



MOAA



Military Officers Association of America Desert Duster
35 YEARS

SEPTEMBER 2016 • www.greenvalleymoaa.org • Green Valley Chapter an affiliate of MOAA

REMEMBERING 9/11»



Storming the Hill and Council President's Seminar

I am back from a week in DC for the MOAA Board meeting, Storming the Hill, and Council Presidents' Seminar. For a couple of days, cold and miserable and then OK. (I was dressed for AZ, while Mary was overdressed. Early on she was comfortable in DC, I was not.) On the way home our flights connecting through Denver were cancelled because of the huge snow storm and we were re-routed through Houston. Worked out OK, but we had to catch a 0515 flight from DCA. Good to be home in Southern AZ.

You will likely be hearing from Barry Wright in the upcoming weeks, but some highlights.

The Level of Excellence grading was accomplished on April 15. I did not grade any AZ submissions and there was no post discussions about the grading of the submissions. The announcement will likely occur as in past years in late summer.

Austerity, Austerity....

The new MOAA President, Lt. Gen. Atkins is in the midst of a staff reorganization, more info in the coming months. Also cost cutting of some MOAA programs. Those impacting Councils & Chapters:

MOAA Connect will be eliminated sometime during the summer. MOAA is looking into a less costly way for chapters to share info with each other.

The "gold bar" program (for newly commissioned ROTC officers) will be eliminated. For chapters which wish to continue on MOAA will seek an "at cost" supplier for these chapters.

The JROTC medal program will be eliminated. MOAA has sufficient medals for 2016. Thereafter chapters that desire to continue on using their own funds, MOAA will be seeking an "at cost" supplier for the medals

The MOAA Regional Leadership Seminars as we know them will be eliminated. For September 2016, the western regional in Las Vegas will continue on in the same format we know. In 2017 and on, a "hybrid" approach will be used (four or so a year, a quick in and out, and less MOAA staff & invitees.) I encourage the GV chapter to fully utilized its slots for the September seminar, as it may be a while before that type of in-depth seminar returns.

Chapters will receive a National MOAA visit every four years, instead of every three years.

Storming the Hill

Storming went very well on April 13. Our agenda was tri-care fees and the SBP/DIC oversight. AZ Council President Ron Perkins, Kim Bilas (spouse of a currently serving MOAA member) and I visited the offices of the entire AZ congressional delegation, albeit we only met with five principals (McCain, Kirkpatrick, McSally, Gallego, and Salmon.) John McCain seemed to be in ornery mood. Martha McSally was full of energy and knew the details of the MOAA agenda better than us. She is a MOAA life member and she asked how many other MOAA Life members are members of Congress (I asked MOAA staff to look into that.)

VR,
John Chernoski

April 13, 2016: MOAA "Storming the Hill." L to R--Kim Bilas (MOAA spouse); John Chernoski (Green Valley MOAA); Congresswoman Martha McSally (MOAA Life Member); and Ron Perkins (President AZ MOAA Council of Chapters.)



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



As we pass the midpoint of the calendar year and look forward to the summer, monsoons and all, let's look at how we closed out this portion on the year. In addition, let's look at what has gone on during the "quiet time" and what lies ahead for the remainder of the year.

On May 18, the annual scholarship award dinner was held. While the chapter awarded two scholarships and the Quail Creek Veterans Golf Association funded one, we ran into a blizzard of schedule conflicts. It seemed that Sahuarita High School and Rio Rico High also scheduled commencement for that evening. As a result, two of our three recipients

were graduating and were attending their own commencement. Yet Alexander Sublette, cadet Colonel, from Nogales High School was present to receive his scholarship. John McGee, President of our Scholarship and Military Assistance Fund, made the presentation.

After the presentation, we were treated to an outstanding musical program presented by vocalist Connie Butz and pianist Marty Schuyler. This dynamic duo had a wide range on songs available to them, yet concentrated on those most remembered by the chapter members. We heard songs from those years heard by our members in their youth. It was a delightful presentation. Many thanks go to Betty Atwater for handling all aspects of the presentation from booking to introductions.

The board met in early June and by a unanimous vote, decided to "take the summer off" which equated to no meetings. The lack of meetings however did not stop Peggy McGee. Peggy planned, organized and managed a masterful effort in "Food for Troops" scheduled for the Independence Day period. With her usual determination, she brought forth a very successful program and kept MOAA at the forefront of the Quail Creek Community.

While we had not scheduled any summer "field trip", Peggy again stepped forward to assume leadership for a visit to Fort Huachuca on August 30th. The trip will include a Command briefing plus tours of the famous museums. This was a real effort in organizing and we have opted to "car pool". A real cynic might call it "herding cats". Yet it is a rare opportunity to visit a military facility steeped in Army tradition and a modern vital link in our security. Our hats are off to Peggy for her efforts. If you have not yet signed up and are interested contact me at 399-3550 or rnnewman514@aol.com

As we now move into the latter part of the year, we will have a variety of programs on the Fisher House and the master plan for the FICO master plan for home site expansion. We conclude the year with our Christmas meeting.

As the year comes to a close in December with the swearing in of new chapter board members, I can say one word: HELP! We have been running short handed this year. This places more of a burden on those of us remaining. Please consider having your name placed in nomination at the November meeting.

Great News - All Arizona Chapters of MOAA + AZ Council of Chapters awarded 5 Star Level of Excellence. Green Valley Chapter will have another 5 Star Level of Excellence banner to add to our flag.

**SEPTEMBER
GUEST
SPEAKER**



Kelly Laurich
Arizona Fisher House (AZFH) Manager

I am very honored to have been selected to manager the AZFH, I have been involved in this role since April of 2015, right before the Fisher House Foundation broke ground on the SAVAHCS campus. Prior to this position I was the Recreation Specialist for the Southwestern Blind Rehabilitation Center at SAVAHCS, this being the reason I moved to Arizona as I started my career as a blind rehabilitation specialist. I have held a few careers prior to arriving here, but these two have been the most rewarding by far.

I was born and raised in Marquette, Michigan which makes me known around most parts of the country as a "Yooper". I graduated from Northern Michigan University with an BA in Special Education and Education. I graduated with a MA from Western Michigan University as a Vision Rehabilitation Therapist. I love animals and when I am not at the AZFH you can find me with my two "boys" aka schnauzers Oscar and Oliver and my cat Olive. I also spend much of my free time advocating for pets at our local shelters. I love to travel and when I get a chance I am narrowing down the items on my bucket list.

Quail Creek Comes Through for *Food for the Troops* Program

We asked Quail Creek to bring groceries over the 4th of July weekend to support our *Food for the Troops* campaign and support us they did. Residents donated 371 lbs. of groceries that really helped fill the pantry shelves at the 162nd Fighter Wing, Arizona Air National Guard (AZANG.)

In addition to all the food, this best yet. After paying the lucky and other donations totaled \$294. junior enlisted troops at



Barbara Gavre, Family Readiness amount of food collected and with an Air Force truck. She was jars of peanut butter and Mac N' Cheese, all troops favorites. And the cake and brownie mixes will be great for making family desserts. She sent a big thank you to Quail Creek for remembering the troops who continue to put themselves in harm's way to preserve our Country's freedom.

year's monetary donations for the program were our winner, the 50-50 raffle netted our Chapter \$333 These funds will be used to purchase turkeys for the Thanksgiving time.

Program Manager, AZANG, was amazed at the fortunately for us was able to pick up all the items especially delighted to see so many boxes of cereal,

Helping to move everything from the Madera Clubhouse were Lt Col (Ret) Bob Atwater, Betty Atwater, LtCol (Ret) John McGee, President, GV MOAA Scholarship & Military Assistance Fund, COL (Ret) Peggy McGee and our webmaster, Marianne Cobarrubias.

Photo

(L-R) The Atwater's and McGee's pause before unloading all the groceries donated at Quail Creek over the 4th of July weekend. (Photo by Marianne Cobarrubias.)



ALERT!!!!



Honor Flight Tucson has joined the ***Fry's Community Rewards Program***: How you can help...

Support Honor Flight Tucson by simply enrolling your Fry's V.I.P. Card online at www.FrysCommunityRewards.com and designating Honor Flight Tucson as your organization of choice. Then each time you shop at *any Fry's in Arizona* using your Fry's V.I.P. Card, Honor Flight Tucson will earn rewards.

PLEASE NOTE: Before you can link your Fry's V.I.P. card to an organization, you must have an email address. If you would like to participate but do not have internet access, please contact Honor Flight's coordinator for the Fry's Community Rewards Program at 520-777-8938.

STEP 1: Creating an online Fry's Account (NOTE: If you already have an online Fry's account, skip to Step #2.)

Go to <http://www.fryscommunityrewards.com/>

Select "Create an Account."

Under "Sign-In information," enter your email address and create a password. (**Write down your email & password—you will need it in Step 2.**)

Under "Select Your Preferred Store," enter your postal code.

Select "Find Stores."

Choose your store, then select "Add Card."

Enter your Fry's V.I.P. Card number and your last name.

You will then be prompted to check your email for a confirmation email.

Go to this confirmation email and click the hyperlink in your email to finish creating your Online Fry's Account.

Continue to Step 2 to register for the Fry's Community Rewards Program for Honor Flight Tucson.

STEP 2: Register for the Fry's Community Rewards Program to Support Honor Flight Tucson

Go to <http://www.fryscommunityrewards.com/>

Select "Sign-In."

Enter your email and password and then select "Sign In." (**This will be the email and password you created in Step 1**, or your email and password from your already existing online Fry's Account.)

Select "My Account," then select "Account Settings" from the drop-down menu.

Click "edit" under Community Rewards. If prompted, enter personal information.

Under "Find Your Organization," enter the number **83110** and click "Search." (NPO number).

Honor Flight Tucson should pop up under "Organization Name." Click on the circle in front of Honor Flight Tucson and then click "Save."

If you have registered correctly, you should see your organization information listed under "Community Rewards" on your Account Summary page.

Your purchases will begin earning rewards for Honor Flight Tucson within 7 to 10 business days of registering your Fry's V.I.P. Card online. Within 7 to 10 business days of successfully enrolling your Fry's V.I.P. Card, you will see at the bottom of your Fry's receipt: "At your request, Fry's is donating to Honor Flight Tucson."

Please Note: this Community Rewards Program will in no way interfere with your Fry's Fuel Rewards...you will continue to get your fuel rewards as before.

September Meeting Tuesday September 20

QUAIL CREEK

Social Time 5:00 - Dinner 5:30

Guest Speaker - Kelly Laurich – Fisher House, Tucson, AZ.

Please reserve ____ places for me for DINNER. I am sending a check in the amount of \$ ____ (\$26.00 per meal), payable to MOA of Green Valley, P.O. Box 769, Green Valley, AZ 85622-0769.

ATTN: Dinner Reservation

This request must be mailed to arrive no later than Sept. 14, 2016

I am bringing a guest whose name(s) is/are: _____

Check Number _____

Rank and Name (please print): _____

Check meal selection and indicate number of each meal:

Mixed Green Salad w/ accompaniments at the table.

_____ **Roast Sliced Sirloin with Black Peppercorn Cabernet Sauce or**

_____ **Chicken Cordon Blue**

Sides: Garlic Mashed Potatoes and Mixed Seasonal Vegetables

Dessert: Chocolate Brownie with Ice Cream and Whipped Cream

NOTE: If you cannot get your reservation and check mailed timely, please call Barbara Brown at 520-625-8066 to make your reservation. Please bring a check or exact cash amount to the meeting.

If you require a ride to the Luncheon, please check here _____

If you require a Hearing Aid Assist, please contact Barbara Brown at 520 625 8066 or email barbara.brown3@cox.net

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GV MOAA Ladies Auxiliary News

The Green Valley MOAA Auxiliary collected donated items for Tucson Veterans Serving Veterans at its annual JROTC Scholarship Awards dinner held on May 18, 2016 at Quail Creek's Madera Clubhouse. Our Auxiliary has stepped up to support TVSV's efforts to assist homeless veterans in our area. GV MOA members donated toiletries and clothing, as well as monetary donations totaling \$220.00. Pictured is Betty Atwater, Auxiliary/Surviving Spouse Chair and a photo of TVSV's Mission Statement.



DATE: May 20, 2016
TO: Chapter and Council Auxiliary Liaisons
FROM: Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee (SSAC)
SUBJECT: 'SSAC Storms the Hill'

By Gail Joyce and Patricia Bergquist, Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee members

On April 13, members of the Surviving Spouse Advisory Committee were among the more than 160 participants — including members of MOAA's board of directors and staff, council and chapter leaders from almost every state, and members of the Currently Serving Advisory and Currently Serving Spouse Advisory committees — of MOAA's annual Storming the Hill lobbying event in Washington, D.C. The teams of Hill-stormers provided their legislators with detailed fact sheets and brochures and asked them to: 1) oppose disproportional TRICARE fee hikes and 2) act this year on the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP)/Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) offset affecting 63,000 surviving military spouses.

Once again, the FY 2017 DoD budget proposes changes to health care for both active duty service members and military retirees that would rebrand current TRICARE health care plans into two renamed plans and feature:

- reduced out-of-pocket expenses for in-network care for active duty families;
- a new annual enrollment fee (\$450 individual/\$900 family) for TRICARE Standard;
- a 24-percent increase in TRICARE Prime enrollment fees;
- a new means-tested enrollment fee for Medicare-eligibles (based on a percentage of retired pay) in addition to their Medicare Part B premiums;
- provider network coverage for 85 percent of beneficiaries;
- a doubled deductible for out-of-network care;
- flat-fee in-network provider cost-shares versus a percentage of the provider payment;
- a 33-percent increase in the annual cap on out-of-pocket expenses;
- doubled or tripled pharmacy copayments over 10 years; and
- annually increased fees/copayments by a health care cost index projected to grow 5.2 percent a year.

DoD documents support the fact that military personnel and their health care costs are not the problem. In fact, the problem still lies in the inefficiency and mismanagement within DoD.

Hill-stormers delivered the message that TRICARE access, referrals, and continuity of care, along with other problems, need to be addressed for active duty servicemembers before fees are increased because the biggest fees would affect beneficiaries without access. The proposed fee increases are disproportionately high for retirees. Without guaranteed access, enrollment fees for TRICARE For Life and TRICARE Standard are inappropriate. Means-testing health care benefits earned through service is not only wrong but unprecedented. No other employer, federal or civilian, means-tests benefits. Any annual fee adjustment should be based on the retiree COLA, not the projected health care cost index growth of 5.2 percent a year. Any changes to TRICARE fee law would represent a breach of faith with those who already have paid extraordinary premiums in sacrifice and service through their military careers.

SBP coverage provides a military spouse up to 55 percent of their servicemembers retired pay upon death for any reason. For active duty deaths, the coverage automatically is provided to the spouse. Under current law, survivors of deceased active duty and retired servicemembers who participated in SBP must forfeit dollar-for-dollar from their SBP when military service causes the death and DIC is awarded by the VA, currently \$1,254 per month (\$15,048 a year). This means those affected by this inequity lose all or part of their SBP. Current legislative proposals to repeal the offset are H.R. 1594 and S. 979. MOAA has been fighting for full repeal of this offset for 15 years!

In 2008, a Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance (SSIA) was approved by Congress to partially compensate for the SBP/DIC injustice. The intent was to continue increasing the SSIA to phase out the offset. Unfortunately, the authority to continue SSIA will end Oct. 1, 2017. If the SSIA is not extended, as provided in H.R. 4519, then SBP/DIC survivors will lose an additional \$310 a month (\$3,700 a year).

On Storming the Hill day, we told our legislators that the SBP/DIC offset should be fully repealed, but if sufficient funds could not be found to do so, then the SSIA should be extended and increased to continue phasing out the offset completely.

Gen. Charles T. "Tony" Robertson Jr., USAF (Ret), chair of MOAA board of directors, said that "Storming the Hill," in his opinion, is "one the most important days of the year for what we do." He continued, "It gives us our chance to walk over to Capitol Hill, look our legislators in the eye, and ask them for their support on some issues that are critical."

While we were encouraged by responses from most legislators, we urge you to contact your legislators on these issues, too. To call your legislators' office toll-free, use MOAA's direct line to the congressional switchboard: **(800) 272-6622**. Then, ask the Capitol operator to connect you with your legislator's office, and ask to speak with the legislator's legislative assistant or military legislative assistant.

Continue to Serve

The local area offers plenty of volunteer opportunities for MOAA members to continue to serve. Here's one you should know about.

The Greater Green Valley Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) will hold a 20-hour basic training course beginning on Wednesday, September 7th at the Green Valley Fire District HQ/Training Center, 1285 W Camino Encanto. This 5-day course will cover disaster preparedness, disaster medical operations, fire safety, psychological reaction to disasters, terrorism and many more topics. The training is free and there is no obligation to join CERT after completing the course.

Classes will be held from 5-9 p.m. on September 7, 8, 14, and 15 and from 9-a.m. – 1 p.m. on September 17. Deadline for registration is midnight, September 6.

The local CERT could especially use more EMT, nurses, as well as those familiar with disaster management. Former military, medical, law enforcement and firefighters make ideal members of the team. But you don't need this experience. The training is important for anyone to help family and neighbors until first responders arrive.

Consider joining other Quail Creek residents by becoming a CERT volunteer to help out first responders and residents in case of a natural or man-made disaster. To learn more about CERT please visit www.ggvcert.com. You can also register for the course there and follow Green Valley CERT on Facebook. Questions, contact John McGee, 520 207-6188, jcmcgee@cox.net.

Photo caption: John & Peggy McGee, GVMOA, second in rows, with other CERT members and firefighters at the CERT Mount-Out trailer after an exercise.



Benefit Concert for College Scholarships

As part of its Veterans Appreciation Week program in November, the Sahuarita Unified School District (SUSD) will be sponsoring several activities to honor veterans. The week will start off with a concert at 4 p.m. on November 5 featuring the *Gatekeepers* from the Ironwood Hills Church in Tucson. The concert will be held in the SUSD auditorium, 350 W Sahuarita Rd. There is plenty of free parking. The group will present a variety of melodies, all with a patriotic theme. With its multi-talented vocalists and musicians the *Gatekeepers* definitely inspire an increased level of patriotism.

Proceeds from the concert will be used for scholarships for students from both Sahuarita and Walden Grove high schools.

Tickets are \$10 each or \$20 for families. There will also be a silent auction featuring golf, meals, spa days and other attractions. Tickets can be purchased prior to or after our dinner on September 20. They can also be ordered from Peggy McGee at pjmcgee@cox.net/207-6188.

Calendars for VA Hospital

If you are starting to get more 2017 calendars in the mail than you can possibly use, rather than throw them in the trash or recycle bin, please save them for the hospitalized veterans. Those being hospitalized long term and those living in the nursing home facility really appreciate getting them. Both wall and pocket calendars as well as note cards are needed. Please bring them to the meeting on September 20 at Quail Creek and Peggy McGee will deliver them to the VA.

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2016 EVENT SCHEDULE

September 20, 2016 (third Tuesday) -

Dinner Meeting, QC Clubhouse, No host bar 5:00-5:30, Dinner to follow. Speaker is Kelly Laurich, Tucson VA Fisher House.

October 2016... no meeting

October 29, 2016 (Saturday)-

White Elephant Parade. This years theme is "The Magic of Giving."

November 15, 2016 (third Tuesday)

Dinner Meeting, QC Clubhouse, No host bar 5:00-5:30, Dinner to follow. Business Meeting. Speaker is Tom Campbell, FICO Corp. - Project Manager - Sahuarita Farms Land/River Project.

December 8, 2016 (Thursday) Christmas

Dinner/Installation of Officers, QC Clubhouse, No host bar 5:00-5:30, Dinner to follow.

MOAA Board of Directors, Green Valley Chapter, meets the first Wednesday of each month from September through May at 8:30 a.m. at Friends In Deed, 301 W. Camino Casa Verde in Green Valley. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend. Please join us!



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SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

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1LT Joseph Longo - COL Peggy McGee - CDR Richard Pollard - Lt Col
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HAPPY BIRTHDAY