

The AZ Territorial Chapter of AUSA

Page 2



National Legislative Update by Lee Lange, Legislative Chair

President's Budget for 2021 Released

This following extract is from an article by Richard Sisk for **Military.com**. The FY2021 President's Budget was released February 10. Included was a proposed 3% military pay raise for the troops, the second-highest pay raise since 2010.

The 3% raise follows 2020's 3.1% increase and is part of a defense spending package with a \$740 billion topline. The raise is aimed at giving the military a competitive compensation package to offset the drain of experienced personnel to the civilian sector, and a difficult recruiting environment, during a booming economy. If passed, the raise would go into effect January 1, 2021.

Although one-tenth of a percentage point below the 3.1% raise in fiscal 2020, the 2021 proposed raised still ranks as the second-highest pay increase since the 3.4% hike in 2010. The bump is also in line with the 2.9% increase for civilian workers indicated by the latest quarterly report on the U.S. Employment Cost Index (ECI), put out by the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics. MOAA has long emphasized keeping pace with the ECI to ensure adequate retention.

The requested increase would keep the pay for military personnel in line with increases in the civilian sector and serve to aid retention, said retired Air Force Col. Dan Merry, vice president of government relations at the Military Officers Association of America. The raise would send a positive message to troops thinking of making a career of the military, Merry said.

Pay Caps Ahead?

Some defense officials have indicated that the latest pay raise could signal the last of the big pay increases as overall defense budgets are expected to level off or even decline, in the face of soaring federal budget deficits. Part of belt tightening could be caps on future pay raises – something we have all to often seen as a cost saving measure.

Arizona State Legislative Update

by Lee Lange, Legislative Chair

The Arizona state legislature has entered its third month of its current session. Two important veterans' issues are being considered by the legislature. The first seeks an increase in funding for six additional Veteran Benefits Counselor (VBC) positions. VBCs are critical to help veterans develop and file claims for disability, pension, and other veteran benefits. SB1044, sponsored by Sen David Livingston, calls for six new VBC's. It passed the Senate on February 4 and was sent to the House for further action. A similar bill, HB2139, sponsored by Rep Jay Lawrence, passed the House Appropriations Committee on February 12.

The second issue, a proposal by Governor Ducey, calls for full exemption of military retired pay from state taxes for some 50,000 veterans in Arizona. This \$45M Initiative would be retroactive to tax year 2020. Companion bills have been introduced in both houses of the legislature. The Senate champion, Sen David Gowan, introduced SB1237 was passed by the Appropriations Committee on February 4 and goes to the full Senate for consideration. House champion, Rep Gail Griffin, introduced HB 2676 which passed by a narrow margin in the House Ways and Means Committee on February 19. The opposition at this hearing was significant. Members pushed back against a special tax exemption for retired military, saying they don't hear this as an issue from their constituents. If we want this to happen, we need to let our state legislators know this is important. Contact your state senators and two district Representatives at www.azleg.gov and click on Find My Legislator.

Supporters frame the tax exemption initiative as a work force initiative that Arizona needs to attract more veterans and retirees to meet the demands of a booming economy. There are 31 states that either have no income tax or exempt full military retired pay. Fifteen more states grant partial exemptions and Arizona's current \$3500 exemption puts us in the bottom half of states in terms of being tax friendly to veterans.

Governor Ducey was especially supportive of the full tax exemption for military retired pay in his State of the State speech and has included it in his 2021 Executive Budget. But his message is falling on deaf ears in the House – **we need to take action now** to call, email or visit your Representatives and tell them you want to see HB2676, and this tax exemption, passed.



Personal Affairs

Lee Lange, Personal Affairs Officer

A New Game Plan for Your Taxes

The following is from an article by MOAA financial affairs contributor, Col Curt Sheldon, USAF (Ret). With less than two months left to file personal income taxes, here are some lessons from major changes to the U.S. tax code that taxpayers encountered last year. Check with your tax advisor about the considerations.

1. Should You Itemize?

Last year's Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) made numerous changes to the federal tax code. Under the TCJA, the standard deduction essentially doubled for most taxpayers. Many states didn't follow suit but AZ legislators made Arizona a "conforming" state meaning the standard deduction for married filing jointly is \$24,000 for both. But Arizona allows you to take the federal standard deduction and still itemize on your state return. You might want to do this because Arizona allows different deductions than on the federal return.

If you pay state income tax and have combined deductions close to the standard deduction, calculate your taxes both ways.

2. Consider Deducting Sales Tax Instead of Income Tax

If you itemize your deductions, you have the option of choosing to claim your state income tax paid or an estimate of state sales tax paid. For most retired officers active duty who pay income tax, the sales tax deduction will be less than the income tax deduction. If that is the case, you might want to consider taking the sales tax deduction anyway.

Under the old tax law, that didn't necessarily make sense. Under the TCJA, it might due to the limitation on property tax deductions. You can only deduct up to \$10,000 in property taxes. If you pay a lot in property taxes, you might be close to that limit and claiming the sales tax might get you to \$10,000.

What difference does it make? Well, state income tax refunds are taxable income, if you take a deduction for paying them. If you deduct sales tax instead, your state income tax refund will not be taxable. To get the maximum sales tax deduction, include your tax-free income in the calculation of the sales tax deduction. Active duty servicemembers will want to include Basic Allowance for Housing and Basic Allowance for Subsistence. Retired officers will want to include any VA disability compensation. What if the sales tax won't get you to the \$10,000 limit? Then you should probably claim the income tax.

3. Should You Claim Your Child as a Dependent?

One of the big things that changed with the TCJA was the elimination of exemptions. To refresh your memory, an exemption was approximately a \$4,000 deduction from income for yourself, your spouse, and each dependent on your tax return. The exemption was replaced with a \$2,000 tax credit for children under age 17 and \$500 for other dependents.

When your children are young, there isn't really any argument about whether they are your dependents or not. But once they head off to college, it becomes a little more blurry. Why should you want to get your child off your tax return? There are a couple of reasons: Your child in college might qualify for certain tax credits. This means your child could get a refund of income taxes greater than what was withheld from pay. If your child has investment income, as a dependent that income will likely be taxed at a higher rate than if your child is not a dependent.

You can't just arbitrarily decide that your child isn't a dependent. If attending college and under age 24, your child is not your dependent if he provided more than half of his support. Determining support is a little complicated. But if you think your family's tax burden might decrease by not claiming a child as a dependent, talk to your tax advisor.

4. Make Sure You Plan Ahead to Bunch Charity Contributions

While it is a good thing to support charity regardless of the impact on your taxes, that doesn't mean that you shouldn't maximize the tax benefit of doing so. The TCJA significantly raised the standard deduction. It just about doubled for most of us. That means it is more difficult to recognize tax benefits from contributions. However, if you bunch your contributions, you might improve your results.

One way to do this is to contribute every other year. Say your deductions — excluding charitable contributions — add up to \$20,000 and you file as a married couple. Let's also assume you routinely give \$6,000 a year to your favorite charity. Add the two together, and you have \$26,000 in itemized deductions.

But what if you went to your charity and said, "I'm going to support you like I always do, but instead of giving you \$6,000 this year, I'm going to give you \$12,000 in January." Now you have \$32,000 in itemized deductions. How much would you save in taxes? Talk to your tax advisor. If you routinely support charity, you might want to use this approach.



March 14th, 2020





"USS Phoenix (SSN-702) COLD WAR MONUMENT" Pete Lumianski, CAPT, USN (Ret)

Pete Lumianski attended the U.S. Naval Academy, and spent the next 24 years in the Navy as a helicopter pilot and leader-manager. He retired in 1988 as a Captain and Commanding Officer of the Naval Reserve Center, Tampa, FL. Pete has been involved with the USS Phoenix (SSN 702) since 1989, first as a USS Phoenix Commission member and, for the past 25 years, as a leader in the effort to save parts of the USS Phoenix and place them in a downtown Phoenix park as part of a Cold War monument. A dedicated spot in Steele Indian School Park adjacent to the AZ Veterans Home has been granted by the City of Phoenix Parks Department/Parks Board. Pete will be presenting the journey of the USS Phoenix to the present and what still needs to be accomplished for this important memorial project.

McCormick Ranch Golf Club

Registration must be received by Tuesday **3/10/20**. \$25/person. Please make check payable to: AZ Chapter MOAA and mail to: Charlie Bitner, 134 E. Northview Ave. Phoenix 85020. You may also contact Charlie at (602) 943-0028 or <u>Charles@Bitner36.com</u>



SAVE THE DATE AZ Territorial Chapter AUSA 2020 - "Task Force Smith" Fundraiser When: Sunday, 26 April 2020, 10 am – 1 pm Where: TopGolf, 9500 Talking Stick Way, Scottsdale, AZ 85256 Cost: \$42 per Player / \$22 per Spectator (*Brunch buffet included)

BRING THE WHOLE FAMILY!!

Come join AUSA and have fun at Top Golf as well as supporting AUSA's Healing Heroes Program, Soldiers and their families and military veterans who require assistance as well as AUSA's JROTC and ROTC scholarship programs! Anyone can play and win! Score points by hitting micro-chipped golf balls at giant dartboard-like targets on an outfield. Competition is All Age Friendly, with the newest in instant replay and "Top Tracker." Players will be able to view the trajectory of their ball & analyze their swing. It's a great way to socialize and learn about the game of golf. A PGA Golf Pro will be on site for instruction and advice. Use Top Golf's clubs or your own!

Entry cost includes buffet, bottomless soft drinks and non-alcoholic beverages. Alcoholic beverages will also be available at your cost. For this fundraiser, 13 bays are reserved and each is limited to 6 Players. Spectators are encouraged to come and cheer on their golfers and enjoy the brunch buffet in our private Party Room. Participate in fun indoor activities like Corn Hole, Giant Jenga, etc. Silent Auction items will be available.

Players can purchase tickets to join us in the Competition Bay to win Prizes for Closest to Pin (Men/Women), Longest Drive (Men/Women), & Beat the Golf Pro. Plus - earn winner's bragging rights! A Putting Competition will be held in the Party Room. Mulligans will also be sold at the event.

Bay Sponsors can purchase half-bay Sponsorships at \$100 on first come, first purchase basis. Bay Sponsors will have their logos displayed at the entrance to their bay and will be able to advertise with promotional items, marketing materials and strategically-placed tent cards in Bay areas. Additionally, sponsor logos will be projected on a screen in the Party Area.

For guestions or reservations, contact Susan Farrell by email: skfarrell@cox.net /mobile (571) 246-7113. (Electronic reservations and e-payments will soon be available on www. ausaaz.org)



2020 AZ CHAPTER MOAA MEMBERSHIP DUES RENEWAL FORM

RENEW your 2020 Arizona Chapter MOAA membership.

Payment of dues is required by February 29, 2020 to avoid becoming delinquent. Even if you have become delinguent, you can still RENEW by completing your information below and sending it with your check — \$20 for a Regular Member or \$10 for Surviving Spouse Member. Make check made payable to "AZ Chapter MOAA" and mail to: Treasurer Charlie Bitner, 134 E. Northview Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85020.

Member OR Surviving Spouse Member

Spouse Name

Please make any CHANGES to Address or Contact Information:

Phone number: ______ Email: _____



Reducing Veteran Suicides

During his remarks at our February luncheon, Colonel Patrick Donaldson, Commander of the 161st Air Refueling Wing of the Arizona Air National Guard, spoke about the vexing problem of military and Veteran suicides. Ironically, the Board of Directors planned to address this issue during our program. Tom Sheets also spoke of the **Southwest Veterans Foundation 2020 Veteran Suicide Prevention Campaign known as** *\$20 to Reduce the 20 in 2020.* **The goal of this program is to raise \$100,000 in 2020 to help fight Veteran suicides.**

For those who could not make the luncheon: 20 Veterans commit suicide daily and 70% of them were not in the VA care system. Arizona has the 6th highest rate of Veteran suicides. Numerous members and guests contributed to this campaign that will continue throughout 2020. The funds raised will be provided in the form of grants to organizations working to prevent Veteran suicides.

If you would like to contribute, you can do so at any of our MOAA luncheons, or by mailing a check made payable to SWVF to: 3820 W. Happy Valley Rd #141-455, or on the SWVF website at https://swvcc.org/savealife/, or by calling 602.677.2961. The Southwest Veterans Foundation sincerely thanks those who have already contributed and hope others will want to help.

Reduce the 20 in 2020.

Trails

Making the World Your Playground!°

PROVIDING CUSTOM TRAVEL SERVICES:

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

Call Leonore Hoak

Toll Free 1-888-799-4284 leonore@arizonatrails.com

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

AZ TRAILS TRAVEL®

5 Star Rating on Facebook & Yelp 24 Years in Business • Bonded & Insured Facebook.com/AzTrailsTravel www.aztrailstravel.com Col Patrick Donaldson commands the 161st Air Refueling Wing based at Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport. Air Guard pilots are airline pilots and other professionals and serve up to 150 days a year supporting active duty missions. The Air Guard is part of the National Guard whose origins date back to our founding fathers, who did not want large standing armies, and thought the idea of citizens soldiers in state militias was important to our national defense. Today, every state has a National Guard funded largely by the federal government.

Global security needs require projecting air power and that means tanker support. The air refueling capability is a key part of going to war and when National Guard units are activated, the public quickly becomes aware. This means the President must be able to make his case for activating forces. Resources in the National Guard provide plenty of "bang for the buck". The National Guard is six percent of the Defense budget and provides 35% of America's combat power. The KC-135 tanker flown by the Guard is very old but remains capable with newer engines and avionics. The 161st Wing supports numerous air bases in the Southwest with just nine aircraft. Hundreds of aircraft depend on these tanker services.

Overall demand for tanker support remains very high. A new KC-46 tanker aircraft is under development to replace the KC-135 and is undergoing operational testing now. The current base facilities are too small for planned future aircraft, so efforts are underway with the Phoenix airport authority to double size of the base by moving other commercial functions north of the main runways.

Col Donaldson took time to note the Air Force and the Air Guard face significant challenges including high rates of suicide and continued issues with sexual harassment/assault. Despite programs and command emphasis, these are still serious problems. It is up to leadership to take the actions needed to give hope to airmen potentially facing these issues.

February Speaker

Col Patrick Donaldson, USAF, Commander of 161st Air Refueling Wing







PLUMBING & ELECTRICAL Veteran Owned & Operated 10% Veteran Discount (480) 210-7514





Hi Folks. The Arizona Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America will be holding our Annual Charity Golf Tournament on **Wednesday April 15, 2020**. This is a fun event and we would like to have as many as possible participate. This is only one of a limited number of fundraisers for our Chapter Scholarship Fund. It helps ASU's Navy, Army and Air Force ROTC Cadets and Midshipmen who will soon be seniors and are <u>not</u> on ROTC scholarships. Fun is guaranteed and anyone can win something. So, come on out and enjoy helping us support these outstanding men and women with their college expenses.

The AZ Chapter Scholarship Golf Tournament will be held at **Starfire Golf Club**, **11500** N. Hayden Road, **Scottsdale**, Arizona **85260**. Check-in from 6:30 - 7:30 A.M. Shotgun start at 8:00 A.M.

The <u>tournament entry fee is \$99</u> which covers team score, longest putt, closet to the pin, Hole-in-One (chance to win new car, and other numerous prizes), golf, cart and a Smoke House Buffet Luncheon (BBQ pulled pork and chicken, sides and sweets). There will also be a 50/50 raffle and Skins game with winners getting a 50% payout. The Silent Auction will be back this year with the opportunity to bid on such items as hotel stays, restaurant certificates and golf passes to dozens of great courses in the area. <u>100% of all donations, auction proceeds, games and hole sponsorship fees go to the AZ MOAA Scholarship Fund.</u>

Those desiring lunch only and not playing golf pay only \$20

Using the attached entry form, please remit a check payable to AZ MOAA Scholarship Fund for your \$99 entry fees NO LATER THAN Monday April 6, 2020



The **Starfire Golf Club** is located in North Central Scottsdale. Starfire (Scottsdale Country Club) offers beautiful views of the McDowell Mountains as players wind through holes lined with mature eucalyptus, pine and cottonwood trees. The "King" Course was designed by Arnold Palmer and opened in 1988.



AZ Chapter MOAA Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament



INTERESTED IN A SUPER DAY OF FUN AND FELLOWSHIP?

WHEN: Wednesday, April 15th, 2020. Please check in between 6:30 -7:30 AM. Shotgun Start at 8:00 AM

WHERE: Starfire Golf Club, 11500 N. Hayden, Scottsdale, Arizona 85260

COST: \$99 Includes golf, prizes, etc. and lunch

WHO: Members, guests, and all those wishing to support the deserving ASU ROTC Cadets and Midshipmen

DRESS CODE: Collared shirts are required. Soft spikes on golf shoes – you may wear sneakers.

WHAT: Reservations and \$99 fee <u>must be received no later than Monday April 6, 2020</u>. Please mail fees and the form below to Jack Farley. Call 480-661-3891 or email Jack at <u>jfa327@aol.com</u> if you have questions.

SPECIAL RULES: the format is a "Scramble" with four used drives per player (minimum) in each foursome. Raw, actual team score will be used. Teams will be grouped into two divisions based on overall index/ handicap. <u>Those wishing to lunch only and not play golf will pay only \$20</u>, with checks made payable to AZ Chapter MOAA and mailed to Jack with form (below). This is a very friendly, fun tournament. You do not have to be a super golfer to play and have fun with this group.

----- CUT HERE AND MAIL WITH CHECK ------

AZ CHAPTER MOAA Annual Scholarship GOLF TOURNAMENT

I WANT TO SUPPORT THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND - COUNT ME IN! HERE IS MY REGISTRATION FORM AND ENTRY FEE

Name:	(Please Print)	
	(Please Print)	
Phone No:	Email Address:	
I would like to be partne	ed with: [names]	
USGA Index	or Estimated Handicap:	
Note: tourney scoring is b	ased on raw, actual team scores	
Check for \$	included for players (\$99 each).	
* Mail checks payable to		rley 2. Lupine Ave. ale, AZ 85259
: jfa327@aol.com : 480-661-3891		



AZ Chapter MOAA Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament



I WANT TO SUPPORT THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND BUT CANNOT ATTEND. **HERE IS MY DONATION TO THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND!**

MY INFORMATION

Phone No:

Name: ______ (Please Print

Email Address:

For donations of: \$35> (Bronze Sponsor) your name and organization will be posted.

\$100> (Silver Sponsor) Hole Sponsorship with Sign

\$250> (Gold Sponsor) Hole Sponsorship with Sign and 2 MOAA Business Luncheon Meeting Tickets with due recognition as a Gold Sponsor

Check amount \$

Mail Donation check made payable to AZ MOAA Scholarship Fund with this form to:

Jack Farley 12622 E. Lupine Ave. Scottsdale, AZ 85259

Email: jfa327@aol.com Phone: 480-661-3891



Mar	ch 14 Luncheon Menu/Program		ARIZONA CHAPTER MOAA CALENDAR			
WHEN:	March 14, 2020 11:00 am Meet & Greet Social Hour 11:45 am - 2pm Lunch		Board of Directors — first Thursday of the month at 1030 hours unless otherwise noted Location: National Guard Regional Training Institute, 5636 E. McDowell Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85008 Show ID for entry. Members welcome.			
WHERE:	McCormick Ranch Golf Club 7505 E McCormick Pkwy, Scottsdale, AZ 8525	8	Upcoming meetings: . March 5			
соѕт:	COST: \$25 Per Person reservation by 4 PM on 3/10/2020		. April 2 . May 7			
DRESS:	Business Casual		Member Luncheon/ Meetings — third Saturday of the month, Social Hour at 1100, Luncheon at 1145-			
MENU:	Roasted Pork Loin & Whipped Potatoes with Roasted Pork Jus, Signature Salad Sherbet Gaufrette		1400, McCormick Ranch Golf Club 7505 E McCormick Pkwy, Scottsdale, AZ 85258 unless otherwise noted. Reservations Required.			
5	M: CAPT Pete Lumianski, USN (Ret) Denix (SSN-702) COLD WAR MONUMENT		Upcoming meetings: . Mar 14 Luncheon . April 18 Luncheon . May 16 Luncheon			
	RECENT DONATIONS		nsed Professional Licensed Independent Substance Abuse Diselor Counselor			
	(As of February 2020)					
	Scholarship Fund:	PE	TER A. BERGER, MPC, LPC, LISAC			
	General Fund:		Associated Recovery Counselors			
	Ron Perkins - \$100 Lee Lange - \$100		East Indian School Rd. tsdale, AZ 85251 480-429-6292			
	CHAPTER FINA	NCI	AL PARTICIPATION			
identified	ould like to make a donation to one or mo	ore o Cha	f the AZ Chapter Funds, include a separate check rlie Bitner, 134 E. Northview Ave., Phoenix, AZ			
General F	und: \$ Scholarsh	ip Fu	nd: \$ [501(c)(3) charitable fund]			
Name of	Donor:					
•	LUNCHEON	RESE	RVATION FORM			
Please						
Enclosed Your che	d is my check for \$ (eck payable to: AZ Chapter MOAA can be c Charlie Bitner, 134 E. No	\$25. lelive rthv i	DO/person) for the luncheon on March 14, 2020 . red at the luncheon or mailed to: ew Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85020 ,			
or conta		-	redit Cards will be accepted at the luncheon.			
•			NOT be accepted after March 10, 2020 will be charged and not refunded.			
:			•			

Page 12

ADVERTISING IN THE SENTINEL

The Arizona Chapter solicits advertisements for the purpose of defraying the cost of publication of the newsletter. The Chapter does not make any investigation as to the products and services advertised herein and makes no representation or warranties as to the advertisements in the newsletter.

SIZE	ANNUAL	QUARTERLY	IMPACT AD
Single Card	\$80.00	\$25.00	\$15.00
Double Card	\$160.00	\$50.00	\$30.00
Quadruple Card	\$320.00	\$100.00	\$60.00

PRESIDENT		ADVERTISING		NEWSLETTER EDITOR	
Maj Pete Berger, USAF	602-739-0586	Janet Lange, USMC Spouse	571-722-4348	Janet Lange, USMC Spouse	571-722-4348
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT		ARRANGEMENTS		PERSONAL AFFAIRS	
Col Tom Sheets, USMC	760-213-3705	Col Charles Bitner, USAF	602-943-0028	Col Lee Lange, USMC	703-232-3609
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT		CHAPLAIN		PROGRAMS	
CDR Jack Farley, USN	412-779-0372	COL Daniel Butler, USA	480-352-2682	CAPT Bruce Kosaveach, USN	602-501-9876
SECRETARY		ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS	5	SCHOLARSHIPS	
CAPT Judy Brooks, USN	623-810-5790	Lt Col Jim Cullison, USAF	602-482-3838	CAPT Phil Roos, USN	928-420-2130
TREASURER		HISTORIAN / PHOTOGRAPHER		SURVIVING SPOUSES	
Col Charles Bitner, USAF	602-943-0028	Lt Col Jim Cullison, USAF	602-482-3838	Susan Farrell, Surviving Spouse	602-993-8556
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT		JROTC AWARDS		TRANSITION LIAISON	
Col Lee Lange, USMC	703-232-3609	Lt Col John Simmons, USAF	623-326-5352	CDR Jim Draper USN	480-483-7769
DIRECTORS:		LEGISLATION		WEBMASTER	
	m Cullicon LISAE	Col Lee Lange, USMC	703-232-3609	OPEN—Currently Contracted	
LTCOL Ron Bright, USA; Lt Col Jir		MEMBERSHIP			
CAPT Bob Fiegl, USN; CAPT Brue Janet Lange, USMC Spouse	ce Kosaveach, USN;	CAPT David Price, USN	831-233-8131		

Access Arizona Chapter's Internet Web Site at: azmoaa.org

Arizona Chapter Military Officers Association of America 41122 N. Majesty Way Anthem, AZ 85086



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED