

Minutes of the September 2010 General Meeting, Arizona Chapter MOAA

A luncheon meeting of the General Membership was held on September 18, 2010 at the McCormick Ranch Golf Club. President Ron Perkins called the meeting to order at 1200 hours and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by an invocation.

Members Present: Ron Perkins welcomed all including Eric Landau, guest speaker, and introduced new members: Carol Zimmerman, Charlie & Sandy Moses, Gene Rafanelli, Bill Sumner and Robert & Dorothy Jones. Total people present: 66; 65 members & Eric Landau.

September 11 & USAF Birthday: Ron Perkins reminded everyone that today, September 18th, is the Air Force's 63rd birthday. Last Saturday was September 11 and there were efforts through the internet to have everyone fly the flag. Ron asked for a show of hands for those able to fly the flag last Saturday and it appeared unanimous. We must always remember 9/11 and the lives lost. MOAA's website and chapter e-mails are effective vehicles to stay current on issues.

Minutes: Ron Perkins dispensed with reading the prior meeting minutes.

Reports:

Treasurer's Report: Bill Roscher reported as of September 17, 2010 the General Fund is at \$9,810.34 plus \$50 petty cash and the Scholarship Fund is at \$8,110.16 for a total of \$17,970.50. Bill also announced \$140 was collected for today's raffle with \$70 going to the scholarship fund and \$70 to be awarded.

5 Star of Excellence: Ron Perkins announced the chapter has received positive recognition for all that we do. The chapter was awarded the *Five Star Level of Excellence Award* for the 7th straight year. Ron & Betty will attend MOAA's Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C., in November and will be presented with a banner to add to our chapter's flag pole. Arizona chapters did well: six received Five Star of Excellence awards and two chapters received Four Star of Excellence recognition. Ron presented Jim Cullison with a *First Runner Up* award from National for our printed newsletter "The Sentinel". Our chapter was also recognized as *Second Runner Up* in web design. Tom Houser has been our webmaster but recently moved to another state. Although Rob Welch has volunteered to transition to this role on an interim basis, if there is a member experienced in web design Ron is asking they step forward to assist.

AVHOF: In August, Ron Perkins was informed two members of our chapter, Gary Fredricks and Webb Ellis, were selected for induction to the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame. Both are very deserving selectees. Members may show their support and attend the induction ceremony on October 29 by registering through the AVHOF website. All are encouraged to make a reservation prior to October 1 as the cost goes up after the first.

Personal Affairs: Dan Conway noted we have had six members die since the first of the year. Dan has contacted each of their widows and/or family members to offer support. At a previous meeting Dan had explained a scam where someone poses as a relative in need of immediate financial support and how to avoid becoming a victim. He brought brochures from the Arizona Attorney General's Office that outlines the top 10 consumer scams and how you can protect yourself. Dan also reminded members that a number of publications are available from National MOAA and brought a couple of examples such as a brochure entitled, *Help Your Survivors Now: A Guide to Planning Ahead*. Dan encouraged members to contact MOAA to request a copy of any of these publications, which are listed and summarized on their website. Dan talked about the wonderful group of high school graduates we awarded scholarships to. Dan shared that a Vice President of TriWest was very impressed with our chapter and suggested his company may donate more than \$1,000 for the next round of JROTC scholarship awards. Dan suggested we all ask companies for a donation of \$1,000 and any company donating \$1,000 or more could make a presentation at next year's scholarship award luncheon meeting.

Honor and Remember Flag: Kathy Upchurch explained the bill to endorse the *Honor and Remember Flag* as a national symbol to recognize members of the Armed Forces who died in the line of duty. It would be flown like the POW flag, six times a year. Kathy also mentioned upcoming events in Phoenix for the Enduring Freedom Memorial Dedication scheduled for October 9 at the Arizona State Capital Wesley Bolin Plaza at 10:00 A.M. In addition, there will be a Parade of Colors honoring Arizona's fallen and their families at 08:30 A. M. For more details, please contact Kathy.

Membership: Ron Perkins thanked the membership committee and encouraged all members to *Bring In A Buddy* as suggested by John Ady. Membership continues to grow with 35 new members recruited so far this year.

Cell Phones for Soldiers: Our chapter joined with Messinger Mortuary in collecting "*Cell Phones for Soldiers*". Every old cell phone we turn in provides a 100 minute calling card for a deployed soldier. Pat Dale brought a box for collection of old cell phones and will have the box available at future chapter luncheon meetings.

Fall Golf Tournament: The two annual golf tournaments are the main money makers for the scholarship fund. Ron Perkins reminded members the next one is planned for November 12 and it only costs \$63 to play. You do not need to play to participate. It costs only \$25 to sponsor a hole, and the sponsor's name will be prominently displayed. Further details are available in *The Sentinel*.

Legislative Report: Gary Fredricks provided an excellent summary of current issues in *The Sentinel*. Ron Perkins reiterated several items. At the National level there will be no doctor payment cuts for now but the new deadline to address the issue is December 1, 2010. And with inflation rising only 0.1% in August and only one month remaining in the fiscal year, it is fairly certain retirees will not see any COLA increase for 2011. There is a looming deficit issue, and Secretary Gates has said there "are no sacred cows" where major cuts are concerned. Personnel costs including retiree benefits are always the first to be challenged. At the State level the administration has indicated any initiatives requiring additional money will not be favorably received.

Arizona StandDown 2011: Last year's event served over 800 homeless veterans, and each year is better and better. Ron Perkins indicated we will have the opportunity to help out again this year and may also be able to help out at the Arizona State Fair. A website is planned for this year's StandDown planning to allow volunteers to sign up directly for specific shifts. Ron will email members or include an article in *The Sentinel* once specific information is available. Ron Green invited Art Sloane to the next Chapter Board of Directors meeting to obtain more information on next year's event planning and how our chapter can be involved.

USO Facilities at Terminal Four: Recently a big ceremony occurred at Sky Harbor introducing the planned USO facilities at Terminal Four. It is under construction and not scheduled for completion until next fall. Auxiliary members may be able to help out in some way once the facility is up and running. Ron Perkins will meet with Kathy Upchurch and some of the auxiliary members the last week of September to determine a possible program. Members are requested to contact Kathy or one of the board members with any ideas.

October Picnic: Ron Perkins stressed next month's meeting is scheduled for October 23, the fourth Saturday of the month rather than the third Saturday when we normally meet. It will be a picnic at McCormick Stillman Railroad Park in the Stillman Ramada. Marie Fredricks has made the arrangements including catering by Famous Dave's Bar-B-Que. Our chapter will host the ESGR (Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve) special recognition to valley employers for their outstanding support of our guard and reserve members. A flyer was available on the tables and information will be available in the next issue of *The Sentinel*. Chuck Schluter added this is a good way to say thank you to these employers. We now have about 102,000 guard and reserves on active duty or about 48% of all troops currently deployed. We couldn't preserve our

way of freedom without them. ESGR Executive Director Butch Wise will be there to help present the awards.

Lunch was served and enjoyed by all.

Eric Landau, “Eye Witness to Ground Zero on 9/11/2001”: Ron Perkins introduced Eric Landau. Over the past few weeks we have been reminded of the terrible attack on the United States on 9/11/2001. Our lives were changed forever due to those attacks. Eric Landau was an eyewitness there and one of the first responders. Rob Welch prepared a moving slide presentation to accompany Eric’s presentation. Eric is a New York native, living on Long Island and working there before retiring and moving to Arizona. Nine years ago, Eric returned to New York on personal business but instead inadvertently became one of the first responders. Eric described what he saw and experienced. He was half a mile away when the twin towers fell and spent time at Ground Zero before becoming an Ad hoc communications officer for a FEMA Triage Center. After it closed due to lack of patients, he worked on the command logistics staff at the New York City Emergency Operations Center. He provided a vivid description of what he saw. The presentation was stirring and informative followed by a Q&A session. At the conclusion, Ron Perkins asked for 15 seconds of silence to remember those who lost their lives that day. He thanked Eric and presented a token gift as a thank you and reminder of Eric’s visit to our chapter.

Chapter 50/50 Raffle collected \$140; six prizes were awarded: two \$5, two \$10, and two \$20 for a total of \$70 awarded.

Closing: Ron Perkins invited all to attend the next board meeting on October 7 at the Veterans Home on North 3rd Street in Phoenix.

Benediction provided by Ron Perkins

Adjournment: 1:58 PM

Respectfully submitted:
Beth Cullison, Secretary