



THE TERRITORIAL

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



FEBRUARY 2024

National MOAA and the Tucson MOAA Chapter are non-partisan



FROM THE EAGLES NEST

**By Col Tom Owens,
Tucson Chapter President**

Punxsutawney Phil did not see his shadow. So this predicts an early spring after waking up and not seeing his shadow. We just hope that the rain stops soon; well not really because we need the rain. But we also need some golfing days.

Tucson will host another recruiting event in Vail, Arizona at the Del Lago Golf Restaurant, Saturday, February 17 at 1130. We had three recruits at our first meeting last month and are hoping for a few more attendees as we try to grow this satellite location. We submitted an event notice to the local newspaper, Vail Voice, which hopefully will boost attendance.

We have submitted MOAA Award requests for Chapter Level of Excellence, Chapter Website, and Chapter Newsletter categories. We have received Five-Star LOE awards for 14 consecutive years.

We are also finalizing applications for 2024 MOAA Community Outreach Grants. The Tucson chapter is participating in the March Military Stand Down which received a MOAA Grant to support this effort.

We are still looking for new Treasurer and Membership Chairs, both of which are board positions. Gary Pettett, COL, USA, (Ret) is stepping down after many years of providing leadership. He would like some overlap, but will

be leaving in April. Please contact me if you are interested in helping the chapter.

Last month at the luncheon, Suzanne Bond, the new CEO of Esperanza en Escalante, provided an in-depth overview of the programs and housing they provide. When asked what we

could do, she said they needed



household goods and furniture. Pam Devine, chapter Secretary, has invited Suzanne to speak at one of her Realty Estate meetings. With the transfer of houses being sold, furniture and appliances may be available for donations to EEE.

This month's luncheon will feature our own Rusty Orvik CDR, USN, (Ret) detailing what is happening in the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR). The ESGR is a DoD office established in 1972 that relies on a network of 2,300 volunteers nationwide and US territories. Rusty is our local representative and he seems to have a lot of fun doing it. The luncheon is again at La Trattoria and starts at 1130, February 22.

Upcoming Tucson Chapter Meetings

The February Luncheon is scheduled for
1130 Thursday, January 25th
Speaker: Rusty Orvik CDR, USN (Ret) / ESGR Update
Venue: [Trattoria Pina](#), 5541 N Swan, near Sunrise.

The March Luncheon is scheduled for 1130 Thursday, March 28
Speaker: Col Greg Hoffman,
162nd Wing Mission Support Group Commander
Venue: [Trattoria Pina](#), 5541 N Swan, near Sunrise.

MOAA Tucson / Vail Meeting

MOAA Tucson / Vail will hold its next meeting Saturday, February 17, at Del Lago Golf Restaurant, in Vail, at 1130. Please let me know if you will attend. Please invite any military officers (active or retired) you know to attend.

Vail is a growth area close to Tucson. MOAA Tucson Chapter started over 50 years ago. We had over 110 members. More recently we started a satellite chapter in the Catalina Mountains area (north of Tucson - SaddleBrooke). After 10 years, they grew to form their own chapter: Catalina Mountains Chapter of MOAA. They now have over 70 members. We now wish to form a satellite chapter in the Vail area. We have found that members do not want to drive 15-20 miles to attend monthly meetings. So we will hold meetings in the local Vail area. Please come and participate.

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

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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, not later than one week prior to the meeting. If you desire to participate, please email rorvik@orvik.com to receive the access link.

Legislative Update

By Ann Hollis, USAF LtCol (Ret), *Legislative Chair*

On January 8, Congressional leaders announced a top-line appropriations deal that was hoped to expedite completing appropriations for FY24 without another Continuing Resolution. However, with the January 18 third continuing resolution, the can was kicked down the road to March 1, for MilCon/VA, Energy/Water, Transportation/HUD, and Agriculture. All other bills, including Defense, expire on March 8

If the two deadlines pass without passage of the 12 funding bills, the compromise Continuing Resolution agreement from 16 Nov 2023, states the government would operate with a 1% spending cut across the board. This is vehemently opposed by Senate leaders, House Democratic leadership, and Republican House members from vulnerable districts.

We must continue to push our Senators and Representatives to work toward a compromise budget that will address the country's needs. I am asking you to act immediately using the [MOAA Legislative Action Center](#) and click on the topic:

“Ask Your Lawmakers to Avoid a Government Shutdown and Finish the Appropriations Process.” I also urge you to call and leave a personal message urging our elected representatives to put aside election-year partisanship and concentrate on the business of the nation. Press them to support quick action on a compromise budget that puts the people, our national security, and our economy first!

Remind them that as members of MOAA, we are not just constituents, but we are voters as well! If they are unwilling to put the good of the nation first, then we will remember their inaction at the polls.

To contact our Congressional members on these or any other 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; or call their offices direct.

Sen. Kyrsten Sinema -- www.sinema.senate.gov – (202) 224-4521

Sen. Mark Kelly -- www.kelly.senate.gov – (202) 224-2235

Rep. Raul Grijalva -- <https://grijalva.house.gov/> -- (202) 225-2345

Rep. Juan Ciscomani -- <https://ciscomani.house.gov/> -- (202) 225-2542

MOAA's Board of Directors approved Tricare for Life, Star Act, and Housing Help as anchors for the [Spring Advocacy Drive](#); click link for more information.

[Arizona Legislative News:](#) There is some important news out of Phoenix! Sen Dave Gowan, District 19 and Chair of the Military Affairs committee has reintroduced legislation to address active duty pay parity for USPHS and NOAA officers serving in Arizona. **SB1413:** Income Tax; Subtraction; Uniformed Services awaits a reading and assignment to committee. Three Senators and seven Representatives signed on as co-sponsors. There are no Senate or House co-sponsors from our four catchment districts. I urge you to immediately contact our Senators and Representatives and ask them to co-sponsor this important legislation. The passing of SB1413 will be the number one legislative priority for MOAA-AZ. Please take time to contact our legislators and ask them to support SB1413.

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

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Legislative Update *Continued from page 3*

LD-17: Sen. Justine Wadsack, 602-926-3106, JWadsack@azleg.gov; Rep. Rachel Jones, 602-926-3558, rachel.jones@azleg.gov; Rep. Cory McGarr, (602) 926-3630, CMc-Garr@azleg.gov. **LD-18:** Sen. Priya Sundareshan, (602) 926-3437, PSundareshan@azleg.gov; Rep. Nancy Gutierrez, (602) 926-4134, NGutierrez@azleg.gov; Rep. Christopher Mathis, (602) 926-3138, CMathis@azleg.gov. **LD-20:** Sen. Sally Ann Gon-zalez, (602) 926-3278, SGonzalez@azleg.gov; Rep. André Cano, (602) 926-3027, ACa-no@azleg.gov; Rep. Alma Hernandez, (602) 926-3136, AHernandez@azleg.gov. **LD-21:** Sen. Rosanna Gabaldón, (602) 926-3424, RGalbaldon@azleg.gov; Rep. Consuelo Hernandez, (602) 926-3523, CHernandez@azleg.gov, Rep. Stephanie Stahl Hamilton, (602) 926-3279, SStahlhamilton@azleg.gov.

AZ Presidential Preference Election

Check your voter registration, especially if you moved or updated your driver's license since the last time you voted. You must be a registered voter in the party whose Presidential Primary Election you wish to participate in. These are NOT open primaries unlike the state primaries but for party members only.

<https://www.recorder.pima.gov/Register>

<https://www.pinal.gov/794/Pinal-Votes>

<https://www.cochise.az.gov/509/Voter-Information>

PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE ELECTION,
February 3: UOCAVA (Military and Overseas) Ballots Mailed.
February 20: Last day to register to vote for Presidential Preference Election.
February 21: Early Ballots mailed out / Early Voting Begins.
March 8: Last day to request a Ballot by Mail.
March 12: Recommended deadline to mail back your ballot.
March 15: Last day to vote early in-person.
PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE ELECTION, March 19, 2024

Surviving Spouse & Personal Affairs

By Polly Parks, *Surviving Spouse Liaison*

MOAA has an excellent [Surviving Spouse Corner](#) on its website. There you can find everything from “Know Your Benefits” to an invitation to join the monthly Virtual Book Club sponsored by [The Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter](#). They alternate between fiction and nonfiction titles and vote as a group on the next selection to read. The conversation offers perspectives of the book that you might not have considered. The social aspect of the discussions makes reading much more fun. All Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter members are welcome to attend these gatherings monthly on Zoom.

If you haven't joined the MOAA Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter, download membership materials [here](#). You can also join MOAA's [Surviving Spouses Facebook group](#). The Virtual Chapter meets monthly on Zoom.

MOAA Member-Only Surviving Spouse publications are a Legislative Action Guide, Survivor's Planning Guide, Survivor's Checklist: First Steps for Moving On, and Your Guide to Military Burials.

February 2024 D-M RAO Meeting

By Polly Parks, *Surviving Spouse Liaison*

RAO Director Charles Schable's (CAPT, PHSCC, Ret) wife is out of the hospital but caught a bacterial infection there and is undergoing intensive antibiotic treatment at home. The foregoing, combined with low staffing and budget will probably lead to no RAO Volunteer Appreciation Day this year. The RAO needs a Thursday volunteer. The hours are 0900-1400 and there is training. The RAO refers people to appropriate on-base or veteran support organizations; it is not social work.

Base News: Col Amy Meier, Acting 355 Deputy Wing Commander reported that the Secretary of the Air Force Frank Kendall III will announce the major command changes shortly. D-M becoming home to the third power projection wing of the AF Special Operations Command (AFSOC), at least currently, will not change the Air Combat Command's ownership of the base. The next few years will see waves of people moving out and moving in. Also, there is going to be significant construction. The watchwords are hurry up and wait.

Entry and exit at the 24/7 Craycroft Gate will shut down by the end of next week and remain shut for several months for repairs and reconstruction. The only 24/7 gate will be Swan. **Special note:** visitors will need to go to the Visitor Check-in outside Craycroft and then return to Swan for entry.

There was some discussion about the continuing pinch of recruitment and retention and the positive impact of two recent military-affiliated individuals having broken into popular culture. Air Force Academy graduate and active-duty 2nd Lt Madison Marsh was recently crowned 2024 Miss America, a first for all the services. Also getting airplay is the 2024 Grammy nominations of duo [The War and Treaty](#), US Army Iraq War veteran, Michael Trotter, Jr, and his wife, Tanya for Best New Artist and Best American Roots Song. Their live rendition of "Cold," the Chris Stapleton classic, during the show, available at the link above, is "trending" on social media. In December, [The War and Treaty](#) undertook a short USO tour of three South Korean bases and Guam. [Stars and Stripes](#) has an excellent interview with Michael about how his time in the Army and Iraq helped him to create his music.

Exchange: Manager Hafeeza McCullough reported that the HVAC switchout went smoothly and the renovation has gone smoothly. The Food Court renovation is complete and both Subway and Popeyes are fully operational; there is one empty slot in the Food Court. The renovation of the Shopette and Burger King will commence once the paperwork is complete. It is expected there will be 30-60 days of construction. Both will be done in stages so there will be no complete shutdown.

Pharmacy: Director Sally To reiterated that as of 1 February 2024, the Pharmacy phone line (520-228-2778) hours changed to 0730-1300. After 1300 all prescription activations will be done via Q Anywhere app messaging or in person. The Pharmacy upgrade for remote activation for new/renewal prescriptions is active. Special formulary meds are at the Annex pharmacy which has more storage.

Support Squadron: Several base activities are scheduled for D-M's 16th celebration of Rodeo Week including a mechanical bull! The kitchen has modified hours. Retirees are encouraged to go to the Fitness Center and get their 24-hour access cards. There will be a Superbowl Party at the Bowling Center; big screens, open bar. The AF awarded D-M the Military Family Readiness Center of the Year.

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D-M RAO February Meeting *continued from page 5*

There is a big voter registration push base-wide. The Readiness Center has a computer at the computer hub that allows for registration in one's home state. On May 8 there will be Federal Voting Act training for point persons in the Wing.

On-base VSO: John Roseberry, the accredited on-base VSO said he had been fielding several DTC issues for Surviving Spouses (SS). He wants to get the word out about the importance of free VSO representation when filing claims. VSO volunteers are trained and accredited by the VA and if given formal representation, can access VA claim records electronically.

He was able to get a resolution to a case that began in 2015. The widow had been rejected previously, but with the PACT Act broadening presumptive conditions, she filed again but heard nothing. Mid-January, the widow got in contact with John and he found she had no representation. He executed the paperwork for the American Legion to be her representative, which came through on 02 February 2024 allowing him to access her records in the VA system. He discovered something had been dropped, and he was able to contact the right person at the VA and get the claim fixed on the spot. VA Benefit Management System executed a retroactive check and that morning, he fielded a call that \$19,940 was in the widow's direct deposit, with more to come.

VITA: In the past week, logging 456 hours, VITA volunteers had had assisted taxpayers filing 256 state forms with \$106k refunds and 241 federal forms with \$380k refunds. In addition to appointments, two days a week are open to walk-ins. **Society of Military Widows:** The local chapter has been holding steady with 23 members. Over the holidays they were able to donate \$600 to Operation Warmheart, which is run by First Sergeants and gives financial support to D-M families in need. **RAO Newsletter:** Barb Estes, the editor, has a new goal of 750 subscribers, which she hopes to attain faster than the decade it took her to get 500 subscribers. The pdf newsletter is free. **TMC Hospice:** The Hospice currently has 16 beds and has in-home hospice care available from Benson to Saddlebrook.

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/>.

EDITORIAL POLICY

THIS MOAA NEWSLETTER, PUBLISHED MONTHLY FROM SEPTEMBER THROUGH MAY IS SOLELY FOR THE BENEFIT OF MEMBERS OF THE TUCSON CHAPTER.

THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED HEREIN ARE THOSE OF THE AUTHORS/EDITOR AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THOSE OF THE MOAA NATIONAL ORGANIZATION, THE EDITOR, OR ANY OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT POLICIES OR AGENCIES.

DAVIS-MONTHAN PHARMACY

PHARMACY UPGRADE



The Pharmacy now offers remote activation for new/renewal prescriptions!

Don't wait in the lobby! Check-in anywhere during normal business hours (0730-1600). Go the pharmacy just ONCE whenever the "ready for pick-up" message is received.




SCAN CODE

Get started with our remote pharmacy check-in process — right on your mobile device!



OR

TEXT

- 1 Save the number to the right & text "Get in line" to get started. Do NOT call. **833-237-3093**
- 2 Provide the Patient's DOD ID number. 
- 3 Select which pharmacy where you want to activate your prescription(s). 1. Main/ Clinic on-base providers 2. Satellite/BX refills and off-base providers 
- 4 Wait for a confirmation message with status of your RX! 

MOAA's Spring Advocacy Push

By MOAA Staff

The three issue areas comprising this year's Advocacy in Action (AiA) campaign show the range of MOAA's legislative priorities – not just for officers, not just for retirees, and not wavering on our commitment to long-term advocacy goals. Here's a quick look at each of the issues, which were approved by MOAA's board of directors Jan. 19. Get involved! [Click here for details](#).

CONCURRENT RECEIPT What's at Stake: The Major Richard Star Act (H.R. 1282/S. 344) would end an unjust offset for combat-injured veterans who lose a dollar of service-earned retirement pay for every dollar of VA disability compensation. The bill has a supermajority of bipartisan support – more than 325 House co-sponsors and more than 70 in the Senate – thanks in part to past grassroots efforts from MOAA and partners in [The Military Coalition](#).

MOAA's Mission: We need to keep up this momentum and secure the bill's inclusion in the FY 2025 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). It's time for lawmakers to push this long-delayed step toward concurrent receipt for all past the finish line. [Ask Your Legislators to Support Combat-Injured Veterans](#)

FULL HOUSING ALLOWANCE What's at Stake: The BAH Restoration Act (H.R. 2537/S. 1823) reverses DoD policy capping the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) at 95% of local rental and utilities costs – a policy that's placing a financial burden on servicemembers and families in the middle of a nationwide rental shortage *and* ongoing recruiting challenges. Restoring this benefit – it was cut by Congress incrementally beginning in 2015 – would make a difference in the quality of life for all who serve, but especially among junior enlisted members and their families, who rely on this allowance as a large percentage of their compensation. **MOAA's Mission:** Language requiring an incremental increase reached the late stages of the FY 2024 NDAA process but ultimately was not included in the final bill. We must send a message to lawmakers that close isn't good enough – servicemembers deserve a full housing allowance, and more progress must be made this legislative session. [Ask Your Legislators to Support Full BAH for Servicemembers](#)

TRICARE FOR LIFE What's at Stake: Protecting TRICARE For Life (TFL) remains a key issue for all MOAA members – those already covered by TFL and Medicare, along with those who'll use the benefit when they turn 65. MOAA remains concerned about a [Congressional Budget Office \(CBO\) report](#) suggesting two measures which would severely weaken the benefit – enrollment fees topping \$1,100 per family, and cost-sharing requirements including an \$850 deductible and up to \$4,675 in potential yearly medical bills. **MOAA's Mission:** Legislators seeking solutions to budget gaps must hear a clear message: Maintaining TFL is not just a national obligation to those who spent decades in uniform, it's also critical to ensuring key influencers in the recruiting process aren't discouraged from recommending uniformed service to future generations. While TFL fees or cost shares aren't part of any current legislation, we must counter CBO's misguided options with our grassroots advocacy efforts. The next CBO release is slated for December of this year, following the elections; MOAA will update our members as soon as we get the report.

Take Action Online: MOAA's last online advocacy effort addressing potential TFL fees resulted in nearly 49,000 messages to lawmakers. Register for [MOAA's Legislative Action Center](#) today so you can be part of upcoming campaigns.



TUCSON CHAPTER OFFICERS

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

President: Tom Owens, Col, USAFR, (Ret), 520-760-3476/owensttt@gmail.com

1st Vice President: Gerald Petersen, LTC USA (Ret), 520-250-1914, cactushome1@earthlink.com

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

Legislative Chair/Personal Affairs/Veteran Committee Rep.: Ann Hollis, USAF LtCol (Ret), 520-749-3573; / annhollis@usa.net

Secretary: Pam Devine 520-401-0001 / Pam.Devine@azmoves.com

Treasurer/Membership Chair: Gary Pettett, COL, USA, (Ret), 520-544-7730, pettett45@gmail.com

Scholarship Chair: Douglas May, LtCol, USAF, (Ret), 520-818-3309 / dougmay@gmail.com

ESGR Chair: Ross Orvik, CDR, USN, (Ret), 510-393-9359 / rorvik@orvik.com

Surviving Spouse Liaison; Territorial Editor: Polly Parks, 703-338-6881 / pollyparks@earthlink.net

Chaplain: Bette Ludlow, 520-207-3755, bettyludlow@yahoo.com

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

Past President: William Wojciechowski, Col, USAF, (Ret), 620-770-0059 /

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 .

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 6415

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

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