

# Superstition Mountain Express



**MOAA**® Military Officers Association of America

FEB 2025  
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## INDEX

President's Message	1
Auxiliary-Surviving Spouses	2
January Luncheon Photos	2-4
Birthdays/Anniversaries	5
50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon	6
Chair Reports	7-13
Calendar	14
Editor's Page	15
Resources	16

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(MOAA and its Superstition Mountain Chapter are both nonpartisan.)



## President's Comments Gregory L. Moore, 1Lt. USA (Ret.)

Greetings friends:

Those of you unable to attend the January luncheon missed a good time.

First, there was the great lunch coordinated by John Bushko.

Second, was the group-assembly of hygiene kits for the Phoenix VA's homeless program. The production line was coordinated by Judy Bushko, Auxiliary Chair. The attendance of 8 JROTC students from Campo Verde High School in Gilbert was an added plus. This program is led by our own LT COL (Dr) Steve Woods (USAF) Ret. The team assembled nearly 150 hygiene kits. Way to go all!!!

Additionally, there is reportedly a new scam going around. It involves a delivery of jewelry, which you did not order. Inside is a QR Code which supposedly gives you particulars on the sender etc. BEWARE! Clicking on this with your phone will allow the scammers access to all your banking data, passwords etc. Your accounts get drained. Do not scan strange QR Codes.

Last, Mike Ostermeyer is busy contacting schools re JROTC awards nights. He can use your help as a Sponsor and/or a Presenter.

Remember our motto: "Never Stop Serving."

Take care and stay safe.

**Greg**



**VP Auxiliary/Surviving Spouse**  
**Judy Bushko**



Hello!

John and I wish everyone a happy Valentine's Day!

We were so honored to have some of the JROTC cadets from Campo Verde High School to assist in the assembly of our much-loved Hygiene Kits at the January Luncheon. They helped to push us over the top of 100 kits! Take a look:



Hope to see you at the Luncheon on February 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Judy**





# January Luncheon Photos!



**Greg Moore**



**Meredith and Cadet Guest**



**Mark Walker**



**Bob Grierson**



**Melanie and Tom Ralph**



**Donna Stowman**

**Our very own Steve Wood and his Cadets**



**Kandi Wojtysiak and her Guest, Bill, and Cadet**







**Fred Ferguson and Cadet Guests**



**Karl Pfitzer and Cadet Guest**

**Peggy and Arlan Allen**



**Rebecca Schmidt and Rodney Carlton**



**John and Judy Bushko**



**Ann Ferguson and Lou Bates**

**Karl and vicki Pfitzer**



# February Congratulations!



## MEMBER

Karl E Pfitzer      12  
Arlan Allen        24  
Tom Gaylor        27

## SPOUSE

Peggy Allen        10  
Joyce Gallagher   14  
Cindy Wood        16  
Dawn Grierson     18  
Bonnie Faull       19

## ANNIVERSARY

# *50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon*

SUPERSTITION MOUNTAIN CHAPTER, MOAA

*You are cordially invited to attend the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon  
of the Superstition Mountain Chapter, MOAA, as their honored Guest, on*

*February 15, 2025*

*DoubleTree by Hilton  
1011 W. Holmes Ave., Mesa, AZ 85210*

*Social Hour begins at Noon - Dinner is served at 1:00pm.*

## Menu

*(All meals are served with a Green Salad, Rolls with Butter, Iced Tea or Coffee, and Dessert)*

*\*Beer-braised Short Ribs with Wild Mushrooms  
Roasted Carrots-Goat cheese Polenta*



*\*Pan-roasted Chicken Breast-Lemon-thyme Jus  
Herb-roasted potatoes-Roasted Vegetable Medley*

## Dessert

*Red Velvet mini cakes, with Vanilla Bean Mousse*

### **RSVP:**

*John Bushko- Phone 480-759-1717*

*Text 614.204.0413*

*e-mail [jabushko@earthlink.net](mailto:jabushko@earthlink.net).*

*(Please give us the courtesy of your reply, as well as your choice of meals, by February 9th.)*

# Chair Report



**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President/Programs**  
**LTC John Bushko, USAF (Ret)**

Greetings everyone,

Our February meeting is on the 15th and will be a little different from most. We are celebrating the **50th anniversary** of the Chapter. With that, the Board of Directors decided that the Chapter will pay for the meals. All meals will be plated instead of the buffet style we normally have. You will have a choice of either **Pan Roasted Chicken Breast**, served with lemon thyme jus, herb-roasted potatoes, and roasted vegetable medley, or **Beer Braised Short Ribs**, served with wild mushrooms, roasted carrots, and goat cheese polenta. A green salad will be served to all with Ranch and Italian dressings and the dessert will be Red Velvet mini cakes with Vanilla Bean Mousse.

For this meeting, I request you email or text me with the number of people attending and the meal each person would like. I will need the reservations by February 9th. Be sure to include your name in any text or email.

My email is [jabushko@earthlink.net](mailto:jabushko@earthlink.net), text me at 614-204-0413.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the meeting to celebrate the anniversary.

**John**



**Legislative**  
**Bob Grierson**

New Year's Greetings to the Superstition Mountain Chapter.

At the time of writing this column, our legislators in DC and in Phoenix are back in session. In fairness, the US Senate is only addressing President Trump's Cabinet appointees in committee hearings. In the House of Representatives, more action is occurring. Once the initial committee meetings are held and their rules established, we will see some legislative activity. (Cont'd.)



That legislative activity will initially be focused on an omnibus spending bill to finish off the appropriations for FY 25. As you recall, it has all been continuing resolutions which has angered many of those in the Republican Caucus. But it needs to be done to fund the government through the remainder of the FY. Once that is done; however, FY 26 needs to be addressed. The 12 appropriations bills are a priority for many in the GOP and even the department heads in DoD. The next major piece of legislation is expected to be on border security, followed by a tax bill continuing to 2017 tax law. How the Democrat Caucus lines upon these issues is yet to be determined. The cynic in me assumes they will be a Nay vote on nearly all GOP sponsored bills.

You note that I did not mention the MAJ Star act. In spite of the massive number of co-sponsors in the House and Senate, it never came to a vote. We may see it in the DoD appropriation bill later this year. But again, the cynic me says we will have this fight again. This time lets carry this ball over the goal line. MOAA National has not issued specific policy positions so far, but they have published the following general positions, and they need your help.

As the legislative slate resets for the 119th Congress, MOAA member engagement will become even more vital to achieving our advocacy objectives.

These are among MOAA's priorities for this year:

### **Currently Serving**

**Military housing:** Recent reporting from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) reveals the myriad challenges servicemembers in unaccompanied housing are facing. The health, safety, and privacy concerns outlined by GAO show the need for action.

MOAA seeks to improve funding and condition transparency for unaccompanied housing by requiring an annual, publicly available report, which will highlight areas that require the most attention from both DoD and Congress. (Cont'd.)

### **Retirees/Veterans**

**Toxic exposure:** MOAA will focus on capitalizing on our recently released report, [Ending the Wait for Toxic-Exposed Veterans](#), to advocate for veterans exposed to toxic materials during their service.

While the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act has made major improvements to how toxic exposures are treated by the VA, additional measures are required. In cooperation with other VSOs, MOAA will advocate for Congress to pass legislation that shortens the time veterans must wait before their toxic exposures are acknowledged and conceded by the VA.

### **Family/Survivors**

**Spouse employment:** Rates of unemployment for military spouses continue to be four to five times higher than the national average. This persistent challenge requires not only providing education and employment resources for spouses, but also incentivizing businesses to hire someone who will likely move in two to three years.

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit program was established to support populations who face significant barriers to employment, and adding a military spouse target group is long overdue. Passing the Military Spouse Hiring Act will provide another important lever needed to address the critical issue of spouse unemployment. (Cont'd)



## **DoD Health Care**

**Access to care:** DoD has acknowledged that congressionally directed reforms to the Military Health System (MHS), together with U.S. medical workforce volatility, exacerbated long-standing access challenges and led to a destabilized MHS that does not consistently deliver timely care to beneficiaries.

Current patient resources for reporting access problems and getting assistance navigating the MHS are inadequate. Also, it is unclear if there are mechanisms for reporting up to the Defense Health Agency so systemic access challenges can be identified and addressed.

MOAA seeks a digital MHS assistance platform allowing beneficiaries to report access-to-care challenges and receive help navigating the MHS, including reporting requirements to increase visibility on barriers to access so fixable issues can be addressed.

## **VA Health Care**

**Support for caregivers:** MOAA has long advocated for legislation that would improve caregiving support for veterans' families. This includes enhancements to the VA Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC) and expansion of home health and long-term care services to meet current and future needs of veterans, their caregivers, and families.

This year, MOAA strongly supports the reintroduction and enactment of the Veteran Caregiver Reeducation, Reemployment, and Retirement Act. This legislation acknowledges caregivers' invaluable contributions while addressing the significant economic and emotional burdens they face. By offering education, employment, and retirement opportunities, the legislation empowers caregivers to achieve financial security while potentially reducing the federal government's long-term economic burden.

## **Persistent Efforts**

There are certain issues that MOAA will always advocate for until they are passed. Among these are concurrent receipt for combat wounded (Major Richard Star Act), Arlington National Cemetery access, and cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs). (Cont'd.)

MOAA will also continually monitor certain issues and will immediately mobilize the entire association, our membership, and VSO/MSO allies to ensure these issues are not negatively impacted. These issues include:

- Decrements to scheduled pay increases.
- New TRICARE or TRICARE Pharmacy Program fees.
- TRICARE cost-sharing increases that exceed military retired pay COLA or TRICARE Pharmacy Program cost sharing that exceeds common industry practice.
- Unequal decrements of compensation and benefits based on rank, age, family composition, retirement status, or disability benefits.

As the work of the 119th Congress gets underway, MOAA will continue its efforts to advocate on behalf of our members and the entire uniformed services community. We will leverage our experience and our relationships on Capitol Hill and with our partners to navigate an increasingly partisan environment.

Through our efforts, MOAA will seek to ensure that servicemembers, veterans, and retirees and their families – who have sacrificed so much – continue to receive benefits earned through their service.

On to state issues. Quite a bit has been put forward in the State House. We will see how they fare in the upcoming months. (Cont'd)

SB1155: state income tax parity for USPHS and NOAA officers has been introduced in the Arizona Senate and is awaiting committee assignment. This is the same bill we worked so hard to get passed last session only to have it languish in the House.

[SB1122](#); Property tax exemptions; inflation adjustment -An Act amending section 42-11111, Arizona Revised Statutes; relating to property tax exemptions. Exemption for property; widows and widowers; persons with a total and permanent disability; veterans with a disability.

[SB1021](#); ROTC cadets; in-state student status - An Act amending section 15-1802, Arizona Revised Statutes; relating to classification of students for tuition purposes.

[HCM2004](#); Military bases; exemption from ESA - A concurrent memorial urging the United States Congress to enact legislation exempting military bases from Endangered Species Act.

[HCR2010](#); Gold star families; legacy preservation - A concurrent Resolution supporting Gold Starr Families and the historical significance of the term.

[HCR2019](#); Technical correction; National Guard - A concurrent Resolution proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of Arizona; amending ARTICLE XVI, SECTION 2, Constitution of Arizona; Relating to the National Guard.

[HCR2023](#); Property tax; combat veterans; exemption - A Concurrent Resolution enacting and ordering the submission to the people of a measure relating to property tax.

HB2009; Vehicle license tax; exemption; military - An Act amending section 28-5811, Arizona Revised Statutes; relating to vehicle license tax. Requires an individual to have valid orders and to be within 30 days of deployment to be able to register a vehicle for one year without payment of registration fees and the vehicle license tax. Permits an individual who paid registration fees or vehicle license taxes who qualifies under this provision to apply for a refund of all monies submitted. Makes the changes retroactive to six months before the effective date of this Act.

HB2030; Impersonation; veteran; armed forces - An Act amending title 13, chapter 24, Arizona Revised Statutes, by adding section 13-2414; relating to obstruction of public administration. Designates impersonating a veteran of the United States Armed Forces and engaging in specific, listed conduct with the intent to induce another to submit to the person's fraudulent official authority or to rely upon the person's fraudulent official acts to be a felony. Stipulates the class of felony based on the conduct of the individual while impersonating a veteran, and entitles the act the Master Sergeant Orlando Dona Valor act.

HB2149; Technical correction; veterans; conservatorship - An Act amending section 41-606, Arizona Revised Statutes; relating to the department of veterans' services.

HB2188; National guard; active-duty combat - An Act amending title 26, chapter 1, article 3, Arizona Revised Statutes, by adding section 26-164; relating to the National Guard.

HB2217; National guard; life insurance - An Act amending title 26, chapter 1, article 3, Arizona Revised Statutes, by adding section 26-158.01; relating to the National Guard.

HB2245; Appropriation; medical marijuana; veterans; fees - An Act appropriating monies to the department of health services. Appropriates \$10,000,000 from the Arizona State General Fund in FY 2025-2026 to the Arizona Department of Health Services for the issuance and renewal of registry identification cards for Veterans of the United States Armed Forces pursuant to state law.

HB2261; Medical marijuana; fee; exemption; veterans - An Act amending Section 36-2804.02, Arizona Revised Statutes; relating to medical marijuana. (Cont'd.)



HB2320; Appropriation; veterans' services; mental health - AN ACT appropriating monies to the Department of Veterans Services.

HB2336; Native American veteran special plates - An Act amending sections 28-2351 and 28-2403, Arizona Revised Statutes; amending title 28, chapter 7, article 12, Arizona Revised Statutes, by adding section 28-2470.27; amending sections 28-6501, 28-6991 and 28-6993, Arizona Revised Statutes; relating to special plates.

HB2406; Property tax; exemption; combat veterans - An Act amending sections 42-11111 and 42-17151, Arizona Revised Statutes; relating to property tax.

National bills supported by MOAA <https://moaa.quorum.us/bills> and State of Arizona legislation <https://dvs.az.gov/about/legislative-updates>

First step: Register as an advocate in [our Legislative Action Center](#). If you are already registered, send the link to a family member or friend. Remember, the Legislative Action Center is open to all who support the uniformed services community.

Did you know that MOAA has a series of video updates on legislation free to its members? Take a look at what is available for you. [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZJJ2z1-x\\_q3tfOALHMIkAR\\_pVTjEhk86](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZJJ2z1-x_q3tfOALHMIkAR_pVTjEhk86)

You may find the email links for your State representatives and the committee members at: <https://www.azleg.gov/MemberRoster/> .

## Bob



**JROTC/ROTC**

**Mike Ostermeyer**

Hello Everyone,

I hope that everyone survived the holidays.

Update on Superstition Mountain Chapter (SMC) ROTC/JROTC Awards Program. Thursday, January 9, 2025, 17 email letters were sent out to the 17 schools that SMC supports. As of January 23, 2025, 10 JROTC/ROTC Programs have responded to the email letter with dates and time or awaiting on details of their ceremonies. As of now, the earliest JROTC Ceremony is Friday, April 11, at 6:30PM, at Mesa High School. I will be looking more Presenters and Sponsors for these schools. I attached to the newsletter the current update on the schools.

Thank you for your time.

**Michael**

**((Mike Ostermeyer - 602-316-1072))**

#	School & Affiliation	Ceremony Date/Time	Presenter	Sponsor	Sr ROTC/JROTC Instructor	Contact Numbers
<b>Superstition Mountain Chapter MOAA ROTC / JROTC Programs / POC Michael Ostermeyer</b>						
1. **	ASU: USA, USN, USAF, USMC, USSF	Pending per Rachael Lamb, Jan 16, 2025	1LT Greg Moore		Rachael Vee Lamb Senior Business Operations Specialist   Army/Air Force ROTC Arizona State University Rachael Lamb <a href="mailto:rachael.duncan@asu.edu">rachael.duncan@asu.edu</a>	O: 480.965.3181
2. **	Apache JCT. USN				LCDR Gary Lock <a href="mailto:glock@goaj.org">glock@goaj.org</a> Email RTN 01-09-25 MGySgt Norvin C. Deleon Guerrero <a href="mailto:ndeleong@goaj.org">ndeleong@goaj.org</a>	O: 480.982.1110 EXT: 5399 Guerrero C: 747.275.6188
3. **	Basha, USAF	Fri, MAY 2, 2025 @ 1500Hrs. Basha HS Auditorium	Arlan & Peggy Allen	Arlan & Peggy Allen	COL Cliff Stansell Basha AFJROTC 5990 S Val Vista Dr Chandler, AZ 85249 <a href="mailto:stansell.clifford@cusd80.com">stansell.clifford@cusd80.com</a>	
4. **	Campo Verde, USAF	Mon, MAY 5, 2025 @ 1800Hrs. HS Cafeteria			LTC Steve Wood <a href="mailto:stephen.wood@gilbertschools.net">stephen.wood@gilbertschools.net</a>	
5. **	Chandler, USAF	Mon, APR 28, 2025 @1830Hrs. Chandler Center for the Arts	John & Judy Bushko	John & Judy Bushko	MSGT Scott Goodson <a href="mailto:Goodson.Scott@cusd80.com">Goodson.Scott@cusd80.com</a>	O: 480.224.3987
6. **	Dobson, USAF	Fri, APR 25, 2025 @ 1745Hrs. Annual Awards Banquet @ HS Cafeteria			LTC Anthony Kusek <a href="mailto:arkusek@mpaz.org">arkusek@mpaz.org</a> SMSgt (Ret) Stephen Tkach III <a href="mailto:sjtkach@mpsaz.org">sjtkach@mpsaz.org</a>	O: 480.472.3055
7. **	Gilbert, USAF	Mon, MAY 5, 2025 @ 1700Hrs. Gilbert HS Auditorium			MSgt Elwin Longnion <a href="mailto:elwin.longnion@gilbertschools.net">elwin.longnion@gilbertschools.net</a> Awards POC: Cadet LT Col DeShane Tullie <a href="mailto:dtullie@gilbertschools.net">dtullie@gilbertschools.net</a>	O: 480.497.0177 EXT: 5066/5064



#	School & Affiliation	Ceremony Date/Time	Presenter	Sponsor	Sr ROTC/JROTC Instructor	Contact Numbers
8. **	Globe, USA				SFC Tony Lyons <a href="mailto:tony.lyons@globeschools.org">tony.lyons@globeschools.org</a> Salvatore Fiorella <a href="mailto:Salvatore.Fiorella@globeschools.org">Salvatore.Fiorella@globeschools.org</a> Email RTN 01-09-25	
9. **	Hamilton, USAF				Lt Col Dan Kline <a href="mailto:kline.daniel@cusd80.com">kline.daniel@cusd80.com</a> MSgt Fred Driver <a href="mailto:driver.fred@cusd80.com">driver.fred@cusd80.com</a>	O: 480.883.5207
10. **	Higley, USAF	Wed, APR 23, 2025 @ 1830Hrs. Williams Field HS Auditorium			COL David Vaughn <a href="mailto:David.Vaughn@husd.org">David.Vaughn@husd.org</a>	O: 480.279.7429 C: 813.810.4831
11. **	Marcos De Niza, USA				MAJ Robert Fore <a href="mailto:rfore@tuhsd.k12.az.us">rfore@tuhsd.k12.az.us</a>	O: 480.838.3200
12. **	Maricopa, USAF				LTC Allen Kirksey <a href="mailto:akirkseyjr@musd20.org">akirkseyjr@musd20.org</a> CMSgt Scott Burton <a href="mailto:sburton@musd20.org">sburton@musd20.org</a>	O: 520.568.5100 ext. 4182
13. **	Mesa, USAF	Fri, APR 11, 2025, @1800Hrs. HS Auditorium			MSgt Mark Caldwell <a href="mailto:mcaldwell@mpsaz.org">mcaldwell@mpsaz.org</a>	O: 480.472.5889
14. **	Queen Creek, USA	Awaiting Details 1-10-25, per Biggs			SFC John Biggs <a href="mailto:jbiggs@qcusd.org">jbiggs@qcusd.org</a>	O: 480.987.5973
15. **	Red Mountain, USA				MAJ Olga Cortez <a href="mailto:olcortez@mpsaz.org">olcortez@mpsaz.org</a>	
16. **	Skyline, USA	Fri, MAY 9, 2025 @ 1700Hrs. HS Auditorium			COL(R) Geoff Stevens <a href="mailto:gdstevens@mpsaz.org">gdstevens@mpsaz.org</a>	O: 480.472.9571
17. **	Westwood, USAF				LTC Joe Abel <a href="mailto:jdabel@mpsaz.org">jdabel@mpsaz.org</a>	

**Current on: Thursday, January 23, 2025**

**P= Presenter or School Has Awards Package**

**\*= Have Awardee Names**

**\*\*= Sent Letter**

**@= Sponsors Have Paid**

**Chapter Donations**

Enclosed is a donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_



This donation may be used for any Auxiliary projects \_\_\_\_\_ or ROTC \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make check payable to SMC of MOAA**  
**Write AUXILIARY or ROTC in the memo line of the check**

Mail to: **TOM RALPH, Treasurer:** 20444 N 22<sup>nd</sup> St, Phoenix, AZ 85024

**2025 Chapter Dues Renewal Form**



Annual Dues: \$25 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<sup>nd</sup> St, Phoenix, AZ 85024

Check enclosed; renew my membership for 2025

Please print name \_\_\_\_\_

My National MOAA Number \_\_\_\_\_

**2025 Chapter Activity Schedule - (Dates and times are subject to change.)**

<b>Chapter Board Meeting</b>	<b>Chapter Auxiliary</b>	<b>Chapter Member/Guest</b>
<b>Chompie's, behind Chandler Fashion Center</b>		<b>Luncheon Meetings</b>
<b>February 11, 2025 9:30am</b>	-	<b>February 15, 2025 12 Noon Social - 1:00pm lunch</b>





“Life is not fair.  
Get over it!”

***...Life-long adage of Marlene Fox***

*In loving Memory of Marlene Fox, our long-time Newsletter Editor.*



Newsletter Editors

Peggy Allen and Paula Anderer

Newsletter Contact: [paulaanderer10@gmail.com](mailto:paulaanderer10@gmail.com)

4201 W. Luke Ave.  
Phoenix, AZ 85019



**Superstition Mountain Chapter**  
Military Officers Association of America

RESOURCES

Newsletter: [paulaanderer10@gmail.com](mailto:paulaanderer10@gmail.com)

MOAA Home Page: [https:// moaa.org](https://moaa.org) ( Visit the [Take Action Center](#) )

MOAA SMC Chapter Website: [https// smcmoaa.org](https://smcmoaa.org)

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service members • veterans • families • communities

Visit the websites and explore the different features,  
and other organizations in your area.