



The Sentinel

Arizona's First Chapter



The Arizona Chapter, 14435 N. 66th Place, Scottsdale, Arizona 85254

July 2006

CHARTERED IN 1956 - OVER 49 YEARS OF SERVICE TO COUNTRY

EDITOR: John Gerometta

50th Anniversary Countdown—3 Months to Go!!!



President's Message

Social activities are an important part of our Chapter responsibilities. Sometimes, these activities take second place as we are concerned about our legislative, community and other member service activities. This will not be the case when we celebrate our 50th when our social activities will take first place at what we expect to be the best Chapter social activity of the past 50 years.

I hope that you will plan to be a part of it.

Daniel M. Conway

Legislative Update

Unfortunately I'm a little out of sync with the Sentinel schedule this month. We are off tomorrow to spend the last two weeks of June on the island of Kauai. That's the good part. The bad part is that a lot is happening on Capitol Hill right now that I'm going to be delinquent in reporting to you. Oh well – here is where we stand at mid-June.

Debate on the FY2007 Defense Authorization Bill has just started in earnest in the Senate. Several amendments that we are following are expected to be considered. Among them is one that would authorize combat-related special compensation for disabled members whose combat wounds forced them into

medical retirement before attaining 20 years of service. Under current law a 100% disabled member forced out of service by combat wounds with any thing less than a full 20 years of service has his full VA disability compensation deducted from any earned, service-based retired pay.

Another amendment would end the "disabled veterans tax" on military retirees deemed "unemployable" by the VA before its scheduled 2009 cut-in date. These members currently have a large share of their VA disability compensation deducted from their service-earned retired pay, unlike all other 100% disabled retirees. Other amendments under discussion would benefit our Guard and Reserve forces by fixing current inequities between their benefits and corresponding ones for active duty forces.

I am sure by now you are all well aware of the potential identity theft issue associated with the theft of certain VA records. Among the interesting potential mitigations to this that are being considered is one by the House Veteran's Affairs Committee. This option would create a claims adjudication process within the VA to provide an avenue to compensate members who actually suffer identity theft damages without having to go through the courts. In the meantime, please take the advice of Tom Houser who earlier suggested that you call credit reporting agencies to place fraud alerts on your credit file immediately. It is understood that if you alert one, the other two will receive complementary alerts from the first one. Contacts identified by Tom as:

Fund Donations

One person's generous gift will help strengthen America's future through supporting the education of our youth. Since the last newsletter the members below have made generous donations to the:

General Fund:

50th Anniversary Fund:

Frank Birtciel \$25, June Bryan \$50, Evelyn Crosby \$50, Faye Fahy \$50, Oliver Exterminating \$50, Bill & JoAnn Roscher \$16, Katherine Russell \$50, JoAnn Thompson \$50, TRIWEST \$1,000, Margaret Ziernicki \$50

Scholarship Fund:

Courtesy Chevrolet \$2,000, MOAA Golf Tournament \$290, Mike Gannon \$16, John Gerometta \$30

Equifax: 1-800-525-6285

www.equifax.com

Experian: 1-888-397-3742

www.experian.com

TransUnion: 1-800-680-7289

www.transunion.com

Have a great summer. I hope yours will be as full as we plan ours to be.

Gary Fredricks

Arizona Chapter Calendar

July 6

- BOD Meeting 1:30, American Legion 107

Aug 3

- BOD Meeting 1:30, American Legion 107

Sept 7

- BOD Meeting 1:30, American Legion 107

SUPPORT OUR TROOPS — REMEMBER OUR FALLEN COMRADES — FLY YOUR FLAG

50th Anniversary Celebration Transportation Planning

Your Board of Directors wants to ensure that Chapter members who need transportation to the 50th Anniversary Celebration receive due consideration. Your attendance is very important to us and we want to ensure you are present when we raise our glasses to salute the occasion, and pay tribute to those who established the fine legacy we have.

Therefore we seek two tidbits of information:

- **Would you attend the evening celebration if transportation were provided?**
- Would you provide transportation to another member if necessary?**

Remember, we need your feedback. This is important. So if you need a ride, or can provide a ride – we need to know. Please call Marie Schluter at 480 563-8480, or send an email to oldlymer@aol.com. Please provide name (s), address and phone number.

50th Anniversary Dinner Reservations

- Bill Adams—2 tickets
 - Chet Baumer—2 tickets
 - Frank Birtciel—8 tickets
 - Dan Conway—2 tickets
 - Gary Fredricks—2 tickets
 - Mike Gannon—2 tickets
 - John Gerometta—2 tickets
 - Doug Gray—2 tickets
 - Ron Green—2 tickets
 - John Gerometta— 2 tickets
 - Chuck Schluter—2 tickets
 - Jim Seidl—2 tickets
 - William Terry—2 tickets
 - JoAnn Thompson—I ticket
 - Rosanne Trujillo—1 ticket
 - Luke Chapter— 2 tickets
- Our goal is 150 tickets—114 to go

New Members
Welcome to five new Chapter members since the last newsletter:

Raphael F. Baumann
CAPT USN (RET)
And his wife Mary Elaine
1843 E Meadow Brook Ave,
Phoenix, AZ 85016
602-604-2330
captainrfb@cox.net

Eugene Bloomfield
LT USN (RET)
And his wife Marjorie Ann
3030 W Julie Dr, Phoenix, AZ
85027
623-582-8057

Dale E Bradford
LT USN (RET)
And his wife Helen E.
10637 N 7th Pl, Phoenix, AZ
85020
602-971-7442
debrad3@cox.net

John Cappalla
Maj USA (RET)
And his wife Anita
10408 W Tonopah Dr, Peoria, AZ
85382
623-486-6992
johncappalla@msn.com

Ronald J. Perkins
Col USAF (RET)
And his wife Elizabeth
6362 W Dublin Lane, Chandler,
AZ 85226
480-961-8632
rbperkins@cox.net

Please take the opportunity to meet our new members.

Membership

Currently the AZ Chapter has 176 members including, 42 auxiliary members and 11 new members for 2006.

Chapter History
By Chuck Schluter

Wow – October marks the Golden Anniversary of the Arizona Chapter! What were they thinking 50 years ago?

At the time there was this big organization known as the Retired Officers Association (ROA) which begat The Retired Officers Association (TROA) which begat the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). Today, generally speaking, those of us who understand many things acknowledge the evolution of name changes and refer to this big organization simply as “National”.

So, in that vein, a little background is provided. “National” was founded by a USMC Major by the name of Marix back in 1929. It seemed like a good idea, and the word spread, and across our mighty nation members continued to roll in. By bunches and bunches - so many in fact that by 1944 the Association became “Incorporated”. Then, in 1955 “National” authorized the Charter of Chapters. To this day, there is a strong opinion back at “National” that many Chapters have a tendency to be quite social in nature, and although its easy for them to rally the troops and bring over-whelming force to bear upon the target (think Legislative) when wielding the might of Chapters – Chapters still have a tendency to lean towards the social end of the spectrum. Go look in the mirror.

I happen to know that in 1955 there was a military unit stationed in a converted warehouse in downtown Scottsdale. This unit was comprised of highly trained combat experienced, lean and mean hard working veterans. And they had a bar in the backroom. And they had a Major by the name of Bill Toy who happened to know a Warrant Officer Junior Grade by the name of Paul Childress. Now it is well understood that Warrant Officers frequently influence impressionable Majors, and to this day Bill Toy holds Chief Childress in high esteem, because he successfully badgered the local commander into allowing a “bunch” of veterans to Charter the Arizona Chapter of ROA in that backroom.

50 years have gone by now, and the Chapter is going strong. Blame it on yourself, and all the guys and gals who added so much to the Chapter along the way. Why are we still here?

Our Chapter members have seen and lived history. First, while as members of the Armed forces, and probably while raising a family too. And also in later years while living right here in the Valley of the Sun, taking the time to participate in the activities of the Arizona Chapter. These are the men and women who dedicated themselves to maintaining a strong national defense and to preserving the earned entitlements of the members of the uniformed services, their families, and their survivors. They are our legacy, and they breathed life into our mission.

In the next few years John Glenn (1961) orbited the earth, America endured the tension of the Cuban Crisis (1962), and citizens saw over 200,000 Freedom Marchers demonstrate in Washington DC. The movie that won the Oscar for Best Picture in 1963 was "Tom Jones"; however a poll (internet of course, "thanks Al") showed that a more popular movie was "The Great Escape". (Speaking of which - one of our long term current members was a POW at Stalag Luft III one year after that actual escape). The Arizona Chapter was alive, well, and active - they had \$123.00 in the Treasury at the beginning of 1963 and finished the year with "approximately \$65.00" which ensured continued financial well being. A regularly scheduled Chapter Dinner which was attended by the Arizona Secretary of State, Wesley Bolin, cost \$3.50, a Chapter Buffet dinner at Luke Air Force Base cost \$2.75, and the "Annual" dinner at the Litchfield Naval Air Station in January 1964 was a bargain at \$2.00. The Chapter roster from 1963 shows that we had 82 Regular, 6 Associate and 2 (Senator Carl Hayden and Senator Barry Goldwater) Honorary Members. And, pssst - whatever you do - don't tell John Gerometta this, but the records show that a Chapter Secretary was receiving a monthly

salary of \$7.50! Adjust that for inflation and we'd go broke in a month!

Why does a Chapter flourish, why does it continue on - what is the reward. The reward is in the heart and in knowing what is right to do, and then doing it. Over the next few years this nation was torn asunder by social strife, anti-war protest, racism verbal venom and violence, and scandal.

During those tumultuous years, this Chapter fielded active and stalwart Presidents and Officers who ensured that your Chapter held together and that a higher mission was sustained. We have a legacy that is strong. If ever it was necessary to support the rights and benefits, the entitlements of those who serve in uniform, their families and survivors - that was a time of test. It was a time when ROTC was unwelcome on campus, when a person in uniform was shunned on the street, a time when the Cold War could flare up and our forces could be called to duty. But it was also a time when a successive series of Chapter members kept the flame burning brightly, kept coming together, and lent a hand wherever necessary. It was the right thing to do, so they simply did it. It's nice to note that during this time that good old WOJG Childress assumed the office of Chapter President too.

The Chapter President in 1974 was none other than our current Chapter Chaplain, Bob Rutherford, which happens to be (according to the internet) the first year that the term "internet" was used. Bob Rutherford is not the man who used that term, not then, and not now. But, he does speak to a higher power, so I'll be nice.

This Chapter and its several thousand past members have seen a world evolving to the point where it is entirely different than the one that Maj Powell, Chief Childress or the other charter members shared in 1956. However, within the Arizona Chapter something important has remained, a constant has existed. And it has existed for decades - and that has been your quest for a unified attempt to secure a strong national defense while ensuring that all men and women who have served in uniform receive due consid-

eration. Additionally, you have recognized an obligation to reach into the communities, to support JROTC, and to publicly acknowledge the good service of others. Good times may change, but it's hard to change good people.

Suffice to say that a common thread throughout the history of the Arizona Chapter - Arizona's First Chapter, is that the world bore witness to turmoil. The ribbons that our members wore on their breast and which have been stowed away, if displayed again with their stars and oak leaf clusters, would reveal a colorful and powerful display of honorable service - a selfless service that is important, has purpose, and reward. This is your Chapter - it's a good Chapter with wonderful members, both regular and auxiliary, and it is our legacy too, so let's keep it going for another 50 years.

Major Billie Loos was our Chapter President during the year that the SS Titanic was found, and another ship, the Achille Lauro, was hijacked (1985). It was a memorable year for another reason as well because Mikhail Gorbachev introduced two incredibly world changing terms, "Glasnost" and "Perestroika". Speaking of ships, terrorists, and Billie, makes me recall an evening years later (2001) when this Chapter reflected upon the terrorist attack on the USS Cole, because it is the same night that we established our 50th Anniversary Fund. The motion was no sooner made, seconded and carried, when Marie Loos instantly stood up and made a \$100 contribution to the fund. It was immediately matched by Bill Toy too! A nice beginning for a big event!

The end of the 80's brought forth new leaders on the world stage and also for our Chapter. Two that come to mind are Jim Seidl and his successor, Ray Hitzel. These men happened to be Chapter leaders as the world was turned upside down. We had recently endured a disaster as our Space Shuttle Challenger exploded upon liftoff and we were taking a hard look at ourselves in the wake of the Iran Contra affair.

Continued on page 4

And the big news in the Chapter a year later is rather significant – Irene Doto was inducted quite literally as our President, and our First Lady President Over the years our members have visited other Chapters, Councils or Conventions, so it wasn't unusual for a gaggle of AZ Chapter members to blaze a trail and trek all the way to Las Vegas in 1993. BG George Woodard (our First Flag Officer President – 1983) was among the hardworking volunteers who, ahem “put their shoulders to the wheel” and ensured the success of the 6th Biennial Convention.

Here's my spin on what the records really mean. Although Ray was the Convention Chairman, it is apparent that his lovely wife Marilyn did all of the work, (The official After-Action Report comments include “... Secretary, distribution of promotional material, reception desk, patience, endured overbearing Convention Chairman”, etc). The rest is equally clear - Bill Toy was the Tour Director – but everybody already knew where the Bar and Pool were anyway, and Jim Seidl was the “Bartender”... go figure! We know that many Chapter members sallied forth and had a grand time of course, and I am, in my

in my heart of hearts, reasonably assured that our good Chaplain Bob Rutherford, who never missed a Convention, was right there too – praying for their poor wayward souls.

To be continued next month

Editor's Notebook

A special edition of *The Sentinel* will be published in August to highlight the 50th Anniversary celebration.

50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Please reserve _____ meals for (name)_____
Enclosed is my check for\$_____ (\$75.00 each or \$600.00 per table) made out to
Arizona Chapter MOAA
Please list my name _____and/or a memorial for
(name) _____. Enclosed is my check for \$ _____.
Send to Bill Johnson, 13410 North 12th Place, Phoenix, AZ 85022-4944.

Arizona Chapter
Military Officers Association of America
14435 N. 66th Place
Scottsdale, AZ 85254



Show Your Colors By Proudly Displaying The Arizona 'Veteran Plate' On Your Vehicle. Show How Veterans Help Veterans.