Level of Excellence Award Winner: 2011 – 4 Star; 2012 – 5 Star 2013 – 5 Star; 2014 – 5 Star; 2015 – 5 Star; 2016 – 5 Star; 2017 – 5 Star; 2018 – 5 Star; 2019 – 5 Star; 2020 – 5 Star; 2021 – 5 Star



NACMOAA STAFF & DIRECTORS FOR 2023 Mrs. Sharon Douglas - President, AZ Council of Chapters Surviving Spouse Liaison & Coordinator for Luncheons LtCol Alex Torrance- Vice President, Coordinator for Guest Speakers and Awards, & Director <u>Col Steve Woods</u> – Legislative Affairs Officer LtCol Bob Wallace – Personal Affairs, Transition Liaison & Director <u>LtCol Dick Jonas</u> – Immediate Past President, Director & Treasurer Col Jon Berry - Director LCDR Spencer O'Neil - Membership & PIO LCDR Peter Jensen – Chaplain <u>Mrs. Mary Jonas</u> – Surviving Spouse Chapter Liaison Mrs. Roberta Rice – Outback Editor

& Secretary

If you would prefer to receive The Outback via email, please make sure Dick Jonas has your correct email address. <<u>az04nac@erosonic.com></u>



From the President By: Sharon Douglas

Memorial Day, the unofficial start of summer is right around the corner. It is also a very important day of respect and gratitude.

Memorial Day is a solemn reminder of the millions of Americans who tragically lost their lives while serving our country. Without the sacrifice of our men and women in uniform, America would not stand. Our ideals of freedom and democracy are only possible due to their service.

The local annual observance will take place at the Citizens Cemetery located at 815 Sheldon St. Prescott. Opening remarks start at 0900. Mayor Goode and the Yavapai Board of Supervisors invite anyone wishing to honor those who have fallen in service to their country to join them. Parking is available at Yavapai College and Bennet Glass. For more information call 928-771-3206.

The next two months are devoted to highlighting mental health and PTSD awareness, care, and where to find it. May is mental health awareness month. It is important to seek help if you or a loved one are experiencing mental illness. Mental health is an important part of overall health and well-being, but many suffer without seeking help. There are many agencies who are working to make treatment and

[Continued on page 2)

Where to find things in this newsletter: Surviving Spouse Membership form: Page 13 Regular Membership form: Page 14 Lunch location and reservation form: Page 3 counseling more widespread and affordable. MOAA, Be Connected, the VA and Tricare are just a few who are working to get veterans and their families the help they need and deserve. For help and support call or text 988 or chat at 988Lifeline.org, call the VA at <u>928-776-6071</u> or consult your PCP.

June is PTSD awareness month. Help spread the word that effective treatments are available. Don't suffer in silence, reach out for help. Contact the National Center for PTSD at ncptsd@va.gov, PTSD Information Voice Mail (802)296-6500 or call 988. It is staffed 24/7.

Friday 12 May Dick Jonas and I will be attending the AZ Council of Chapters bi-annual meeting in Phoenix. I will be giving a PowerPoint presentation on Surviving Spouse issues and Dick will be addressing Chapter Development.

NAC has been awarded the 2022 Marvin J. Harris 5 Star Communication Award. Congratulations to long time editor Mary Jonas and our new editor Roberta Rice. Great job in putting out such a quality newsletter and keeping our members informed.

Honor Flight, Mission accomplished:

After four plus years of fund raising and identifying a veteran and escort, we were able to complete the mission. Maj. Wade Rutt USA (ret) was accompanied by Col Jon Berry USAF (ret) to Washington DC on April 11-13. The trip was comprised of a three day journey of honor and remembrance to the memorials in D.C. They also witnessed the changing of the guard at the Arlington Cemetery. Look for more information, photos and a recap from Wade and Jon at an upcoming meeting and newsletter article.

I want to thank all of you who donated to the Honor Flight to fund this trip of a lifetime.

Speaking of trips, if you are planning a getaway check out MOAA Vacations. They are running some great deals right now, especially on cruises. Great prices, added amenities like on board credits, and concierge level service for planning and during your trip. As an extra bonus, a percentage of the price of your vacation is given to the member's chapter. MOAAvacations.com (800) 211-5107.

After funding the Honor Flight and this year's five Scholarships, it's time to refill our coffers. If you are interested in chairing or assisting in fund raising or contacting local businesses to advertise in our Outback Newsletter, please let me know. Donations to the Scholarship Fund are always happily accepted.

Alex Torrance and I attend all four local scholarship ceremonies. The award for Mohave High School was mailed to the instructor. We were impressed with all of the recipients of the 2022 MOAA Scholarship awards. We met an outstanding group of cadets and the future leaders of our country. Look for photos and biographies of these cadets in the upcoming newsletters.

We have a special guest coming all the way from Anthem to speak at our next luncheon. Col. Thomas Kirk USAF (ret) a decorated aviator, POW, and member of the AZ Veterans Hall of Fame. You will find an extensive biography in this newsletter. You will not want to miss his inspirational talk.

I hope you will be able to join us on 07 June for our next luncheon. The theme will be Welcome Summertime. A variety of foods you might find at a picnic will be served, complete with an ice cream sundae bar. Plan to join us at 1100 for a Welcome appetizer table. Enjoy a cold glass of lemonade, ice tea or a wine cooler while getting to know our chapter members. See the entire menu and RSVP information in this newsletter.

All the best. Sharon Douglas, Surviving Spouse, President NACMOAA Chapter

NEXT LUNCHEON: 7 JUNE 2023 at Granite Gate

LOCATION: Granite Gate Senior Living 3850 North AZ-89, Prescott, AZ 86301GATHERING TIME: 11:00 AMPLACE: Granite Gate Dining RoomANNOUNCEMENTS & INTRODUCTIONS: 11:30 AMBUFFET LUNCH: 12:00 PMWELCOMING SUMMER WITH SEASONAL FAVORITES:

Appetizers with Refreshing Lemonade, Tea & Wine Coolers Juicy Grilled Chicken Quarters Yummy Pulled Pork w/buns Kickin' Hot Links Assorted BBQ condiments and sauces Accompanied by: Cole Slaw, Potato Salad, Baked Beans Dessert: Build your own Sundae Bar & Pie A la Mode



COST: The Buffet Lunch is \$30.00 per person. The reservation deadline is 31 May. IF YOU HAVE DIETARY RESTRICTIONS, PLEASE ADVISE SHARON DOUGLAS Sharon must have an accurate attendance count for the caterer by 31 May.

DIRECTIONS: As you approach the Granite Gate Entrance, watch for the flagpole with the Granite Gate flag because there are no street name signs. FROM PRESCOTT: Drive North on US Hwy 89 past Watson Lake to Boulder creek Lane. The Granite Gate entrance is on the West side of Hwy 89. Turn Left and go to the parking area in front of the large building. FROM THE AIRPORT / PIONEER PARKWAY AREA: Drive south on US Hwy 89 by the Phippen Museum past Three Sisters Consignment to Boulder Creek Lane. The Granite Gate entrance is on the West side of Hwy 89. Turn Right and go to the parking area in front of the large building. For additional information go to: wwwGraniteGate.com or call (928)771-8200. Phone: 928-771-8200

Please cut on the line below and mail with your check to Sharon Douglas

TO RECEIVE NO LATER THAN - 31 May 2023

NACMOAA address is PO Box 95 Dewey, AZ 8632

You may call Sharon at (928) 632-5939 to place a reservation if you prefer to pay at the door.

LATE NOTICE CANCELLATIONS CANNOT BE REFUNDED

7 June Meeting: Please make checks payable to: NACMOA

All meals are \$30.00

My check for \$_____is enclosed Attendees: Members: Guest Lunch - \$_____ 2023 Dues - \$_____ Scholarship - \$_____

Chaplain's Corner:

Members of NACMOAA may contact our Chaplain Pete Jensen anytime for prayer over the phone (928-830-3569), or to obtain confidential, Biblical counseling by phone or in person. No question you have is unimportant or "off limits". The Chaplain generously donates his time to our chapter members.



Treasurer's Report: As of 8 May 2023

\$ 5 1,015.44	General Fund
\$ 959.31	Scholarship Fund
\$ 625.26	Honor Flight Fund
\$ <u>1,451.00</u>	Events Fund
\$ 6 4,051.01	Total Funds Available



Ladies of NACMOAA



We gather at 11:30 AM, at Augie's Restaurant in Frontier Village, order off their menu and pay individually. Our lunches are over by 2:00 PM. We invite all ladies of NACMOAA to join us for this social event.

Our lunch dates for 2023 will be: July 14th; September 8th; and November 10th.

These dates are all the 2^{nd} Friday of odd numbered months.

If you know of any of our Ladies who have moved or have health issues we should be aware of, please forward that information to Mary Jonas at <u>mlajonas.2012@gmail.com</u> or call her at (928) 925-4674.

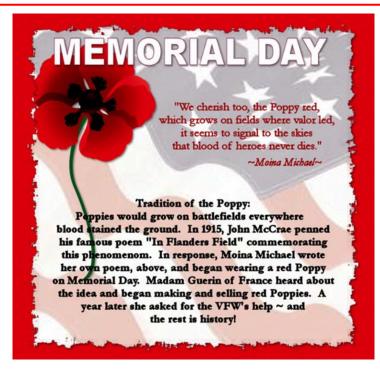
<u>Membership Corner:</u>

As your Membership Chair, please let me know if you have changes in your address, phone numbers, email address, etc. so that I can keep the chapter's roster up to update.

Our membership now stands at 53 (44 Regular Members plus 9 surviving spouses). Dues for 2023 have been renewed by all; Two former members decided to not renew their chapter membership. We certainly regret to see their departure from our NACMOAA family. All of our family members have journeyed similar paths, have much yet to offer each other and our country, and are all vital to our sustained growth, influence, and mission. Thank you all for being a part of our MACMOOA family.

Please, if you know any former, current, or retired officers who are not MOAA members or members of NACMOAA, invite them to join us. You can offer them a membership form from our newsletter and/or put them in touch with me. We would love to meet them and welcome them aboard our chapter.

LCDR H. Spencer O'Neal, USN, (Ret) Membership Chair, NACMOAA H_Spencer_ONeal@yahoo.com; (760) 486-3855



PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER CORNER:

As your new PIO I am still in the process of learning the intricacies of maintaining our NACMOAA website: nacmoaa.org. I am also looking at ways of advertising our chapter and meetings via local publications. If you have ideas for promulgation of such announcements or you are a website guru, please let me know! Currently our chapter's activities appear regularly in two news publications, the Daily Courier newspaper including the online edition and in Coffee Talk, which you can see in most restaurants in the Prescott area.

LCDR H. Spencer O'Neal, USN, (Ret) Public Information Officer, NACMOAA H_Spencer_ONeal@yahoo.com; (760) 486-3855

Legislative Affairs Update BY COL (Ret) Steve Woods, U.S. Army

MOAA Member to Lead Panel on Quality of Life

MOAA President and CEO Lt. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, USAF (Ret), and MOAA Government Relations staff members met with Rep. Don Bacon (R-Neb.) in January to share MOAA's priorities for the 118th Congress and discuss a newly announced panel on military quality-of-life issues. Bacon, a retired Air Force brigadier general and MOAA member, will lead the bipartisan panel expected to be stood up this year. Military pay, housing, health care, child care, spouse employment, and food insecurity are likely to be on the panel's agenda when hearings begin in late spring or summer. During the meeting, Kelly emphasized the importance of ensuring the ongoing viability of the all-volunteer force. He pledged MOAA's support for the panel and appreciation for the committee's renewed focus on military quality oflife issues—topics that align closely with MOAA's legislative priorities. A Military.com article noted the congressional panel's efforts will likely extend beyond this year, with recommendations potentially included in the FY2025 National Defense Authorization Act, the defense authorization bill Congress will consider in 2024. The article quoted Bacon on the bipartisan nature of the effort: "I know there's folks on both sides of the aisle really desiring to be part of this because this has a chance to impact our military for decades to come," he said. "I think people are also yearning for a bipartisan focus. This is not a Republican or Democrat focus. It's going to be a patriotic national focus of serving the folks who defend our country." MOAA looks forward to working with Bacon and his staff and all members of the congressional panel to address quality-of-life issues for servicemembers and their families and to ensure our nation fulfills its commitments to the uniformed services community.

Advocacy Action Items

- <u>Advocacy in Action: MOAA Members Bring Our Message to Capitol Hill.</u> The annual MOAA spring event to Capitol Hill stressed restoring the Basic Allowance for Housing and preserving TRICARE pharmacy network access. (3 pre-formed letters available at MOAA Advocacy Legislative Action Center)
- <u>Help MOAA Repeal the '180-day Rule' for Retirees Seeking Civilian Careers in</u> <u>DoD.</u> Ending this practice would deepen the Pentagon talent pool and help transitioning servicemembers. Join the fight today. (Pre-formed letter available)

<u>Major Richard Star Act Reaches Key House Milestone Again....Is it Enough?</u> Keep up the fight for concurrent receipt. Ask your lawmakers to support this bill. (2 pre-formed letters available)

- <u>MOAA Works to Support New Law Helping Military Spouses</u>. The legislation will make it easier for spouses to continue a career after a move but only if the right infrastructure is in place. (Pre-formed letter available)
- (continued from page 7)
- <u>Help Strengthen MOAA's Message: Sign Up for Our Legislative Action Center.</u> This year's in-person Advocacy in Action event is over but there's more work to do. (2 pre-formed letters available)

How you can help

We need to let Congress know where beneficiaries stand on these issues. Look for updates in The MOAA Newsletter and on MOAA's Advocacy News page. With your Premium or Life *(continued on page 7)*

(continued from page 6)

membership to **National MOAA**, you can log in at <u>www.MOAA.org</u> and access the pre-formed advocacy letters found there to send to your Legislators. If you wish to see advocacy letters for this issue or to see what you can do for all action items, please follow the instructions below:

- 1. Click on MOAA MOAA Home Page
- 2. Click on "ADVOCACY" at the top of the page

3. Click on "**LEGISLATIVE ACTION CENTER**" in the left hand column. Note the specific blocks that will allow access to specific groups.

- 4. Click on "WRITE" to generate <u>pre-formed letters</u> to your Legislators on issues of importance.
- 5. Please feel free to write to your Legislators on <u>any</u> of these issues.

Thanks for your interest and action in addressing these legislative issues for the benefit of all who have served.



IN MEMORIUM COL (RET) CAROL EBERSOLE



COL (ret) Ebersole served as a U.S. Army Nurse Corp officer in the Reserve Component and active Army for 25 years. Carol served as Chief Nurse in the Arizona National Guard, Staff Officer in the National Guard Bureau, Chief Nurse for the 309th Medical Group. During Desert Storm, she was assigned to Fort Belvoir, VA as head nurse in Critical Care and Recovery Room, and then as Assistant Chief of Professional Services. A year later, LTC Ebersole was promoted to Colonel in the U. S. Army Reserves and served in the 100th Station Hospital with active-duty tours in the internal medicine clinic at Walter Reed Medical Center. Summers were spent as nurse practitioner for West Point in the field hospitals medically serving the troops in training. COL Ebersole retired in 1999.



MOAA National Surviving Spouse Corner

Submitted by Sharon Douglas

The 2023 Advocacy in Action in person DC visits took place the third week of April. The state contingent that called on Arizona legislators consisted of the immediate AZ council past president, state legislative affairs liaison and a surviving spouse liaison. It is exciting to have Nora Dunham, a recent addition to the national Surviving Spouse Advisory Board representing our interests.

Look for more information on the congressional visits in the next newsletter.

Please support the Caring for Survivors Act of 2023. S414/H.R.1083. This legislation would increase the DIC payment to surviving spouses from 43% of the 100% disability pay to 55%. That increase would put the amount in line with other federal employee programs.

As with any proposed bill with financial ramifications, there will be an uphill and probably long battle to receive the benefits deserved. Much like the repeal of the "Widows Tax", it will take time and a lot of grassroots work from our members. Please contact your lawmakers and ask for their support and co-sponsorship.

There have recently been 20 new burn pit and other toxic exposure presumptive conditions added to the initial list, based on the PACT ACT.

This change expands benefits for Gulf War and post 9/11 Veterans and their survivors. If you or your spouse were previously denied or have not yet applied for benefits call 800-698-2411 or go to https://www.va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefit

If you need help filling out forms for benefits, your local VFW and DAV have VA trained volunteers who can help.

There have been a number of instances recently when DFAS has fallen short of expectations in processing pay and benefits. I have had three surviving spouses contact me looking for

information and where to go for help. This problem was recently brought up at a Surviving Spouse Virtual Meeting. The MOAA Director for Government Relations, Mark Belinsky is asking for those who have an issue, to report it to MOAA. The number and type of issues will help forge a solution or policy adjustment.

I will be speaking at the AZ COC bi-annual meeting in Phoenix. I will be providing an update on surviving spouse issues. Following this meeting, I will be sending my PowerPoint presentation to all of the chapter liaisons to distribute to their members. If you would like a copy, please send me an email.

Feel free to contact me with your questions or concerns.

HELPFUL INFORMATION & NOTICES

SPECIAL ONLINE ACCESS INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS TO STAY CONNECTED TAKE ACTION Page: https://moaa.quorum.us/ or moaa.org/takeaction

Web Page for NACMOAA: nacmoaa.org

Facebook: NACMOAA

Northern Arizona Chapter MOAA Mission

NACMOAA's mission is to promote the purposes and objectives of the Military Officers Association of America; to foster fraternal relations among retired, active and former commissioned and warrant officers of the eight U.S. uniformed services, including the National Guard and Reserve Components; to protect the rights and interests of our members and all U.S. military veterans, their dependents and survivors; and to serve the community and the nation



Minutes of NAC MOAA Board Meetings

You may now request a copy of the NAC MOAA Board Meeting minutes from Roberta Rice, Secretary - rbdrice@verizon.net or find them available on groupworks.

<u>The Outback</u> Newsletter is published by the Northern Arizona Chapter, which is an affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). MOAA and its affiliated chapters and councils are an independent, nonprofit, politically nonpartisan organization.



JUNE LUNCHEON GUEST SPEAKER: COL (RET) THOMAS KIRK, USAF

Tom Kirk was born in 1928 in Richmond, Virginia, and grew up in Portsmouth, Virginia. He was commissioned in the U.S. Air Force through the Air Force ROTC program at Virginia Military Institute on June 13, 1950, and he completed Undergraduate Pilot Training and was awarded his pilot wings on June 30, 1951. Kirk flew B-29 Superfortress bombers in Georgia and Kansas before serving in combat during the Korean War flying the AT-6 Texan as an Artillery Spotter and then the F-86 Sabre between November 1952 and November 1953. After Korea, Kirk flew with fighter squadrons in Louisiana, Belgium, and Italy, before going through Air Command and Staff College at Maxwell AFB, Alabama from September 1960 to July 1961. His next assignment was at Edwards AFB, California from July 1961 to September 1963. He then served an Air Force Institute of Technology assignment at the University of Southern California, where he earned an MBA. Kirk served at Myrtle Beach AFB, South Carolina, with the 354th Tactical Fighter Wing, from September 1964 until he left for an overseas assignment in Japan in November 1965. He served as Operations Officer of the 356th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Misawa AB, Japan, until July 1967, when he began flying combat missions as the Commander of the 357th Tactical Fighter Squadron out of Takhli Royal Thai AFB, Thailand. On October 28, 1967, Col Kirk was forced to eject from his F-105 Thunderchief when it was hit by anti-aircraft fire over North Vietnam. He was immediately captured and taken as a Prisoner of War. After spending the next 1,964 days in captivity, he was released during Operation Homecoming on March 14, 1973. After hospitalization, Col Kirk became the Deputy Commander for Operations and then the Wing Commander of the 29th Flying Training Wing at Craig AFB, Alabama. He next served as Deputy Commander of the Lowry Technical Training Center at Lowry AFB, Colorado, and finally as Vice Commander of all Special Forces in Europe before retiring from the Air Force on March 31, 1978. After his retirement, Tom lived in Italy and Spain before settling in Colorado in 1992. He is married to the former Ann Berardi of Canton, Massachusetts, and they have two sons; Thomas H. Kirk III and Robert T. Kirk.

His Air Force Cross Citation reads:

Lieutenant Colonel Thomas H. Kirk, Jr., distinguished himself by extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against an opposing armed force as an F-105 pilot near Hanoi, North Vietnam, on 28 October 1967. On that date, Colonel Kirk planned and led a 24-aircraft strike force against an important and heavily defended railroad and highway bridge near Hanoi. Despite seven surface-to-air missiles being fired at him and extremely poor visibility, Colonel Kirk, with undaunted determination, indomitable courage, and professional skill led his force to a precise ordnance delivery point, placing his own bombs directly on the target. His aircraft sustained a direct hit from the extremely intense antiaircraft fire. He courageously flew his burning aircraft until it became completely uncontrollable and he was forced to eject over hostile territory. Through his extraordinary heroism, superb airmanship, and aggressiveness in the face of the enemy, Colonel Kirk reflected the highest credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

Please plan on joining us at our June Luncheon as we welcome Colonel Thomas Kirk



Veterans Suicide Prevention Line

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (now known as the <u>988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline</u>), and is now active across the United States. When people call, text or chat 988, they will be connected

to trained counselors that are part of the existing Lifeline network. These trained counselors will listen, understand how their problems are affecting them, provide support, and connect them to resources if necessary.

The previous Lifeline phone number (1-800-273-8255) will always remain available to people in emotional distress or suicidal crisis.



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs



MOAA MISSION: To advocate for our military community and connect it to the nation we serve.

MOAA VISION: To promote and protect a strong national defense and lead our nation to honor its commitments to all who serve.



Arizona's 600,000 service members, veterans & their families to support and resources



Thank You Businesses for your support of NACMOAA.

Learn more and explore next steps: BeConnectedAZ.org 1-866-4AZ-VETS If you would like to place an AD in this newsletter, contact any Board Member.



The advertisements that appear in this publication do not reflect an endorsement by MOAA or this Chapter.



NORTHERN ARIZONA CHAPTER ~ APPLICATION FOR

SURVIVING SPOUSE MEMBERSHIP

Must be completed for you to have a vote on Chapter Issues or to hold elected office.

NAME: FIRST	MIDDLE	LAST		
ADDRESS:				_
CITY:	ST/	ATE:ZIF	<u>.</u>	
TELEPHONE: _(<u>,) </u>	_ALTERNATE PHONE: _()	
E-MAIL ADDRE	SS:			
Surviving Spous	se: Your deceased spouse Ran	k / First / Middle Initial / Las	st Name / MOAA Member a	#:
AMOUNT ENCL	.OSED: \$	(Make check payable to	NACMOAA)	
	SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT:		DATE	



New Regular Membership Application Northern Arizona Chapter

Name			_ MI	Las	t		
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Amt enclo	osed: \$_		(n	nake ch	eck payabl	e to NACMOA	A)
Signature					Date		
Mail check and a NACMOAA Tre PO Box 1226 Chino Valley AZ	asurer		All Chapter	memb	ers are enco	at www.moa ouraged to be n ssociation of A	nembers

Any person who has ever held a commission or a warrant in any of the eight uniformed services is eligible for membership in the Military Officers Association of America.

HIGHLIGHTS OF NACMOAA APRIL LUNCHEON

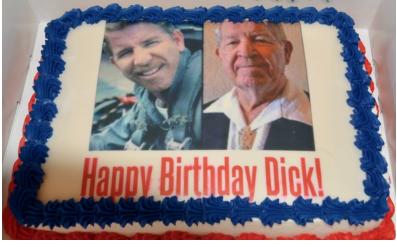




Embry Riddle AROTC Color Guard with Alex Torrance, Cpt Stone & Sharon Douglas

Thank you for wearing so many hats over the last years; we wish you a Happy Birthday Dick!







From: NAC MOAA The Outback Mrs. Mary G. Jonas P O Box 1226 Chino Valley, AZ 86323

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