



President's Message

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- Welcome to our newly formatted Council Newsletter – an eNewsletter. Transitioning from a “Print Newsletter” to an “eNewsletter” will have a few key benefits for both contributors to the newsletter and you, the audience: An eNewsletter simplifies creating input while also making it more impactful and always current by using hyperlinks. Additionally, an eNewsletter will facilitate broadening our audience, and be more accessible for you by being posted to our website and distributed directly to all chapter presidents.
- For those who were used to seeing our newsletter prior to Council meetings, you may have asked “Where’s the Council newsletter?” I purposely ...

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changed the timing so that you will receive it after our Council meetings – to allow us to share the pertinent business and discussions from the meetings with not only our chapter presidents, but all chapter members. So, with all that said, this is our first edition and I hope you like it. It will only get better as we move forward and receive your comments.

- The contents are shown on the left side of the homepage, one of the items is “Topics of Interest.” This is where you will find items we believe are of special significance to you. You may see short, hard-hitting complete articles or perhaps lead-in articles with hyperlinks. Regardless, each will hopefully entice you to read it by answering “What’s in it for me?” up front.
- Since this edition follows our Council meeting on 3 May, it gives me a great opportunity to again thank everyone for attending. We had 39 at the social the evening before the meeting and 33 at the meeting. A great turnout! I also want to again thank our host, the Grand Canyon Chapter and especially its President, LTC Steve Jarvis for the great logistics, venue, and ...

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hospitality. Everything was outstanding.

- In addition to the typical business of a Council meeting, I want to highlight two things that occurred: First, I was honored to present LTC Steve Jarvis with the MOAA Leadership Award for his tireless leadership, and personally advancing MOAA's mission of *improving the lives of those who serve and their families*. Second, Col [Wanda Wright](#) USAF (Ret), Director of the Arizona Department of Veterans' Services gave us an outstanding update on what is happening in Arizona concerning veterans and their families; she was the hit of the meeting!
- Finally, the format of this eNewsletter provides me a great platform with which to share a few of the items I personally presented at the Council meeting. You will see under "Topics of Interest" the following items: MOAA Communication Awards, Storming the Hill, Council Presidents' Seminar, and Committee Module.
- Please read-on...and enjoy!

Legislative Chairman Page 1 of 2

- After more than four months of work, the Arizona Legislature completed its 2019 Legislative Session May 27. After contentious negotiations, the legislature passed an \$11.8 billion FY 2020 budget and Governor Ducey immediately signed it. Several bills of interest to veterans failed to gain traction. Here is an update on these bills. For a full report see the final version at the Arizona Department of Veterans Services' [Legislative Update](#).
- **HB2093 Veterans Services Counselors (VBC's)**. Sponsored by Rep Richard Andrade, and a top goal of the Unified Arizona Veterans, the bill called for \$1.2 million to add more paid state VBC positions. The bill easily passed the House but was ultimately killed in the Senate for inexplicable reasons.
- **HB2488 – Annual Report, Veteran Suicides**. Sponsored by Rep Jay Lawrence, the bill calls for an annual report by the Arizona Department of Health Services (DHS) on information related to veteran suicides in the state. The final version of the bill passed both Houses April 11. It was signed by the Governor April 17.

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- **HB2011/SB1157 – Income Tax Subtraction, Veterans Pensions.** House and Senate bills sponsored by Rep Gail Griffin and Sen David Gowen, respectively, called for increasing the state tax exemption on military retired pay. No increase was included in the final budget. The exemption remains \$3500.
- **Payday Lending Ballot Initiative.** In separate news, a coalition of veteran's groups, charities and faith-based organizations recently decided to pursue a ballot initiative in 2020 that would limit interest rates to 36% on all loans in Arizona. This would match what is in federal lending law now for active military members. Currently, title loans in Arizona can go as high as 200%+ and can affect thousands of veterans in Arizona not on active duty or in drilling reserve status. The ballot initiative would allow Arizonans to vote on the issue and if passed, the state legislature would put it into law. A committee has been formed called Arizonans for Fair Lending and a ballot initiative for 2020 filed. The AZCOC supports this effort.

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- The Council's finances remain in excellent shape through the first six months of 2019 as reported at the May 3 Council meeting. An important reason for this has been the successful application by the Council to the MOAA/USAA sponsorship program and receipt of \$800 grants for the last three years. As a result, reimbursement of expenses for chapters hosting semi-annual Council meetings has been increased from \$200 to \$400.
- Don't forget that the MOAA/USAA sponsorship program is available to support chapter programs as well. MOAA, in partnership with USAA, will provide up to \$300 per year to support qualified chapter programs. Applying for the program requires several steps and requests are submitted using an online form found on MOAA's website.
- The first 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. Some examples which would meet the spirit and intent of the...

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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. The program for 2019 is now closed but will re-open for 2020 applications in December. Chapters have time to plan ahead.
- On a final note, 145 MOAA coins have been ordered based on chapter orders received at the Council meeting. They will be shipped in bulk to the Council and then sent to individual chapters that placed orders. Amounts due will be billed from the Council when the coins are delivered.

Secretary Page 1 of 1

- Council Members and Chapter and Satellite Presidents, Part of my responsibility as council secretary is to maintain a master roster for the council. This roster lists the council staff, past council presidents, chapter and satellite presidents and the officers for all the chapters and satellites.
- I need your help to make sure that the roster always contains the correct updated information. If you have a change of address or phone number, please make sure to send me the change. Chapter and Satellite Presidents, please send me any changes to officer positions, as well as any address or phone number changes for any of your officers listed on your roster.
- At all council meetings, I pass around the master roster and ask for updates or changes. After the council meeting, I update the master roster with the updates and changes I received at the meeting and then send out the master roster to the council staff, past council presidents and the Chapter & Satellite Presidents.
- I appreciate your assistance in keeping the master roster up-to-date.

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- **SBP/DIC Offset Widows Tax Update**
 - The new session of the 116th Congress saw two new bills to amend Title 10 of the United States Code - H.R.553 and S.622.
 - The purpose of these two bills is to repeal the requirement for reduction of survivor annuities under the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) for military surviving spouses to offset the receipt of Veterans Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC).
 - The SBP/DIC offset affects over 67,000 military surviving spouses.
 - Currently, surviving spouses forfeit \$1.00 in SBP for every \$1.00 received in DIC.
 - The annual loss to those surviving spouses is \$12,000-15,000.
- **The Military Surviving Spouse Equity Act House Bill (H.R.553)**
 - [H.R.553](#) has 312 co-sponsors (as of 22 May 2019).
 - Six of nine of Arizona's Representatives have signed-on.

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- Please help us contact and convince Arizona's three remaining Representatives to become co-sponsors: Andy Biggs District #5, David Schweikert District #6, and Gregg Stanton District #9.
- If you choose to call them, the Capitol Switchboard's # is 1-866-272-6622.
- Be sure to mention you are a member of MOAA.
- **Military Widow's Tax Elimination Act of 2019 Senate Bill (S.622)**
 - [S.622](#) has 63 co-sponsors (as of 22 May 2019).
 - Senators Sinema and McSally are both co-sponsors.
- **MOAA Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter** - The purpose of this new virtual chapter is to provide:
 - A national forum for surviving spouses of uniformed services officers,
 - A common space to communicate with each other,
 - A forum to disseminate information about concerns pertinent to each of us and our families,

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- And provide a platform to advocate for protection of rights for our members and dependents.
- Additionally, they want to become a reliable source for surviving spouses who: live in remote areas, are housebound, have jobs and children, or might be unable to participate at the chapter level.
- An application can be found at the following link: [Virtual Chapter](#).
- For the very latest info, visit the [Surviving Spouses of MOAA](#) on Facebook.
- **Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)**
 - TAPS is the national nonprofit organization providing compassionate care for the families of America's fallen military heroes.
 - TAPS provides peer-based emotional support, grief and trauma resources, grief seminars and retreats for adults; Good Grief Camps for children; and casework assistance, connections to community based care, online and in-person support groups, and a 24/7 resource and info helpline for all who have been affected by a death in the Armed Forces.

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- TAPS services are provided free of charge.
- TAPS was founded in 1994 by Bonnie Carroll following the death of her husband in a military plane crash in Alaska in 1992 and since that time, TAPS has offered comfort and care to more than 80,000 bereaved surviving family members.
- TAPS receives no government grants or funding.
- For more information, please visit [TAPS.org](https://www.taps.org).
- [TAPS Magazine](#) is dedicated to America's fallen heroes and their surviving families and friends.
- The articles in each edition are written by military survivors, grief professionals, and TAPS staff; find inspiration, comfort, support, resources, and a sense of belonging within these pages.
- This quarterly magazine is sent free of charge to anyone interested in receiving it, including survivors, service members, supporters, and grief professionals. Use the following link to [subscribe to TAPS Magazine](#).

Chapter and Satellite Development Page 1 of 2

- **Satellite Chapter Updates**

- The Mohave Satellite Chapter in northwestern Arizona is growing. Their numbers in the most recent count are 11 Regular Members, plus eight Surviving Spouse Members for a total of 19. They continue activities in support of veterans' issues. They are planning to participate in Stand Down as they have in previous years. They continue to have a succession of very worthwhile speakers and programs in their regular monthly meetings. Meetings alternate between Bullhead City and Lake Havasu City and are held on the second Saturday of each month. There is a summertime hiatus with no meetings to be held in July and August. The regular monthly meetings will begin again in September.
- The Rim Country Satellite Chapter in northeastern Arizona is also growing. Within the past month, five new members have been added—four Regular Members and one Surviving Spouse Member. Their ...

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numbers are now at six Regular and seven Surviving Spouse members. Whereas in the past, the Rim Country membership has been centered more or less in and around the Payson area, a new effort which began last year is underway to expand into the Show Low, Pinetop/Lakeside area. The new point of contact is Lieutenant Terry Burgess, USPHS, who resides in Pinetop. His email address is terry.burgess@ihs.gov for those who want more information. We are planning for our next meeting to be later in June.

- Further updates on the Mohave and Rim Country satellites' meetings and other activities can be found in The [Outback Newsletter](#) published by the Northern Arizona host Chapter.

Personal Affairs Officer Page 1 of 2

- **The Value Proposition for Being a MOAA Member**
 - Why did you join National MOAA? For the typical MOAA member, we are commissioned officers who are retired, on active duty, or in the National Guard or Reserves. Most likely joined to protect our respective earned military benefits. However, the largest group of eligible MOAA members are former commissioned officers. The difficulty is identifying the value proposition for this large group. They likely have few if any earned benefits from their military service. Camaraderie attracts some to participate in chapter activities. National MOAA has struggled to identify the “value” for this group. To some extent the value proposition is found within the bailiwick of personal affairs.
 - MOAA offers a myriad of insurance products that are not dependent on receiving a military pension or a military “pay check.” This includes the following: Hospital & Short-Term Recovery, Vision Care, Group Accidental Death & Dismemberment, Group Term Life, Long Term Care, & Pet ...

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Health Care. Personal Affairs officers are not intended to be insurance salespersons but insurance does serve to provide financial protection to your chapter members so Personal Affairs officers should have some familiarity with the MOAA insurance programs. Note: Some of the insurance programs may not be available nationwide, this subject and other valuable info can be found at [MOAA Insurance](#).

- Many other value propositions, such as travel and discounts can be found at [MOAA Benefits and Discounts](#). Did you know, thorough MOAA Travel, some chapters have arranged cruises open to their entire membership? I have encountered a chapter which has a member responsible for the “travel club.” This is an example of “outside the box” thinking. Spend some time surfing MOAA’s website and you’ll discover a myriad of programs, discounts, deals, etc. available to all MOAA members...some of which your Personal Affairs officer may want to explore for your chapter.

Transition Liaison Page 1 of 4

- **What is a Transition Liaison (TL)?**

- Transition Liaison (TL) is the follow-on to the former The Officer Placement Service or TOPS.
- This program was established to provide all MOAA members and their Spouses with another venue for job research and placement.
- The mission of MOAA TL is to compile, publicize, and disseminate job opportunities via its network of industry, MOAA Chapters, military leaders, veteran service organizations, and other MOAA stakeholders.
- In Summary, the MOAA TL mission is to provide Professional Guidance and Support for MOAA Members & Spouses in Job Transition

- **What is the AZ TL?**

- The Arizona TL Organization is comprised of nearly 40 Business and Industry Executives along with other professionals who routinely provide notices of job opportunities in their areas for posting to the FORMER MOAA TOPS1 database.

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- MOAA TL AZ is an arm of the MOAA Organization serving the Arizona community.
- MOAA AZ operates a website at “moaatopsaz.org” for the purpose of posting information of interest to our stakeholders.
- If you have information you want to share, send that information to me and I will have it posted on the website
- **Services Provided**
 - Provide local networking contacts for MOAA members and spouses in job/career transition
 - Each Chapter is viewed as a primary career and geographic resource
 - Each Chapter provides needed “sponsor” assistance
 - Provide Job Listings on the website for access to the membership
 - Provide career related links and information for the membership in transitioning to civilian workforce as well as pertinent military and retired changes in benefits

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- Provide Career Fair Listings
- Serve the membership with Networking Contacts
- **Results of Last Five+ Months**
 - Jobs Posted: 138 Single and 4 Multi-listing
 - Single Announcements: 138
 - Arizona State-wide: 129
 - Continental United States (CONUS) Wide:7
 - Outside Continental United States (OCONUS): 2
 - Multiple Listings: 12 for 515+ 3 for unspecified number
 - Arizona State-wide: 5
 - CONUS-wide: 7
 - OCONUS: 2 + 3 for unspecified number of positions
- **Job Fairs Published**
 - Arizona State-wide: 2
 - CONUS-wide: 0

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- **Resources Available**

- National:

- MOAA

- Career Center Website: www.moaa.org/careers

- Linked In (Join MOAA Career Networking Group)

- Arizona:

- Council and Chapter Policies and Procedures Guide

- Arizona MOAA Website: moaatopsaz.org

- **AZCOC TL Contact Information**

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Home: 520-458-1058

- **Employer Support of Guard and Reserve (ESGR) ... What's in it for the Servicemember?**
 - Employer Outreach - Promote a culture where all employers support and value military service through education, recognition, and mediation
 - Military Outreach - Make Service members aware of their rights and responsibilities under the law and the value of employer support and recognition
 - Employment - Increase career opportunities through strategic relationships with employers, state and Federal partners, and professional associations
 - Ombudsman Services - Provide informal, neutral mediation for issues or conflicts between employers and Service members before they escalate
- **What Are The Associated Responsibilities?**
 - Service Member Responsibilities
 - Provide advanced notice to employer (verbal or written)

- Leave a civilian job for fulfillment of military obligations
- If on extended active duty, receive a qualifying military separation (served honorably)
- Serve for no more than five cumulative years away from the workplace, excluding exceptions
- Notify employer of intent to return to work in accordance with USERRA guidelines
- Employer Responsibilities
 - Allow military leave of absence
 - Reinstatement employee promptly
 - Restore employee seniority
 - Reinstatement employment benefits
 - Provide training or refreshing of skills
 - Do not discriminate or retaliate

- **What Protections Do Servicemembers Have?**
 - The Uniformed Services Employment & Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) is a Federal statute that protects Service members' and veterans' civilian employment rights.
 - An employer must not deny initial employment, reemployment, retention in employment, promotion, or any benefit of employment to an individual on the basis of his or her membership, application for membership, performance of service, application for service, or obligation for service in the uniformed Services.
- **Among other things, under certain conditions, USERRA...**
 - Requires employers to put individuals back to work in their civilian jobs after military service.
 - Restores employees who engage in military service to the same level of seniority, status, and pay ordinarily attained if they were not called up for military service.

- Protects Service members from discrimination in the workplace based on their military service or affiliation.
- **ESGR Employer Awards**
 - [Patriot Award](#)
 - [Spouse Patriot Award](#)
 - [Seven Seals Award](#)
 - [Above and Beyond Award](#)
 - [Pro Patria Award](#)
 - [Extraordinary Employer Support Award](#)
 - [Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award](#)

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- **National MOAA Communication Award – AZ Chapter Winners**
 - 5-Star Websites: Arizona, Coronado, Luke, and Superstition Mountain
 - 5-Star Newsletter (paper): Coronado, Luke, Superstition Mountain, Tucson, and Grand Canyon
 - 4-Star Newsletter (paper): Arizona
- **“Storming the Hill” 2019**
 - Arizona’s four representatives along with 158 other “Stormers” from around the nation converged on Washington, D.C. to promote MOAA’s top issues with congressional representatives
 - The three top issues discussed were 3.1% Pay Raise, SBP/DIC Offset (Widow’s Tax), and Tricare.
 - Support for the 3.1 percent pay raise in the President’s Budget
 - The pay raise needs to align with the Employment Cost Index (ECI).
 - The pay raise should not reduce other programs to offset the increase
 - Pay and benefits are key factors in recruiting and retention

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- SBP/DIC Offset (Widow's Tax) – Please refer to the Surviving Spouse Liaison section for more on this critical issue.
- Tricare – The primary push was to stabilize the extent of care and stop disproportional cost increases relative to those in the civilian sector
- Our contingent met with all 11 AZ legislators – 6 Principals and 5 Staffers
 - Senators Sinema and McSally
 - Representatives O'Halleran, Kirkpatrick, Lesko, and Gallego
- **MOAA Council Presidents Seminar 2019**
 - MOAA Membership Overview
 - Life Membership converts to surviving spouse
 - Premium Membership converts to surviving spouse (One year free or remaining time on multi-year...whichever is greater)
 - Basic Membership is now indefinite – does not expire
 - Dual military couple Life Membership (One pays listed amount; the other pays only \$100)

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- Total Membership: National = 350,000 Arizona = 1,041 ↑3%
- Life Members: = 49% = 59%
- Premium Members: = 23% = 26%
- Basic Members: = 28% = 6%
- Retired Members: = 61%
- Currently Serving: = 21%
- Former Officers: = 3%
- Surviving Spouse: = 14% (50,000) = 12%
- Councils and Chapters: = 34 = 400
- Chapter Members: = 45,000 = 1,141
- MOAA Virtual Chapters
 - MOAA Uniformed Services Nurse Advocates Virtual Chapter
 - 174 Members, 43 states, 115 congressional districts
 - Eligibility: Must be MOAA members
 - Their official website is <https://www.musnavc.org>

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- MOAA Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter
 - Chartered in March 2018
 - Currently 88 Members
 - Eligibility: MOAA Surviving Spouse or Surviving Spouse Liaison
- **MOAA Committee Module (i.e., National MOAA's member database)**
 - Serves as MOAA's Official Membership Roster
 - Tracks those serving in Officer, Board, Staff, and Committee Positions
 - Committee Module information is linked to the Level of Excellence (LOE) award, and Recruitment and Retention Bonuses
 - It is helpful in identifying a chapter's National MOAA member percentage, lapsed memberships, and non-MOAA members
 - The primary resource is [Committee Module Instructional Guide Ver 2.0](#) but training webinars can be arranged through National MOAA's Council and Chapters office (Daniel Slattery 800-234-6622, ext. 168)

AZCOC Meeting Information

- **Fall 2019: Green Valley**
 - Date: Social - Thursday, 7 Nov / Meeting - Friday, 8 Nov
 - Location: Canoa Ranch Golf Resort, 5775 S Camino Del Sol, Green Valley, AZ 85622
 - POC: Joe Longo (President): longojv5@gmail.com, (509) 945-4993
Elliot Jones (1st VP): jonesemj@gmail.com, (847) 366-6466
- Spring 2020: Coronado
- Fall 2020: Tucson
- Spring 2021: Northern Arizona
- Fall 2021: Superstition Mountain
- Spring 2022: Yuma
- Fall 2022: Luke
- Spring 2023: Arizona
- Fall 2023: Grand Canyon

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