



# THE TERRITORIAL

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



OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2025

*National MOAA and the Tucson MOAA Chapter are non-partisan*

## Editor's Note

Dear Tucson MOAA member,

I've been a bit MIA. One of my younger brothers has a glioblastoma multiforme (GBM) brain cancer diagnosed earlier this year (and operated on, then followed up). It is a particularly aggressive cancer, and it is ultimately terminal. I've been spending a lot of time out in Tennessee helping to take care of him. And now, I'm heading off to the Philippines (with a side trip to Vietnam) for a month. The next issue will be out in late November and will cover December.

Our next meeting is on October 23 at the Hungry Fox. No November meeting as it conflicts with Thanksgiving. I have not heard from Ann Hollis whether there will be a Christmas/Holiday/December luncheon, but if so, it will be earlier in December than the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday.

I'm heading to the Philippines tonight and wanted to make sure you have a Territorial since I'm not bringing my computer. I last visited the Philippines 30 years ago when I was doing development work with the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) after the Philippine Senate rejected extending the US-Philippines Bases Treaty. A couple of months later, Pinatubo erupted, destroying Clark AFB infrastructure. The main policy issue I was focusing on was the U.S. responsibility for environmental cleanup at the former bases.

US policymakers were furious at the Philippine government of Corazon Aquino and her Vice President, Philippine General (and US West Point grad) Fidel Ramos.

Eventually, I found [Phil Barringer](#), who was the person at the Pentagon who had been writing/negotiating post-WWII base agreements and tweaking the pre-WWII bases treaty. Phil was already in his late 70s, but patiently spent several afternoons in his office on the inner ring trying to explain to me why he had spent his career ensuring the US military would not have a liability tail at these overseas facilities.

He might as well have been speaking Chinese. UUSC and the bilateral coalition we were part of didn't really care (though it was interesting) that the Pentagon had an office devoted to ensuring that the US military had no liability tail at overseas facilities. We didn't think it was up to the US military to decide whether the US took responsibility (i.e., paid for characterizing contaminants and invested in cleanup technologies). As with domestic military bases, it was up to Congress, as it had been when it passed the Federal Facilities Compliance Act, which President H.W. Bush signed before he left office.

Did we win that policy battle? Not really. Congress was already having sticker shock over the cost of cleanup at the domestic facilities. This spurred innovation at a small DoD R&D shop, leading to the development of low-cost technologies based on scientific principles. Although it took a decade to validate the concepts, the science was shared with the Philippines and the rest of the world.

Polly Parks

# Upcoming Tucson Chapter Meetings

**October 23, 2025:**

Venue: [The Hungry Fox](#) / Time: 1130  
4637 E. Boardway

**November 2025: No meeting due to Thanksgiving**

**December 2025: TBD**

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## MOAA Vail Satellite Meeting

MOAA Vail Satellite will hold its next meetings **Saturday, October 18** and **November 15** at Del Lago Golf Restaurant, in Vail, at 1130. Please let me know if you will attend and please invite any military officers (active or retired) you know to attend. Please come and participate. We have added new members and look forward to others joining.

Col Tom Owens  
Past President, MOAA Tucson Chapter  
520-400-9561 cell <https://tucsonmoaa.org/>

## 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 [annhollis@usa.net](mailto:annhollis@usa.net). If you desire to participate, please email [rorkvik@orvik.com](mailto:rorkvik@orvik.com) 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

## MOAA Vail Satellite Meeting

MOAA Vail Satellite holds its meetings on the third Saturday of the month at Del Lago Golf Restaurant, in Vail, at 1130. Upcoming meetings: **October 18, November 15, December 20, and January 17.**

### Agenda for October 18:

Pledge of Allegiance  
Esperanza En Escalante activities  
Parade Veterans Day - November 11  
Tucson Chapter activities  
Golf outing 2026 date - April or May 2026

Please let me know if you will attend and please invite any military officers (active or retired) you know to attend. Please come and participate. We have added new members and look forward to others joining.

Col Tom Owens  
Past President, MOAA Tucson Chapter  
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## Davis-Monthan News

Wing Commander: AFSOC has a change to the base's mission. They will be gaining two special tactical units, which will be flying 20 CV-22s (tiltrotors). This will drive some changes in the planned infrastructure buildout over the next few years. There is a big exercise scheduled for 12-17 November; the 14th will be the heaviest. Access to base will likely take longer.

Impacts from the shutdown: The PX and Commissary are still open, and October sales are progressing. On-base access to facilities like the gym and bowling alley remains available; base access has not been affected yet. Road maintenance continues, and there may be some detours. Active Duty members have not been furloughed; civilians who are not furloughed are confined to specific duties; contractors with allocated funding are unaffected.

On October 24th, the Wing will host a Community Engagement Program with Pima County, the City of Tucson, SAVAHOCS, and UA. SAVAHOCS aims to expand the campus to an on-base facility. The event will showcase research and internship opportunities. The working session will proceed regardless of the shutdown.

Old solar panels have been removed and won't be replaced. The current arrays are exceeding the wattage requirements.

VITA is moving along but needs volunteers for the upcoming tax season; training is provided and incorporates all tax code changes. Scheduling begins in early January, and tax processing will commence once the IRS begins accepting returns.

Morgan Bell, Red Cross Program Specialist Service to the Armed Forces/IS Programs, provided an overview of their work and volunteer needs; base access is required. Please see the article on page 5. Additionally, SAVAHOCS has some critical volunteer requirements; refer to pages 6-8.

# Budget & Legislative Update

By Polly Parks, *The Territorial Newsletter Editor*

**FEDERAL:** As we go to press, the Federal Government is still without a FY2026 budget or continuing resolution. It looks increasingly unlikely that a full budget will be enacted. Despite the impasse, at presstime, House Speaker Mike Johnson was continuing a House recess. While Speaker Johnson has not left DC, he has used both the recess and the CR impasse as public excuses for not swearing in newly elected Congresswoman Adelita Grivalva from Arizona's Congressional District 6. Without being formally sworn in, Congresswoman Grivalva is unable to staff her DC and district offices, thereby denying her constituents, many of whom are veterans, representation.

Federal workers are being furloughed and, in some instances, fired without cause, though entities with plus-ups from the Big Beautiful Bill, including parts of DoD, are re-purposing funds to meet payroll. Earned benefits, which are funded outside of the annual appropriations process, such as Social Security, military retired pay, and pre-funded VA benefits and core services, are unaffected.

**Major Richard Star Act:** Despite an overwhelming 76 Senate member co-sponsorship (41 Democrats, 33 Republicans, and 2 Independents), Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS), Chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee, unilaterally blocked a motion by Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) to bring the [Major Richard Star Act](#) to a floor vote on October 8. Senator Wicker's objection was based on the debunked notions that ending the offset of VA disability benefits to retirement pay is "double-dipping" and would cost too much. Senator Blumenthal then offered a compromise motion for a single roll-call vote on the bill at a 60-vote threshold. The motion would have waived all procedural votes to protect floor time, allowing Senate President John Thune (R-SD) discretion to call up the vote at any point before the end of the year. Senator Wicker also blocked the motion, thereby delaying passage of this critical bill till next year.

**Legislative Good News:** Thomas P Waddell, Col, USAF (Ret), and MOAAZ Council of Chapters Legislative Chair sent some good news:

Under the Aviation Cancer Examination Study (ACES) Act, signed into law Aug. 14, the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) will conduct a VA study to identify unhealthy exposures faced by aircrews and how these may be linked to higher cancer rates, cancer-related deaths, and specific cancers such as brain, lung, pancreatic, and thyroid."

The ACES Act was one of MOAA's top [Legislative Action Center \(LAC\)](#) Legislative priorities. Because of your grassroots advocacy, it is now the law of the land—a powerful reminder that when we speak up together, Congress listens. This victory is a step toward finally understanding the health risks faced by all who served in military aviation. But our work doesn't stop here. Please continue urging your members to use the LAC and support MOAA's priorities. And spread the word—friends, neighbors, and non-members can also use the LAC to support veteran legislation and protect earned benefits. Every voice matters, and every action strengthens our mission. Together, we've proven that advocacy works. Let's keep the momentum going!

*Continued on page 5*

## Budget and Legislation Update, *continued from page 4*

**LOCAL:** The Tucson City ballot for November 4 should have arrived. City-wide Councilmember elections for Wards 3, 5, and 6 are underway. While Wards 3 and 6 are competitive, Ward 5 is really a change of guard after Councilmember Richard Fimbres, who served for 16 years, resigned in May due to health issues. The City's ballot also has a referendum on the next decade's general plan. Residents in the Tucson Unified School District will vote on a budget override to help close the gap left by the Executive Branch's withdrawal of appropriated funding. Voters in the Sunnyside and Flowing Wells school districts will have bond issues on their ballots. If you are a resident of Tucson, please vote and make your voice heard.

## "Red Cross Needs You!"

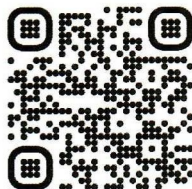
Red Cross is looking for local volunteers with base access to help maintain a sustainable presence at Davis Monthan. Community members like you can help ensure that service members and their families have consistent access to important information about emergency communications, mental health programming, CPR certifications, upcoming blood drives, and more. Volunteering options include: participating in Newcomers Orientations, deployment briefings, other on-base tabling events, on-base office volunteering and general outreach. There are also opportunities to participate in Veterans Standdowns, International Humanitarian Law, and other Red Cross lines of service. Visit [redcross.org/volunteer](http://redcross.org/volunteer) or contact Morgan Bell (480-979-6280 - [morgan.bell6@redcross.org](mailto:morgan.bell6@redcross.org)) for more information about the Service to Armed Forces/International Services program.



**American Red Cross**  
Arizona and New Mexico Region

**Join us!**

[redcross.org/AZNM](http://redcross.org/AZNM)



### To become a volunteer:

- Visit: [www.redcross.org/AZNM](http://www.redcross.org/AZNM) and click on "Get Started."
- Enter your zip code to view available volunteer opportunities.
- Browse the positions and click "Apply Now" on your selected opportunity.
- You will be prompted to "Create a Red Cross ID" on the right-hand side of the following page.
- Once you complete the application, you will then be asked to activate your "Volunteer Connection" account by clicking on the link sent to the email address you provided.
- Follow the remaining steps listed on your new Volunteer Connection profile page!



# SAVAHCS News

*This report is compiled/edited from the SAVAHCS October Director's Report..*

[My HealthVet](#), the VA's patient portal has moved to VA.gov. The move centralizes a secure, single online location to manage their health care and other VA benefits and services. The link above is to the VA My HealthVet home page.

Users of the old system can no longer log on using their My HealthVet user ID and password. The two remaining options will be **LogIn.gov** or **ID.me**. LogIn.gov offers streamlined setup and integration with most other federal services such as TSA Precheck, Social Security, FEMA, and the IRS. ID.me provides additional verification methods, including video calls, and offers military discounts.

At the VA portal, from the left hand menu, you can easily manage health appointments, refills, medical records, send and receive secure messages, file for travel pay reimbursement, order medical supplies, get a Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC), review and pay VA copays, update health benefit information, file a VA Foreign Medical Claim, request decision review, and more!

If you, or the Veterans you serve have questions about this change, please call the SAVAHCS Virtual Health Resource Center at (520) 629-1713 or send an email to [TucsonVHRC@va.gov](mailto:TucsonVHRC@va.gov).

## Upcoming events:

- A drive-up Flu Shot Clinic will take place on Saturday, October 18 at the main Tucson campus from 0700 to 1300. No appointment is necessary.
- [SAVAHCS Veteran Health Care Update](#) will take place on Wednesday, October 22 from 1300 to 1400. Click the above link to access this online event. Topics include latest health care services and Veteran Health Care Administration (VHA) updates
- There will be a Veteran Health Fair on Friday, November 14, from 1000 to 1300. The event will be held in the Tucson VA Medical Center's Rose Garden Courtyard, 3601 S 6<sup>th</sup> Ave.

## SAVAHCS Local Contacts

- SAVAHCS Main Line: (520) 792-1450 or 1-800-470-8268.
- Caregiver Support Program: (520) 792-1450, extension, 1-6555.
- Center for Development and Civic Engagement (formerly Voluntary Services): (520) 629-1822
- Compensation and Pension: (520) 629-4662.
- Eligibility and Enrollment Section: (520) 792-1450, ext 1-6572 or 1-1740
- Homeless Program Coordinator: (520) 792-1540, ext 1-1839
- Medication Automated Refill Line: 1-800-470-8262, press 1, then 1 again
- Mental Health Clinic: (520) 629-4884
- Virtual Health Resource Center: (520) 621713 (help with My HealthVet and other virtual care technologies.
- Native American Program: (520) 792-1450, ext 1-6622
- Patient Advocate Office: (520) 629-4933
- Public Affairs: (520) 629-1819
- Release of Information Office: (520) 792-1450, ext 1-4665
- Suicide Prevention Coordinator: (520) 792-1450, ext 1-6415
- Post-9/11 M2VA Case Management for Veterans recently separated from military: (520) 629-1684
- Women's Health Clinic: (520) 629-4885



**SOUTHERN AZ VA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM  
(SAVAHCS)  
Center for Development and Civic Engagement (CDCE)  
How to Become a VA Volunteer**



**Thank you** for your interest in volunteering. Being a SAVAHCs volunteer comes with many benefits. When you share your time and talents at SAVAHCs you:

- Serve those who served our country
- Improve the lives of others
- Learn to develop new skills
- Build your resume'
- Make new friends
- Transform your own life & health
- Strengthen our community
- Fulfill your civic duty
- Teach skills to others
- Connect to others

**For most positions, the process to become a volunteer is easy:**

- Complete Application (VA Form 10-7055)
- Information & Interview Session
- Complete New Volunteer Training
- Fingerprint/Background Check Clearance
- TB Screening
- **Flu Vaccinations (seasonal)**

Volunteer positions such as Concierge, Volunteer Visitors, Drivers, and positions needing computer access require additional training.

**Volunteers must be able to commit to a minimum of 100 HOURS in a year.**

**Please submit completed application:**

In person: CDCE Office in BLDG 58

Mailing Address:

SAVAHCS - CDCE (2-135)

3601 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Ave.

Tucson, AZ 85723

E-mail: [TucsonCDCE@va.gov](mailto:TucsonCDCE@va.gov)

Once completed application is received CDCE staff will review, then contact applicant to schedule an Interview and Information Session.

**For more information or to request an application,  
please contact the CDCE Office at (520) 629-1822**

Updated: 5/21/2025

# Southern Arizona VA Health Care System

## Open Volunteer Positions

**As Of: August 8, 2025**

**\*\*\*\*Subject to Change\*\*\*\***

### High Need Positions

Position	Duties	Available Times (Actual hours will vary)
Veteran and Family Advisory Council Member	Serve in an advisory capacity. Discuss opportunities in healthcare services that will improve the Veteran experience. Must be a current patient or family member of a patient receiving services at the SAVAHCS or CBOC sites.	1-2 hours per month
Driver (DAV)	Drive Veterans to medical appointments in VA-provided van from Casa Grande, Sierra Vista, or Tucson.	Varies depending on Veteran appointments and location.
In Home Visitor Program Volunteers	Visit with Veterans in-person at their home.	Determined by Veteran availability
Red Vest Ambassador	Patient including pushing wheelchairs. Lab and equipment transport.	Monday- Friday, 8AM-4PM The greatest need is 8-10AM and 2-4PM.
Red Vest Dispatcher	Takes transports requests in-person and over the phone.	
Tucson Vet Center	Reception/front desk	Monday- Friday, 8AM-4PM
Yuma Vet Center	Reception/front desk	Monday- Friday, 8AM-4PM



# Medicare Launches 6-year Prior Authorization Pilot Program

*Lightly edited from an Arizona Medical Association (ArMA's) Advocacy Team August 28, 2025 press release.*

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recently announced that Arizona will be one of six states to pilot the new Wasteful and Inappropriate Service Reduction (WISeR) Model. WISeR adds prior authorization requirements for 15+ select Medicare services. The six-year outsourced pilot program utilizes Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning alongside human clinical review to “reduce clinically unsupported care.”

## **Authorities Cite Prevention of Fraud, But Draw Criticism**

Prior authorization is widely used in Medicare Advantage and commercial health plans, but has rarely been imposed for traditional Medicare. The controversial process claims to prevent medically unnecessary care, deter fraud and abuse, and reduce spending. However, it is well-documented that these requirements result in delays and denials of care, contributing to physician burnout and moral injury.

The Medicare services requiring prior authorization under CMS's new WISeR Model include:

- Electrical Nerve Stimulators
- Sacral Nerve Stimulation for Urinary Incontinence
- Phrenic Nerve Stimulator
- Deep Brain Stimulation for Essential Tremor and Parkinson's Disease
- Vagus Nerve Stimulation
- Induced Lesions of Nerve Tracts
- Hypoglossal Nerve Stimulation for Obstructive Sleep Apnea
- Epidural Steroid Injections for Pain Management, Excluding Facet Joint Injections
- Percutaneous Vertebral Augmentation for Vertebral Compression Fracture
- Cervical Fusion
- Arthroscopic Lavage and Arthroscopic Debridement for the Osteoarthritic Knee
- Incontinence Control Devices
- Diagnosis and Treatment of Impotence
- Percutaneous Image-Guided Lumbar Decompression for Spinal Stenosis
- Skin and Tissue Substitutes
- Application of Bioengineered Skin Substitutes to Lower Extremity Chronic Non-Healing Wounds
- Wound Application of Cellular and/or Tissue-Based Products, Lower Extremities

## **Medicare Prior Authorization Changes to Launch in 2026**

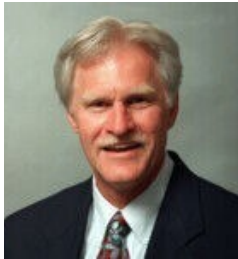
Clinicians will be able to deliver services before submitting a prior authorization request, but they will then undergo a post-service payment review, which may result in a denial.

**The model will launch on January 1, 2026, and run through 2031.** With less than six months' notice, stakeholders are asking whether a sufficiently long runway was planned for the adequate preparation and implementation of the process.

# Social Security & You Little Green Spacemen and Social Security

By Tom Margenau

*Reprinted with author's permission*



Well, if I listen to news reports or review the emails I get from many readers, I guess I'd have to conclude that Social Security is doomed. So that means it's time to once again trot out my

"little green men and Social Security" story. That story has to do with an intriguing newspaper headline I read about 20 years ago that went like this: "More people think they'll see little green spacemen than a future Social Security check." The story that ran with that headline was based on a poll of young people that asked a question something like this: "Do you believe you will have a better chance of seeing a Social Security check someday or of seeing Martians land on Earth?" And guess what? Most people answered that they figured they'd be more likely to see little green men from outer space than their promised Social Security benefits.

I wasn't surprised by those poll results then and I'm not surprised by people's pessimism now. That's because I've been listening to Social Security skeptics for a half century. I remember way back in 1973 when I was sent out as a relatively new Social Security Administration spokesperson to deliver my first speech on the topic. And hardly before I had a chance to introduce myself, some guy in the audience who appeared to be around 40 years old jumped up and said, "I don't know why we should listen to anything you have to say. We all know Social Security will go belly up long before we ever have a chance to collect a dime out of the system!"

Well, of course, if that guy is still alive, he'd be pushing 90 now and will have been

collecting many millions of dimes in the form of Social Security checks, month in and month out, for about 30 years now. I've often wondered if he ever looked back and regretted his rude interruption of that neophyte Social Security rep's maiden Social Security presentation. At least I hope he accepted the fact that he was wrong.

And that story always reminds me of something I learned from one of my mentors when I started working for the Social Security Administration. He was a fairly high-placed official within the agency who started working for the SSA shortly after it was created in 1936. And he told me that way back then, many members of the public were telling him that the Social Security program was doomed to failure.

Well, those doomsayers in 1936 were wrong about the future of Social Security. And that rude audience member who interrupted me in 1973 was wrong about the future of Social Security. And those poll respondents from about 20 years ago who said they'd see Martians from space before they'd see Social Security benefits were wrong about the future of Social Security. And so too are the people I still hear from today who tell me that Social Security is destined to fail.

I mean, come on folks! The Social Security program is 90 years old now. It has been paying monthly benefits over those many decades without fail to hundreds of millions of people. How long must the program be around before people accept the fact that it is here to stay?

But of course I'm not naive. I know what fuels people's recent skepticism about the future of the program. You can hardly go a

*Continued on page 11*

## **Little Green Men, continued from page 10**

week without seeing some newspaper report or some internet story predicting Social Security's demise.

Some of the headlines like this one: "Social Security going broke in 2034" are just outright false. Some of the headlines like this one: "Social Security benefits to be cut 20% in 2034" are misleading. And of course none of the headlines tell the whole story.

If you go beyond the headlines and read the rest of the story, you will see a statement similar to this one, "By 2034, Social Security will only have enough cash reserves to pay 80% of promised benefits IF NO CHANGES ARE MADE TO THE SYSTEM BY THEN."

I added the emphasis to the "if no changes ..." part of that sentence because it is the key. The Social Security program will never reach the point where future benefits will have to be cut by 20% because there is absolutely no question that the system will be reformed before we reach the 2034 crunch date.

How do I know that? Well, for one thing, it's just common sense. No member of Congress, no president, no government official is going to let the Social Security program go belly up. You can be as cynical as you want about the state of politics and about the lack of bipartisanship in our country today. But I can assure you that no politician is going to say to their elderly constituents: "Sorry Grandma, because I'm bickering with my colleagues across the aisle and can't get anything done, I'm going to just forget about reforming Social Security and cut your Social Security checks by 20%!" (OK, maybe there are a few rogue members of Congress out there who might say that. But certainly nowhere near a majority.)

How else do I know that Social Security will not go belly up by 2034? Well, history is on my side. Throughout its history, the program has been reformed many times to keep it relevant and to keep it financially secure.

The last time that happened in a big way was the early 1980s. At that point, the Social Security system was about five years away from going in the red. Back then, President Reagan appointed the National Commission on Social Security Reform, made up of a bipartisan coalition of Senators and members of Congress and other experts. They proposed, and Congress eventually passed, a series of relatively modest tax increases and benefit cuts that has kept the system solvent for the next 50 years.

And that's what's going to happen again. I'm betting there will be another commission established that will suggest relatively modest reforms that will keep the program solvent for the next half century.

Before I close, I must make this point. I get dozens of emails from readers who tell me that the aforementioned Social Security headlines scare them. So they are choosing to take early (and reduced) benefits now so that they can get "grandfathered in" to the current system before the program goes bust. My advice to them is always the same. DO NOT make Social Security decisions based on politics. Make decisions based on your own personal economic situation. And I say that because I can guarantee that you will have a better chance of seeing little green men from outer space than you will of seeing the Social Security program go belly up now or anytime in the future.

**If you have a Social Security question, Tom Margenau has two books with all the answers. One is called "Social Security -- Simple and Smart: 10 Easy-to-Understand Fact Sheets That Will Answer All Your Questions About Social Security." The other is "Social Security: 100 Myths and 100 Facts." You can find the books at Amazon.com or other book outlets. Or you can send him an email at [thomas.margenau@comcast.net](mailto:thomas.margenau@comcast.net). To find out more about Tom Margenau and to read past columns and see features from other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate website at [www.creators.com](http://www.creators.com).**

# Honoring Veterans Day

By Leonard Summers III,

SHS '72 & USAFA '76, Cold War and OEF Veteran

D-M RAO Newsletter contributor, reprinted with permission

"But war, in a good cause, is not the greatest evil which a nation can suffer. War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things: the decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks nothing worth a war, is worse. When a people are used as mere human instruments for firing cannon or thrusting bayonets, in the service and for the selfish purposes of a master, such war degrades a people. A war to protect other human beings against tyrannical injustice – a war to give victory to their own ideas of right and good, and which is their own war, carried on for an honest purpose by their free choice – is often the means of their regeneration. A man who has nothing which he is willing to fight for, nothing which he cares more about than he does about his personal safety, is a miserable creature who has no chance of being free, unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself. As long as justice and injustice have not terminated their ever-renewing fight for ascendancy in the affairs of mankind, human beings must be willing, when need is, to do battle for the one against the other.

John Stuart Mill, *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* (April 1862)

Robert W. Black, *Rangers in World War II*, (1994) reported that "15 million served in the United States Armed Forces during WWII; of those no more than 7,000 were volunteers in the U.S. Army Rangers.

"The contribution of the six Ranger battalions of World War II far outweighed their numbers. They were not supermen or demigods. They were well-trained and highly motivated volunteers, steeled in the cauldron of war."

(*Author's note: COL Black was a Ranger himself. Korea was his war, which he would write about in subsequent book with a similar historical record treatment. Interestingly, he never wrote a book on Rangers in Vietnam.*)



1944: the fourth year of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. Allied troops have now advanced across France, Luxembourg, and Belgium and are poised to enter Nazi Germany. By this time, the 5th Ranger Battalion was joined to LTGEN George S. Patton, Jr.'s Third Army. Officially, they were attached to the 6<sup>th</sup> Calvary (Mechanized) Group. The 5<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion and 6<sup>th</sup> Calvary were serving as a screening force operating to the front and flanks of the American divisions.

L'Hopital, France - 2 December 1944 "D" Company of the 5<sup>th</sup> Ranger Battalion supported by Troop B and the 10th Infantry's Cannon Company has been ordered to take the French border town and has encountered a stiff enemy resistance of mortars and small arms fire. Although the Rangers were initially able to take the center of the village, the German defenders in the town

*Continued on page 13*



## Honoring Veterans Day, *continued from page 12*

counterattacked and drove them back. Fighting has ceased for the day as it was now 4:00 P.M. and too dark to continue. "D" Company was now situated in the southern part of the town, and took defensive positions to hold their position for the long night that lay ahead.

With no time to dig in, two 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenants: Francis W. Dawson and Leonard Summers, Jr. took advantage of the foxholes previously dug by the German soldiers. The good news: they hadn't had to dig those available shallow pits. The bad news: the German defenders knew exactly where those foxholes were located.

For LT Leonard Summers, Jr., he is the second generation to serve in the United States Army in a European theater of war as his father, SGT Leonard Summers, had served on the Meuse-Argonne front during the Great War, now referred to as WWI. LT Summers takes the first watch and LT Dawson goes to sleep to rest up and pull the second shift.

*Sometime that night a German soldier approaches the position and elects to take out both American Rangers by lobbing a grenade into the foxhole. That was his first mistake.*

LT Summers while standing upright, possibly nodding off, feels something hitting the side of his right thigh and knows instantly what has happened.

*The German soldier had by chance or by design thrown the grenade to the right side of the figure standing upright in the foxhole. That was his second mistake.*

*The German infantryman then turns and runs as far and as fast as he can away from his intended target. That was his last mistake.*

LT Summers, now fully awake, reaches for and grabs the grenade in mid-air before it has a chance to hit the ground. Out of the corner of his eye, he spies the German trooper sprinting away and, in one swift movement, hurls the primed charge back at him. At just about the time it reaches the back of the retreating soldier, the grenade explodes, and as the story went, "neither one of us had any problem staying awake for the rest of the night".

Homo sapiens are an unusual species. We realize our very existence has depended on millions of decisions made previously by our ancestors, some small, some large, but all counted. And we know that those numerous decisions made over so many years and eons ago were correct because we are living proof of it; we are present, here and now. In my family's case, my sisters and I owed our very existence to one singular, traceable event. Because, as it was explained to me when I was a Captain, "If I hadn't caught that grenade before it hit the ground, you wouldn't be here".

HAPPY VETERANS DAY!



## TUCSON CHAPTER OFFICERS

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**Secretary:** Larry Summers

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

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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 we still need a Board position of Legislative Chair. Please consider lending your *LEADERSHIP AND VOICE* to the Chapter teams.

Contact Tucson Chapter President Ann Hollis at [annhollis@usa.net](mailto:annhollis@usa.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