



# THE TERRITORIAL

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



DECEMBER 2023

National MOAA and the Tucson MOAA Chapter are non-partisan



## FROM THE EAGLES NEST

**By Tom Owens,  
Tucson Chapter President**

Our Christmas luncheon has been rescheduled to Tuesday, December 19, at 1130 at Trattoria Pina. This was necessitated when the price at the Tucson Country Club escalated twice. I polled those attending and canceled when we no longer met the minimum number of attendees for Tucson Country Club. On short notice, Trattoria Pina found a time and reasonable prices off their regular luncheon menu, which is quite delicious. Please join us and celebrate the holidays and coming New Year.

Our January 25 luncheon speaker is to be determined and I'll let you know in the January issue. Please join us at 1130 at Trattoria Pina.

November was a busy month. Ann Hollis and I represented MOAA in the City of Tucson Veterans Day parade held in downtown Tucson on Friday, November 10<sup>th</sup>. Tucson MOAA board member, Rusty Orvik participated with the USS Tucson SSN770 nuclear submarine float and showed up to photobomb us. Photos are on page 2.

The Territorial will now cover just the Tucson chapter (though we are open to articles

submitted by the Catalina Chapter). They are starting their own publication and, since the chapter president is a Navy Captain, we are wishing them fair winds and following seas.

We are still looking for a Membership and Treasurer. If you have the slightest interest in either, please get in touch. We need to grow the chapter. In that vein, looking forward to 2024, we have scheduled a recruiting meeting in Vail on January 13. There are over 100 MOAA members in that area. We hope to generate interest in how chapters are an integral part of the MOAA mission and hope to form another satellite if possible.

Be sure to check out my article on the MOAA Western Region Chapter Leaders Workshop and our Fall meeting of the Arizona Council of Chapters on page 5. John Davee, Ann Hollis, and myself participated. This was a terrific networking event jampacked with information and news that demonstrated "We Can Never Stop Serving."

Have a Merry Christmas (or whatever holiday you celebrate around the winter solstice) and Happy New Year! It promises to be quite the ride.

**MOAA Western Region Chapter Leaders Workshop  
and AZCoC Fall Meeting Reports on page 5**

# Upcoming Tucson Chapter Meetings

The December Holiday Luncheon is scheduled for  
**TUESDAY, December 19 at 1130**  
at [Trattoria Pina](#), 5541 N Swan, near Sunrise.

The January Luncheon is scheduled for Thursday, January 25 at 1130.  
Venue: [Trattoria Pina](#), 5541 N Swan, near Sunrise.  
Speaker: TBD

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## TUCSON CHAPTER ACTIVITY

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 to the Secretary: [pam.devine@azmoves.com](mailto:pam.devine@azmoves.com), not later than one week prior to the meeting. If you desire to participate, please email [rorvik@orvik.com](mailto:rorvik@orvik.com) to receive the access link.



Ann Hollis and Tom Owens represented MOAA in the City of Tucson Veterans Day parade held in downtown Tucson on Friday, November 10<sup>th</sup>. Tucson MOAA board member, Rusty Orvik participated with the USS Tucson SSN770 nuclear submarine float and showed up to photobomb us.



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

MOAA is asking that we log in to the [Legislative Advocacy Center](#) and ask our lawmakers to avoid a legislative shutdown and finish the appropriations process. As servicemembers in all branches know, true leadership requires a team effort. As Mark Belinsky, Currently Serving and Retired Affairs, Government Relations, notes in an excellent "[Should Lawmakers Lead by Example and Stay In Session to Finish the Budget?](#)":

“Nothing motivates servicemembers as much as time. Although no one likes mass punishment, taking time away from members of a large formation – *“No one is going home until ...”* – creates significant peer pressure and fosters teamwork to accomplish a difficult task.

“When it comes to the difficult task of funding the federal government, Congress could take some hints from the multiplying effect of unit cohesion over individuality. It is failing in its mission by not passing a budget on time year after year – the result of an ongoing administrative problem nursed by both parties and both chambers.”

## Status of MOAA priorities in the NDAA

Despite the chaos in the House these past three months, if the House and Senate stick to their public schedules, the NDAA should pass the House on December 14 and the Senate on December 15. Though MOAA priorities are included in one or both bills, until final reconciliation and floor voting, the ultimate passage is still uncertain.

- A House provision (Section 765) requiring a detailed Government Accountability Office (GAO) report on access to the TRICARE pharmacy benefit – a report necessitated by [significant cuts to the retail pharmacy network](#). However, MOAA strongly opposes excluding beneficiary segments, including Coast Guard/USPHS/NOAA and uniformed services retirees and their families, from TRICARE coverage updates. Allowing TRICARE coverage to continue to lag benchmarks not only betrays our nation’s obligation to those who have earned the benefit, but it also raises the risk that servicemembers, retirees, and their families – key influencers in the recruiting process – will be less likely to recommend military service to current and future generations.
- House NDAA language increasing the Basic Housing Allowance (BAH) to 96% of local rental and utilities costs, up from the current 95%. MOAA continues to advocate restoring the full 100% benefit.
- Along with a 5.2% pay raise to keep pace with the private sector, MOAA supports language in the House bill reforming the military pay table, which would result in higher pay for younger members and help combat ongoing recruiting challenges.
- Eliminate BAH from the Basic Needs Allowance (BNA) Calculation (House Section 621): MOAA appreciates the progress on BNA but recognizes the need to expand eligibility to support low-income servicemembers and their families who are struggling with food insecurity. Excluding BAH from the BNA calculation will drastically increase the eligible population and improve the overall quality of life for our service members and their families. While the BNA is an intermediate fix, ultimately, service member pay must be adequate to ensure no military family faces food insecurity.

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## Legislative Update *continued from page 3*

- Family Separation Allowance (House Section 628): Each pay plays an important role in servicemember compensation and must be frequently revisited, the House's language to increase Family Separation Allowance to \$400 per month ensures this pay is adequate for today's family needs and requires it be revisited regularly on a regular basis.
- Discounted Child Care for DoD Child Care Employees (House Section 643): The nationwide shortage of childcare providers continues to negatively impact military families. MOAA supports implementing a tiered fee structure, starting with no fee for the first child of DoD childcare employees.
- Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) Expansion (House Section 1821) – The House's inclusion of report language to designate the "next ANC," as it approaches capacity, is an important milestone to prevent the reduction of this benefit. In the interim, MOAA continues to advocate for the passage of The Expanding America's National Cemetery Act (H.R. 1413).
- Retain Skilled Veterans (House Section 1108) – The House's inclusion of language similar to The Retain Skilled Veterans Act (H.R. 939) is an important talent management reform for DoD. Section 1108 is supported by the American Federation of Government Employees and will improve competitive hiring pools for DoD civilian positions that require current military certifications and a security clearance.

### State:

The first Regular Session of Arizona's 56<sup>th</sup> Legislature began on 30 October 2023. You can access volumes of information on current activities at [Arizona Legislature \(azleg.gov\)](http://ArizonaLegislature.azleg.gov). As their work starts you can contact your area Senator/Representatives as follows:

The Tucson and CMC member catchment areas are comprised of Legislative Districts 17, 18, 20, and a part of 21.

**LD-17:** Sen. Justine Wadsack, 602-926-3106, [JWadsack@azleg.gov](mailto:JWadsack@azleg.gov); Rep. Rachel Jones, 602-926-3558, [rachel.jones@azleg.gov](mailto:rachel.jones@azleg.gov); Rep. Cory McGarr, (602) 926-3630, [CMcGarr@azleg.gov](mailto:CMcGarr@azleg.gov). **LD-18:** Sen. Priya Sundareshan, (602) 926-3437, [PSundareshan@azleg.gov](mailto:PSundareshan@azleg.gov); Rep. Nancy Gutierrez, (602) 926-4134, [NGutierrez@azleg.gov](mailto:NGutierrez@azleg.gov); Rep. Christopher Mathis, (602) 926-3138, [CMathis@azleg.gov](mailto:CMathis@azleg.gov). **LD-20:** Sen. Sally Ann Gonzalez, (602) 926-3278, [SGonzalez@azleg.gov](mailto:SGonzalez@azleg.gov); Rep. André Cano, (602) 926-3027, [ACano@azleg.gov](mailto:ACano@azleg.gov); Rep. Alma Hernandez, (602) 926-3136, [AHernandez@azleg.gov](mailto:AHernandez@azleg.gov). **LD-21:** Sen. Rosanna Gabaldón, (602) 926-3424, [RGalbaldon@azleg.gov](mailto:RGalbaldon@azleg.gov); Rep. Consuelo Hernandez, (602) 926-3523, [CHernandez@azleg.gov](mailto:CHernandez@azleg.gov); Rep. Stephanie Stahl Hamilton, (602) 926-3279, [SStahlhamilton@azleg.gov](mailto:SStahlhamilton@azleg.gov).

## WHO CAN JOIN MOAA?

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/>.

# MOAA Western Region Chapter Leaders Workshop & AZCoC Fall Meeting

**By Tom Owens**  
**Tucson Chapter President**

On November 17-18, John Davee, Ann Hollis, and I participated in the MOAA Western Region Chapter Leaders Workshop at the Hilton Resort at the Peak in Phoenix. The in-person workshop included council and chapter officers from Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, and Wyoming

MOAA senior leaders attending included Maj Gen Joe Lynch, USAF (Ret), General Counsel and Corporate Secretary; CAPT Jim Carman, USN (Ret), Vice President, Council/Chapter and Member Support; Kathy Partain, Vice President, Membership and Marketing; LTC Mark Belinsky, USA (Ret), Director, Currently Serving and Retired Affairs, Government Relations; Amanda Centers, Vice President, Development; Peter Magnuson, Vice President, Communications; Gail Joyce, MOAA BoD, Surviving Spouse Advisory Council; and Nora Durham, from the Surviving Spouse Advisory Council. MOAA staff participating included CAPT Frank Michael, USN (Ret), MOAA Program Director, Council and Chapter Affairs, and LTC Suzanne Walker, USA (Ret), Director, Membership Events and Protocol.

The Workshop provided a forum to receive updates and ask questions of MOAA leadership, attend break-out sessions on Chapter Management, Legislative Training, and Surviving Spouse Liaison training. Friday evening there were cocktails and a buffet dinner. The guest speaker was Lt Gen John Regni, USAF (Ret).

The Breakfast keynote speaker was Gail Joyce, a member of the MOAA Board, chair of the MOAA President Surviving Spouse Advisory Council, and co-chair of the Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter. She gave a heartwarming and informative presentation. We have invited her to come to Tucson to present locally.

Surviving Spouse Training was an emphasis of the Workshop. Much information was shared on what veterans should do to prepare for their families and how a Surviving Spouse can navigate the military-related bureaucracies those first few months after one's spouse passes. It provided real depth for key parts of MOAA's legislative agenda.

Some highlights were:

- MOAA National Membership is 363,146; MOAA Arizona has 9400; Congress has 17% veterans serving
- MOAA Awards submissions has been moved up to February 15, 2024; Tucson has achieved 5-Star Level of Excellence for 14 consecutive years
- MOAA has a Legislative Action Center. Members can log in online. (Note: Catalina Mountains Chapter President Chuck Vaughn did a step-by-step article on how to access the Center in the October Territorial). There are 35 organizations and coalitions nationally that MOAA collaborates with.
- MOAA is pushing for members to pay dues online. Tends to increase donations also.

## **Fall Meeting of Arizona Council of Chapters**

The Workshop was followed by a truncated Arizona Council of Chapters meeting. Former AZCOC President (and current national MOAA board member) Pete Kloeber put together a

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detailed PowerPoint on how Arizona fits into the organization overall including important metrics and the relationship between a state council and chapters. Anyone interested in reviewing the information can get in touch with Polly Parks, Territorial editor, who has converted it to a PDF.

Each of the 10 state chapters gave a report including metrics, including successes, noteworthy programs, and challenges. Aging out is a state-wide issue. The younger generation of retiring officers is at that point of looking at a second career like many of us were. But unlike our retirements, in which MOAA (at that time TROA) focused totally on retiree issues, today's MOAA has broadened its membership to include active-duty uniformed service officers. This has resulted in programs and advocacy that serve not just retirees but the needs of enlisted personnel. It is exciting to see the breadth of what MOAA is undertaking, but chapters and state councils will need to evolve to stay relevant to the "younger" generation.

The Luke Chapter seemed to have the most aggressive recruitment program (including local radio announcements). They have a strong Surviving Spouse Committee and JROTC Committee that have been working with local JROTC cadets to record oral histories through the Arizona Veterans History Project. These oral histories will be recorded and shared with the [Library of Congress Veterans History Project](#). Food for thought.

## Esperanza en Escalante Wish List

Suzanne Bond, CEO of Esperanza is asking our community to please consider utilizing the Arizona Tax Credit to support their program which offers a fresh start for homeless vets and their families. In addition, she is requesting the following items:

- **Operation Enrichment:** wall décor without glass frames, board games, books and playing cards.
- **Operation Keep a Lid on It:** plastic wrap and lidded food storage containers.
- **Operation Chow Time:** fresh produce, bread, meats, non-perishable food.
- **Operation Swab the Deck:** Lime-away and pumice stones, mops and brooms (dollar store quality is fine), cleaning/scouring sponges, dish soap.
- **Operation Mess Hall:** pots, fry pans, cooking utensils, silverware, plates, cups, glasses, silverware holders, knives, coffee pots, toasters, microwaves.
- **Operation Move In:** twin sheet sets & comforters, pillows, twin beds and frames, mattress covers, bedside/end tables, recliners, flat screen TVs.
- **Operation Smells Like a Rose:** bar soap, body wash, shampoo, lotion, and bath tissue.
- **Company Clerk's Needs:** copy paper, phone message books.
- **Non-Mission-Specific Needs:** a harmonica, men's wallets, working natural gas stoves and dryers, good condition refrigerators, boxes of disposable gloves size M & XL.

Contact information is 3700 S Calle Polar, Tucson, AZ 85730. Phone: (520) 571-8294.  
Email: [info@eeeveterans.com](mailto:info@eeeveterans.com). URL: [www.eeeveterans.org](http://www.eeeveterans.org).

# Surviving Spouse & Personal Affairs

By Polly Parks, *Surviving Spouse Liaison*

I am hoping you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving. We are now nearing the end of 2023. If any of you do not have any friends or family to comfort you and bring companionship during what can be a stressful time, please let me know.

My stress has been compounded by the renovation of a home that initially I planned to move into.... well, at first February, then June, August, September, Thanksgiving, and now, I **will** be there by New Year because my landlady is renting out the small house where I live now.

Most of the delay was of my own making. I would ask my foreman, Nathaniel Lespron, "Can we do this?" This being: remove walls, brick up this side door, and open another one over here, on and on. At any rate, Nate always said yes, we can.

When I worked with the United Farm Workers Union in the early to mid-1970s; we always said, Si Se Puede! It didn't matter whether the task was me organizing half of Alameda County in a voter registration drive or being sent all over the state of California to train farmworkers to become social workers. I was a high school graduate at the time. The UFW was a lot like the Army, or maybe the Navy, because Cesar Chavez had served on an ammo ship.

Nate is a third-generation master mason, one of 13 Tucson-born and bred siblings. His father was from El Paso and his mother from Sonora. They met when his father, returning from action in the Pacific Theater, went to Mexico to heal. We call it PTSD now. Nate and his brother tried to join the Army after they graduated from Tucson High, but it was after the Vietnam drawdown and the recruiter told them, they weren't needed. I can vouch the Army missed out.

Nate and his crew call this a custom house. 1946 bones with a 1971 addition, and a 2023 revival. They tease me when I do the daily check-in, pulling up a chair for me to sit down at a table that moves from room to room, and say, "Okay, time for the Union meeting." Though I worked with the UFW for four years, I only picked up what we called Spanglish. It has been humbling and nostalgic to see how they move so fluently between each language. They have graciously shared their stories, their families, their perseverance, intelligence, and knowledge. While I'm excited to finally move in, I know I will miss the interaction. The collaborative effort to reach a goal. I understand how my George so missed the NCO's when he retired.

I'm also grateful to be part of the MOAA family here. I've enjoyed the monthly Board meetings and the luncheons with interesting speakers, writing for and editing The Territorial, and getting to know D-M and the military veteran community through the RAO Board Meetings. Incidentally, the December RAO meeting was canceled, so no report this month.

I still miss my husband, but I'm looking forward to 2024. So again, if you need some comfort, companionship, or just advice on how to prepare for or deal with the aftermath of losing a spouse, do not hesitate to get in touch. I can be reached at pollyparks@earthlink.net or call/text 703-338-6881.

## **REMINDER:**

***When you consider giving a gift this holiday season,  
please remember MOAA Tucson Chapter Scholarship Fund.  
This tax-deductible gift directly funds our annual ROTC scholarships.***



**TUCSON CHAPTER OFFICERS**

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

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**Past President:** William Wojciechowski, Col, USAF, (Ret), 620-770-0059 / [billterriwoj@gmail.com](mailto:billterriwoj@gmail.com)

**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 a Membership Chair and a Treasurer**

Our MOAA programs and their quality depend on the voluntary efforts of our members. Please consider lending your *LEADERSHIP AND VOICE* to the Chapters' teams. Contact Tucson Chapter President Tom Owens at [owensttt@gmail.com](mailto:owensttt@gmail.com).

**Contact Your Legislator and Urge Them to Support the All-Volunteer Force**

**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 64  
**Caregiver Support Program** 520-792-1450 extension 5390  
**Patient Advocate Office** 520-629-1819  
**Care in the Community** 520-792-1450 extension 6555

Women's Health Clinic 520-629-4885

**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