Superstition Mountain Express MOAA[®] Military Officers Association of America



July 2021	
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The Superstition Mountain Chapter, Military Officers Association of America Inc., is a non-profit organization, IRS tax ID# 23-7430856

http://www.smcmoaa.org/

Please remember to share the newsletter with your spouse!

President's Comments



LTC John Bushko, USAF (Ret)

Greetings All,

June was a very interesting month. We were able to have our first in-person membership meeting since November. As expected, the turnout was light, but it was great to see everyone and catch up with what people were doing. I hope to see more of you at our next meeting on July 17th.

One step we took during the meeting was to change our toasts from wine to water only. The reason for this is that the hotel bar is not open at lunchtime and they need to bring in a server to pour the wine. This adds to the cost of the meal. Therefore, by eliminating the wine we will save and possibly reduce the cost of the meal.

As I write this, the AZ Legislature passed the budget which included the tax exemption for uniformed services pensions. This is the full exemption of military retirement pay. I want to thank all those who took the time to contact their representatives to voice your position and request their support for this matter. This will definitely go a long way to making Arizona a more veteran friendly state.

Continued on next page...

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202	1 OFFICERS	2021 COM	MITTEE CHAIRS
President, Lt Col John Bushko	480-759-1717 jabushko@earthlink.net	Programs	CW4 Arlan Allen
		Membership	COL John Marsh
1 st VP, CW4 Arlan Allen	602-283-5862 <u>cw4allen@cox.net</u>	ROTC/JROTC	Capt Ed Mangan
2 nd VP, COL John Marsh	480-2191020 emarsh125@gmail.com	Personal Affairs	Lt Gregory Moore
VP Auxiliany Mro. Judy Puchko	190 750 1717 idbuebke@earthlink.net	Legislative	COL Robert Grierson
VP Auxiliary, Mrs. Judy Bushko	480-759-1717 jdbushko@earthlink.net	Newsletter	Mrs. Marlene Fox
Secretary, Mrs. Peggy Allen		Website	Lt. Ann Ferguson
Treasurer, COL Thomas Ralph		Transition Coordinator	
· · ·		Director	Maj. Austin Foote
Past President, MG Dave Rataczak		Director	Mrs. Ann Schminke
		Director	Capt. George Meegan
		Director	Lt Col Sheryl Mauldin
		Director	COL Karl Pfitzer
		Director	Captain Al Anderer
		CAS Membership	Maj Norm Poole

We are definitely in the throes of summer and constant triple digit temps. Please pay attention to your health and nutrition during this time. Every media outlet continues to remind you that you need to hydrate more than normal. Most of us have been in this area for a while so it is old news, but for those who may have recently moved here, be sure to heed the warnings. If you feel you are thirsty you are already getting dehydrated. Drink plenty of fluids.

With many of the restrictions of the last year being lifted, many are looking to travel. If you are traveling this summer to escape the heat, or just to get away from the house for a while, please do so safely. There are still some restrictions, especially on the airlines. Don't become one of the rowdy travelers who has to be escorted from the plane.

I want to wish everyone a happy and safe 4th of July celebration of our Nation's Independence!

John



AUXILIARY NEWS: from Judy Bushko



Our June luncheon at Goody's was very nice. We put together 42 Hygiene Kits that were delivered to the Veterans Center. The food was delicious and of course it was great to see

everyone!

The auxiliary will be meeting on Wednesday, July 14th at 11:00 at Goody's. We decided to take a break and will not be doing a project at this meeting, just having lunch, and enjoying each other's company. Hope to see you there!

We are always looking for opportunities to be of assistance to our veterans and if you know of any, please contact me. Thanks for all your time, effort and support in our endeavors. 480-759-1717 jdbushko@earthlink.net

Judy

Hygiene Kits	Toothbrushes Toothpaste- full size Toothbrush holders Disposable razors Bar of soap -regular size Deodorant White socks Wash cloths Backpacks	The veterans have voiced their appreciation for these kits. They are given one per month. That is why we ask for full sized items. Most of the veterans are given plastic grocery bags to carry their personal belongings in. In November we were able to take many backpacks for them to use in place of the plastic bags, but more are needed. All donations can be brought to any chapter function or call any chapter board member and we'll see if we can pick them up. Monetary donations are also appreciated! Thanks for your
		up. Monetary donations are also appreciated! Thanks for your support!

These are the items we put in the Hygiene Kits. Your donations are greatly appreciated. You may also make a monetary donation using the coupon on page 11 of the newsletter.

We also are still collecting backpacks/bags with shoulder strings for the Vets at the Veterans Center.

🎽 June Luncheon Meeting 🎽



Greeting us as we arrived were our Vice President Arlan Allen, President John Bushko, and Secretary Peggy Allen. What a warm welcome!



As we sat together catching up on all that has happened in the past year we simply celebrated being together again!



Paula & Al Anderer



Jo & George Meegan



Robert Grierson



Barbara Austin & Sheryl Mauldin.



Art Stark



John & Judy Bushko



Lou Bates.



Meredith & Greg Moore



Diane & JR Richardson



Arlan & Peggy Allen



Ed & Marlene Fox









Jim & Barbara Austin



Marilyn & John Marsh



Ed Mangan & Ann Schminke



Bill & Lesley Baran



President John Bushko



Remembering those who served

This was our first meeting at the Double Tree, and it was awesome! The food was great and there was lots of it, the room was perfect, not to big but not too small. Listening to JR and Diane entertain us again was wonderful. A big thanks to Peggy and Arlan Allen for all the time they put in trying to find us a new venue. This worked well and we are looking forward to next month's luncheon!

July Congratulations



MEMBER BIRTHDAY

Allen Ashmore	1
Michael Dickson	19
Bob Dulong	29
Karl Kohlhoff	28
Sheryl Mauldin	17
Ann Schminke	15
Hubert Sharp	20

	SPOUSE	BIRTHDAY
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Paula Anderer	17
Pamela Banachowski	31
Royetta Dooley	14
Linda Hayball.	12



James & Bonnie Faull	20
William & Connie Koch	3
Ted & karen Konfederak	1



Superstition Mountain Chapter MOAA Auxiliary Luncheon at Goody's Café 1862 W Baseline, Mesa AZ 85202 Wednesday, July 14, 2021

> Lunch at 11:00am Order lunch off the menu No reservation needed

Please join us for lunch and some good old fashion conversation



Superstition Mountain Chapter MOAA Luncheon Meeting July 17, 2021

12 noon Social – 12:30 Lunch

DoubleTree by Hilton 1011 West Holmes Ave., Mesa, AZ 85210 Ocotillo Room

Menu

Hamburgers and Hot Dogs, with all the fixings, condiments, cheese slices and buns. Includes mixed green salad with choice of two dressings, french fries, macaroni and cheese, and corn on the cob Double Tree cookies for dessert \$30.00 per person

> Reservations by Monday Noon, July 12th to Arlan Allen 4201 W Luke Ave, Phoenix AZ 85019 602-283-5862 - <u>cw4allen@cox.net</u>

Masks required until you reach the Ocotillo Room

Chairman Reports



1st Vice President *Arlan Allen - Programs*

Join us for our July 17th luncheon meeting. We will be celebrating summer with an indoor picnic, featuring, grilled Hamburgers and Hot Dogs, with all the

fixings, condiments, cheese slices, and buns. Includes mixed green salad with choice of two dressings, french fries, macaroni and cheese, and corn on the cob, with a special treat for dessert; the world-famous Double Tree cookies.

Social time begins at 12:00 with lunch at 12:30. Please have your reservations to me by noon on Monday July 12th. You can make your reservations by

email: <u>cw4allen@cox.net</u> or phone 602-283-5862 (can leave a message).

You can now purchase your 50/50 raffle ticket, 1 for \$5.00 or 3 for \$10.00, when you check-in at the door.

Just a reminder, we will soon be starting a new school year and need sponsors and presenters for the 23 JROTC Units the Chapter supports. This will be for the 2022 school year.

CW4 Arlan R Allen, USA, Retired





Personal Afffairs Greg Moore



VA Phone numbers & amp; Extensions VA Indian School: 602-277-5551(main) - SE VA Clinic: 480-397-2890

If only extension is listed below, dial main number above first, then extension. *Dental: 480-397-2860 (direct)SE VA *Dental: 602-277-5551 Ex 4774 *MyHealtheVet Coord: Victoria Reyes Ex: 3934 *Telehealth: Erika Kinzie Ex. 4030 *Dietician: Jenessa, 602-329-1486 *Patient Advocate: Jennifer Russiello Ex: 3774 *Travel Benefits fax: 602-222-2601 *Agent 6749 Orange: Kirsten Lamunyon Ex: Kirsten.Lamunyon@Va.gov *Prosthetics: 6417 *Cardio Rehab: Ex: 7926 *Cardiology: 602-200-2323 Or Ex: 7262 *Billing: Tri-West WPSe-VAPC3, P.O. Box 7926 Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7926 *Nuclear Medicine: Ex. 7639 *Community Care: Ex. 2254



Legislative Robert Grierson



Independence Day greetings to the Superstition Mountain Chapter. It's been a busy month at the state and federal level. As you read the newsletter, the

State legislature is done with this session and no further action will be taken on state issues until they reconvene. But we got a really big win this year!

State Legislation

To confirm who your state legislators are, you can go to <u>https://www.azleg.gov/findmylegislator/</u>.

SB1828 omnibus; taxation

The June 24th House session was acrimonious to say the least. HB 2900 ended up being pulled after 90 minutes of howling by the minority party. It was replaced by SB1828. Which was debated and approved on a vote of 31-29.

Key issues for Military Retirees and MOAA members:

Makes Active Duty/Reserve military pay in AZ tax exempt and makes all military retirement pay tax exempt in AZ. Both are retroactive to 1 Jan 2021.

Lowers personal income tax bracket from high of 4.50% to 2.75% starting 1 Jan 2022.

Action Needed – None – Passed 31-29.

SB 1260 - AZ property tax exemptions; statutory conformity exempts, from property tax, the property of veterans with service or nonservice-connected disabilities who are Arizona residents. It also updates the exemption amount for widows, widowers, persons with a disability and veterans with a service or nonservice-connected disability to reflect the presentday amount of \$4,117, to be increased based on the average annual percentage increase in the Gross Domestic Product price deflator. It's still out there, but it hasn't moved since March 17th when it passed out of the House Ways & amp; Means Committee with a party line vote of 5-4-0-1. Technically the bill is not dead, but since it has a fiscal impact and wasn't included in the budget, I don't think we will see it go through, but there an old saying around the Legislature that nothing is dead until Sine Die and I never take that for granted.

Action Needed –this would be beneficial to many former service-members dealing with a disability. Hopefully we will see this return in the next session.

HB 2706 – AZ veterans' services; benefits counselors Appropriates \$948,400 from the State General Fund in FY 22 to the Arizona Department of Veterans' Services to hire additional benefits counselors. The state agency is currently short 12 benefit counselors. This is causing a backlog and delay of benefits.

Action Needed – None – Passed

Federal Legislation

AZ Senator Kelly is supporting legislation aimed at correcting Healthcare coverage of dependents and young adults under Tricare ends at 21 or 23 if enrolled in school fulltime. To provide coverage costs upwards of \$3,000 per year per child. This was listed as the Second Advocacy item in last month's legislative update.

FIRST ADVOCACY ITEM: Concurrent Receipt Update: Major Richard Star Act Hits Big Milestone. The Major Richard Star Act, would provide concurrent receipt for service-members unable to complete 20 years of service due to combat-related injuries. Help ensure these men and women get their full service-earned retirement, as well as their disability compensation from the VA. More than half the Senate supports it. Here's how you can help.

Click on TAKE ACTION: Ask Your Lawmakers to Support the Major Richard Star Act] Fill in your personal information and Zip Code.

SECOND ADVOCACY ITEM: Proposed VBA Budget Reflects multiple MOAA-Backed Benefit Improvements.

Comprehensive toxic exposure reform is needed to ensure we avoid the problems faced by Vietnam veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange. Omnibus bills have been introduced by both chambers of Congress to address this issue. The Senate's Cost of War Act and the House's Honoring our PACT Act provide the change we need to recognize and care for toxic exposures. Each of these bills include the two key bills that MOAA supported with our Advocacy in Action campaign. In addition to supporting the comprehensive toxic exposure bills, we also encourage support for the following bills: The Veterans Burn Pits Exposure Recognition Act introduced by Sens. Dan Sullivan (R-Alaska) and Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.)

Click on TAKE ACTION: Ask Your Lawmaker to Support Comprehensive Toxic Exposure Reform] Fill in your personal information and Zip Code. THIRD ADVOCACY ITEM: Ask Your House Member to Support a Needed Fix for Military Families. H.R. 4021, introduced by Reps. Joe Wilson (R-S.C.) and Elaine Luria (D-Va.), would create an advisory council of EFMP-enrolled families and representatives from the Defense Health Agency, Department of Defense Education Activity, and DoD's Office of Special Needs. The council would represent the diversity of the disability community and would be charged with making non-statutory, semiannual recommendations related to EFMP to the services and congressional armed services committees.

Click on TAKE ACTION: Ask Your House Member to Support the Representation for Exceptional Military Families Act] Fill in your personal information and Zip Code.

MOAA National Legislative Action items are available to you at <u>http://www.moaa.org/</u>. Click on 'Take Action' at the top of the page.



Auxiliary Sponsored Programs



Hygiene Kits for Vets Judy Bushko

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Items we need for our kits are Razors, Wash cloths, combs, white socks, bars of soap, regular size toothpaste and toothbrushes. We have been asked for regular sized items

as the veterans are only allowed to receive one kit a month. Thanks for your continued support! **Over 470 kits made since we started this project**!



Last Call Blankets for VA Hospital

Blankets are used for covering our veterans who have passed in the room and are being moved.

They are covered with these blankets and the blanket is then given to the family. Over 50 blankets donated since we started this project!

Heart Shaped pillows for VA Hospital and Hospice of the Valley

Patients at the VA hospital that have had heart surgery use these pillows to help in their recovery. Hospice of

the Valley gives them to their patient's family members for comfort and they are greatly appreciated.

Cell Phones for Soldiers /Helping Heroes Home. Calling for old phones!

When you upgrade your phone, don't throw those old phones away. Bring them to us. We'll send them in to get phone time for our troops overseas. Phones don't need to work. Contact Judy Bushko 480- 759-1717 jdbushko@earthlink.net



Operation Paperback Books *Ann Ferguson*

We send paperbacks to the troops and hard cover books are taken to the VA

Hospital. Bring your books to any chapter function or contact Ann Ferguson.

480-961-9634 or email vfergusonfnp@cox.net

Since 2012, over 11400 books taken to the VA Hospital and hundreds of paperbacks have been sent out to our troops.

Our Auxiliary ladies at work! They are Awesome!



Operation Paperback







Blankets for the Veterans in the VA Hospital

Breaking out of Isolation!



Backpacks/Bags for Vets



Marilyn and I embarked on an ambitious three-week tour to the East Coast to breakout of our isolation to see relatives and friends. I would like to share with you this reentry into society. We cashed in the loan made to American Airlines from the COVID cancelled trip last year and flew nonstop to Orlando. If you haven't renewed your TSA precheck status recently, check on the expiration.

Standard check in lines at Orlando were very long with almost none at precheck. We found very few places open to eat at Sky Harbor airport. Eat before you go. During

the four-hour flight, we had to wear masks except to eat or drink. Loosening the straps made it more tolerable. No complaints heard while eating!

On arrival, we rented a car and drove to a restaurant and a motel. Masks were required unless eating or staying in your room. It was very useful to carry a mask with you at all times. With increasing vaccination this is becoming less and less necessary. We stayed with friends or relatives almost every night. Everyone had had their shots, not sure who the holdouts are, but we haven't met any.

Interesting statistic, 95% of people testing COVID positive in Arizona recently were not vaccinated or had only one shot. 90% had no shots. Another is that hospitalizations for COVID are almost 100% non-vaccinees, as are deaths. So, it appears to be OK to get out there and enjoy restaurants, ball games and trips visiting friends and relatives. **John Marsh**

WHY DID YOU DO WHAT YOU DID WHEN YOU DID IT?



Meredith and I HAD to get married!!

about.). Here we are 30 years later, and truth be known, we still have our moves. Greg Moore

One day when we were dating and on a road trip, we mused that it was the anniversary of our first date. (Blind date at a coffee shop.) She then mentioned it was her mom and dad's anniversary and she needed to call them. Then I said, it's my parents' anniversary too. Bottom line, our first date, both sets of our parents and my maternal grandparents wedding date are the same date, June 28th.

So as not to disturb the Force,1992 the year we decided to tie the knot, found June 28th to be on a Monday. The church was free (who gets married on a Monday in June?). The church ladies were free to assist, and the reception venue (the old Studebakers on Rural and University) was normally closed Mondays, but the manager said sure to a private party with their DJ, cocktail waitresses in poodle skirts and a bunch of people in their 30s and 40s boppin' at a sock hop! (Your grandchildren will have no idea what I'm talking



Finding Meaning and Hope

A Video Discussion Series for Family Members Caring for Someone with Dementia

Join a group of fellow family caregivers to discuss how to regain hope and build resilience when dealing with the complexities of ongoing loss associated with caring for someone with dementia. In Duet's *Finding Meaning and Hope* series, you will learn skills to help you stay strong, healthy, resilient, and positive as you navigate your caregiving journey with healing and hope. This 10-week discussion series features videos based on the groundbreaking book, *Loving Someone Who Has Dementia: How to Find Hope While Coping with Stress and Grief* by Pauline Boss, Ph.D., a leading expert on caregiver grief. It is built on solid research and years of practical experience, and it offers real help in dealing with the challenges, losses, and rewards of being a family caregiver of someone who is, or is becoming, psychologically absent.

These sessions will be offered virtually using Zoom. To participate, you will need a computer, tablet, or smart phone with a camera and sound capabilities. Please contact the number below for assistance. **Limited respite funds are available.** If interested, please ask when registering for the series.

DATE: TIME: LOCATION:

COST: RSVP:

Sundays, August 1 – October 3, 2021 3 pm – 4:30pm

Virtual Session using Zoom - (Zoom link will be sent once registration is complete) Free-of-charge

Please call Dr. Barbara L. Austin (480-694-8067) or email Bleeaustin@gmail.com

I will say that although it focuses on Dementia, Dr. Boss' work is applicable for anyone in the caregiving world. I have learned a lot in my role as sole caregiver for Jim as a Parkinson's patient. This is an excellent series and very helpful. Barbara Austin



MOAA's Mission: The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is a non-profit veteran's association dedicated to maintaining a strong national defense and to preserving the earned entitlements of members of the uniformed services, their families, and survivors. National MOAA, it's Councils and Chapters are nonpartisan.

MOAA National & Superstition Mountain Chapter Membership Application

DateP	rinted Member Name & Initial	
	Rank	
	National MOAA Number	
	City	
Home Phone #	Work or Cell#	
Please Circle: ARMYAIR F	ORCE-NAVYMARINE CORPS- COAST GUARI	DNOAAPUBLIC HEALTH SVC
Circle All That Apply: REG	ULAR-RESERVE-NATIONAL GUARD-FORMER	OFFICER-ACTIVE-RETIRED-
MALEFEMALEWII	DOWWIDOWER	
Member Date of Birth MM_	/DD/YYYY Spouse Date of Birth MM	M/DD/YYYY
Anniversary Date	E-mail Address	
our career resources (one- discounts on products and tap into MOAA's staff of ex- more. That's on top of all the <i>Superstition Mountain Cha</i> Auxiliary luncheons and activi members of MOAA National For National dues, enclose	Member you get full access to everything MOA on-one career counseling, résumé reviews, and i travel, and access to all MOAA exclusive public xperts for financial and investment advice, colle ne benefits you receive at the BASIC Membershi <i>apter</i> membership fee is \$25 per year . Spouses o vities with no fee. Chapter bylaws require Chapter f e check for: \$43.00 – Make check payable to 488, Maryfield, VA 22116-9820	interviewing advice and critiques), countle ications and news updates. You'll be able ege scholarships for dependents, and mu hip level. of current members may participate in Chap members and Chapter Auxiliary members to
-	ter \$25.00 or Auxiliary (SSAC) \$12.50	
	MC of MOAA. Write 2020 dues in the memo li	line
Mail Chapter Application		
SMC MOAA, Tom Ralph	AZ 85024 - Phone 602-569-2130	
, , ,		
For Mo	re Information Contact, Membership Committee 480-219-1020 memarsh125@gmail.com	
	le hard plastic, white background with MOAA le please fill out the form below.	
Print first and last	name	Select nametag type Pin on magnetic

11



2022 Chapter Dues Renewal Form				
Annual Dues:	\$2	5 Regular Members	\$12.50 Auxiliary (SSAC) Members	
	Please make check payable to SMC of MOAA			
	Write MOAA Chapter Dues on Memo line of the check			
	Mail to:	Tom Ralph, Treasurer	20444 N 22 nd St, Phoenix, AZ 85024	
		Check enclosed; renew	my membership for 2020	
Please print name	My National MOAA Number			
Address				
Phone number		Email		

Superstition Mountain Chapter Military Officers Association of America 1151 N Joshua Tree Lane Gilbert, AZ 85234



2021 Chapter Activity schedule - (Dates and times are subject to change)

Chapter Board	Chapter Auxiliary	Chapter
Meetings	Luncheons	Luncheon Meetings
No meeting	July 14 th – 11:00am	July 17 th – 12 noon social – 12:30 lunch
No meeting	August 11 th – 11:00am	August 21 st – 12 noon social – 12:30 lunch



Be Connected Website <u>https://beconnectedaz.org/</u> Visit the Be Connected website and explore the different features and other organizations in your area.