



# AZ Council of Chapters



**Date:** June 2018

**President:** LtCol Dick Jonas



## President's Message

This year has developed into a very busy time for the Arizona State Council MOAA, along with our nine chapters and four satellites. Of the 9,000 MOAA members in the state, about 1,200 are affiliated with a chapter and are able to participate in meetings and other activities in support of Arizona veterans.

I want to congratulate and thank the leadership in each chapter for excellent performance all around. Special thanks to newsletter editors. It is important that we stay in touch with each other, and sharing newsletters among the chapters is a good way to do that. It's another way we can share ideas and learn from each other. The recent announcement of all the Communications Awards from National for Print Newsletters and Websites constitutes a well-earned pat on the back for communications jobs well done.

I want to offer a special personal thanks to Col Pete Kloeber, State Council vice president, for bringing those awards home from the Council President's Seminar for presentation at our Spring AZCoC meeting. Also, another personal thanks to Col Kloeber and the State staff for their outstanding help to me in my job

as president. As many of you know, I have had some personal health and family issues which have kept me from my duties from time to time. Without the help of the staff, my job would not get done. My sincere thanks.

There have been some changes in the State Council staff as you may already know. Lt Col Darren Venters took over as Legislative Liaison and has done an excellent job with the state legislature on Arizona veterans' issues. The Surviving Spouse Liaison saw the departure of Mrs. Shirley Phillips from the Tucson Chapter after four highly productive years in that position. She is succeeded by Mrs. Sharon Douglas from the Northern Arizona Chapter.

National places a high emphasis on keeping in touch with affiliates in the field by sending HQ staff members to visit. We have been fortunate to benefit from that policy. Last year at our Spring State Council meeting, our guest speaker was COL Terri Coles, Senior Director from Councils and Chapters. In the Fall meeting our speaker was LGen Dana Atkins, MOAA CEO. At our next meeting in June, our speaker will be LGen Edward Hanlon from the National Board. This fall, we are working to get LGen Atkins back as our speaker.

I hope to see you all at the 2 June meeting in Surprise, Arizona, hosted by the Luke Chapter.

*Dick Jonas, President*

## **MOAA UPDATES: “Storming the Hill” and Council President’s Seminar from April 16 – 19, 2018:**

The following individuals represented Arizona during MOAA’s “Storming the Hill” on April 18th:

- Col Pete Kloeber, USAF (Ret) - Team Leader
- Lt Gen John Regni, USAF (Ret) - MOAA National Board Member
- CDR John Chernoski, USN (Ret) - MOAA National Board Member
- Cynthia Giesecke - MOAA Currently Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee

They joined the other 150 MOAA members “Storming the Hill” to fight for support of the president’s 2.6 percent pay raise, further protection of service members’ pay and benefits, and ending reduced pay for over 200,000 “Chapter 61” retirees who are currently being denied retirement pay due to injury or illness. They also provided each congressional office with important facts and a call to end the Survivor Benefit Plan-Dependency and Indemnity Compensation offset, commonly referred to as the “Widow’s Tax.” They visited the offices of all ten current AZ legislators and visited personally with Representatives Biggs, Gosar, McSally, Schweikert, and Sinema.

### **A few items from the Council Presidents’ Seminar:**

#### **MOAA Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee**

MOAA is still looking for nominations to fill two positions on the Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee. Nominees should include a short 250-word biography, a letter of recommendation from their council or chapter president, and state why they want to serve on the SSAC. The deadline for applications has been extended to 31 May 2018.

To apply, visit the Surviving Spouses section of MOAA’s website and download the Selection Criteria. Applications can be submitted via email to [auxcomm@moaa.org](mailto:auxcomm@moaa.org) or mailed to MOAA, Attn: MSC, Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee, 201 N. Washington St., Alexandria, VA 22314-2539.

#### **New Committee Module**

To date, some 230 chapters are utilizing the Committee Module - the new tool to facilitate officer and membership roster updates. The good news: the AZ Council and all nine of its chapters are doing so. Thank you! We will discuss the Module and offer training at our June Council meeting.

#### **MOAA Virtual Chapters**

MOAA has approved the following two “Virtual Chapters”

- MOAA Uniformed Services Nurse Advocates Virtual Chapter (MUSNAVC) (VC01)
- MOAA Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter (MSSVC) (VC02)

#### **Communication Awards:**

MOAA announced the results of the 2017 Col Marvin Harris Communications Awards at last week’s Council President’s Seminar. Below are the winners from Arizona:

Arizona Chapter  
Print Newsletter 5 Star  
Website 5 Star

Coronado Chapter  
Print Newsletter 5 Star  
Website 5 Star

Grand Canyon Chapter  
Print Newsletter 5 Star

Green Valley Chapter  
Website 5 Star

Luke Chapter  
Print Newsletter 5 Star  
Website 5 Star

Superstition Mountain Chapter  
Print Newsletter 5 Star  
Website 4 Star

I picked up your respective certificates and pins we will present them to you at the Council meeting in June.

MOAA Summary: 146 total awards (14 Councils and 132 Chapters)

Print Newsletter: 71 total  
5 Star: 4 Councils, 53 Chapters  
4 Star: 14 Chapter

E-Newsletter: 4 total  
5 Star: 1 Council, 3 Chapters

Website: 71 total  
5 Star: 9 Councils, 55 Chapters  
4 Star: 7 Chapters

**Note:** MOAA has 34 Councils and 405 Chapters; so, the above winners represent 41% of Councils and 33% of Chapters.

Congratulations to all!

*Pete Kloeber, Vice President*



### [Secretary's Message](#)

It is time to make your plans to attend the June 1<sup>st</sup> Luke Chapter reception and the June

2<sup>nd</sup> Council of Chapters meeting. The information listed below will give you some of the details for both events. More information will be sent via email when COL Mike Kramer has confirmed all the details including more information for the buffet luncheon.

**The Luke Chapter** will be hosting a reception on Friday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, from 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. The location for the reception is the Trevi Meeting Room inside The Colonnade, located at 19116 Colonnade Way, Surprise, AZ. Appetizers, iced tea, soft drinks and water will be provided. For those wishing an alcoholic beverage, they may be purchased in The Bistro which is just down the hall from the room being used for the reception.

**The Arizona Council of Chapters meeting** will be held on June 2<sup>nd</sup> in the La Vita Ballroom inside The Colonnade, located at 19116 Colonnade Way, Surprise, AZ. The meeting will commence at 8:00 a.m.

For those of you interested in lunch, a picnic buffet will be provided. Cost information will be forthcoming.

**Overnight Lodging** – Adjacent to The Colonnade is a Hampton Inn located at 14783 W. Grand Avenue, Surprise, AZ. Their phone number is: 623-537-9122. As Col Mike Kramer had stated in an earlier email to all of you, the room rate of \$76.00 (plus tax) was only guaranteed until May 1<sup>st</sup>. If you find that you do need a room, you may ask for that rate, but there is no guarantee that the hotel will still give it to you. A stay at the Hampton Inn does include breakfast.

*Pam Wojtas, Secretary*



### Treasure's Report

The Council's finances remain in excellent shape so far in 2018. All chapters have paid their Arizona Council of Chapters dues. Thank you very much. The council has also received a \$50 incentive payment from MOAA for updating council officers in MOAA's database prior to March 1 of this year. I will have a Treasurer's Report of income and expenses for the last six months to present to the membership at our June meeting.

Don't forget that the MOAA/USAA sponsorship program is available to support 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 and stand-alone chapter recruiting activities. 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](http://www.moaa.org/Content/Chapters-and-Councils/Council-and-Chapter-)

Thanks for your support.

*Lee Lange, Treasurer*



### VETERAN LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

53<sup>rd</sup> Arizona Legislature, Second Regular Session has been on a roll!

The Governor announced, at the start of the session, that the income tax exemption for 52 thousand Arizona residents receiving retired Military pay would be increased! Seemed like the stars were all in alignment! Senator Griffin introduced a bill that mirrored the Governors comments, Representative Livingston introduce a similar bill in the House. Griffins bill sailed through committee, had a hiccup in the Senate but eventually was passed in the Senate and transmitted to the House. Military, Veterans and Regulatory Affairs Committee (MVRA) passed the bill on a 9-1 vote. Representative Michelle Ugenti-Rita refused to give the bill a hearing in the House Ways and Means Committee. Ugenti-Rita effectively killed the bill in the House Appropriations Committee along with the Bill introduced by Representative David Livingston.

Along the way, the increase to the income tax exemption still appeared to be safe in the Governor's budget with Senator Griffin monitoring the Budget closely. Then the Teachers Strike disrupts everything! My contact in the Governor's office told me it didn't look good! *Moments ago, I read in the news that the state income tax exemption, all though smaller was still in the proposed budget.* By the time you read this it may have changed!

## Late breaking news from Senator Gail Griffin – May 3rd.

“Darren,  
We just passed SB1529 which includes the language to raise the retired veterans’ exemption from \$2500.00 to \$3500.00 in 2020.

We will come back again next year and try to increase the amount.

We also approved Veterans Homes for Flagstaff and Yuma.

Sorry I wasn't able to get more exemptions on the retirement income this year.

Gail”

### Other Legislation that was passed this session:

7 August “Purple Heart Day” in Arizona. Not a legal holiday.

23 October in Arizona “Beirut Barracks Bombing Remembrance Day” to commemorate the terrorist bombing of the U.S. Marine Corps barracks in Beirut, Lebanon on 23 October 1983. Not a legal holiday.

A concurrent resolution to honor the victims of the 1983 bombing of the United States Marine Corps barracks in Beirut, Lebanon and to proclaim October 23, 2018 as Beirut Bombing Remembrance Day in Arizona.

Authorize a memorial to the Buffalo Soldiers in Wesley Bolin Plaza at the State Capitol

Arizona Game and Fish to provide complimentary licenses to U. S. Armed Forces *veterans* who receive compensation for a service-connected disability rated by the VA at 100% and who have been an Arizona resident for at least one year prior to applying for the license.

Authorize the department of administration to provide for the placement in the governmental mall of a memorial dedicated to the commemoration of *veterans* who have committed suicide due to unresolved post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injury.

Allow the owner of a qualified alternative fuel vehicle with *veteran* special license plates to be issued the diamond shaped alternative fuel sticker for placement on the vehicle’s plate. Right now, veteran plates are not compatible with the alt-fuel sticker. This lets the people with veteran plates don’t have to give up their veteran plate to use the alt-fuel sticker. This would allow that vehicle to use high occupancy vehicle lanes at any time regardless of the number of people in the vehicle.

Extends the existing Military Family Relief Fund to 2026 and creates another separate sub account like the Military Family Relief Fund for the assistance of “Pre-9/11” veterans and their families who qualify.

Arizona *veteran* with a VA certified 100% disability can obtain a permanent disability windshield placard for the automobile that will not expire as long as the veteran’s certified 100% disability exists

Defines “Day” as a “shift of work” for state employees who are members of the National Guard or Reserve Forces who are entitled to leave from the state job on days the employee reports for military training. Would clearly state that Arizona employers must allow members of the National Guard of any state or members of the U. S. Reserve Forces time off to participate in ordered drills. There are residents of Arizona who are members of other state’s National Guard and residents of other states who are members of the Arizona National Guard.

Appropriate \$25,000 to create a fund administered by the Arizona Department of Veterans’ Services and controlled by an

appointed committee to pay for hyperbaric oxygen treatments for *veterans*.

A concurrent resolution urging Congress to enact the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act to restore the presumptive coverage for blue water veterans and remove the burden of having to prove their exposure to Agent Orange.

A concurrent resolution urging Congress to recognize and award a Congressional Gold Medal to members of the WWII 23rd Headquarters Special Troops and the 3133rd Signal Service Company, also known as “The Ghost Army”. During WWII, these units used inflatable tanks and artillery, sound equipment and impersonation to confuse the enemy about where the real Allied fighting units were located.

*Darren Venters, Legislative Affairs*



### ESGR News

Angel MedFlight, Republic Services and Tri-City Ministries have been named as recipients of the highly coveted Pro Patria Award. The award will be presented May 17 at the Goldwater Air National Guard Base in Phoenix.

161<sup>st</sup> Air Refueling Wing hosted a “Bosslift.” Thirty employers participated in and observed a typical day of an Air Guardsman. They observed a KC 135 Tanker offloading fuel to a C 130J. One employer, who had spent 16 years in the Army, said he learned more about how the Guard and Reserve contribute to the Nation’s defense than he had known before. Employers from around the state traveled to Phoenix to have the opportunity to see the Air National Guard in Action.

There is some exciting openings for Volunteers in the Arizona Committee! We need Employer Outreach Coordinators in Kingman, Payson, Show low, and other parts of Arizona. Other openings include Social media coordinator, Public Affairs Director, Finance and Volunteer Coordinators. If interested or just want more information call Scott Essex at 602-267-2404 or email [scott.r.essex.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:scott.r.essex.ctr@mail.mil)

Ed Mangan, our outstanding Military Outreach Director has cut back on some of his many volunteer responsibilities due to his health. We miss Him!

Daniel Irving has been selected to replace Darren Venters as the Arizona Committee, ESGR effective October 1, 2018

*Darren Venters, ESGR Chairman*



### SURVIVING SPOUSE NEWS

As I’m sure most of you know, Shirley Phillips has retired as the Arizona Council of Chapters Surviving Spouse Representative. She has worked tirelessly for years to advance, educate, and engage the members of this group. Through her efforts, over 500 heart pillows were donated to the Tucson and Phoenix V.A. hospitals.

Recently, Shirley was awarded the MOAA Surviving Spouse Liaison Excellence Award. Well-deserved recognitions for her years of service.

In an effort to keep the Surviving Spouses better informed, I will be trying to spotlight issues that

affect this group. I will research and make information available on current challenges facing us in the legislature as well as benefits and services available to spouses and widows.

Currently, one of the most important issues is the SBP-DIC Offset. Currently the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation benefit is being offset dollar for dollar up to the full amount of the Survivor Benefit Plan amount. This could be as much as \$ 15,397 loss per year to the survivor. We need to contact our House and Senate members to encourage them to support or co-sponsor Senate bill S-339 and House bill H.R.846.

I have a sample letter you can mail to your Congressional Representatives, along with addresses and phone numbers for them. Please contact me if you would like more information on how you can make a difference.

There is also a program in the works for an assistance program for hearing devices. More information to follow.

MOAA is now offering pet insurance.

Next year there will be a new dental and vision program offered through Tricare. Details are evolving but you can pre-enroll at [www.TRICARE.benefeds.com](http://www.TRICARE.benefeds.com).

There is a lot going on and. If you would like more information on any of these programs or would like to receive emails or regular mail with information concerning these and future issues, please contact me.

Thank you;  
Sharon Douglas  
*AZCoC Surviving Spouse Representative*

Contact Information:  
P.O. Box 95 Dewey, Arizona 86327  
Phone Number: 928 632 5939  
[Sharon.Douglas.NACMOAA@gmail.com](mailto:Sharon.Douglas.NACMOAA@gmail.com)



### **Arizona Council of Chapters (MOAA)**

President: Richard Jonas, Lt Col, USAF Ret.  
Address: P.O. Box 1226, Chino Valley, AZ 86323  
Email: [az04nac@erosonic.com](mailto:az04nac@erosonic.com)  
Phone Number: 928-636-2259

Vice President: Peter Kloeber, Col, USAF Ret.  
Address: 2651 Mary Colter, Flagstaff, AZ 86001  
Email: [pkloeber@earthlink.net](mailto:pkloeber@earthlink.net)  
Phone Number: 928-525-0585

Secretary & Membership: Pam Wojtas  
Address: 19065 N Mira Bello Rd, Surprise, AZ 85374  
Email: [jp7wojtas@gmail.com](mailto:jp7wojtas@gmail.com)  
Phone Number: 623-544-4477

Treasurer: Lee Lange, Col, USMC, Ret.  
Address: 41122 N Majesty Way, Anthem, AZ 85086  
Email: [lflange48@gmail.com](mailto:lflange48@gmail.com)  
Phone Number: (c) 703-232-3609, (h) 623-215-4721

Legislative Affairs & ESGR:  
Darren Venters, Lt. Col, USAF, Ret  
Address: 1510 Eagle Crest Drive, Prescott, AZ 86301  
Email: [dventers@msn.com](mailto:dventers@msn.com)  
Phone Number: 520-490-4479

Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee Rep:  
Sharon Douglas  
P.O. Box 95 Dewey, Arizona 86327  
Phone: 928 632 5939 Email:  
[Sharon.Douglas.NACMOAA@gmail.com](mailto:Sharon.Douglas.NACMOAA@gmail.com)  
Phone Number: 928-632-5939

National MOAA BOD Member & Personal Affairs Officer:

John Chernoski, CDR, USN, Ret.  
Address: 2009 East Oak Hill Place, Green Valley, AZ 85614-6290  
Email: [jchernoski@cox.net](mailto:jchernoski@cox.net)  
Phone Number: 520-625-3909

Transitions Liaison:

Harry Bowen, CW3, USA, Ret  
Address: 1950 Cottonwood Drive, Sierra Vista, AZ 85635  
Email: [harrybowen@aol.com](mailto:harrybowen@aol.com)  
Phone Number: 520-458-1058

Chapters Development Directors:

Allen F. Rossow, COL, USA Ret.  
Address: 1548 Buena Dr., Sierra Vista, AZ 85635  
Email: [alrossow@cox.net](mailto:alrossow@cox.net)  
Phone Number: 520-439-4144

Ronald J. Perkins, Col, USAF Ret.  
Address: 6393 W. Dublin Lane, Chandler, AZ 85226  
Email: [rbperkins@cox.net](mailto:rbperkins@cox.net)  
Phone Number: (h) 480-961-8632,  
(c) 602-295-3880

Immediate Past President: Ronald J. Perkins, Col, USAF Ret.  
Address: 6393 W. Dublin Lane, Chandler, AZ 85226  
Email: [rbperkins@cox.net](mailto:rbperkins@cox.net)  
Phone Number: (h) 480-961-8632,  
(c) 602-295-3880

**2018 AZ COC Meetings**  
**Important upcoming Dates**

- 1) June 1-2 2018: Spring MOAA State Council Meeting June 1<sup>st</sup>, from 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. The location for the reception is the Trevi Meeting Room inside The Colonnade, located at 19116 Colonnade Way, Surprise, AZ. June 2<sup>nd</sup> the Arizona Council of Chapters meeting will commence at 8:00 a.m. in the La Vita Ballroom inside The Colonnade, located at 19116 Colonnade Way, Surprise, AZ.



*The 2 June, 2018 Council of Chapters MOAA Meeting is sponsored in part by a USAA/MOAA grant.*