

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Green Valley Chapter · DESERT DUSTER NEWSLETTER

December 2023/January 2024 · Winter Issue



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



We have some great events coming up and I hope you will be able to join us for one or more of these activities.



The swearing in of officers will take place at our dinner on December 13.

We are always looking for new members to join the Board to share ideas. Please let me know if you have an interest in serving on our Board. We meet at Friends in Deed at 9 a.m. on the first Wednesday of the month (September through May).

If you have not yet renewed your membership, we hope you will soon. It is renewals that help us meet the needs of the military community. Dues form is on pages 23-24 of this newsletter.

We made a very nice presentation at the 162nd last week. See page 20.

- **Christmas Dinner with gift give-away, La Posada: December 13, 2023**
- **January Luncheon: La Posada: January 18, 2024**

As Congress continues work on an overdue annual budget as well as longer-term financial concerns, MOAA continues its work to keep TRICARE For Life fees and cost shares off the table as possible revenue-generating tools. For more details [click here](#).

I want to remind you that registering with [MOAA's Legislative Action Center](#) now and [sending a message today](#) will not only help prevent TRICARE fee increase concepts from moving ahead, it will ensure you are poised to fight TRICARE fee increases if the CBO concepts evolve into legislative proposals.

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QUICK LINKS

[GV MOAA WEBSITE](#)



[GV MOAA member page](#)

**GREEN VALLEY/SAHUARITA
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

We're on Facebook: facebook.com/GVMOAA

[MOAA.org/takeaction](#)

[MOAA's "Never Stop Serving" Podcasts](#)

[Surviving Spouses webpage](#)

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Once again, I have included instructions for registering with Legislative Action Center. See page 16.

As 2023 draws to a close and my term as your President comes to an end, I want to thank you for the support you have given me for the past two years. Your being there to help and support our fund-raising projects have made my job easier and our Chapter shine. I trust you will give the same level of support to your next President, Jack Bundy.

I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

Elliott Jones, 1LT USA (former)
2022-2023 Chapter President
Green Valley Chapter, MOAA

Never Stop Serving!!



INCOMING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



As I take over the helm of the Green Valley MOAA's Chapter, I am extremely pleased with the support I have seen from our members over the past couple of years. Our numbers have grown and we've had more variety in our programs as well as being able to reduce the cost of most of the meals.

With two Community Partners, we have been able to increase the number of scholarships we are able to award as well as support some Veterans initiatives. I am fortunate to have some very dedicated members on our Board with a variety of background and service experience.

I do want to hear from you, our members, to know what we can do to better support you, maybe ideas for new programs, possible speakers, venues in the local area we might explore.

I wish you all a healthy and happy New Year and a peaceful 2024.

Jack Bundy, CW3 USA (Ret)
2024 Chapter President
Green Valley Chapter, MOAA



HOLIDAY DINNER

Peggy McGee, 2nd Vice President/Programs

It's time to dig out that Christmas tie or holiday top for the Chapter's annual holiday dinner. The event will be held on December 13 in the Madera Room (3rd floor) in La Vista on the La Posada campus. The social period will start at 4:30. Wine and beer are \$4 each. Dinner will be served at 5.



Diane Longo (aka "Mrs. Santa") has been busy selecting and wrapping a gift for each attendee so we ask that you send in your reservation form (see page 5) even before the deadline, if possible, in the event she has to do some last-minute shopping.



If you bought a gift for the needy youth in the area (see article below) please bring it to the dinner. Members of the Green Valley Fire Dept. will be there to pick up donations.

YOUR CHANCE TO PLAY SANTA

Peggy McGee, 2nd Vice President/Programs



As your Chapter traditionally does, all who attend the holiday dinner will get a gift as our way of saying "Thank You" for your support throughout the year. This has been a rough year for many in the local area with high inflation, food prices that seem to be only going up, and rent and utility bills increasing. If you are able, we hope that you will support our efforts to help teens in our area to find something from Santa on Christmas morning.

The Green Valley Fire Dept. is collecting toys and told us that the teenagers are typically the ones who get the fewest gifts.

(continued, next page)



They try to ensure every child under the age of 18 has something to open (purses, wallets, shower sets, hats, water bottles). Some of the other items on teens' wish lists include soccer balls, footballs, basketballs, skateboards, Bluetooth speakers, U of A caps, board games (Clue, Scrabble, Wordical, Taboo). Gift cards to any of the fast-food places are always welcomed as are gift cards for Desert Sky Cinema, Triple Play. The girls like Crocs Charms, lotions, make-up, nail polish too.

The Fire Dept. said they generally get a lot of bikes and scooters donated at this time of year but lack the safety equipment needed such as helmets, wrist guards, and knee pads (all ages).

Many thanks to our members who brought gifts to the November luncheon. When the firefighters picked up the donations they were especially appreciative for the safety equipment some members had purchased. They say safety is of primary importance to their mission.

If you'd like to help bring some holiday cheer to low-income families, you may bring your donations to the dinner on December 13. If you won't be attending that day, you may also drop donations at the Faust's home at 2304 E. Madera Plateau Drive. or the McGee's at 1908 E Longspur Place. Both drop-off points are in Quail Creek.

If you don't have the time or energy to shop, you may send a check payable to MOAA S&MA Fund with Holiday Gift on the memo line and one of Santa's elves will shop for you. Please leave checks at one of the locations listed or mail to MOAA, Box 1535, Green Valley AZ 85622-1535.



The Green Valley Fire Dept. did the heavy lifting of the gifts for teens.



HOLIDAY DINNER RESERVATION FORM

Reservation form may also be found on the GreenValleyMOAA.org website

13 December 2023 · Social: 4:30 PM · Dinner: 5 PM
La Posada Campus (Green Valley) · La Vista Bldg. ► Madera Room

Please make your reservations by December 5

Reserve _____ places Cost: \$_____ (\$17 per person)

MENU CHOICES:

- #1. Seared Salmon with Creamy Risotto, Asparagus with a Beurre Blanc Sauce
- #2. Chicken Alfredo Pasta with Garlic Bread
- #3. Chef's Choice of Vegetarian Option

INCLUDED WITH ALL MENU CHOICES: Assorted warm rolls; nonalcoholic beverage (coffee, iced tea, water). In addition to Chef's choice for dessert, the following sugar-free desserts can be requested: Pies: Apple, Blueberry, or Lemon; Chocolate Cake.

Wine available for purchase.

Check # _____
Attn: GV MOAA Reservation

Mail check and reservation form to:
MOAA of Green Valley · PO Box 1535 · Green Valley, AZ 85622-1535

RANK: _____ **NAME:** (please print) _____

MENU CHOICE (#):

Member/Guest name: _____

Member/Guest name: _____

Member/Guest name: _____

Member/Guest name: _____

If you require a ride to the meeting, program or event please check here:

✂ ----- CUT HERE -----

If you cannot get your reservation and check mailed timely, or **if you have made a reservation and find you cannot attend, PLEASE CALL (leave a message if no answer):** Peggy McGee 520-207-6188 or by email: peggy@greenvalleymoaa.org. **Your chapter is charged for all ordered meals even if they aren't served.**
Please bring a check or exact cash amount to the meeting.

FIRST LUNCHEON IN 2024

Peggy McGee, 2nd Vice President/Programs



We will start out 2024 with a luncheon on January 18. The event will be held in the El Dorado Room in La Perla on the La Posada campus. When you enter the campus at the light, make a right at the first 4-way stop sign and it will take you to La Perla.

The El Dorado Room is on the 2nd floor. The luncheon will start with a social period at 11:30 with luncheon being served at noon. The reservation form with menu options is on page 7. La Posada is now also offering sugar-free dessert options in addition to the regular Chef's Choice desserts.



Our guest speaker will be CDR Bruce Grissom, USN (Ret). Bruce is the Director of the Veterans Education and Transition Services (VETS) and Interim Director for VETS and ROTC programs at the University of Arizona. He grew up in Arizona and was commissioned as a Naval Officer in 1990 through the NROTC program at the University of Arizona.

During his more than 23 years of Naval service as a Surface Warfare Officer, Bruce served in six shipboard assignments including one tour with the Forward Deployed Naval Forces. He served as Chief of Staff to the Director, Coalition Naval Advisory and Training Team in Umm Qasr, Iraq. Bruce's shore tours included an assignment at Tactical Training Group, Pacific in Point Loma, California. He holds a master's degree from the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, CA and a master's degree from the Naval War College in Newport, RI.

Following his Naval service, Bruce became the Administrative Manager for the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management at the University of Arizona and since June 2019, he has served as the Director of the VETS Center.



JANUARY LUNCHEON RESERVATION FORM

Reservation form may also be found on the [GreenValleyMOAA.org website](http://GreenValleyMOAA.org)

18 January 2024 · Social: 11:30 AM · Luncheon served at Noon
La Posada Campus (Green Valley) · La Perla Bldg. ► El Dorado Room

Please make your reservations by JAN. 10

Reserve _____ places Cost: \$_____ (\$17 per person)

MENU CHOICES:

- #1. Pot Roast, Roasted Potatoes, Carrots
- #2. Roasted Half Chicken, Wild Rice, Baby Carrots, Velvety Brown Sauce
- #3. Vegetarian Option: Stuffed Poblano with Quinoa, Cream Sauce & Pomegranates

INCLUDED WITH ALL MENU CHOICES: Assorted warm rolls; nonalcoholic beverage (coffee, iced tea, water). In addition to Chef's choice for dessert, the following sugar-free desserts can be requested: Pies: Apple, Blueberry, or Lemon; Chocolate Cake.

Wine or beer available for purchase.

Check # _____
Attn: GV MOAA Reservation

Mail check and reservation form to:
MOAA of Green Valley · PO Box 1535 · Green Valley, AZ 85622-1535

RANK: _____ **NAME:** (please print) _____

MENU CHOICE (#):

Member/Guest name: _____

Member/Guest name: _____

Member/Guest name: _____

Member/Guest name: _____

If you require a ride to the meeting, program or event please check here:

✂ ----- CUT HERE -----

If you cannot get your reservation and check mailed timely, or **if you have made a reservation and find you cannot attend, PLEASE CALL (leave a message if no answer):** Marianne Rogers Faust 210-861-9440 or by email mr Rogersfaust@aol.com. **Your chapter is charged for all ordered meals even if they aren't served.**
Please bring a check or exact cash amount to the meeting.

CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Jack Bundy, 1st Vice President/Membership



Our Chapter membership as of November 15th is comprised of 5 Former Officers, 69 Retired Officers, 1 Active Duty Officer, and 8 Surviving Spouses for a total of 83 members. Additionally, we have 30 registered auxiliary spouses. Our membership remains stable with only one addition during October, COL, USA, (Ret), David Young and his wife Ursula (Uschi). Even though David and Uschi moved to Oro Valley from Tubac, they decided they would rather be part of the Green Valley Chapter.

Welcome David and Uschi! Two of our former officer members decided they no longer wished to participate in our Chapter so asked to be removed from our roles.

DUES FOR 2024

We have had 22 of our members and 7 spouses pay their Chapter dues for 2024 so far. We have collected \$575 as of the 1st of November. If you have not had a chance to pay your Chapter dues yet, now would be a good time. You can mail your dues payment, along with the membership form: [Membership Information - Application and Renewal Form](#) found on our MOAA Green Valley website: greenvalleymoaa.org to Green Valley MOAA, P.O. Box 1535, Green Valley, AZ 85622-1535 or bring your dues to one of our upcoming meetings on December 13 or January 18. The Membership renewal form can also be found on pages 23-24 of this newsletter.

We now have a credit card reader too if you want to use it. Just bring your card with you to one of our functions and see Elliott Jones who will process the payment with the card reader. We welcome your support for our chapter. Dues amounts have not changed. They are still **\$25 per member and \$15 for a spouse**, should you wish to register your spouse.

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MOAA LIFE MEMBERSHIP

If you are not already a Life Member of MOAA, please consider becoming one. You pay one-time dues to MOAA National to become a Life Member. **MOAA LIFE Membership** is the most elite membership category. As a MOAA LIFE Member, you'll receive all MOAA's PREMIUM benefits - plus more - for life.

Additional benefits include spouse protection and direct access to MOAA staff experts on the dedicated MOAA LIFE Member Hotline. Membership costs vary by age.

AGE 49 AND UNDER	\$894
AGE 50-54	\$852
AGE 55-79	\$804
AGE 60-64	\$740
AGE 65-69	\$662
AGE 70-74	\$574
AGE 75-79	\$476
AGE 80-84	\$370
AGE 85-89	\$266
AGE 90-94	\$171
AGE 95-99	\$104
AGE 100 AND OVER	FREE

MOAA ELECTION RESULTS

Peggy McGee, 2nd Vice President/Programs

At our meeting on November 16, the following were elected to be the officers and directors for 2024:



Jack Bundy, President; Joe Longo, 1st Vice President; Peggy McGee, 2nd Vice President, Programs & Public Relations; Bettie Rundlett, Secretary; Gene Graff, Treasurer; Elliott Jones, President, Scholarship & Military Assistance Fund & Membership Chair; Nora Durham, Surviving Spouse Liaison; Robert Lewis, Chaplain; Jim Whitehead, Community Sponsor/Outreach Director; Marianne Rogers Faust & Myra McCune, JROTC Coordinators; Mike Faust, Historian;

Darren Venters; Legislative Liaison; Jim Rundlett, Personal Affairs Director; Ken Cottrill, Grant Writer/Coordinator.

Some of these officers might welcome an assistant so if you wish to help, please contact them directly. Their contact information can be found on page 26.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: JIM HARBISON

Peggy McGee, 2nd Vice President/Programs



Introducing our newest member James Harbison and his wife of 36 years Annie. Jim was born and raised in Fairfield, CA. After graduating from high school, he enlisted in the Army in 1962, advanced to Sgt E-5 and was on the E-6 promotion list when he received a direct commission to 2nd Lieutenant, Infantry in 1966. He served two tours in Vietnam. Among his numerous military awards are the Silver Star, Legion of Merit, two Bronze Stars (one for valor). He is a graduate of the Command & General Staff College. His last military assignment was Chief of Operations & Training for Southern European

Task Force (SETAF) supporting Italy, Greece, Turkey & the Sinai Peninsula.

In 1990 after retiring as a LTC, Infantry, he served as a Director of Human Resources for a large physical therapy company, owned his own Human Resources consulting business, and finally served as Director of Performance Development, designing, and administering training for all employees (entry level through senior management) for a nationwide company with 4500 employees in nine factories located from California to New York.

He received undergraduate degrees in History and Political Science, and a Human Resources certification from the University of California, Davis, a graduate certification in computer systems from the University of Southern California, and a Master's Certificate in Project Management from George Washington University.

Jim and Annie, who was a registered nurse for Kaiser Permanente for 28 years, met on a cruise ship. They love to travel and enjoy zoos, art galleries, museums, wine tasting and great restaurants. They have two sons, three grandchildren, two great grandchildren and a great-great grandson.

In 2002 they retired and moved to Bullhead City, AZ but after living in the oppressive heat and wind, they moved to Las Cruces, NM in January 2007. Jim served on the City of Las Cruces Veterans Advisory Board. He was the Project Manager and Committee Chairman of the Vietnam War Memorial Committee and built the Las Cruces Vietnam Memorial.

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Jim was named Citizen of the Year in 2016 by the Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce and was inducted into the Veterans Hall of Fame in 2017. Wanting to enjoy the many experiences of a larger city they moved to Vail in 2017 and became active members of the Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society and its Cactus Rescue group. Inspired by this group they created their own 5,000 square foot mini-botanical garden.

Jim is a life member of Vietnam Veterans of America, the 1st Cavalry Division Association and MOAA. He is the past president of Mesilla Valley Chapter MOAA and past President of New Mexico MOAA Council of Chapters. He has been actively involved with the Scottish Rite Dyslexia and early childhood learning programs and with the Shriner's Hospitals for Children for more than 45 years. He is also a member of the Khe Sanh Veterans and has been a member of the American Legion for 55 years.

CHAPTER MEMBER RECEIVES ESGR SPIRIT OF VOLUNTEERISM AWARD



Commander John Chernoski, long-time member of our Chapter was the recipient of the 2023 National Spirit of Volunteerism.

John Chernoski is retiring after 15 years of outstanding service as Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Chair of Arizona's South Area. John was dual hatted for many years as an ombudsman, military outreach, and employer outreach. He was a tireless ombudsman seeking to improve the life of the service member and gaining the patriotic support of the employers.

In 2009, John became part of the Arizona ESGR Committee. He was assigned as an Ombudsman and attended intense training for Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Act (USERRA). He embarked on his duties with enthusiasm and diligence. With his legal background, calm approach, and a keen sense of issue recognition, he was often able to successfully mediate disputes between service members and employers concerning USERRA disputes.

In 2010, John volunteered to fill a void and serve as ESGR military outreach representative to various Army Reserve units in the Tucson area. He maintains important regular contact with these units,

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providing guidance to command personnel and individual soldiers about USERRA rights and responsibilities. He suggested effective ways to avoid potential problems from rising to the level of an actual incident.

John has prepared and given a myriad of USERRA presentations to various Guard and Reserve units and to civilian groups. Of note, John has made presentations to the active-duty JAGs at Davis-Monthan AFB and to the Pima County Bar Association. John combines an easing-going style with a firm knowledge base to provide an enjoyable and highly informative USERRA briefing. He traveled throughout southern Arizona to make these presentations.

In 2013 he became the Southern Arizona Chair, leading other volunteers. Despite COVID John was able to maintain enthusiasm for his team and in fact recruit new members during that time.

John has also been active in youth baseball serving as an umpire. He has held many MOAA positions including Green Valley AZ Chapter President, New Jersey Chapter President, and member of MOAA Board of Directors.

John has volunteered his time, money and energy supporting members of the Guard and Reserve. John embodies the MOAA motto: Never Stop Serving!

Previous page photo, L-R: *John Chernoski received the **ESGR Spirit of Volunteerism Award** from Darren Venters.*

A LOOK AT THE CHAPTER'S GRANTS PROGRAM

Ken Cottrill, Grants Writer/Coordinator



Our Chapter has been very busy with numerous projects throughout the year. Many members know we give scholarships, support troops at Thanksgiving, contribute to the food locker at the 162nd Fighter Wing, Air National Guard, support veterans and deployed troops with special items, sponsor Honor Flights for our members and help with special projects that come up. All of these projects cost money, and the Chapter uses several sources of funds to support these endeavors.

Members make donations in addition to paying their dues. We get some money from the Split the Pot drawings at our meetings, from community partners who generously make donations, and we receive

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grants from Foundations. In 2023, we received two grants, one from ASMBA (Overwatch Alliance), and one from the MOAA Foundation Community Outreach Grant, and will be getting a grant from the White Elephant on December 7. This is a first for our Chapter. We are currently waiting for news from one more foundation where a request was submitted.

In addition, the Board of Directors is looking at a project related to furnishings for homeless veterans being moved into housing by the VA and support of another military unit at holiday time. We are sharing all of this information to make members aware of the fact that we will need more money in the future and more members to help with the projects.

If you know of a possible source for funding, please let me know (email kecottrill@comcast.net). And if you know of a former or retired officer who is not a member, ask him or her to join.

THINGS TO DO NOW

Peggy McGee and Nora Durham

Nora Durham always reminds us that she bears the one title she did not want—Surviving Spouse. She shared with us some ideas that both members of a couple should consider while they still can. Not taking the steps suggested will cause problems when one loses a spouse. It’s not easy to think about the death of a loved one but following the steps below will make life a tad easier on the surviving spouse.

Education of Surviving Spouses & Spouses: Planning Ahead!



- ✓ Gather all passwords & user IDs. Share lock combinations
- ✓ Check Mortgages & brokerage reports—check beneficiaries
- ✓ List all credit cards & balances—personal & joint. Make sure each has one in her/his name alone
- ✓ Check bank statements, check registers. Check beneficiaries and co signers
- ✓ Check credit card statements for occasional expenses (ie, estimated taxes, HOA fees, charitable gifts, safety deposit box rentals, etc)
- ✓ Review utility bills----to include cable internet, phones—make sure both names are on the account when required.

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NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE NEWS

Darren Venters, Legislative Affairs/Transition Liaison



Still no Defense Budget! Representative Mike Johnson (LA) was elected Speaker of the House October 25, 2023, with a Continuing Resolution (CR) expiring November 17. As you are probably aware, the Speaker proposed and the President approved a split CR with the first portion expiring January 19, 2024, and the second part staying in effect until February 2, 2024. The legislation would extend funding for military construction, veterans' benefits, transportation, housing, urban development, agriculture, the Food and Drug Administration and energy and water programs through January 19. Funding for all other federal operations would expire on February 2.

You can keep up with the Budget progress using MOAA Action Center, moaa.quorum.us. While you are in the Action Center, please review all the MOAA supported actions and send the appropriate letters. It takes very little time to complete a letter even if you personalize it (more effectively!). A few key issues are Tricare Pharmacy changes; Tricare fee increases; Concurrent Receipt of retirement and VA Disability pay; Improving Survivor benefits. As always, grassroots advocacy works!

To contact our Congressional members on issues of importance to you personally or to MOAA, you can use the MOAA Action Center to send emails or you can visit the members' websites to send a message. You can also call their offices direct.

Senator Kyrsten Sinema sinema.senate.gov ◀ (website) (202) 224-4521

Senator Mark Kelly kelly.senate.gov ◀ (website) (202) 224-2235

US Representatives

CD 6 Juan Ciscomani [Veterans | Representative Ciscomani \(house.gov\)](https://veterans.house.gov/representative/ciscomani) (202) 225-2542

CD 7 Raúl Manuel Grijalva [Contact Raúl - Raúl Grijalva \(house.gov\)](https://raul.house.gov/contact) (202) 225-2435

MOAA warns us to Beware of Scams Connected to Disability Benefits (from an article by Kevin Lilley). Scammers targeting veterans who apply for VA benefits may focus on a key piece of paperwork as a way to collect payouts with the promise of successful claims decisions, according to the VA OIG. Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs) collect medical information used in VA claim processing. Public DBQs are available on the VA website and can be filled out by a veteran's health care provider. The fraud comes when individuals offer to assist veterans with this process:

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- Offering to assist veterans in having the forms filled out, for a fee.
- Charging to fill out any claims related to the DBQ.
- In the case of providers themselves, soliciting a fee to falsify or exaggerate the material on the DBQ, with a goal of a larger benefit claim or higher disability rating. Free claims services are available to veterans who need assistance – the VA’s online accreditation search can help veterans find nearby VSOs / assistance or confirm the credentials of any prospective representative. By law, VSOs and VSO representatives cannot charge a fee for representing you in your claim for benefits.

Guard and Reserve: The *Military Times* recently noted a GAO report on how the National Guard and reserve service members are less likely to get their veteran disability claims approved than their active-duty counterparts because of incomplete military records and inadequate oversight of their injuries. The disparity comes even as guard and reserve members continue to take on traditional active-duty roles across a host of military deployments, bringing with them additional health risks and complications.

Other important issues concerning readiness and the care of reserve component service members and their families.

- Provide cost-free dental care for all Selected Reserve members.
- Increase the nurse officer accession bonus from \$20,000 to \$40,000.
- Improve healthcare benefits for Reserve and National Guard survivors.
- Amend the funding structure and amount for the Tri Service Nursing Research Program.
- Fully fund the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account.
- Enable the Air National Guard to purchase two additional F-15EX Eagle II aircraft.
- Ensure parental leave parity between components.
- Ensure Hazardous Duty Incentive Pay and Aviation Incentive Pay parity between components.

Arizona Legislative News

The Second Session of Arizona’s 56th Legislature begins on January 8, 2024. You can access volumes of information on current activities at Arizona Legislature (azleg.gov).

You can contact your area Senator/Representatives as follows:

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Legislative District 19:

AZ Senator David Gowan	dgowan@azleg.gov	(602) 926-5154
AZ Representative Gail Griffin	ggriffin@azleg.gov	(602) 926-5895
AZ Representative Lupe Diaz	ldiaz@azleg.gov	(602) 926-4852

Legislative District 21:

Sen. Rosanna Gabaldon,	RGabaldon@azleg.gov	(602) 926-3424
Rep. Consuelo Hernandez,	CHernandez@azleg.gov	(602) 926-3523
Rep. Stephanie Stahl Hamilton,	SStahlhamilton@azleg.gov	(602) 926-3279

Here is a “really impressive” page! AZPEOPLESLOBBYIST.com Use this webpage to contact state elected officials. There are numerous options including bulk emails to either party or house, senate.

If you are NOT registered with the “Legislative Action Center” (AKA Quorum)”

1. Go to MOAA.org
2. Click on “Advocacy”
3. Click on “Legislative Action Center”
4. Click on red box in upper right “Sign Up”
5. Fill out the information required and submit
6. You can now follow instructions to the right

If you are registered with the “Legislative Action Center” (AKA Quorum)”

1. Go to MOAA.org
2. Login to your MOAA account
3. Click on “Advocacy”
4. Click on “Legislative Action Center”
5. Under “Active Legislative Campaigns” Click on an issue or “Write” (in a black box) to the right of the issue you want to write about
6. When you click “Write” the next screen will be populated with letters to both our Senators and to your Representative
7. Note: You can edit the proposed letters if desired/needed
8. Scroll to the bottom and click on “Submit Selected Letters”
9. You are done



JROTC NEWS

Marianne Rogers Faust
Director/JROTC Liaison

The Army JROTC unit at Rio Rico High School is staying very busy this fall. One of their biggest November events was the 13th Annual Padilla Raider Challenge that was hosted on their obstacle course at Rio Rico High School. Several cadets participated in a Prisoner of War & Missing in Action Ceremony conducted in early November at a Military Order of the World Wars event in Tucson. A few cadets were chosen to post the Service Flags at the event.



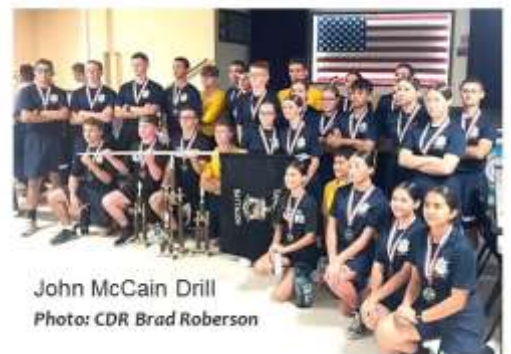
The Naval JROTC unit, with cadets from both Sahuarita and Walden Grove High Schools has been busy too. In October, the unit placed 2nd overall out of 10 schools participating at the John McCain JROTC Drill Meet in Phoenix.

◀ The [Naval JROTC](#) cadets took first place in the 4th annual [Beast Raider Meet](#). Sahuarita hosted over 30 teams from Arizona and California for the competition, which featured

a vehicle pull, obstacle course, rifle match and more.

The Naval JROTC unit placed 2nd overall out of the 10 units participating at the Rio Rico Raider Meet. As a result, several cadets will journey to Molena, GA for the National Raider Competition in late November. Then in December, many cadets are looking forward to participating in the "Clash of the Titans" NJROTC Field Meet in Phoenix.

Some cadets will compete in the Academic Brain Brawl Competition in Glendale, Arizona next month. Last, but not least, the Area 11 Marksmanship Regional Meet will be held at Sahuarita High School in December. Many local cadets will have an opportunity to compete.



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Robert D. Lewis, Chapter Chaplain



With all of the recent events in Israel, and the mid-eastern region, you begin to wonder what is happening with the world. Students rioting (without really knowing why they are rioting), attacking Jews (without fully understanding why) not to mention the adversity you may be having in your own life with medical issues, financial issues and family issues we may feel overwhelmed. Worry creeps into our thoughts...you may ask, why me? You may ask why now? Depression and fear can creep into your thoughts. You wouldn't be the first to feel anxiety over current events or your own personal situation. Please believe me when I say you are not the first to ask these questions, nor will you be the last.

The comfort I offer may not be immediate or answer all of your concerns, but first, we must try and understand what is happening behind the scenes. Simply, Evil is in the world. Even the Bible states that we will have wars and rumor of wars (perpetrated by evil people). So, what you see happening is evil let loose upon us.

I used to feel anxiety over a lot of things, mainly those over which I had no control. With maturity, a study of the Bible and through reading and understanding that God is in charge, my anxiety and fear of the future has been drastically reduced. Do I still care about what the future may bring? YES. But I believe that God is still in charge. He allows things to happen to gain our attention or to display his wonderful love to those that believe.

So praying is one method (probably the best as I feel a true relationship with God) I use to search for answers. God will answer in his own time and in his own way. Trust that he is in total control and will use his own time and method to reveal his plan. Pray for peace in Israel, pray for yourself, your family and your friends. Have that conversation with God on a daily basis. It doesn't need to be fancy or of great oracle, but a conversation you would have with your best friend (and he is). That conversation, ongoing, will help you find peace with your own situation and the world.

And the Lord, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you; He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed. **Deuteronomy 31:8.**

I pray that you will be richly blessed during this Christmas season and throughout 2024. May we experience the Peace on Earth that is part of the Christmas spirit.



CHAPTER SUPPORTS BLIND VETERANS

Peggy McGee, 2nd Vice President/Programs



After learning about the many programs, the VA Hospital in Tucson offers to help blind veterans adjust, the Chapter decided they wanted to do something to support the program. They learned that the Blind Veterans Rehab program wanted to get a program to teach blind veterans gardening skills off the ground—literally. Recreation Therapist Shelley Marsh said that her job is to teach blind and visually impaired veterans the skills need to continue to participate in leisure activities they enjoyed during their lives until vision loss struck. She chose gardening because that is a hobby that so many find relaxing.

The VA Hospital built a concrete walking path leading up to the garden and provided raised beds with fencing to protect the plants. The dilemma. No tools were provided. It was the Green Valley Chapter to the rescue to support the new project. Within two weeks after learning of the need, the Chapter, with the help of the monetary donation from Lisa Larkin, Esq. from RE/MAX Select and our newest Community partner, delivered trowels, garden trays, hand hoes specially designed for raised beds, dribbles, pruners, seed starting trays and gardening gloves. Thanks to the long growing season for the Tucson area, the blind veterans now have veggies and flowers growing in what was just an empty space a month ago. They are hoping they can harvest the tomatoes and zucchini before the first frost hits.



Above, right - (L-R) Green Valley Chapter MOAA board members Darren Venters, Peggy McGee and Jack Bundy presented a variety of gardening implements to Diana Kellermeyer, Chief, Southwestern Blind Rehabilitation Center

Above, left - A few of the blind veterans in the current class cheered as they learned that they now had the necessary tools to garden. Photos by Brenda Stockton

ALOHA SHIRTS DRIVE A SUPER SUCCESS

Peggy McGee, 2nd Vice President/Programs



Thanks to everyone who donated a Hawaiian shirt or two and collected the shirts in their neighborhoods. The organizers in Tucson had hoped to collect 100 shirts this year. They definitely topped that when they picked up the 83 shirts for both men and women we had collected. What a wonderful way to support the deployed troops.

◀ The Board delivered the shirts to Barbara Brownlie at their November 1 meeting.



Barbara Brownlie presented the Board with a bottle of Hawaiian sand, seashells and an orchid in appreciation for our support for the Aloha Shirt Drive. (Photos: Ken Cottrill)

CHAPTER PAYS A VISIT TO THE 162ND WING

Peggy McGee, 2nd Vice President/Programs



On November 3, several members from the Chapter visited the 162nd Wing, Air National Guard, for a tour of the facility and to attend a Command briefing on the evolving mission of the Wing. They did learn that the Wing is currently training pilots from Ukraine to improve their expertise in fighting their war against Russia. The group visited the personal equipment area and the engine shop. After seeing all the 21st century personal equipment, a retired B-47 pilot commented that he came to the conclusion that their helmets are more complicated than his whole airplane!

(Photo: 1LT Jones gave Col Hoffman a check for \$2,000 for the Family Readiness Center's Food Locker.)

The group also attended the Wing's quarterly Awards Ceremony.

(continued, next page)

At this time, it gave the Chapter an opportunity to tell the many command representatives the story of our Chapter and what we do to support the local veteran community.

At the end of the event, Chapter President Jones presented a check for \$2,000 to Col Greg Hoffman, Deputy Commander, 162 Wing so they could resupply their Food Locker. In addition, we gave the Family Readiness Center thirty \$70 gift cards for the Davis-Monthan Commissary to be given to the lower ranked enlisted personnel as part of our *Turkeys for the Troops* program. These donations were made possible by member donations and grants from Armed Services Mutual Benefit Association (ASMBASTAR) and the MOAA Foundation Community Outreach program



IRS ALPHABET SOUP

Peggy McGee, 2nd Vice President/Programs



The year is almost over. Have you taken your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) yet? Don't ignore it or the IRS will penalize you to the tune of a 50% excise tax on the amount not distributed as required.

The IRS allows taxpayers over the age of 70 1/2 to make a contribution up to \$100,000 to a recognized charity as well as churches and not have to pay taxes on the amount donated. In most cases, distributions from a traditional Individual Retirement Account (IRA) are taxable in the year the account owner receives them. A Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) is an exception to that rule. A QCD is a nontaxable distribution made directly by the trustee of an IRA to organizations that are eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions. A QCD will count toward an RMD. The amount of the QCD can't be more than the amount of the distribution that would count as income.

If you have not taken your RMD, here's a way you can reduce your tax liability for your 2023 taxes that you will be filing in the spring. The "catch" with the QCD is that the IRA Trustee must make the

(continued, next page)

check payable to the charity. You can ask your Trustee to mail the check directly to the charity or to send it to you to give to the charity. If you use your checking account to write the check, the charity will thank you but there is no reduction in one's taxable income. If you have already taken your RMD, you can still make a QCD for 2023 if you get the request in and it is processed before the end of the year.

Even if you don't want to consider a QCD for 2023, you might want to consider it when you do your tax planning in 2024. If you already give a certain amount to your favorite charity, why pay taxes on that amount? It pays to plan ahead. However, if you do take a QCD, then you cannot use that same donation to reduce your AZ state liability.

Financial institutions report RMDs on Form 1099-R for the calendar year the distribution occurs. There's no number or letter code on the Form 1099-R that indicates the distribution was a QCD. You can claim the QCD on your tax return whether you itemize or take the standard deduction. But you do have to file a Form 8606 to report the total amount of the QCD. For more information, please contact your IRA Trustee.



Holiday Riddles

What kind of pictures do elves take?

Answer: Elfies

What do you call a disrespectful reindeer?

Answer: Rude-olph

If athletes get athletes foot, what do astronauts get?

Answer: Missiletoe

What did Santa use when he sprained his ankle?

Answer: A candy cane



MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
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Military Officers Association of America
Green Valley, Arizona Chapter
PO Box 1535 · Green Valley, AZ 85622-1535

2024 Chapter Membership/Renew Dues

Chapter Dues: (Regular-\$25; Spouses-\$15)

Membership Dues \$ _____ Make check payable to: Military Officers Association of Green Valley or GV MOAA.

PLEASE PROVIDE THE INFORMATION BELOW:

Name: _____ New ___ Renewal__

Rank: _____ Branch of Service: _____ (Status) _____ National # _____

Spouse/Partner _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip _____

DOB (Month/Day/Year) _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Scholarship & Military Assistance Fund \$ _____ Donation.

Make check payable to: Green Valley MOAA Scholarship and Military Assistance Fund or GV MOAA S&MA Fund.

Dues may be paid at any meeting or mailed to Military Officers Association of America, Green Valley, Arizona Chapter, P.O. Box 1535, Green Valley, AZ 85622-1535.

SEE REVERSE SIDE (next page)

MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

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Congratulations on becoming a member of the second oldest of the nine MOAA Arizona Chapters. The MOAA is recognized as the most respected and influential professional military association in America. The Vision Statement "NEVER STOP SERVING" provides a focus for the entire MOAA organization.

To help us better understand how you would prefer to contribute to our Chapter, please complete the following questions.

Previous work and/or volunteer experience _____

Description of training, leadership and knowledge that may be pertinent _____

PLACE A CHECK NEXT TO YOUR DESIRED CHAPTER AREAS OF PARTICIPATION:

- Fundraising or Assistant
- Public Relations or Assistant
- Scheduling & managing Chapter events or Assistant
- Grant writing or Assistant
- Chapter secretary or assistant
- Chapter Treasurer or assistant
- Community Partner Programs committee member
- Historian
- Chapter Liaison to military units
- Chapter Liaison to JROTC units
- Chapter Liaison to Green Valley Chamber of Commerce or Assistant

RETURN THIS NEW MEMBER QUESTIONNAIRE WITH YOUR CHAPTER APPLICATION/RENEWAL FORM.

Welcome Aboard

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR for these dates!

Information for the December & January dates (programs, reservation forms), chapter membership dues, & other events listed are in this newsletter or linked to an external location.

2024 Chapter Dues Campaign continues!

13 Dec. (2023): Holiday Dinner 4:30pm, La Posada

18 January: Luncheon, La Posada

21 March: Mix & Mingle, La Posada

2 May: Scholarship Dinner, Grill on the Green

19 September: Dinner, La Posada

17 October: Cocktail Party, La Posada

21 November: Dinner, La Posada

12 December: Holiday Dinner, La Posada

The Board of Directors meetings are the 1st Wednesday of each month 9-10:30am at the Friends in Deed Building, Green Valley.

Members are welcomed to attend... join us!

There are no Board meetings in June, July or August. Check the Chapter website for Calendar updates:

greenvalleymoaa.org/news-events



MOAA MISSION



The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is a nonprofit veterans' association dedicated to maintaining a strong national defense and ensuring our nation keeps its commitments to currently serving, retired, and former members of the uniformed services and their families and survivors.

Membership is open to those who hold or have ever held a warrant or commission in any component of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force,

Space Force, Coast Guard, Public Health Service, or NOAA and their surviving spouses.

WHY JOIN MOAA

MOAA's greatest mission is to improve the lives of those who serve and their families. Membership is open to active duty, former, retired, and National Guard and Reserve commissioned and warrant officers of the uniformed services and their surviving spouses.



2024 OFFICERS, DIRECTORS & CHAIRS

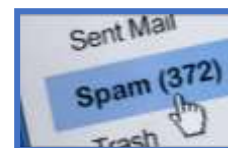
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JROTC Coordinators COL Marianne Rogers Faust USAF (Ret) (210) 861-9440 Myra McCune 279-0433 USN (Ret)	Grant Writer/Coordinator COL Ken Cottrill Army (Ret) (304) 702-3693	MOAA • GREEN VALLEY CHAPTER • 2024 Officers & Board Members	

Webmaster/Newsletter Editor: Marianne Cobarrubias
 Phone numbers are 520 area code unless otherwise indicated

GETTING EMAILS IN YOUR SPAM FOLDER THAT BELONG IN YOUR INBOX?

Marianne Cobarrubias, Webmaster/Newsletter Editor

Junk E-mail is where spam messages go, either moved there by your server, or because you have Blacklisted the sender. Each email client (Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo, AOL, Cox, etc.) has their own protocol in which to handle email spamming. The short answer is to train your Email account by marking non-spam emails as “Not Spam”. The spammed email should immediately move to your Inbox. Follow your email client’s protocol to manage Spam emails. Depending on your email client, this process may have to be done many times during this training process. This link offers additional tips:



<http://howtogeek.com/290046/how-to-stop-legitimate-emails-from-getting-marked-as-spam>



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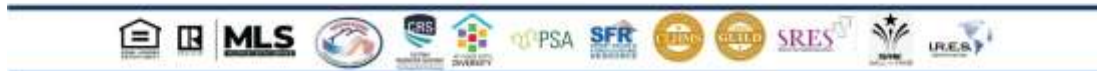
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*Member Savings lender fee available for VA loans that have a triggered RESPA app date as of January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023 at origin EIT. This offer does not extend to Housing Finance Agency loans. "Triggered RESPA" in accordance with Regulation X, is defined as lender receipt of all six pieces of information required in a secure format: applicant name, property address, home value, loan amount, income and ZIP. Not all borrowers will be approved. Borrower's interest rate will depend upon the specific characteristics of borrower's loan transaction, credit profile and other criteria. Offer not available from any affiliate or operations that do not operate under the Guaranteed Rate name. Restrictions apply. Guaranteed Rate, Inc. has no affiliation with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, the US Department of Veterans Affairs, the US Department of Agriculture or any other government agency. United Service Organizations, Inc. (USO) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization (EIN Tax ID: 13-160943) and not part of the Department of Defense (DOD). Using funds from a Cash-out Refinance to consolidate debt may result in the debt taking longer to pay off as it will be combined with borrower's mortgage principal amount and will be paid off over the full loan term. Contact Guaranteed Rate for more information.

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MOAA National News

No More Delays: Ask Congress to Come Together to Protect Servicemembers' Pay

While Congress [has completed its work](#) on a short-term funding fix to prevent what would be a disastrous federal shutdown, it's long past time for lawmakers to set aside their differences and ensure all those in uniform, and all retired servicemembers, continue to receive pay during any lapse in federal funding.

[TAKE ACTION: [Urge Your Elected Officials to Protect Pay for All Who Serve](#)]

The Pay Our Troops Act ([H.R. 5641](#)), and Pay Our Military Act ([H.R. 5667/S. 2835](#)) are strong starts toward this goal. Much of the text for these bills is similar to [2013 legislation](#) necessary to ensure servicemembers were paid during previous shutdowns; the decade-old legislation applied only to the 2014 fiscal calendar and must be renewed.

Recent legislation includes protection for the Coast Guard, but unfortunately leaves out members of the U.S. Public Health Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration – an unfortunate, but common, oversight MOAA has flagged in discussions with lawmakers. It also does not address what a shutdown could mean for USPHS and NOAA retirees, who are not covered by the [Military Retirement Trust Fund](#) and could miss paychecks as a result.

[The Military Coalition](#) (TMC), of which MOAA is a founding member, is a group of 35 military and veterans service organizations (MSO/VSOs) that pools advocacy power and has continued to send a clear message to Congress to pass appropriations on time, protect servicemember pay, and improve the quality of life of those in uniform and their families.

“Many of our uniformed servicemembers are under financial stress, and endure unacceptable housing conditions and food insecurity, while our nation faces a recruiting crisis,” TMC President CW4 Jack Du Teil, USA (Ret), said. “Servicemember pay raises fell 2.6% behind the Employment Cost Index from 2014-16, and Basic Allowance for Housing was reduced 5%, all as cost-saving measures on the backs of our uniformed community. The threat of not receiving a paycheck is unacceptable for the members of our eight uniformed services.

“We urge Congress to rapidly pass the Pay our Troops Act before a lapse in appropriations. Missing a paycheck is a stress our servicemembers should not have to worry about, especially when deployed in harm’s way.”

(continued, next page)



[TAKE ACTION: [Urge Your Legislators to Improve the Quality of Life for Our Troops](#)]

Although a bipartisan deal on a continuing resolution (CR) [has cleared the House and Senate](#), it is important to acknowledge these CRs are incredibly wasteful of taxpayer dollars and harmful to our national defense.

A new CR will kick the can down the road and buy time for Congress to pass the 12 appropriation bills for this fiscal year. It will also trigger automatic cuts if the federal government is not funded by the new year.

[FROM 2019: [The Last Continuing Resolution Cost DoD \\$19 Billion. Congress Is on Track to Do It Again](#)]

It is an important time to ask elected officials to put aside their political differences, lead by example, and keep to the schedule. The work on appropriations should have been completed before Congress went on summer recess, and is still incomplete. Our uniformed servicemembers do not have the luxury of going on recess or vacation when their mission is not complete, and Congress should stay in session, suspend all travel, and get the job done.

[TAKE ACTION: [Ask Your Lawmakers to Avoid a Government Shutdown and Finish the Appropriations Process](#)]

How You Can Help

Jump on our [Legislative Action Center](#) and engage with your representatives; of the more than 362,000 MOAA members, only about 21,000 have used the center, and we need your help.

However, you do not need to be a MOAA member to use the center. Activate your network by sending them the links above and directing them to [MOAA.org/TakeAction](#), and encourage them to call their lawmakers via our toll-free hotline – 866-272-MOAA (6622).

Servicemembers, retirees, and their families – regardless of service branch – do not deserve the financial insecurity they face every time Congress fails to pass a timely budget. [Support MOAA's work on this issue today.](#)

Latest Continuing Resolution Would Move Budget Deadlines Into 2024

With zero of the 12 appropriations bills needed to fully fund the government signed into law, Congress resorted to another continuing resolution (CR) to avoid a federal shutdown, with the House passing

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the year's second CR 336-95 on Nov. 14 and the Senate passing it 87-11 late Nov. 15, two days before the first CR expires.

[TAKE ACTION: [Ask Your Lawmakers to Avoid a Government Shutdown and Finish the Appropriations Process](#)]

The new CR, with no anticipated policy changes or spending reductions, features two distinct expiration dates extending the appropriations and authorities of the 12 FY 2023 spending bills: Jan. 19 for Agriculture, Energy-Water, Military Construction-VA, and Transportation-HUD; and Feb. 2 for Defense, Homeland Security, Labor-HHS-Education, Commerce-Justice-Science, Financial Services, Interior-Environment, Legislative Branch, and State-Foreign Operations. The White House had indicated the president [will sign the legislation into law](#).

While MOAA supports the CR in lieu of a shutdown, relying on extensions instead of passing a full budget comes at a significant cost:

- **Underfunded programs, benefits, and services:** By extending the funding expiration dates into the new year, federal agencies overseeing the eight uniformed services lack the authorizations or funding necessary for crucial elements such as the annual military pay raise, quality health care coverage, and quality-of-life programs for servicemembers and their families.
- **Time crunch:** The new expiration dates compress the timeline for federal agencies to spend funds and implement programs that will be outlined in the FY 2024 regular appropriation bills.
- **Looming budget cuts:** Failure by Congress to pass a budget by the start of the new year would pose a significant threat to all federal agencies and the programs vital to supporting the uniformed services and veteran communities. If all 12 regular appropriation bills for FY 2024 are not signed into law by Jan. 1, it would trigger an **automatic 1% funding cut across all departments**, with no exception for DoD or the VA.

[Take action today](#) and urge your lawmakers to pass a full budget for FY 2024 and do what is right for our nation's servicemembers, past and present, and their families.

[RELATED: [No More Delays: Ask Congress to Come Together to Protect Servicemembers' Pay](#)]



The **Desert Duster Newsletter** is published by the members of the [Green Valley Chapter](#) of the [Military Officers Association of America](#) (MOAA). The newsletters are sent electronically to Chapter members and posted on our website's [News and Events page](#) (in a downloadable PDF format).

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Robert Lewis



Wishing you the joy of the season.

