley Phillips, National Board Member – CDR John Chernoski, Personal Affairs Officer – CDR John Chernoski, ESGR Representative – Lt Col Darren Venters. COL Allen Rossow and COL Ron Perkins have agreed to replace Lt Col Dick Jonas as the Chapter’s Liaison for Satellites.



Arizona Satellite Chapters

Nationwide, there are 16 MOAA satellite chapters. Twenty-five percent of them are in Arizona. We have four:

The Rim Country Satellite in Payson with 17 members, sponsored by the Prescott Chapter, is under the leadership of Col Bill Sahn. They have formed the “Tiger Team” to address the veteran challenges in the high country.

The Mohave Satellite is led by Maj Bob Roberts. It serves MOAA members up and down the Colorado River and environs with monthly meetings, which alternate between Bullhead City and Lake Havasu City. Their membership is at 14. The Prescott Chapter also sponsors the Mohave Satellite.

The Catalina Mountains Satellite in the Saddlebrooke Community north of Tucson. Col Rett Benedict is the president. A staff of five others assists him. Their membership stands at 25. The Tucson Chapter is the sponsor for Catalina Mountains Satellite.

The Central Arizona Satellite (CAS) in Eloy is our newest satellite. The Superstition Mountain Chapter in Mesa sponsors CAS. The membership is small but growing. It’s now at 10. The next meeting is 29 Oct for lunch at 1100 hours at the Robson Ranch in Eloy.

Like several of our chartered chapters in the state, most of the satellites take a summertime hiatus from their regular meetings. The satellite report next spring should be somewhat more informative. Special thanks to those chapters who sponsor satellites. We believe the satellite approach is the best way to give more of our state membership the opportunity to participate and grow our numbers.

Dick Jonas, AZ COC VP, & Chapters Development Director



Secretary's Message

The Fall Council of Chapters meeting and the Superstition Mountain Chapter (SMC) dinner meeting are fast approaching. It is time to make your plans to attend.

Listed below is information on the Superstition Mountain Chapter dinner on 13 November 2016 and the Council of Chapters meeting on 14 November 2016.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The SMC dinner and the lunch at the council meeting must be prepaid. Checks must be received No Later Than 7 November.

The Superstition Mountain Chapter dinner meeting will be held on 13 November 2016, at the Embassy Suites, 4400 South Rural Road, Tempe, AZ 85282 beginning with a reception at 5 p.m. At 6 p.m. the Campo Verde High School JROTC will present the colors. A toast and dinner will follow.

The dinner selection will be roasted free-range chicken breast served with mustard-dill sauce, garlic fingerling potatoes, house salad, rolls and butter. *If you would rather have pasta, pasta primavera is available upon request.* Dessert will be Chef's choice. Also included are iced tea, coffee and Tazo teas. The cost of the dinner is \$25 per person. Make your check payable to MOAA SMC. Mail your check to Captain George or Mrs. Jo Meegan, 1981 E. Dava Drive, Tempe, AZ 85283, to arrive **No Later Than 7 November 2016.** Their contact information is: CaptainGeorgeMeegan@gmail.com or

gbmeegan@cox.net. Their phone number is: 480-897-8835.

The Arizona Council of Chapters meeting will be held on 14 November 2016 at the Embassy Suites, 4400 South Rural Road, Tempe, AZ 85282, on the second floor. The meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m. Coffee and Danish will be available at 8:30 a.m. and late morning there will be soda and iced tea available.

The guest speaker will be Colonel Wanda Wright, Director Arizona Department of Veteran Services. (See page 2 for her biography)

For those interested in lunch, there will be a Southwest table which will include citrus marinated chicken and beef fajitas, Pico do Gallo, guacamole, sour cream, asadero sauce, lime wedges, shredded cabbage, warm tortillas, green chile and cheese enchiladas, Spanish rice, cantina beans, fruit salad, organic green salad with jicama, radish, Manchego cheese with a Serrano lime vinaigrette. Dessert is Tres Leches cake and Key Lime pie. The cost of the lunch is \$25 per person. Make your check payable to MOAA SMC. Mail your check to Captain George or Mrs. Jo Meegan, 1981 E. Dava Drive, Tempe, AZ 85283, to arrive **No Later Than 7 November, 2016.**

Their contact information is: CaptainGeorgeMeegan@gmail.com or gbmeegan@cox.net. Their phone number is: 480-897-8835.

Overnight lodging has been arranged with the Embassy Suites, 4400 South Rural Road, Tempe, AZ 85282. The phone number is 480-897-7444. The cost of the room is \$118 per night (**ask for the government rate**) and includes breakfast. For purposes of this meeting, all AZCOC attendees are considered government and will pay the \$118 per night rate.

Pam Wojtas, Secretary



Treasurer's Report

The Council's finances continue to be in very good shape in 2016. One piece of especially good news is that the Council again received an \$800 grant from MOAA/USAA in support of our council meetings/programs in 2016 and beyond. I will have a more detailed annual review for all hands at the November 14 meeting. We will also discuss the proposed 2016-2017 budget.

I have recommended in the past that your chapter consider signing up for MOAA's Online Chapter Membership Dues Join and Renewal Program. This program, first launched in 2013, allows chapters to automate the process of members joining your chapter or renewing their memberships. Dues renewal can be problematic for many chapters and is often the time when significant chapter membership losses occur. The online dues renewal tool allows chapter members to renew their memberships online using a credit card. This avoids members having to find their checkbook, write a check and put it in the mail. The costs of this program are borne by MOAA so chapters receive the full amount of dues paid. The program also allows contributions to your chapter's scholarship program. Deposits are made immediately to each chapter's bank account.

To test the concept, the Arizona Chapter, MOAA, recently enrolled in the program and will be using it in this year's dues renewal cycle. The chapter will include a link on its website to allow easy access for members. It is a fairly simple process and works a bit like PayPal. The chapter will provide feedback on how the program is working for them.

Interested chapters can watch the MOAA webinar on this subject to see if this program can help their chapter. MOAA's chapter webinars can be accessed through the Chapters link on MOAA's home page at www.moaa.org and then clicking on Council and Chapter Management. You will need to log in with your user ID and password to access the webinars.

Lee Lange, Treasurer



Veteran Legislative Affairs

ARIZONA MILITARY RETIREES
(A SNAP SHOT)
CDR John Chernoski, USNR (Ret.)

Statistics, you either hate them or love them. Since I was a kid figuring out Major League batting averages and ERAs, I have been in the latter camp. Stats can provide insights into who we are and demonstrate that there can be strength in numbers for advocating legislative issues, which are often also personal affairs issues. Stats change every day and are just a moment in time.

National MOAA membership is about 350,000 with about 3,200 members in Arizona. For the most part the bulk of these MOAA members are military retirees. As of December 31, 2015 there were 2,136,276 military retirees throughout the world. Of these retirees, 56,369 were Arizona residents and 14,154 were officers. The first observation is that about 22% of the Arizona officer retirees are MOAA members, almost 1/4. If you are an optimist—not bad. On the other hand, one could say “we can do better.”

The average military retiree pension is \$25,536 a year.

Now to get into the weeds. By Congressional District, the number of military retirees ranges from a **high** of 15,214 in CD 2 (Parts of Cochise County and Pima County) to a **low** of 2,149 in CD 7 (Phoenix). In fact, CD 2 is ranked #16 nationwide among Congressional Districts! Martha McSally is the CD 2 representative; she is a retired AF Colonel, a MOAA life member, and a member of the House Armed Services Committee. Stats sometimes don't prove a point. CD 7 (ranked #322) is represented by Ruben Gallego, who served in the Marine Corps, is a member of the Armed Services Committee, and a supporter of the MOAA agenda.

Below is a chart by Arizona CD, military retirees in the District, and the District's overall ranking.

CD 1	4,916	#151
CD 2	15,214	#16
CD 3	5,366	#133
CD 4	7,688	#75
CD 5	5,369	#132
CD 6	3,260	#226
CD 7	2,149	#322
CD 8	9,466	#50
CD 9	2,941	#252

OK, now what? I found the information enlightening. Several of you have been working on legislation to eliminate the Arizona income tax on military retirement pay. The Governor has announced his desire to make Arizona a "military friendly" state. Love them or hate them, statistics can help to advance both issues. For a bit of perspective, the overall national numbers rank us #10, below South Carolina (59,441) and just ahead of Tennessee (55,321). We have potential clout. We speak for not only our MOAA members, but our agenda also beneficially

impacts the 56,369 military retirees and the 8,738 surviving spouses in the state.

Most of the information in this report is from the Department of Defense's Office of Actuary, <http://actuary.defense.gov>. The Office has lots of info—there are six military retirees living in Lithuania.



Transitions Liaison

During the period of 26 May through 10 October 2016, the MOAA chapters continued to assist the Transition Liaison (formerly TOPS) Coordinator in identifying potential employment opportunities; States wide as well as in Arizona. This support also included broadcasting job/career fairs within the confines of Arizona. However, it should be noted that there was a decrease in job announcements during this report period.

During this period, the Transition Liaison Team was able to post 10 Job/Career Fairs, and 66 new Job openings throughout Arizona.

- Of the 178 New Job listings, 98 were within the Phoenix, Chandler, Glendale, Tempe, Surprise, Kingman, Mesa areas; another 18 in Flagstaff, Tolleson, Kingman, Gilbert, Parker, and Globe areas; with 62 for Sierra Vista, Fort Huachuca, Wilcox, Douglas, Herford, Parker, Benson, and Bisbee areas.

- Of the 10 Job Fairs, 7 were in the Phoenix/Maricopa area with 3 in Cochise County area.

One of the additional functions of the Transition Liaison in Sierra Vista has been

participation as a coordinator with the **Cochise Serving Veterans (CSV) and the Resource Fair:**

The CSV Resource Fair was conducted on 19 August 2016, from 0900 to 1400 hours, at the Rothery Educational Service Center, located at 3335 E. Fry Boulevard in Sierra Vista. This fair, similar to the last 2 years, was devoted to helping veterans on the brink of becoming homeless and less so for the homeless. 82 veterans and families attended and obtained assistance from 56 providers and 11 recruiters. The veteran population consisted on 1 male homeless veteran, 1 female homeless veteran, and 80 veterans required assistance.

The CSV is hoping to get the definition of homeless changed for use by the resource fair. There were 2 homeless veterans who were deemed not homeless and could not be placed in housing.

The first one was because he had moved, temporarily, in with his sister until he could get a place of his own. He had been homeless for 205 days so his sister went to Pennsylvania and brought him back to see if he could get on his feet here. This translated to the definition that he was not homeless on the date of the fair so therefore he did not qualify for housing.

The second one, the female veteran did not qualify under the definition of homeless, as she was a National Guard and not a veteran of the reserves or active duty. Other providers provided other support to them so that they were helped but the situation did not help their emotional wellbeing in the least.

Seventy-two providers were registered to help us support the event; however, four (4) of the providers were unable to participate, as was one (1) of the recruiters.

The remaining 80 participants were in need of assistance in other areas. Those services included social security, mental health, substance abuse, social and community assistance, legal services, housing, vision

screening, medical and dental, child care services, and counseling. In addition, 30 veterans visited the job fair and nine (9) of them had employer offers that day.

Harry Bowen, Transition Liaison



[Personal Affairs](#)

Hearing Aids for Military Retirees

TRICARE does not cover hearing aids but two DoD sponsored programs may provide help. The Retiree-At-Cost Hearing Aid Program (RACHAP) and the Retiree Hearing Aid Purchase Program (RHAPP) are designed to help military retirees purchase hearing aids through an audiology clinic at a Military Treatment Facility (MTF) at a special government negotiated cost. The hearing aids available through this program are the same state-of-the art technologies available to active duty service members. The program is open to all military retirees who have hearing loss or tinnitus (ringing in the ears). Dependents of military retirees are not eligible for this program.

Potential Cost Savings

Retirees can buy hearing aids at a significant savings by using the program. For example, a set of hearing aids (one of the best available) that retails for about \$5000.00 costs a retiree as little as \$755.00 or about 15% of the retail costs. Services for the hearing evaluation, hearing aid fitting and follow up hearing aid checks are part of the retiree benefits and are available at no cost to you.

Not every military medical facility is able to provide the RACHAP/RHAPP program. It is not available in Arizona. If you are traveling to a participating site from out of town, you need to compare your travel costs and purchase savings to the costs of purchasing hearing aids privately in your local community. Travel and overnight expenses are not covered. Generally, at least two visits are required for you to get hearing aids: one for your hearing evaluation and one for your hearing aid fitting.

A list of participating facilities (CONUS/OCONUS) are available online at <http://militaryaudiology.org/rachap-rhapp-locations/>. Participation by these sites may be subject to change on short or no notice.

VA Option

Military retirees may also be eligible for hearing aids from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). In most cases there is no cost to the patient. More information about VA services is available by contacting the VA directly at (877) 222-8387 or (800) 827-1000.

Lee Lange



Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee

Remember when....we went to Walgreens to pick up that quick one time only prescription? Then it all changed and we had to go to CVS. Tricare announced on 30 September that we must return to WALGREENS and NOT CVS as of 1 December 2016. The Express Scripts Inc., who manages the pharmacy network on behalf of Tricare has reached a new

agreement with Walgreens that begins 1 December. If you are currently using CVS including the CVS pharmacies in Target stores, you will have time to switch to Walgreens or another network pharmacy. Express Scripts is doing an additional outreach to patients filling specialty drugs through CVS to be sure they can move their scripts with no gap in their coverage. Please be sure all the Surviving Spouses in your chapter are given this information. By returning to Walgreens we will have more than 57,000 locations nationwide that will ensure beneficiaries have timely access to retail pharmacies in their immediate community.

Our SSAC members have contributed over 500 heart pillows to the Phoenix and Tucson VA for use by patients who have had open heart surgery. The hospitals are always in need for more so please don't stop making them. When you deliver them to your VA, please let me know so I can keep track of the number donated.

The Tucson VA was recently presented with 8 beautiful patriotic quilts and 2 crocheted afghans. These are used to cover the body of a veteran who passed away in the hospital while the body is taken through the labyrinth of halls to the mortuary. In the mortuary the quilts are folded into a presentation envelope and presented to the veteran's family. The quilts were lovingly made by a quilters group who heard about our project through a wonderful sister-in-law of Tom Owens. We are looking for more quilters who will join this amazing project. Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Shirley Phillips: squirley1@comcast.net

Shirley Phillips, Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee Rep



ESGR News

**“Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week”
August 21-27, 2016**



Towns, Cities and Counties all over the State of Arizona are designating the week of August 21 - 27 as Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve with proclamations like the one from the Town of Chino Valley.

Since 9/11 over 930,000 Guard and Reserve members have been mobilized, some of them many times. Today over 29,000 citizen soldiers / airman are serving on active duty.

Arizona employers share their 14,500 employees, who are also members of the Guard and Reserve, proudly with the nation.

In Arizona, sixty-five ESGR Volunteers work closely with employers' talent scouts seeking jobs for Guard and Reserve members ESGR also provides

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Act (USERRA) training for both employers and service members.

Darren Venters, ESGR Chairman



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2016 AZ COC Meetings

Important upcoming Dates

- 1) October 24-25, 2016: National MOAA Annual Dinner and Annual meeting, Arlington, VA (4/5 Star LOE awards).
- 2) November 13, 2016 Superstition Mountain Chapter dinner and November 14, 2016 Council of Chapters meeting, Tempe, AZ



The November 14, 2016 Council of Chapters MOAA Meeting is sponsored in part by a USAA/MOAA grant