

Minutes of the October 2009 General Meeting, Arizona Chapter MOAA

The picnic luncheon meeting of the General Membership was held on October 17, 2009 at the McCormic/Stillman RR Park. President Ron Perkins called the meeting to order at 11:55 AM and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by an invocation.

Members Present: Total people present: **59**; 46 members/spouses, 10 ESGR guests, 3 family guests. New member Paul Schnur and his wife Barbara were introduced along with other guests including ESGR State Chairman Scott Essex and ESGR award recipients. Ron Perkins asked all members to provide e-mail address updates to either Ron or Beth Cullison to ensure members receive all pertinent information from our chapter.

Reports:

Treasurer's Report: Bill Roscher reported the General Fund is at \$8,945.59 and the Scholarship fund is at \$11,261.83. With an additional \$25 from the golf tournament, the combined total is \$20,232.42.

U S Navy Birthday: Ron Perkins reminded everyone that the United States Navy, established on October 13, 1775, celebrated its 234th birthday.

5 Star Level of Excellence Award: Ron & Betty Perkins along with Gary Fredricks and Bob Stimming will be attending the National Conference in San Diego next week. Our chapter will be recognized for the fifth consecutive year with the 5 Star Level of Excellence Award.

AVHOF: Make your reservations now if you have not already done so for the annual Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame luncheon. The AVHOF annually recognizes and honors Arizona veterans who have honorably served their country through military service and who have continued to serve and inspire their fellow man with deeds and accomplishments throughout their lifetime. Arizona Chapter members Carl Schneider, MG USAF (Ret.), and the late Bill Jenkins, Capt. (USN), will be honored this year at the October 30th induction ceremony. Reservations can be made on-line at www.avhof.org.

AZ National Guard Emergency Relief Fund Contribution: Ron Worthington is a member of the Norwegian Fish Club of Phoenix, Port of Sky Harbor, which is a group that meets monthly to dine on an authentic Norwegian fish dinner and enjoy an evening sharing stories with other Norwegians. Ron shared one story about some Swedish border guards who had been drinking and decided to throw some firecrackers over the border to Norway. The Norwegian border patrol decided to light the firecrackers and throw them back to Sweden. On behalf of the Norwegian Fish Club, Ron presented a check for \$185.31 to Chuck Schluter, Director of Employer Outreach for the State of Arizona. The check is for the Arizona National Guard Emergency Relief Fund.

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR): Chuck has been involved in ESGR for a long time. He explained ESGR is dedicated to help military personnel and their employers. ESGR is a Department of Defense organization. In 1972 we went to an all volunteer military force. Today about 51% of those serving our country are from the Guard and Reserves. If not for their employers, we would not have viable Guard or Reserve support.

Lunch: Marie Fredricks planned and coordinated the luncheon catered by Famous Dave's Bar-B-Que. The menu was extensive and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Guest Speakers: Ron Perkins introduced ESGR Chairman, **Scott Essex**. Scott has been a dedicated volunteer for 18 years and has attained the rank of Major General. Scott began by thanking MOAA for the opportunity to recognize several deserving employers. "*We All Serve*" is

the ESGR theme. He explained what a challenge it is for both the bosses and co-workers. Two decades ago approximately 800,000 employee hours were lost annually due to Guard & Reserve time. Today, that number has risen to about 46.8 million days, roughly a 4,600% plus increase in the amount of work-time lost. Participation in the Guard & Reserves has decreased meaning there are fewer people doing over 4,600% more work. Since 2001 more than 8,000 citizen soldiers have been deployed from Arizona, many multiple times. This could not happen without the support of family members and employers. Scott re-iterated, we all, in one way or another, serve.

Butch Wise, ESGR Executive Director, said we are recognizing the dedication and support provided by these ESGR award recipients. He gave thanks for their support which is critical to the freedom we enjoy. Butch explained that many of these companies continue to provide full pay or pay differential and continued health benefits for family members. The following awards were presented:

Patriot Award – John Blanks, Wells Fargo, nominated by Specialist Mario Aguirre, AZ ARNG

Patriot Award – Douglas Austin, Boeing, nominated by Senior Airman Andrew Halton, ANG

Above & Beyond Award – Shirley Strembel, Maricopa City Department of Health nominated by Maj Deborah Robinson, USAFR

Seven Seals Award – Paul Callaghan, INTEL, nominated by LTCDR Curtis Smith, USNR

Doug Austin invited anyone interested in a Boeing tour to contact Butch Wise and he'll be happy to set it up. Paul Callaghan reminded everyone that freedom is not free and all U.S. companies should support our military.

Chapter 50/50 Raffle collected \$110; eight prizes were awarded: five \$5 awards and three \$10 awards for a total of \$55 awarded.

Thank You: Ron Perkins thanked **Scott Essex** for the ESGR award presentations, **Butch Wise** for the podium & microphone, and **Marie Fredricks** for the excellent food and picnic site.

Coming Events: Ron Perkins summarized upcoming events:

October 23-24 – MOAA National Conference in San Diego

October 30 – AZHOF Awards

November 5 – Chapter Board Meeting. Invited all to attend, State Veteran's Home on North Third Street, 11 AM – 1 PM

November 21 – Chapter Luncheon. Officer elections & Meritorious Service Awards

December 3 – Chapter Board Meeting

December 19 – Chapter Luncheon

Adjournment: 1:10 PM

Respectfully submitted:
Beth Cullison, Interim Secretary