



# The Sentinel

Arizona's First Chapter



The Arizona Chapter, P.O. Box 7644, Cave Creek, Arizona 85327

JANUARY 2004

CHARTERED IN 1956 - OVER 47 YEARS OF SERVICE TO COUNTRY

PAGE 1



### President's Message

Bette and I hope that you all had a good Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas. We now want to wish each of you a Blessed New Year.

I started out December by attending the Unified AZ Veterans (UAV) meeting on December 6 and then attended the Pearl Harbor (PH) Day Remembrance Ceremonies the next day at Wesley Bolin Plaza. The UAV meeting was very enlightening. Many of the same team at the PH Ceremony also attended and talked at the UAV. You have a very good team carrying the sword for strength of the United States and fair treatment of the active military, Guard, Reserve, veterans, and the retired military community.

I have 50 tickets to the "Voices Take Flight" program that will be held at the Phoenix First Assembly on Saturday, March 6, 2004, between 2:00 and 4:00 p.m. The church is located at 13613 N. Cave Creek Road, Phoenix AZ 85022. This year features the ASU Concert Choir, the "West Point" Cadet Glee Club and the Xavier Preparatory College Honor Choir. The cost will be \$10.00 per ticket purchased through me or \$10.00 at the door. However, if you buy them in advance through me, the Chapter will get to keep \$5.00 of each ticket sold. You may send the request to me at 6303 E. Mesquite Rd., Cave Creek, AZ 85331-8541. Make the check out to the Arizona Chapter MOAA and identify it for the concert in the remarks section. I will send the tickets to you. Proceeds from the concert will be used to further research on ALS, MS and Parkinson's disease.

There will be a Veterans Appreciation Day ceremony at Wesley Bolin Plaza on January 19.

Parking should not be a problem as it is a holiday. Many important people will be there and will speak during lunch. A free lunch will be served between 11:30 - 2:00. Please call (602) 926-5829 if you are coming so that they can have the proper amount of food available.

Land has been donated for another Veterans Cemetery in Northern Arizona - I think close to Holbrook, AZ. More on this as it develops.

The Veterans Home, located just behind the VA Medical Center, is looking for volunteers for the "Heroes Buddy" program. For this you visit the Vets Home and talk to members that are there and if you want you may take one of the Vets to lunch. Many do not have family members around to visit them and this is greatly appreciated. If you want to do this, call John Tucker at (602) 248-1591 and arrange a day for a visit.

The Chapter's Annual Silent Auction and Dinner was held the evening of December 18. We met at the Sunshine Hotel & Suites to get a larger room, great food, good service and a staff that asked us many times what they could do better. Seventy-One members and guests turned out to make bids on the many excellent items that were available. To coin an old phrase - "Ya Shoulda Been There." If you missed this year's dinner because of a conflict, I suggest you mark next year's event on your calendar now - December 16, 2004. You might even start identifying items that you want to put in the auction now. Thanks to all that gave items for the Auction.

A gentle reminder that if you haven't paid your dues for 2004 they are now due. There will be more on this in the pages following, but I just want to add

that I hope you stay with the Chapter as your team needs you!

This is the last President's Message that I will be penning for the *Sentinel*. However, I will be staying on the team and I hope to be submitting articles periodically. Stay Tuned and thanks for the opportunity to work with and for you!

God Bless America and God Bless Each of You.

*Ronald R. Green, LtCol USAF(Ret)*

### From the President Elect

Many thanks go to Ron Green for his unselfish and dedicated leadership to our Chapter over the past two years. As Chapter President, Ron gave extensively of his free time and focused his energy on moving the Chapter forward and in keeping the membership informed and involved. I can personally attest to Ron's active and hands-on approach to many Chapter activities over the past year. These activities include the significant administrative challenge of the name change from TROA to MOAA, the task of keeping the membership up to speed on developing legislative matters, the initiative to expand membership to Guard/Reserve forces and in the task of initiating planning for our own upcoming Chapter 50th Anniversary. Fortunately for us, in his position of Past President, Ron will continue to serve actively on your Board of Directors (BOD).

As your new Chapter President for 2004, I look forward to the coming year with great anticipation. Fortunately, in addition to Ron, our BOD and principal committee leaders from 2003 have agreed to stay on in Chapter leadership positions in 2004. That will assure us continuity of activities and will make my job a whole lot easier. I commit to work closely and

### Arizona Chapter Calendar

#### January 08

- BOD Meeting 1:30, American Legion 107

#### Jan 19

- Vet's Recognition Day at State Capitol

#### Jan 17

- Luncheon Meeting, McCormick Ranch

#### February 5

- BOD Meeting 1:30

#### February 19

- General Dinner Meeting 6:30 p.m.

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**SUPPORT OUR TROOPS — REMEMBER OUR FALLEN COMRADES — FLY YOUR FLAG**

**Chaplain's Corner**

"The Lord is good and we are beholden to him on this day as he was born some 2003 years ago; so let us pay homage to Him and thank Him for all the things we are thankful for. Amen  
 —*Robert Rutherford, Chaplain*

actively with the BOD and the committee chairpersons to serve the interests of the membership, to keep the membership informed and to continue to grow the Chapter in ways that will ensure that members enjoy being involved with it. Please do not hesitate to let me know of your concerns, points of interest and enjoyment or just whatever. And, oh by the way, we are always looking for volunteers and the more involved you are or become, the more you will enjoy it.  
 — *Gary Fredricks*

**Membership Renewal**

If you have an \*03 behind your name on the newsletter mailing label, we are looking for your renewal. Please use the renewal form included in this Sentinel or the cut-out slip on page 7 of this bulletin. An \*04 or greater on your label means you are paid up through that year. For electronic *Sentinel* recipients, you should have previously received an informational email with your membership expiration year listed.

**Silent Auction**

*by Dan Conway*

Again this year the Silent Auction was a great success, both in terms of funds raised in the amount of \$1,333, and the wonderful meal and fellowship experienced by those attending. We also received a donation from Lexus Western Region for \$3,000. It looks like our Scholarship Program is in good health.

Many thanks to those making donations listed below and to those who attended and whose purchases made the event a success. Also special thanks to Velma Birtciel and Dolly Bleick for helping set up.

Listed below are those companies who contributed. Please think of them as you are out making purchases this year.

**Member Donors**

- Paul Alix
- Dolly Bleick
- Judy Conway
- Marie Fredricks
- Mike Gannon
- Velma Birtciel
- Dan Conway
- Raymond Deane
- Doug Gray
- Ron Green

**Membership**

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 \*  
 \*  
 \* Currently the AZ Chapter has 208  
 \* members including, 50 auxiliary  
 \* members and 5 new members for  
 \* 2004.  
 \*  
 \*  
 \*\*\*\*\*



Guests and Chapter members enjoying the ambiance of the Annual Dinner and Silent Auction. L to R: Veva & Al Pasley, Sombra McKinney & Clint Laubabh, Gordon Drake, Mary Jane Hudson, Nina & Bill Johnson.

- Trula Halpern
- Bob Rutherford
- Martin Selling
- Bill Toy
- Art Parker
- Jim Seidl
- Gerry Treece
- Terry Tassin

**Corporate Donors**

- Airpark Chrysler
- Arizona Diamondbacks
- Audi North Scottsdale
- Charles Schaeztle, CFP
- Heard Museum
- Marie Callenders
- Phoenix Art Museum
- Riazzi's
- Taliesen West
- Arizona Cardinals
- Arizona Rattlers
- Bank One
- Durant's
- Lexus Western Region
- Out of Africa
- Pinnacle Infiniti
- Sapporo

**Membership – Jan 2004**

*by Paul Fein*

We welcome our newest members who joined at the December dinner, **COL Al Shipley (ARNG)** from Tempe, **COL Dick Minor (USA)** and his wife Debbie from Scottsdale and **Major Lou Cordova (USAF)** and his wife Julie from Peoria. Welcome also to **COL Reginald Weber** and his wife Jeanne from Glendale who joined earlier this month. Make sure you all welcome our new members when you see them at the next gathering.

Our Early Bird drawing was held at our December dinner and once again it has

helped our Chapter raise money for our scholarship fund and other chapter needs. Over \$700 was gathered, and after the 50/50 drawing was held the Chapter raised \$380. The following members were winners:  
 Grand Prize \$140: Bill Johnson  
 Second Prize \$70: Charles Balcer  
 Third Prize \$35: Ronald Drew  
 Bernie Conway, Gordon Drake, Doug Gray and Dolly Bleick

With 2003 at a close, it is always a great time to reflect on what we accomplished and where we need to go from here. This gives us a chance to see if our efforts for recruiting new members were successful and what we have to do to continue to grow and expand our ranks.

This last year we added 15 new members to our roster, and we are well on our way to continuing this growth trend in 2004. Our own members proved to be the best source of growth as the majority of our new members were referrals. We have also seen that our web site created by Tom Houser has resulted in interest and has directly resulted in new members as well.

So where do we go from here? One goal that we failed to meet this last year

**Newsletter Advertising**

If you or a business/organization known to you wishes to place an ad in *The Sentinel* please contact the Editor for details. Advertisements will be priced according to size in multiples that approximate standard business card dimensions. Proceeds from advertisements help defray cost of preparing the newsletter. Advertising costs are:

<u>Size</u>	<u>Annual</u>	<u>Quarterly</u>	<u>Impact Ad</u>
Single Card	\$80	\$25	\$15
Double Card	\$160	\$50	\$30
Quadruple Card	\$320	\$100	\$60

was recruiting officers from our own Reserve and Guard forces here in the valley. While we made some initial contacts with key people, it was difficult to schedule meetings with the individual units. We need to continue to focus on this group of potential members, since they benefit significantly from the efforts of our National organization and form a key group of potential members in our backyard. This is also a group of members that we can directly help while they are deployed, acting as a support group for the family left behind.

We hope to see all of you at our lunches and dinners in the coming year and remember to bring your friends along.

### **January Luncheon Meeting Saturday, 17 January at McCormick Ranch Golf Club**

The next Chapter meeting is set for Saturday, 17 January at McCormick Ranch Golf Club. Bring a friend or two to our meeting and introduce them to a great group of people. The meeting will start with a half-hour social time at 11:30 a.m., with lunch served at 12:00 Noon. The reservation form is located on page 7 of this newsletter along with a description of the meal. The deadline for reservations to reach Bill Johnson is 10 January. Come join us for food and comradeship.

Some future Chapter meeting dates are listed here for your planning purposes. Please put them on your calendar as a reminder!

BOD Meeting - Jan 08 - Post 107

Lunch - Jan 17 - McCormick Ranch

### **Do We Have Your E-Mail Address?**

Once again, I stress the importance of providing the AZ Chapter your e-mail address. You miss out on important current information that we send out to the members from time to time.

The Arizona Chapter of MOAA would like to make sure we have your e-mail address on file if you would like us to

communicate with you via e-mail. So, come aboard and enter the cyberspace world of our Chapter.

There are a few options: 1) we can have your e-mail address on file to contact you specifically about National MOAA items of interest; 2) you can be included in an email list to receive communication about a variety of subjects including those nice to read fun or informative emails that some of you like so much. 3) you can elect to receive your *Sentinel* newsletter via email rather than USPS thereby saving the Chapter the cost of postage, printing, folding, labeling, etc.

If you are interested, please email me at [terrytassin@cox.net](mailto:terrytassin@cox.net) and let me know your intentions.

### **Veterans Recognition Day at the Arizona State**

1700 West Washington between the  
State House of Representatives  
and the State Senate

Date: January 19th, 2004  
Time: 11:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

*Meet the members of  
AMVETS - American Legion  
DAV - Korean War Veterans  
MOPH - MOAA - SAMS - TREA  
VFW - Vietnam Veterans of America  
and others*

*Come down and discuss...*

*Women Veterans Issues*

*Veteran's Legislation*

*Veteran's Benefits*

*State Veteran's Home*

*Veteran's Education*

*Budget Issues*

*Veteran's Cemetery*

Please RSVP to Representative

Wally Straughn at 602-926-5829

### **Some TERA Retirees Confused By Act's Provisions**

Based on questions by a number of retired members who failed to completely understand the provisions of the Temporary Early Retirement Act (TERA), officials have provided a web site offering additional information.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1992, Public Law 102-484, Oct. 23, 1992, under which Congress enacted the Temporary Early Retirement Act (TERA), permitted selected military members to retire early and accrue additional military retirement credits if they gained employment with qualifying public or community service organizations.

The TERA measure gave each of the Armed Services the 'temporary early retirement authority' (TERA), to offer

### **Fund Donations**

One person's generous gift will help strengthen America's future through supporting the education of our youth. Since the last newsletter generous donations have been received for the

**50th Anniversary Fund:**

**Scholarship Fund:**

**General Fund:**

through participation in the Early Bird Raffle.

Our thanks are offered to contributors on behalf of all future beneficiaries of the Chapter Funds.

retirement at 15 years to 20 years of service. It stated that a service member electing early retirement may accrue additional retirement credit if employed in public or community service between the time of retirement and the time the retiree would have attained 20 years of military service. The early retiree will have his or her military retired pay increased at age 62.

According to officials, the public or community service organization employing the retiree must be designated a qualifying organization and be on the Department of Defense's Public and Community Service Organization Registry, which is maintained by the Defense Manpower Data (DMDC). More information and the registry are at web site:

<http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/tera/owa/ShowPage?p=index>. [Source: Air Force Retiree News Dec. 12, 2003]

### **DFAS Works To Implement Concurrent Receipt Legislation**

Concurrent receipt of both retired pay and Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) disability compensation has become a reality.

Signed by President Bush on Nov. 24, 2003, Public Law 108-136 authorizes a 10-year, phased elimination of the DVA disability offset to retired pay. This will affect members with non-disability retirements, without regard to years of service.

According to information on the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) MyPay web site, <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.asp>, those who retired as a result of a service-related disability are also eligible. These members must have at least 20 years of qualifying service. In all cases the retiree must be rated at least 50 percent disabled by the DVA.

This legislation also expands the field of eligibility for Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) to include retirees with 20 years who have a combined disability rating of less than

### **Chapter Officers for 2004**

The following elected officials will be sworn in at the January General meeting.  
President: Gary Fredericks, Col USAF  
1st VP: Paul Fein, CWO3 USN  
2nd VP: Tom Houser, Capt USAF  
3rd VP: Frank Birtciel, LtCol USAF  
Secretary: Terry Tassin, LCDR USN  
Treasurer: William Johnson, Maj USAF  
Past President: Ron Green LtCol USAF

All remaining Chapter Committee Chairpersons will continue to serve in their current positions as an expression of their faith in the new President's leadership abilities.

60 percent, but repeals the authority for Special Compensation for the Severely Disabled (SCSD).

The SCSD came about Oct. 1, 1999 under the Fiscal Year DOD Authorization Act which provided special compensation, ranging from \$100 to \$300 a month, to certain severely disabled uniformed services retirees retired under the regular retirement law.

SCSD recipients will be the first to see increases to their retired pay effective Jan. 1, 2004 for the payment dated Feb. 2, 2004. Implementation of the full legislation is complex and is not possible by January 2004, according to DFAS officials who report that DFAS is working closely with the DVA to implement this legislation and issue the payments to all eligible retirees as soon as possible.

Although full implementation may take several months, payments will include monies that are due retroactive to Jan. 1, 2004. Updates will be posted to the DFAS MyPay website as they become available. [Source: Air Force Retiree News Dec. 13, 2003]

**Scam Site Under Investigation**

Defense officials are warning military members, civilians and retirees about a scam Web site that is similar to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service's myPay site.

The Web site apparently is operated by a company in South Korea and has links that look like official military sites. However, they link directly to advertisements, primarily for loan companies.

The correct Internet address for the myPay Web site is: <https://mypay.dfas.mil>.

**Social Security Information**

You can get both Social Security benefits and military retirement. Generally, there is no offset to Social Security benefits because of your military retirement. You'll get your full Social Security benefit based on your earnings. However, your Social Security benefit may be reduced if you also receive a government pension based on a job in which you did not pay Social Security taxes. If you have questions, ask the Social Security Administration for a copy of the fact sheet, *The Windfall Elimination Provision* (Publication No. 05-10045).

**DEERS Verification Changes for Unremarried Former Spouses**

The Social Security number (SSN) used to verify TRICARE eligibility in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) for unremarried former spouses is changing. Starting Oct. 1, 2003, DEERS will reflect TRICARE

eligibility for these beneficiaries using the unremarried former spouse's own SSN and not the former sponsor's. Health care information will be filed under the unremarried former spouse's own SSN and name. These beneficiaries will now use their own name and SSN to schedule medical appointments and to file TRICARE claims.

The current Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege Card, DD Form 1173, held by the unremarried former spouse is still valid until it expires. Upon renewal, the unremarried former spouse will be issued a replacement DOD/Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege Card, DD Form 2765.

The Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office is sending a letter to all beneficiaries affected by this change. The letter explains the new DEERS eligibility verification procedures and serves as official notification from DOD regarding this change. The letter does not, however, provide proof to continued eligibility for TRICARE health care benefits.

After Oct. 1, 2003, unremarried former spouses may contact or visit the nearest identification card issuing facility for questions or assistance.

Unremarried former spouses should always keep their DEERS information current and up-to-date. For questions regarding their medical records, they should contact the Military Treatment Facility and medical records department where their DOD medical records are stored. [Source: Shift Colors Oct-Dec 2003]

**Sponsors Encouraged to Wrap Their Newborn Babies in DEERS**

At birth, a newborn baby is often wrapped in a blanket for added warmth and protection. The Department of Defense also offers newborns a blanket of protection. As a beneficiary of the Military Health System, enrolling your newborn son or daughter in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS), provides you with the comfort

*"There is a rank due to the United States, among nations, which will be withheld, if not absolutely lost, by the reputation of weakness. If we desire to avoid insult, we must be able to repel it; if we desire to secure peace, one of the most powerful instruments of our rising prosperity, it must be known that we are at all times ready for war."*  
--George Washington

of knowing your baby is TRICARE eligible and will continue receiving the essential well baby and pediatric health care he or she needs.

As a parent of a newborn, one of the first decisions you probably made was deciding on a name for your new "bundle of joy." As a TRICARE beneficiary, the second and most important decision you should make is to enroll your newborn baby in DEERS as soon as possible after birth.

Uniformed Services sponsors are responsible for keeping their family members' TRICARE eligibility in DEERS current and up-to-date. By enrolling your newborn in DEERS, you establish TRICARE eligibility for the baby and avoid potential claim problems or other financial hardship in the future if your baby is not properly enrolled.

A newborn infant is covered as a TRICARE Prime beneficiary in DEERS for the first 120 days after birth as long as one additional family member is enrolled in TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Prime Remote. After the initial 120 days, any claim submitted for a newborn will process as TRICARE Standard until the infant is enrolled in DEERS and TRICARE Prime, or the infant's TRICARE Standard eligibility ends.

*"Posterity -- you will never know how much it has cost my generation to preserve your freedom. I hope you will make good use of it."*  
--John Quincy Adams

**Quick Reference Numbers**

Cut out the quick reference phone list below and put in a safe place for you and your family to use in case of an emergency.

Name:	Social Security #:
Retiree and Annuitant Pay.....	(800)321-1080
TRICARE for Life.....	(888)363-5433
TRICARE Information.....	(800)874-2273
TRICARE Headquarters.....	(303)676-3526
Delta Dental.....	(888)838-8737
I.D. Cards Benefits and Eligibility.....	(800)443-9297
Federal Long-term Health Insurance.....	(800)582-3337
NPC Customer Service Center.....	(866)827-5672
Social Security Administration.....	(800)772-1213
VA Burial Benefits.....	(800)827-1000
Reporting a Retiree's Death to DFAS.....	(800)269-5170

Eligibility for TRICARE Standard benefits ends 365 days after birth for any newborn infant who is not enrolled DEERS.

To establish TRICARE eligibility in DEERS, parents legal guardians are required to submit a certificate of live birth from a hospital or TRICARE approved birthing center and a copy of a verified and approved DD Form 1172 "Application for Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege Card" signed by the sponsor.

For additional information on enrolling your newborn baby in DEERS, sponsors may contact or visit their unit personnel office, their nearest identification card issuing facility [www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/](http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/), or contact the Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office Telephone Center at (800) 538-9552. Additional information on DEERS eligibility is available on the TRICARE Website at [www.tricare.osd.mil/deers/default.cfm](http://www.tricare.osd.mil/deers/default.cfm). [Source: Shift Colors Oct-Dec 2003]

### **TRICARE Enhances Dental Benefits for Uniformed Services Retirees**

Under a new five-year dental contract between the Department of Defense and the Delta Dental Plan of California, dental benefits for uniformed services retirees and family members enrolled in the TRICARE Retiree Dental Program (TRDP) have been enhanced. Beginning May 1, 2003, the mandatory enrollment period is reduced from 24 to 12 months. The annual maximum benefit per enrollee and lifetime maximum benefit for orthodontic care was increased from \$1000 to \$1200.

After the mandatory enrollment period ends, eligible enrollees which include uniformed services retirees and their family members; Medal of Honor recipients and their family members; and survivors and family members of deceased retirees or active duty sponsors who served on active duty for more than 30 consecutive days, may continue their enrollment in the TRDP on a month-to-month basis. During the mandatory 12-month enrollment period, TRDP enrollees are covered for basic restorative services, periodontics, endodontics, oral surgery and dental emergencies. After 12 months of continuous enrollment, TRDP enrollees are covered for cast crowns, cast restorations, full and partial dentures and orthodontics for adults and children.

As an incentive, sponsors and family members who enroll within 120 days of the sponsor's retirement from active duty receive an extra benefit. They and their family members are covered by the

enhanced dental services starting the day they enroll. Sponsors and family members who wait and enroll after the 120-day period are not eligible for the enhanced dental services until they complete the mandatory 12 months of continuous TRDP enrollment.

The TRDP is a voluntary dental program with enrollee-paid premiums deducted automatically each month from the sponsor's retired military pay. If retired military pay is not available, sponsors and family members can arrange with Delta Dental to pay the monthly premiums either by mail or an electronic funds transfer.

Under the TRDP, there is a \$50 deductible per enrollee, with a \$150 yearly deductible per family. Premiums vary depending on where enrollees live and the number of family members they choose to enroll. During the enrollment period May 1, 2003, April 30, 2004, enrollees pay approximately \$22 to \$37 a month for single coverage, \$42 to \$71 for two or \$71 to \$120 for family of three or more.

Dental coverage is available throughout the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U. S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Enrollees may seek dental care from any licensed dentist or specialist within the TRDP coverage area. To minimize out-of-pocket expenses, enrollees are encouraged to seek dental care from more than 67,000 participating dental providers. A directory of participating Delta Dental providers is available online at [www.ddpdelta.org](http://www.ddpdelta.org). Retirees and family members may also request a provider directory by calling the Delta Dental Customer Service number at (888) 838-8737. Additional information on the TRDP is available on the TRICARE Web site at: [www.tricare.osd.mil/dental](http://www.tricare.osd.mil/dental). [Source: Shift Colors Oct-Dec 2003]

### **How to Get Your Service Record**

Reproduced with permission from Military.com.

An individual's complete service record is available to the former service member or, if deceased, to his/her next of kin (parents, spouse, or children). Limited information (such as dates of service, awards, and training) is available to anyone. Not available to the general public is information which would invade an individual's privacy; for example, medical records, Social Security number, or present address.

The St. Louis Center receives many requests for service records each week, so a request will be processed with greater speed and accuracy if the requester uses a Standard Form 180, "Request Pertaining to Military Records." If requesting the records of a relative, a requester should mention the relationship to the former member (brother, uncle, or other). There is no charge for this service to former service members or their next of kin. For others, a nominal fee is

charged for research and reproduction costs. You may submit more than one request per envelope or fax, but submit a separate request (either SF 180 or letter) for each individual whose records are being requested.

\* Send by Mail:

National Personnel Records Center  
Military Personnel Records  
9700 Page Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100

\* Send by Fax: 314-801-9195.

The Center will respond in writing by U.S. Mail.

Order Processing Time:

Response times for records requested from the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) vary greatly depending on the nature of the request. For example, the NPRC Military Records Facility currently has a backlog of 180,000 requests and receives approximately 5,000 requests per day. Routine requests for separation documents currently require only 2-4 weeks for servicing. However, requests that involve reconstruction efforts due to the 1973 fire or older records which require extensive search efforts may take much longer. The average turnaround time on all requests is currently running at approximately 12 weeks.

### **Variable Pricing Could Raise Commissary Prices**

In a memo to the Defense Commissary Agency, John Molino, defense deputy undersecretary for military community and family policy, directed commissary officials to provide information on legislative actions that would be required for inclusion in a final study on variable pricing. Under current law, commissaries must sell items at cost plus a set surcharge at the cash register. With variable pricing, the added amount could rise, allowing the Pentagon to reduce the one billion dollars a year currently spent to run the commissaries. In order to implement a variable-pricing system, the law would have to be changed. The DeCA is tasked to provide the information by March 15, 2004. [Source: Armed Forces News: Dec 26, 2003]

### **MOAA Name Tags**

Many members are ordering new nametags sporting the new MOAA logo. If you would like a new Name Tag, order forms are available at each Chapter meeting. It is requested that you pay for them (\$5) when ordering so if something prevents you from attending the next meeting they can be mailed to you.

### In My Opinion

When the Chapter dues bill arrives, we all have to make the decision as to whether or not Chapter membership is worth the dues. Some of us think that it is.

We first look at the purposes of the Chapter, and determine if our Chapter is meeting those purposes which are as follows:

The purposes of the Chapter shall be to promote the purposes and objectives of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA); stimulate love of our country and the flag; defend the honor, integrity, and supremacy of our National Government and the Constitution of the United States; advocate military forces adequate to the defense of our country; foster fraternal relations among retired, active, and former officers of the uniformed Services and their National Guard or reserve components; protect the rights and interests of active duty, retired, reserve, and National Guard personnel of the uniformed Services and their dependents and survivors; provide useful services for members and their dependents and survivors; and serve the community and the nation.

Being a member of National MOAA can support most of these objectives. Those of us who attend our monthly meetings know that the National purposes can be supported at a higher level by belonging to a Chapter. For example, the National legislative efforts would not be nearly as effective without the Chapter support. It wasn't National sending in 8,000 emails an hour to get TRICARE For Life passed - it was the Chapter members who did that. It isn't National fostering fraternal relations among retired, active, and former officers of the uniformed Services and their National Guard or reserve components - it is at the Chapter level where this is done. It isn't National which keeps you informed on local issues - it is at the Chapter level where this is done.

If you haven't attended one of our monthly meetings, please do so before dropping your Chapter membership. We believe that you will be pleased. *Daniel M. Conway*

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### Membership Renewal

- Sign me up for AZ Chapter, MOAA membership for 2004 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

[Dues are \$20.00 for Full Member and \$10.00 Auxiliary]

**Total remitted** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please fill out the following and return with your dues as we are trying to expand our database.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date \_\_\_\_\_ (mm / dd)

Spouse Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date \_\_\_\_\_ (mm / dd)

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Hobbies \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Put your check in the mail right now, made out to "AZ Chapter MOAA", annotated to show "For 2004 Dues", and ship the whole thing off to:**

**Bill Johnson, 13410 North 12<sup>th</sup> Place, Phoenix, AZ 85022-4944**

**Well...What are you waiting for—renew now!**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Firewood</li> <li>* Hauling</li> <li>* Tree Removal</li> <li>* Clean-Up</li> </ul>	 <p><b>BEN'S</b> FIRE &amp; ICE CO. (602) 437-3139</p>	<p>1/2 Cord: \$150.00 Full Cord: \$250.00 Delivered &amp; Stacked</p>
<p>Benson H. Huddleston General Manager/Owner</p>		<p>7246 S. 41st Street Phoenix, Az 85042</p>

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

**2004**

**TAPS**

*If you know of a member or spouse who enters the hospital or passes away, please notify one of the Chapter Officers.*

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<b>Quarterly</b>	<b>\$25.00</b>
<b>Annual</b>	<b>\$80.00</b>

**January Luncheon Meeting**

**WHEN:** 17 January 2004  
11:30 PM Social Period  
12:00 Noon Lunch

**WHERE:** McCormick Ranch Golf Club  
7505 McCormick Parkway  
Scottsdale, Arizona

**COST:** \$16.00 - Per Person

**MENU:** Roast Pork Loin w/Herb Stuffing  
Whipped Potatoes  
Tossed Salad  
Fresh Vegetable Medley  
Fresh Bread w/Creamy Butter  
Banana Cream Pie  
Coffee & Iced Tea

**PROGRAM:** Annual business meeting with swearing-in and induction of 2004 Officers.  
Please make your reservations early and send your check to Bill Johnson using the Meal / Meeting Reservation Form.  
*Jim Seidl Programs*

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**CHAPTER FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION**

If you would like to make a donation to one or more of the AZ Chapter Funds or renew your chapter membership, include your check identified as the appropriate fund and mail to: **Bill Johnson, 13410 N. 12th Place, Phoenix, AZ 85022-4944.**

**Membership Renewal:** \$ 20 Full Member: \_\_\_\_\_ \$10 Auxiliary Member: \_\_\_\_\_

**50th Anniversary Fund:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Scholarship Fund:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_ **General Fund:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\* It is OK to identify me as a donor in the next newsletter. YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Name Full Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Auxiliary Member: \_\_\_\_\_

**MEAL / MEETING RESERVATION FORM**

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ meals for (Name) \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (**\$16.00** per person) for **17 January 2004.**

Make check payable to: AZ Chapter MOAA **No Later Than: 10 January 2004**

Send to: Bill Johnson, 13410 North 12th Place, Phoenix, AZ 85022-4944. Phone 602-689-5379

