

## The Sentinel

Arizona's First Chapter
The Military Officer's Association of America



The Arizona Chapter Scottsdale, AZ 85250

February 2024 CHARTERED Oct 1956

67 YEARS OF SERVICE TO COUNTRY

Stephen MacDonald, EDITOR

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#### The Sentinel

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e continued into the New Year with a great January luncheon, a packed agenda and lots of great future plans. I will be emphasizing our goals each month and reporting progress to you. Our chapter is recognized as one of the prominent chapters in the country, largely due to its past great leadership and chapter membership engagement, and we want to keep up that reputation.

Three of our objectives this year include:

- Restructure and expand our current "one person" Board committees to include engagement from not only Board members, but also non-Board members.
- Continue quarterly meetings/events between luncheons to promote more member attendance and include potential new members.
- Continue fund raising events with the Southwest Veterans Chamber of Commerce.

#### To that end:

- We passed an expanded committee list for members to become engaged and increase our member participation. Please see attached spreadsheet on page 8 and sign up! Spouses are welcome! You can respond to me via email or phone.
- We are also organizing a Happy Hour event between luncheons (hopefully for

(Continued on next page.)



FEBRUARY 23, 1929

US ARMY JUNE 14, 1775

US NAVY OCT 13, 1775

US MARINE CORPS NOV 10, 1775

US COAST GUARD AUG 14, 1790

US PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE JAN 4, 1889

US AIR FORCE SEP 18, 1947

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRA-TION OCT 3, 1970

US SPACE FORCE DEC 20, 2019

#### President's Perspective

Continued from page 1

February 29th - Leap Day) that will allow members who cannot attend regular luncheons the chance to become more engaged. More to follow...

• Lastly, Tom Sheets continues to do an outstanding job of putting the "fun" in fundraising along with the Southwest Veterans Chamber of Commerce with another game pool-this time for the Super Bowl. (See page 10.) Recently, we raised \$365 for our General Fund with the NCAA Championship Game pool. This income goes to good causes within the veterans' community! (See page 8.)

Our first guest speaker for 2024 was Mik Milem, Executive Director of Soldiers Best Friend, along with Jeff Raebel and his service dog, Tilly. We presented a \$500 check to Mik as part of our quarterly goal to assist deserving veteran run non-profit organizations. Story and pictures are on page 7.

Amidst the celebration of the end of the year and the holiday season, we were informed that long time member Jim Draper had passed away. Jim served as our Transition Liaison on the Board for many years, and he will be missed. I know you all join me in sending our deepest sympathy to his wife, Judith, and their family, and our offer of support for anything she needs.

A personal mea culpa to Pete Berger, who I missed listing as one of our members leaving the Board. As President and Past President, and holding other chapter responsibilities, Pete has done an outstanding job for our AZ MOAA Chapter!

All the best to everyone,

Bruce Kosaveach President AZ MOAA Chapter

#### **Useful Web Links:**

**Chapter Home Page** 

**Member Dues Renewal** 

**Chapter Events** 

**National MOAA Website** 

**MOAA Store** 

**MOAA Legislative Action Center** 



## ARIZONA CHAPTER MOAA MEMBERSHIP DUES RENEWAL FORM

2024 DUES are payable on JANUARY 1. Dues become DELINQUENT on March 1, 2024.

If you become delinquent, you can still pay your Past Dues by completing your information below and send it with your check — \$20/year for a Regular Member or \$10/year for a Surviving Spouse Member payable to "AZ Chapter MOAA" and mail to: Charlie Bitner, 134 E. Northview Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85020.

Dues for <b>2023</b> \$	Dues for <b>2024</b> \$	
Member OR Surviving Spouse Member		
Spouse Name		
Please make any CHANGES to your Contact Information below:		
Address:		
Phone number:	_ Email:	

To Renew Online - Click Here!



### MEMBER LUNCHEON



February 17th, 2024

#### "Let's Talk Heart to Heart"

## Dr. Andrew Kaplan, MD, FACC, FHRS (Commander, USNR) Director of Electrophysiology at Phoenix Heart Vein Vascular





Operating onboard USNS MERCY



r. Andrew J. Kaplan is a board-certified cardiologist at Phoenix Heart with expertise in Electrophysiology. Dr. Kaplan studied medicine at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School and completed his residency in internal medicine at Duke University Medical Center. After his residency, Dr. Kaplan continued his training with two fellowships in cardiovascular disease and cardiac electrophysiology at Emory University School of Medicine. In addition, he completed his Chief Residency in internal medicine at Grady Memorial/Emory University school of medicine. On top of this extensive training, Dr. Kaplan's expertise and commitment to excellence have earned him certifications by the American Board of Internal Medicine, with special focuses on cardiovascular disease and cardiac electrophysiology. He received his certification from the National Board of Physicians and Surgeons, with special focuses on internal medicine, cardiovascular disease, and clinical cardiac electrophysiology. Dr. Kaplan also serves as a reservist medical corps officer with the US Navy and enjoys being able to focus there as a leader and advocate for military health care.

Agenda: 11:00-11:45 am Meet & Greet Social Hour

11:45 am-12:00 pm Pledge, Invocation, Announcements

12:00-2:00pm Lunch and Program

Place: McCormick Ranch Golf Club

7505 E McCormick Pkwy, Scottsdale, AZ 85258

Cost: \$40 Per Person; Reservations by 4PM, Tuesday, 13 Feb 2024 to Charlie Bitner

RSVP to Charles Bitner, 134 E. Northview Ave, Phoenix 85020

By email: <a href="mailto:charles@bitner36.com">charles@bitner36.com</a> or contact Charlie at 602-943-0028; <a href="mailto:PAY ONLINE!">PAY ONLINE!</a>

Menu: McCormick Signature Salad, Chicken Cordon Bleu with Mornay Sauce, Garlic Roasted

**Red Skin Potatoes and Apple Pie** 

**Dress:** Business Casual

#### Legislative Update

by Lee Lange, Legislative Chair



## One More Time - Short-Term Funding Extension Keeps Government Open

President Joe Biden signed legislation January 19th to temporarily extend federal funding into March, averting a partial government shutdown.

The House and Senate approved the continuing resolution in bipartisan votes after congressional leaders reached a broader agreement on spending levels through September 2024. The stopgap measure buys lawmakers additional time to finalize the \$1.59 trillion appropriations legislation and clear both chambers.

The continuing resolution finances federal operations at current levels through March 1st for most agencies and March 8th for others, including DoD. This marks the third short-term extension since September.

The latest continuing resolution staves off imminent funding disruption while negotiations proceed on the broader spending package. Lawmakers will utilize the coming weeks to translate the agreed budget framework into detailed appropriations bill language needed to keep the government running past March.

Congress must reach a funding deal by April 30 to avoid an automatic 1% across-the-board budget cut, as required by the Fiscal Responsibility Act passed in June 2023. MOAA urges all members to

contact their lawmakers immediately and demand they finalize full-year appropriations to avert further disruption.

This is yet another example of our lawmakers not doing their job. Congress was supposed to have all this done by October 1st, 2023 – over four months ago. This should get you fired up – it does me. We need to tell our lawmakers to get it done via MOAA's Legislative Action Center. Write your lawmakers today to make your voice heard – Congress needs to pass the funding bills our country relies upon.

#### <u>Announcements!</u>

#### **January 2024 Donations**

Scholarship Fund:

Al Crawford

\$50

## Check Out Our Facebook Page!:

Don't forget to "Like" and "Follow" us!

Feb 17th Member Luncheon Meeting Reservation Form			
Please reserve meals for name(s):			
Enclosed is my check for \$ (\$40.00/person) for the Feb 17th Mer Luncheon Meeting payable to: AZ Chapter MOAA and mailed to arrive by Feb 2024 to: Charles Bitner, 134 E. Northview Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85020, or co Charles@Bitner36.com, 602-943-0028.	13th		
Member reservations or call-ins WILL NOT be accepted after Feb 13th, 2024 @ 4pm			

Cancellations after Feb 13th, 2024 at 4 pm will be charged and not refunded.

**TO PAY ONLINE - CLICK HERE!** 

#### Personal Affairs

by Lee Lange, Personal Affairs Officer



#### Four Tax Mistakes to Avoid

The federal tax code is complicated, and you might be making mistakes without even knowing it. Here are some common ones from MOAA contributing author, Curt Sheldon.

#### 1. Over-Contributing to a Roth IRA

If you retired from the military and are working in a second career, you might trip over this obstacle. There is an income limit for contributing to a Roth individual retirement account (IRA). In 2023, that limit was \$228,000 if you file your federal tax return as married filing jointly and \$153,000 for those who file single.

If your modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) exceeds these amounts, you can't contribute directly to a Roth IRA. For joint filers, there is a phaseout of the amount you can contribute, starting at \$218,000 MAGI. For single filers, the phaseout begins at \$138,000.

The limits are higher in 2024. For married taxpayers filing jointly, the 2024 limit is \$240,000, with the phaseout range starting at \$230,000. For single filers, the limit increases to \$161,000, with the phaseout range starting at \$146,000.

What happens if your income is above the limit, and you contributed to your Roth IRA? If you don't withdraw the contributions and the income on them prior to filing your tax return, you will be subject to a 6% excise tax for each year the excess funds remain in the Roth IRA.

#### 2. Missing Donation Tax Breaks

Sending cash to a charity is the least taxefficient way to support it. There are better ways to support a charity and reduce your tax bill. One option is to gift appreciated assets. If you held the asset for more than one year, you can deduct its fair market value on the day it is donated.

Even if you don't itemize deductions, there is still a tax advantage. The capital gain goes to the charity, and because the charity is tax exempt, no tax is due from the charity or you.

(Continued on page 6.)



#### personal affairs

Continued from page 5

If you're 70½ or older, you can make qualified charitable distributions (QCDs) from your IRA to your charity of choice. The QCD is not included in your adjusted gross income (AGI), so it reduces your overall tax bill even if you don't itemize.

The reduced AGI might make you eligible for credits you wouldn't normally be eligible for or increase your deductions that are limited based on AGI, such as the medical expense deduction. Either way, this could reduce your total tax even more.

#### 3. Not Depreciating Rental Real Estate

When you buy a rental property or convert your residence to a rental, you own a capital asset. Capital assets normally can't be expensed in the year purchased, and instead, the capital asset must be depreciated over its useful life.

In the case of residential real estate, the IRS has determined that the useful life is 27½ years. That means each year you'll deduct about 3.6% of the basis of the structure (land is not depreciated). Some tax software might allow you to decline to depreciate the rental property. Or perhaps you hear that you'll need to pay depreciation recapture when the property is sold and you don't want to pay those taxes, so you don't depreciate the property.

That's the problem. When you sell the property, you will owe taxes on the depreciation allowed or allowable (depreciation you took or should have taken).

What should you do if you failed to depreciate your property? If you haven't skipped the depreciation for two years or more, you can file an amended return for the first year and properly depreciate the property going forward. If



it has been two years or more, then you're operating an impermissible accounting system, and you must request a change in accounting method from the IRS. The change is automatic, but you have to file for it via Form 3115.

#### **4.** Not Withholding Sufficient Income Tax

In many ways, U.S. tax code is still designed for Ozzie and Harriet (households that have one income source). In America today, that isn't often the case, especially for a military retiree. That can cause problems with your withholding.

The withholding tables that your employer (and, if you're retired, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service) uses are based on that single-income assumption. So, each entity that withholds taxes from your income starts at \$0 of income. They withhold some at the lowest rate and work their way up.

But if you have multiple income sources, your income should be stacked, and one or more of those entities should start withholding at the rate the other entity ended at.

How do you avoid this? The IRS has a <u>W-4</u> <u>calculator</u> that can help to figure out how much your withholding should be. You can also complete <u>Form 1040-ES</u> using your estimated income and estimated withholding.

If you find you will owe, ask for a specific additional dollar amount to be withheld from your pay or retirement pension.



## Recent Chapter Events January Luncheon

f you could not attend January's luncheon you missed a highly informative and inspirational presentation by Soldier's Best Friend. Mik Milem, Executive Director, gave a polished presentation about what they do and how they do it.

Unlike other models that train service dogs and then give them to a veteran with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Soldier's Best Fiend trains the veteran and the service dog together as a team—at no cost to the veteran. Most of their dogs come from animal control pounds and rescue groups. Hence their tag line —Touching 2 Lives at Once.

Their goal is to help give the veteran the skills they need to lead a satisfying and productive life. In that process, they are helping to combat the national epidemic of veteran suicide.

Mik also introduced Army veteran and Soldier's Best Friend graduate Jeff Raebel and his service dog Tilly. Jeff shared his story about how "he was fine until he wasn't." The onset of symptoms came several years after his medical discharge from the Army.

To date they have trained 350 veteran/dog teams and rescued over 200 dogs. The average cost for each veteran/dog team is \$7,500, compared to \$25-\$30,000 for organizations that train the dogs and then give them to a veteran.

After the presentation, President Bruce Kosaveach presented Soldier's Best Friend with a \$500 donation from the Chapter to help fund their great work.



For more information about Soldier's Best Friend, or to donate to them, please visit their website at <a href="https://soldiersbestfriend.org/">https://soldiersbestfriend.org/</a>. Mik invited our Chapter Members to attend their next graduation ceremony on February 21st. If you plan to attend, please visit their website and RSVP so they can plan support for the right number of people.

While their tagline is "Touching 2 Lives at Once," the truth is that they often "Save 2 Lives at Once!"



Mik Milem speaks to the chapter.



Bruce and Tom make a \$500 gift presentation.

## Keeping the FUN in FUNdraising!

om Sheets presented a check for \$365 to Charlie Bitner at the February luncheon as the Chapter's proceeds from the recent NCAA Championship FUNdraising Pool. Individual winners included General Al Crawford, who won \$100, and Ron Perkins, who won \$50. General Crawford donated \$50 of his winnings to the AZMOAA Scholarship Fund.

This was the second of three annual football game FUNdraising pools in which AZMOAA partners with the Southwest Veterans Chamber of Commerce—the Army-Navy Game, the NCAA Championship, and the Super Bowl. Each organization netted \$1,000 from the Army-Navy Game.

How much will we make on the Super Bowl on February 11th? Our members and other supporters will determine that by the number of squares they buy. See the flyer on page 10 for details and a QR code and URL link to buy squares. You can also go to the <u>AZMOAA website</u> that has a "popup" link on our home page.



Tom Sheets presents a check for \$365 to Treasurer Charlie Bitner



AZMOAA Committee Structure				
Goal: two Directors & one n				
Committee	Chair	Members		
		Richard Zwieg		
Finance	Charlie Bitner			
		Lee Lange		
Membership	Bob Fiegl	Linda Vatalaro		
International Property	DOD FICE	Emad vatarare		
		Lee Lange		
Programs, Events & Fundraising	Tom Sheets			
Arrangements - including		Richard Zwieg		
meeting venue	Charlie Bitner			
		Jeff Young		
Legislative Affairs	Lee Lange			
Personal Affairs	Lee Lange			
Marketing - Sentinel, website,	Steve MacDonald			
Facebook, social media	Steve MacDollala			
		Chuck Christoph		
Nominating - annually in September	Daniel Arroyo	<u>'</u>		
September	·			
		Lenore Portante		
Corporate Governance	Tom Sheets	Bob Hinton		
	I	Pete Berger		

#### Fisher House College Scholarships

If you or someone in the military you know has school age children, you may be interested in this. Fisher house is awarding 500 \$2000 scholarships to children of active, reserve, or retired military. Applications are due by February 14th. For more information, go to the Fisher House website at this link.

Renew Your Chapter Membership Now! CLICK HERE

#### More Veterans Day!

APT Chuck Christoph had the privilege of attending the Veterans Day celebration at his grandson's school. He says it was an honor to see all these children say the Pledge of Allegiance, sing patriotic songs and honor all the veterans in attendance!



Chuck Christoph, his wife Janet, daughter Jenny, and her son Tyler.



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VS



#### \*\*\*\*\* Game Pool \*\*\*\*\*

**Sunday February 11, 2023 4:30 PM** 

Watch the Super Bowl...win \$\$...and support veteran and their families!!!

\$5.00 a Square—100 Squares per Board

For every 100 squares sold, there will be a \$50 payout at the end of each quarter based on the score. Every square purchased gives you four chances to win \$50.

Squares will be randomly assigned when purchased and the row and column numbers will be randomly drawn after all squares are sold and filled in.

Get your squares from any SWVCC Director, on our website at <a href="https://business.swvcc.org/store/gamepool">https://business.swvcc.org/store/gamepool</a>



or by calling 602.677.2961 or 760.213.3705

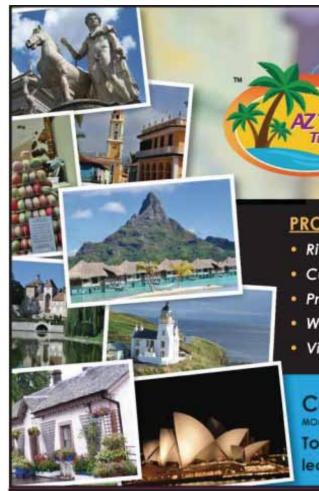
On behalf of the veteran and their families who will ultimately benefit from your generosity, WE THANK YOU.

## Arizona Chapter MOAA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

**ELIGIBILITY:** Men and women who are or have been federally commissioned in one of the seven U.S. uniformed services (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard), or NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) or U.S. Public Health Services, the National Guard or other Reserve Components of those services, and Surviving Spouses of deceased individuals who would, if living, be eligible for regular membership as defined above.

(Click here for online application form.)

Full Name:		
Spouse Name:		
Street Address: _	1956	
City:	State:	Zip:
Telephone #:	E-Mail address:	
Branch of Service:		Rank:
Service Status: _	Active (includes Reserve/National Guard)	Retired
_	Former Officer	Warrant Officer
_	Surviving spouse of deceased MOAA member	OR eligible individual
Date of Birth:		
Your MOAA Memb	er Number: (Nation	nal MOAA membership is required.)
the AZ Chapter Mer	ntly a member of National MOAA, you may request mbership Chairperson, Bob Fiegl, to enroll you in Nonemail Bob at <a href="mailto:Fieglr869@gmail.com">Fieglr869@gmail.com</a> .	
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	\$20.00 per year for a Regular Member and \$10 for a membership. Even if you have a free membershi	
	: \$ Please mail check payab ter Treasurer: Charles Bitner, 134 E. Northview	le to "AZ Chapter MOAA" with completed w Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85020
•	about the Arizona Chapter?AZ MOAA \ hapter Membership ChairmanOther (	
Applicant Signatur	re:	Date:



# World Your Playground!°

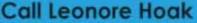
#### **PROVIDING CUSTOM TRAVEL SERVICES:**

- River & Ocean Cruising
- Custom Itinerary Planning
- Pre & Post Cruise Packages
- War History Guided Tours
- Villa Rentals

Independent Travel

Making the

- Golf Vacations
- Major Sports Events
- Military Discounts
- Travel Insurance



MOAA 2015 Mentonous Service Award - AZ

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#### AZ TRAILS TRAVEL®

5 Star Rating on Facebook & Yelp
24 Years in Business • Bonded & Insured
Facebook.com/AzTrailsTravel
www.aztrailstravel.com

#### Who Can Join MOAA?

Men and women who are or have been federally-commissioned in one of the seven U.S. uniformed services:

Army
Navy
Air Force
Marine Corps
Coast Guard
Space Force
National Oceanic and
Atmospheric Administration
Public Health Services
The National Guard
or other Reserve Components
of those services

Widows and widowers of deceased individuals who would, if living, be eligible for regular membership in accordance with the above.

## ARIZONA CHAPTER Military Officers Association of America

#### **CALENDAR**

#### **Board of Directors Meetings**

First Thursday of each month
February 1st, 2024
Papago Park Arizona National Guard Base
5636 E McDowell Rd
Phoenix, AZ 85008

#### Member Luncheon/Meetings

Third Saturday of each month at 11am
Next Meeting: Feb 17th, 2024
McCormick Ranch Golf Club
7505 E McCormick Pkwy, Scottsdale, AZ 85258

#### **Upcoming Events**

16 Mar 2024: Member Luncheon



Licensed Professional Counselor

Licensed Independent Substance Abuse Counselor

#### PETER A. BERGER, MPC, LPC, LISAC

**Associated Recovery Counselors** 

7101 East Indian School Rd. Scottsdale, AZ 85251

480-429-6292

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CAPT Bruce Kosaveach, USN	602-501-9876		
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT			
CAPT Bob Fiegl, USN	850-207-9845		
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LTC Daniel Arroyo, USA	412-779-0372		
SECRETARY			
CAPT Carole Litten, USN	970-355-8981		
TREASURER			
Col Charles Bitner, USAF	602-943-0028		
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT			
Col Tom Sheets, USMC	760-213-3705		
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USA; Lt Col Donna Tew, USAF; LTC Richard Zweig,			

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Access Arizona Chapter's Internet Web Site at: azmoaa.org
The Sentinel Newsletter is sent electronically

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USA; Capt Stephen MacDonald, USAF





ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED