

AZ Council of Chapters MOAA

Date: *Spring 2012*

President: *Col Ken Yamanouchi*



President's Message

Our next meeting will be on Monday, 21 May 2012, at the Best Western Dobson Ranch Inn in Mesa, hosted by the Superstition Mountain Chapter. It will begin at 0900 and end NLT 1400 with a break for lunch. On Sunday, 20 May, the Chapter will be holding its regular meeting to which we are all invited. It begins with a no host cocktail hour at 1600, followed by dinner, and program. Please let me know, if you have not received specific invitations. At our Council meeting, I will be asking Gary Fredricks, our National Board member, to bring us up-to-date on Council and Chapter Affairs, new officer orientation and training, and ideas to strengthen our council and chapters. COL Joey Strickland, Director of AZ Department of Veterans Services will attend also and provide us with his report.

Purpose: To help each other strengthen our chapters through membership growth and insure leadership succession through sharing of information at every level from Presidents to Personal Affairs and Auxiliary. One excellent source is our monthly chapter newsletters. Please ask to be placed on distribution, if you are not receiving one.

Membership. At our last meeting, I asked every chapter to adopt a goal of 6% net growth and trust this goal is being achieved. We

needed a specific target and a plan for recruitment and retention. We need good programs, climate of camaraderie, and shared values in the mission and community projects of each chapter. If a member does not return after attending a meeting, welcoming efforts need redoubling. The AZ Chapter has formed a special committee to determine how to add value to chapter membership.

Last May, the National Guard Convention took place at the same time as our Council meeting. This year, it is scheduled for 18-19 May and Ed Mangan, from the Superstition Mountain Chapter, has agreed to head up again AZCOC. I plan to be a helper as well as representatives from the AZ and Luke chapters. All chapters are requested to send Ed, your chapter application forms, since we will be recruiting members who reside in your area and you will be given GMT credit. This is a wonderful opportunity, because Guardsmen are residents of our State and more likely to renew their memberships.

On the subject of GMT, congratulations go out to our Yuma Chapter for winning in your category and award of \$1,000.

Increasing Visibility. Please continue publicizing your many accomplishments internally in your newsletters and externally in your local newspapers by submitting articles. Please continue to visit/contact your legislators, local employers and promote your chapter, ESGR, and TOPS. Please see talking points provided.

Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame (AVHOF). MOAA has an outstanding track record of success in our members being selected to the AVHOF. The deadline for submission of nominations is 30 April 2012. We have outstanding members throughout our state. Please take the time to nominate them.

Vice-Presidents Report

ESGR & TOPS. I want to thank Kelly Galvin for his dedication and contributions to TOPS, not only in our State, but all of MOAA. He asked to step down and he is being replaced by CW3 Harry Bowen of the Coronado Chapter. Please visit the Personnel Departments of your local colleges, hospitals, and government offices to promote ESGR & TOPS at least twice per year as a minimum.

Leadership Succession. Please consider backing up every position on your Boards with for example an assistant secretary. That way it's easier to slide in a replacement. I have asked Bob Delker to Chair the Nominating Committee for our next President and Vice President. He may be contacting you to help him as a member of his committee.

Level of Excellence (LOE) Awards. We received finally, formal recognition in writing in the February issue of the "Military Officer" magazine as the first and only State to have all of its chapters earn LOE awards. According to Kris Ann Hegle, research took time.

Council LOE. I have asked each chapter to adopt quantitative goals, because award scoring is quantitative. I see problems, because we do not hold a state convention, have formal orientation and training for new officers per se, and conduct chapter visits. I will work on our submission and ask for your help with the wording and inclusion of additional information.

Bylaws. Amendments requiring a budget and setting spending limits will be on our agenda for the May Council of Chapters meeting. Proposed By-Law changes will be sent out to all Council members for review prior to the Council meeting.

Finally, I'm looking forward to our next meeting. Gary Fredricks and I will have participated in Storming the Hill and will report back to you on our experience.

Col Ken Yamanouchi

The absolute highlight of 2011 was the Levels of Excellence awards dinner in San Antonio this year! ALL of our Chapters received recognition; that is not only a first for us, but, as I remember only two other Councils in the nation met that standard (one Council had three Chapters and one had eight!!). Yes, we are the Leaders!

My most sincere congratulations to all the new officers and directors that have been selected and installed in your Chapters. You have a strong tradition of supporting the goals of MOAA and supporting the current, former, and retired officers in your communities. As a new member of your Board, your Chapter has bylaws and records of past speakers/treasurer records/secretary minutes/and SOP's. Those records are critical in a transition to you, the new leaders.

But, here is one of the key resources that the Council can provide to you. Steve Abel, and we are very fortunate to have a most capable and resourceful Secretary/Treasurer for the Council, publishes a roster for the Council of the officers/directors of each Chapter. I would strongly recommend each President/ Secretary provide the new Board that roster. As a new officer/director, and you are seeking information, "what are the rules, what has worked successful in the past, where should I look, what should I watch for, how do I do this, where can I seek advice as to what has worked", call your counterpart(s) in another Chapter. Whether it be on 501 (c)19 qualifications, Personal Affairs, scholarships, publications, electronic newsletters, website maintenance, or recruiting efforts – call your counterpart in those other chapters. Some have been very successful. That is one of the most valuable resources of the Council.

We need a very special recognition to the Northern Arizona Chapter for their highly successful outreach to those current and potential members in the northern portion of our state, along Interstate 40. They have wisely started contacting officers and holding meetings, and whether to become satellite organizations or

ultimately become Chapters in those communities will be seen by the support of those communities and those individuals. The leadership of the Northern Arizona Chapter deserves our applause and support.

I look forward to working with each of you and your Chapter in these coming months. We truly have the leaders in our communities.

Allen Rossow
Vice President, AZ Council of Chapters
alrossow@cox.net
(520) 439-4144



Congratulations to all 8 Chapters on LOE Awards

Secretary/Treasurer Report

This year's Spring Council meeting is scheduled for Monday May 21st, 2012 at the Best Western Dobson Ranch Inn in Mesa AZ (1666 S. Dobson RD. Mesa AZ 85202 480-831-7000). The Host Chapter is Superstition Mtn. who invites you to attend their Chapter Dinner meeting on Sunday May 20th, 2012. More details will be forwarded via electronic means as they are available.

I will be sending out the Semi-Annual Chapter Presidents reports in March. I would like to have them returned by the first week of May. I will be out of town from 04/04/2012 until 04/22/2012 however, you may return your reports (when completed) to my email address and I will be sure they are distributed on time prior to our Council meeting.

I would like to offer my sincere Thank You to all of the Arizona MOAA Chapters for their continued

support in my role as Secretary and Treasurer. The electronic communications we have developed has worked very well with immediate feedback and responses thus making Council business more efficient. This has also significantly reduced the Council's annual expenses as it relates to all the previous copying and mailing expenses. The 2011 fiscal years expenses were the lowest they have been in many years.

I am open to suggestions or ideas to help improve our communication between the Council and Chapter members. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me.

Steven Abel
Secretary/Treasurer

Legislative Affairs

2012 is shaping up to be a Legislative challenge. MOAA's Legislative Goals include:

Active/Reserve Force/Family Issues:

- Sustain active duty, Guard and Reserve force sizes to meet mission requirements
- Sustain military pay comparability with private sector
- Credit all post-9/11 active duty service toward Guard/Reserve early retirement
- Restore tax deduction for reservists' out-of-pocket expenses for drill travel of 50 miles or more
- Create new incentives for employers to hire and retain drilling Guard/Reserve members
- Provide incentives for employers/government/contractors to hire military spouses
- Protect funding for commissary/exchange, dependent schools and family support programs
- Improve educational transition for military children
- Establish flexible spending account coverage for out-of-pocket health/dependent care expenses
- Improve access to affordable child care
- Expand career advancement account program (MyCAA) to career spouses and degree programs
- Require better education on serious financial disadvantages of the REDUX retirement option

Health Care Issues:

- Avert 30% Medicare/TRICARE payment cut and fix statutory formula to improve access to care
- Protect against disproportional increases in TRICARE fees
- Oppose enrollment fee for TRICARE For Life or curtailment of TFL coverage
- Allow three years of active-duty-level TRICARE coverage for disability retirees/families
- Improve seamless transition between Defense and VA health care/benefits systems
- Authorize option to subsidize retention of operational reservists' civilian family health insurance
- Increase orthodontia payment cap under active duty dental plan

Retirement/Survivor Issues:

- Oppose military benefit changes that are inconsistent with service career sacrifices
- Preserve full-inflation cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs)
- End deduction of VA disability compensation from military retired pay
- End deduction of VA survivor benefits (DIC) from military Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuities
- Implement a more equitable military disability retirement system
- Restore VA survivor annuities for qualifying widows who remarry after age 55
- Expand permanent ID card eligibility for elderly/disabled beneficiaries
- Authorize survivors to retain a deceased retiree's full final-month retired pay
- Authorize SBP annuities to be paid to Special Needs Trusts for permanently disabled annuitants
- Reform the Uniformed Services Former Spouse Protection Act (USFSPA)

Veterans and Other Issues:

- Improve quality, efficiency, and timeliness of VA claims-processing system
- Establish Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits for Surviving Spouses of Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts
- Authorize pre-tax payment of health, dental and long-term care premiums
- Reduce Social Security penalties for certain civil service and state retirees/survivors

- Prevent disproportional Social Security/Medicare penalties for any population segment

If your membership is not fully engaged in our weekly Legislative Updates petitioning process, I recommend you take every opportunity to encourage them to do so.

Elevator/Hallway Talk Ideas

When you have an opportunity to talk to your Legislators, say to them something like the following:

I know you are busy with all of the deficit cutting and budget issues. But **PLEASE - - PLEASE** don't do it on the backs of Active Duty, Guard and Reserve personnel, Military Retirees, Veterans and Survivors.

These folks are earning or have earned the benefits that they are receiving. These are not social welfare benefits; they are earned benefits, as is Social Security for those who have paid into it as we have for years, and they all should be appropriately funded. I hope you agree and will work to enlist support from other Legislators.

And add the following if your contact is after 1 March and they haven't permanently resolved the "Doc Fix" issue.

And most urgently is the need for a permanent fix to avert the statutory formula Medicare/TRICARE payment cuts that we have been facing annually over the past 10 years. We can't afford to lose more Doctors who refuse to see Medicare and Tricare patients.

Gene Fenstermacher
Veterans Legislative Affairs Director
fensteg@cox.net



[AZ TOPS](#)

CW3 Harry Bowen, USA, (Ret) has taken on the role of the Arizona TOPS Coordinator. Harry is just getting his feet under him in this position but he has issued a statement for our Newsletter.

Here is what he would ask each of our Chapter Presidents or TOPS coordinators to tell prospective companies about the AZ TOPS network. " If you want highly motivated, highly qualified and influential employees, try the MOAA AZ TOPS network. This network is accessed by current, former, and retired Commissioned and Warrant Officers and their family members from all over the Continental United States. This is a free service provided for both the company with a highly skilled position and the personnel accessing the network".

"It only takes a moment to notify any one of the TOPS representatives or send an announcement to coord@moaatopaz.org and our coordinator will have the position posted and notification made to all chapters around the United States".

If you have question please feel free to contact Harry @ harrybowen@aol.com or phone (520)-458-1058. We welcome Harry to the AZ Council of Chapters MOAA.

[Auxiliary](#)

Creativity is unpredictable and disruptive. There is a limitless supply of creativity and creativity implies reinvention.

As military families, we need to continue to support our men and women who are serving our country and what better way than to have a special project by adopting a military family. We need to help these families as they readjust to being back home.

We can help 3 or 4 times throughout the year by visiting with them, purchasing a grocery card, inviting them to a cook out and even celebrating their birthday. If everyone would help we will help a lot of military families .

I would like to know what the chapters involvement are doing to assist service members and their families. People enjoy working on projects that have a clear and meaningful purpose in assisting others. Helping others and keeping your chapter strong go hand in hand.

What project would you like to see your chapter get involved in. Any ideas or thoughts are welcome in this matter.

Just send them to clayp09@yahoo.com.

Priscilla Clay
Auxiliary Affairs Director

[Personal Affairs](#)

The AZ Council of Chapters MOAA Personal Affairs Directed is available as a resource for each Chapters Personal Affairs Officer (PAO). I am available to help the Chapters PAO negotiate the maze of Veterans benefits as well as survivor benefits available. If your PAO has questions or any difficulty helping a member or a spouse please feel free to contact me.

Each Arizona Chapter of MOAA should have a Personal Affairs Committee or Officer appointed by their Board of Directors. These individuals should focus on educating their membership on the importance of maintaining a complete and concise record of their personal affairs (especially as it relates to their military service).

The Chapter PA Officer should also hold an annual Personal Affairs workshop (held at a monthly meeting) and they should make a special effort to have their members spouse's attend. The spouse's are usually the ones with the most relevant questions that need answering. The PAO should also have all the National MOAA personal affairs booklets and info available for their members. A great tool to use during these workshops is the MOAA Personal Affairs Workbook. Even if the member has filled this booklet out in the past have them bring it to your workshop because it will need constant updating.

The individual Chapters PA Officer should also have a reference library at home to use as guides to help answer questions and use as a resource for helping with survivor benefits. The list of reference material can be found in MOAA's Policy and Procedures manual under appendix J. The Chapter PAO can call National MOAA at 1-800-234-622 to obtain these copies for their individual personal reference library.

The PA Officer should always send out a survivor package which contains the booklets Survivors checklist, Turning the Corner, TAPS along with a

list of local resource phone numbers along with a condolence letter to all survivors when a member passes away. These booklets and phone numbers really **do** help answer survivors questions and help them negotiate the obstacles following the loss of their loved ones.

I realize most of this information comes natural to the PAO of your Chapter, However, you will be surprised at how little most surviving spouse's know about their entitled benefits and how to go about applying for and obtaining them.

I have a Personal Affairs page on our Council website that has all these booklets and resource numbers available to your PAO and our members. <http://azcouncilofchapters.org/personal/personal.htm>

Maj. Steven Abel, USAF, (Ret)
Personal Affairs Director
AZ COC MOAA

ESGR

The Arizona Office for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) planned, organized and funded the first ever Phoenix Hiring our Heroes Job Fair on September 29, 2011. Partners for this event included the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Employer Partnership of the Armed Forces (EPAF), Department of Labor Veterans Employment and Training Services, TriWest Healthcare Alliance, the military veteran component of the Maricopa County Workforce Connection, and several local chambers of commerce. Additionally, ESGR and EPAF collaborated with the Maricopa Workforce Connection, Training to You, Getting results, and Rubicon to conduct Employment preparation workshops on September 28, 2011.

The Maricopa Workforce Connection provided approximately 15 staff members to conduct registration operations for the employers and the job seekers. Additionally they also advertised this event to job seekers utilizing their existing network of Veteran and military customers.

Employment preparation workshops occurred utilizing the partners discussed above. Approximately 150 job seekers attended these workshops. In total, 10 classes on resume writing, 5 classes on interview skills, 5 classes on how to prepare for a job fair, and 5 classes on how to use social media occurred.

A computer resource room was available to accommodate job seekers and employers if they needed to access the internet, print resumes, correct resumes, etc. One on one counseling to job seekers was provided to assist, correct and mentor attending job seekers. The staff of the Maricopa Workforce Connection provided counseling services.

Seven hundred and ten Job Seekers attended this Job Fair along with 128 Employers. Employers had 865 jobs available, ranging from computer programmers, jobs in the medical profession, transportation, construction, logistics, welders, mechanics, and various engineering specialties and so on.

By all measurements, it was an exceptional job by everyone involved in supporting this outstanding event. It was a textbook example of how to conduct a Veterans and Guard and Reserve hiring event. Attendance by employers and job seekers was exceptional and stretched the limits of the large facility. The job seeker traffic was steady from 10:00 am to approximately 2:30 pm. Several of the employers made comments that this hiring event was the best they had ever attended. Many employers requested assistance from event partners (including ESGR) to design hiring plans, identify qualified seekers and facilitate the hiring of Veterans and Guard and Reserve members. The most noteworthy example of this is the Arizona Mining Association whose members are anticipating hiring over 1000 employees from entry-level positions to highly skilled positions within the next 6-12 months.

Darren Venters
Sothern AZ Chairman
AZ Committee ESGR