



THE TERRITORIAL

**TUCSON CHAPTER OF THE ARIZONA COUNCIL OF CHAPTERS
MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA**



AUGUST 2026

National MOAA and the Tucson MOAA Chapter are non-partisan



FROM THE EAGLES NEST

By Polly Parks

President, Tucson Chapter MOAA

Change is in the air! The Board has agreed to move the monthly membership luncheon to the John P. Burns American Legion Post 36, 5845 E. 22nd Street, east of Craycroft on the north side of 22nd. Because their hall is booked on the third and fourth Thursdays of the month, the luncheon will be held on the second Thursday at 1130. There is plenty of parking, and there is a separate entrance from the Bar/grill.

Chef Luis at the Hall offers 16 buffet menus with set prices ranging from \$21 to \$25, excluding the traditional Chef's honorarium. For September, the \$25 menu will include a mixed green salad with appropriate toppings and three dressings; a fruit display; Southwest pasta salad with chipotle vinaigrette and cotija cheese; dinner rolls and butter; seasonal vegetables; baked potatoes with appropriate toppings; cowboy beans; chicken a la brasa (Peruvian rotisserie chicken); mesquite-grilled New York steak; and assorted desserts. Bring your appetite; for the September meeting, the Chapter will cover the honorarium.

If anyone has dietary restrictions that the

September menu cannot accommodate, please let me know. Also, Chef Luis needs a headcount by September 3. He will then get the ingredients. Please RSVP.

The September luncheon speaker is expected to be a representative from D-M's 55th Electronic Combat Group, who will speak on the retirement of the EC-130H Compass Call electronic attack aircraft at Davis-Monthan and the future of the EA-37B replacement.

I will provide a report on our August Advocacy in Action meetings with Congressman Juan Ciscomani's legislative aide, Cameron Fox (Green Valley's Darren Vinters, our Caleb Martiny, and me), and with Congresswoman Adelita Grijalva's Senior Policy Advisor, Kelsey Mishkin (Michael Becker, Contractor, Senior Program Manager, 355th Wing Program Integration Office, and me). I also included a brief write-up on this issue in the legislative report. Btw, it looks to be Continuing Resolution in September.

As I noted in my letter, I spent the summer drafting bylaws. The Fund and the Chapter bylaws are under review by the Board. The Chapter Bylaws are more flexible and streamlined, looking to the future of the

Continued on page 3

Upcoming Tucson Chapter Meetings

Venue Change: American Legion Post 36

5845 E. 22nd Street, Tucson, AZ 85711 / Time: 1130

DATE CHANGE: September 10, 2026

Speaker: Davis Monthan's 55th Electronic Combat Group
The retirement of the EC-130H
and the future of the EA-37B.

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MOAA Vail Satellite Meeting

Col Tom Owens has to step back because of health issues. The Chapter does not yet have a person to take up this task. If you would like to volunteer, please let me know.

MOAA Vail Satellite has been holding its meetings on the 3rd Saturday of the month at the Del Lago Golf Restaurant, in Vail, at 1130. The Chapter has a core group from Vail and surrounding environs.

Polly Parks, Tucson Chapter President
Cell: 703-338-6881 pollyparks@earthlink.net

WHO CAN JOIN THE MOAA TUCSON and VAIL SATELLITE CHAPTER?

MOAA membership is open to all officers, commissioned or warrant, whether on active duty, retired, former, reserve or national guard and their surviving spouse of all the eight uniformed services, including the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Space Force, Coast Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the Public Health Service. To join the Tucson Chapter, click the Join Our Chapter button on our Chapter's home page:

<http://www.tucsonmoaa.org/>.

The **Tucson MOAA Board** meets the first Wednesday of the month, at 2 p.m. via ZOOM. Members are invited to submit items for consideration not later than one week prior to the meeting to the President at pollyparks@earthlink.net. If you desire to participate, please email pollyparks@earthlink.net to receive the access link.

MOAA Tucson and Vail Satellite Chapter Mission

1. Advocate and support MOAA national goals.
2. Advocate and support the Arizona and metro Tucson programs, activities, and proposed legislation.
3. Encourage and promote a spirit of volunteerism and participation in programs and activities

From the Eagles Nest *continued from page 1*

Tucson chapter. There is increased pressure to accommodate active-duty personnel and retirees at the Base who cannot attend our luncheon meetings. Some chapters manage this by alternating meetings between luncheon and dinner. I would like your opinion on that option; specifically, would you attend an evening meeting?

MOAA National offers another option for chapters in its Policies and Procedures for Affiliate Organizations: adjunct members or groups, which can include chapter members as well as people who are not eligible for MOAA membership. An adjunct member or group can be established as long as it advances MOAA's goals and the Chapter's mission. This differs from a Satellite Chapter, which is more formal and aims to seed a new chapter.

We will be chartering new ground for Tucson, and I have incorporated the change into the Chapter Bylaws. If alternating meetings is not feasible, members may attend meetings of the Chapter, the adjunct affiliate, or both. Our goal is to expand Chapter membership and train a younger generation to keep MOAA's vital work alive.

Because we are moving the monthly luncheon to an earlier date each month, the newsletter will also shift to a later publication date.

Tom Owens, who has been shepherding the Vail Satellite has to step back due to health issues. There was talk at the last Satellite meeting about scheduling a golf tournament this Fall. The one held previously was quite successful and raised needed funds for the

Scholarship Fund. The Chapter Board can provide support, but we do not the time to do what Tom was doing. If someone from the area can step up, we can provide some assistance. Tucson has seeded a satellite before (Catalina Mountains Chapter). It is a multi-year process and perhaps we should speak about some sort of adjunct organization in the meantime.

Medicare has released the schedule for 2027-2035 estimated Part B monthly premiums. This is the minimum amount that will be levied. For 2027 it will be \$209.50, a 3.25% increase over 2026. In 2028, it will rise to 224.50, a 7.16% increase over 2027. By 3035, the estimated premiums will raise to \$360.60, a whopping 77.7% increase over 2026.

MOAA is keeping on top of the projected 2027 COLA which is determined by the Consumer Price Index in July-September. The July number was 3.1%. This will affect SS benefits, retiree/surviving spouse pensions, and VA disability payments.

I'd like to ask you to at least once a week go to [MOAA.org](https://moaa.org) and read the latest news. At least monthly, please check the [Legislative Advocacy Center](#) and weigh in. Tell your friends and neighbors they can access the LAC without being members and support MOAA's critical legislative agenda.

If you have not voted in the MOAA 2026 Membership electronic ballot, please do so. The ballot includes a slate of eight Board members, five Resolutions, and a Bylaw Amendment to Article VIII – Board of Directors, Election, Etc., Section I.

Hope to see you at the September 10 luncheon. Don't forget to RSVP before September 3. Thanks.

SAVAHCS/D-M HEALTH CARE CLINIC



Notional rendering of proposed VA/D-M Health Care Center.

After nearly three years of dialogue and planning, the joint effort between the Southern Arizona VA Health Care System (SAVAHCS) and Davis-Monthan AFB to build a new VA Healthcare Center on the installation is making significant progress. HR 217 is with the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs and includes proposed language to make the current law permanent and to allow federal entities to transfer land to the VA for real property construction. Although the language is included in the omnibus Take Care of American Veterans Act (HR 9737/S 4744), which is currently stalled, it can revert to a stand-alone bill if needed before the pilot program's expiration at the end of this year.

Through grassroots efforts, coordinated with local and federal VA leadership, Department of the Air Force leadership, and concerned citizens in the Tucson area, the project is moving forward. The proposed 90K sq ft facility would feature a standalone Emergency Department, a Musculoskeletal Surgery and Rehab Clinic, a Mental Health Clinic, and a Dental Clinic. Much work remains, but the goal is for the Air Force to donate the land and for construction to be funded by private donations. Questions can be directed to Mr. Michael Becker at michael.becker.3579@gmail.com

“Never Stop Serving”

Legislative Update

By Polly Parks

The Territorial Editor

The House and Senate Veterans Committees in June advanced an omnibus Take Care of America's Veterans Act (TCAVA), which consolidates 60 pieces of veteran legislation to expand benefits for combat-disabled retirees, surviving spouses, caregivers, Guard and Reserve members, veterans receiving community care, and millions of other current and future veterans and military families.

Major legislation included in the Act includes the Major Richard Star Act, the Love Lives On Act, the Veterans ACCESS Act, the Sharri Briley and Eric Edmonson Veterans Benefits Expansion Act, expanded caregiver support, education and GI Bill improvements, mental health initiatives, VA modernization reforms, and survivor and dependency benefit improvements.

It also includes language to make the CHIP-IN program permanent and to allow the transfer of federal real property, both of which are necessary to move the SAVAHCS-Davis Monthan Healthcare Center project forward. The Healthcare Center requires the transfer of some Davis-Monthan real property to the VA and a donor base to fund its construction.

After the House leadership postponed a June 16 vote, the fight to pass the bill has not ended. Proponents, including MOAA, are pushing for a floor vote in September. The calendar is running short.

Tucson Chapter AiA House Office Visits

After a hiatus of several years, the Tucson Chapter re-engaged during the August Advocacy in Action with our local Representatives on the AiA agenda: The Major Richard Star Act, GLP-1, and the Improve and Enhance the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (S.3265/H.R.6231): Retain the

Service Member through Military Spouse Employment.

The August 18th meeting with CD-6 Rep. Ciscomani's aide, Cameron Fox, was facilitated by Green Valley legislative liaison Darren Vinters. In attendance from Tucson were Caleb Martiny and me. The discussion was very productive, with strong commitment to the agenda items, and we also thanked him for co-sponsoring the TCAVA.

Luckily, before the August 21st meeting with Rep. Adelita Grijalva's Senior Policy Advisor, Kelsey Mishkin, I learned from MOAA that their staff had never interacted with Rep. Raul Grijalva or Adelita Grijalva, but they were very supportive of my securing the meeting and of including D-M's Michael Becker, Contractor, Senior Program Mgr, 355th Wing Program Integration Office, who is the base POC for the proposed VA/D-M Health Care Center and the CHIP-IN Act. While D-M only abuts CD-7, the main VA Campus is in the district.

As a constituent, I knew CD-7 had a strong veterans' voting record and that Rep. Adelita Grijalva was a co-sponsor of the Richard Star Act. However, the only people who have co-sponsored the TCAVA in the House and the Senate are Republican members of the respective veterans committees, so it was unclear where she would stand on passage. But since the CHIP-IN Act had been rolled into the TCAVA, it was necessary to discuss it.

It was a lively discussion. Although she did not commit to TCAVA, she did commit to following the clinic, making it a major win for the base. She also said she would review the handouts on the A&A agenda and pass them to the office's Veteran Aide, along with the TCAVA briefs MOAA National had sent me.

If you want more information about either meeting or copies of the handouts, please contact me directly.

Understanding Arizona's Veterans Property Tax Exemption

By Thomas P Waddell, Colonel, USAF (Ret)
President, MOAA Grand Canyon Chapter
AZ Council of Chapters Legislative Chair

Recent legislative sessions brought major changes to Arizona's Veterans Property Tax Exemption rules, raising many questions about eligibility and how the system works. Although these laws are enacted at the state level, individual county assessors administer them. Because each county office can interpret administrative guidelines and paperwork requirements slightly differently, you must apply directly through your local assessor's office. The standard application window traditionally opens on the first Monday in January and closes on March 1. We recommend contacting your local assessor now to confirm the exact timeline and requirements for the upcoming 2027 tax year.

This legislation was enacted through two bills. HB 2792 addressed homeownership rules. Starting in the 2026 tax year, it clarified that any veteran with a 100% service-connected disability rating from the VA qualifies for a full property tax exemption on their primary home. Further, if a home is jointly owned by the veteran and their spouse, the state treats it as if the veteran owns it entirely, so the veteran doesn't lose the benefit.

The next hurdle was the household income cap. For a long time, many disabled veterans were excluded from these tax breaks simply because their household income was too high. Critics argued this was unfair, as a veteran's tax relief should be based on their service and disability, not on their ability to earn a living after leaving the military.

The second bill, HB 4168, beginning with the **2027 tax year**, removed the income limits for disabled veterans and their surviving spouses. While income caps will stay in place for other categories (like widows, widowers, and citizens with non-service permanent disabilities),

disabled veterans and their surviving spouses are now completely exempt from those income rules.

This law does not mean every single disabled veteran automatically pays zero property tax. Unless you have a 100% service-connected disability rating, the amount of tax relief you get is tied directly to your specific VA rating percentage.

This is not a cash check from the state, nor is it a direct discount on your final bill. Instead, it reduces your home's assessed value (the taxable dollar amount the county uses to calculate what you owe) before your local tax rates are even applied.

Because of this, your actual cash savings will depend entirely on the combined local tax rates where you live. And because every city, school, and fire district charges different rate, the actual savings will depend on the county.

Crucial Next Steps for Veterans

The bottom line is that Arizona is removing income as a roadblock to veteran tax relief. However, this tax break will never happen automatically.

Property tax exemptions are strictly managed at the local level. **You must proactively apply through your specific County Assessor's office to receive the benefit.** Furthermore, because state tax statutes can be complex, individual county assessors may interpret and apply these rules differently. One county may have slightly different paperwork requirements, stricter verification steps, or unique processing timelines than its neighbor.

To protect your benefits, do not guess or assume. Contact your specific County Assessor's office directly. Ask them for their exact filing deadlines, confirm their specific documentation checklist, and be prepared to provide official proof of your VA disability rating, homeownership, and primary residency.

QCD's: An Innovative Way to Donate to MOAA Tucson's Scholarship Fund

There are multiple ways to make a tax-deductible donation to the Tucson Chapter MOAA Fund, a qualified IRS 501(c)(3) charity that funds the annual Tucson Chapter MOAA University of Arizona (UofA) Scholarships.

Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD): Starting the year you turn 70½, you can avoid taxes on otherwise taxable distributions by using a QCD to withdraw from a traditional IRA. A QCD transfers up to \$111,000 (in 2026) to a qualified charity, thereby excluding the amount from your income. QCDs are counted in the tax year in which they're taken. A key requirement of a QCD is that the withdrawal must be made directly from the IRA to a qualified charity; it cannot go to your bank account.

This differs from the mandatory Required Minimum Distribution (RMD), which begins the year you turn 73. With an RMD, you can make an independent tax-deductible donation after the funds are deposited into your personal account. However, the IRS will treat the entire RMD as taxable income, potentially increasing your Adjusted Gross Income, triggering higher Medicare premiums, and pushing you into a higher tax bracket.

To take advantage of the QCD tax strategy once you start taking the RMD, you have to direct your broker (or traditional IRA annuity) to send the amount you want to donate directly to the qualified charity. It cannot go through your bank account.

How can you donate to the MOAA Tucson Chapter Fund scholarship fund using a QCD? Have your IRA servicing broker send a check payable to the MOAA Tucson Chapter Fund--Scholarship. If needed, the Fund's EIN is 85-1893759. The Fund's mailing address is c/o Charles Vaughan, Treasurer, 12688 N Lauterbrunnen Lane, Tucson, AZ 85755-6092.

Tax-Deductible Donations: Because the Fund is a qualified IRS charity, donations are tax-deductible. You can donate by check to the address above or online via [MOAA's Tucson Chapter portal](#) using the Scholarship donation option.

October 14 2026 Dedication Ceremony for Desert Shield and Desert Storm Memorial



The Dedication Ceremony for the Desert Shield and Desert Storm Memorial will take place on **Saturday, October 24, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. EDT**. The ceremony is open to the public and will be held at the southwest corner of **Constitution Avenue and 23rd Street NW, Washington, D.C.**



TUCSON CHAPTER OFFICERS

Web: <https://tucsonmoaa.org/> Facebook: [MOAA Tucson Chapter](#)

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2nd Vice President: John Davee, Col, USAF (Ret), 520-275-7864 / kiddavee@gmail.com

Personal Affairs: Brenda Hughey, LT COL USA (Ret), 703-321-6344 / hugheyb1@gmail.com

Legislative Chair: volunteer needed

Secretary/Treasurer: Charles Vaughan, CAPT. USN, (Ret) 505-553-4364 / Chuck.vaughan@comcast.net

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Scholarship Chair: John Davee, Col, USAF (Ret), (520) 275-7864 / kiddavee@gmail.com

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MOAA Tucson Chapter Mission

1. Advocate and support MOAA national goals.
2. Advocate and support the Arizona and metro Tucson programs, activities, and proposed legislation.
3. Encourage and promote a spirit of volunteerism and participation in programs and activities beneficial to Tucson civic and military communities.

Volunteer to be a MOAA Mover Tucson Chapter needs Your Help

Our MOAA programs and their quality depend on the voluntary efforts of our members. We need a volunteer for the Board position of Legislative Chair as Caleb Martiny is taking on the Membership Chair. Please consider lending your **LEADERSHIP AND VOICE** to the Chapter teams.

Contact Tucson Chapter President Polly Parks at pollyparks@earthlink.net

LOCAL VA CONTACTS

Southern Arizona VA Health Care System (SAVAHCS) 520-792-1450 or 1-800-470-8262
Suicide Prevention Coordinator 520-792-1450 extension 6415
Caregiver Support Program 520-629-1822 extension 5390
Patient Advocate Office 520-629-1819
Care in the Community 520-792-1450 extension 6555
Women's Health Clinic 520-629-4885

Center for Development & Civic Engagement
520-629-1822

D-M AFB CONTACT NUMBERS

Base Welcome Center 520-228-4886
Info and Referral Services 520-228-5690
ID/CAC card processing 520-228-4425
Base Exchange 520-748-7887
Commissary 520-228-3116
Retiree Activities Office 520-228-5100
VSO 520-275-7633



POW/MIA Recognition Day

Friday, September 18, 2026 at 6 p.m.

Please join us as we honor the brave men and women of the Armed Forces
who remain missing in action or are/were prisoners of war.

Live stream on [Facebook.com/FunerariaDelAngelSouthLawn](https://www.facebook.com/FunerariaDelAngelSouthLawn)

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POW/MIA Recognition Day

Please join us as we honor the brave men and women of the Armed Forces who remain missing in action or are/were prisoners of war.

Ceremony by Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary Unit 2

Friday, September 18, 2026 | 5:30 pm

5801 E Grant Road, Tucson AZ 85712

Live stream on [Facebook.com/EastLawnPalms](https://www.facebook.com/EastLawnPalms)

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