



August 2023

Volume 3 Issue 8

### Commander's Corner



Fellow Patriots,  
Welcome back! Most of our chapters were dark for the summer. We continued to hold our monthly Department Cdr's Call. The department and chapters continued to assist Patriots

& veterans in need.

Now that we are back let's hit the ground running and think about what we can do to improve the Order. All suggestions, remarks, comments & concerns can be sent to Chapter or Department leadership and will be evaluated at the monthly Commander's calls.

The Sr. Vice-Cdr & I attended the National Convention in August. We will provide highlights and communications from the convention at our September Cdr's Call.

The Cdr's Call is every month on the Fourth Thursday. A member of the chapter command group must attend. Open to all members.

**Time: 06:30 PM Arizona Time, Sep 28, 2023**

Zoom Meeting ID: 842 2842 9701

Passcode: 879117 Dial in: 669 900 6833.

**Patriot Ron Capek**, the Department Finance Officer recently had to have his gallbladder removed. His wife reports all went well, and Ron is now home. She did not have any update on the inflamed pancreas or hernia. Get well cards may be sent to Patriot Ron Capek, 5221 W Mescal St, Glendale, AZ 85304. Please keep Ron, Cindy, and his whole family in your thoughts and prayers

Yours in Patriotism,  
Keith Gray  
Commander

### Department Officers 2023/2024

Cdr: Keith Gray [commandermophaz@gmail.com](mailto:commandermophaz@gmail.com)  
Sr. Vice Cdr: Rodger Ely [juggy64@aol.com](mailto:juggy64@aol.com)  
Jr. Vice Cdr: John Moore  
[mophchapter442@comcast.net](mailto:mophchapter442@comcast.net)  
Adjutant: Larry Leighton  
[adjutant.mophaz@gmail.com](mailto:adjutant.mophaz@gmail.com)  
Finance Officer: Ron Capek [ronluccap@gmail.com](mailto:ronluccap@gmail.com)  
Sgt-at-Arms: Jimi Sallmen [jimisallmen@gmail.com](mailto:jimisallmen@gmail.com)  
Inspector: **vacant position**  
Judge Advocate: **vacant position**  
Americanism Officer: **vacant position**  
Chaplain: John L. Bhelm [jblehmsr@gmail.com](mailto:jblehmsr@gmail.com)  
Legislative Liaison: Jim Muhr [jrmuhr@yahoo.com](mailto:jrmuhr@yahoo.com)

### Find Us Online

**Website:** <http://mophaz.org/>

**Facebook:** [Department Facebook Page](#)

**National MOPH Website:** <https://national-moph.uc.r.appspot.com/#>

### Calendar

- Sep 4 – Labor Day
- Sep 8 – Williams, AZ Stand-Down
- Sep 9 – Williams, AZ Patriot Day Parade
- Sep 11 – Patriot Day
- Sep 15 – POW/MIA Day
- Sep 16 – American Legion Day
- Sep 17 – Constitution Day
- Sep 18 – Air Force Birthday
- Sep 24 – Gold Star Family Day
- Sep 28 – Casitas for Homeless Veterans Groundbreaking Ceremony
- Sep 30 – MIAP buries unclaimed cremains of 20 veterans AZ State Veterans Cemetery Marana.
- Oct 1 – Life Membership Verification Due

### Junior Vice-Commander



**September 11<sup>th</sup> is Patriot & Remembrance Day.** This day is dedicated to all those who love their country. Take time to remind ourselves of the dreadful incident of 9/11 and remember those who lost their lives to the needless terror. A special thanks goes to our **181 members who received Purple Hearts** when answering the call after 9/11 and served during the Global War on Terror. Thank you for your courage and sacrifice!

**September 15<sup>th</sup> is POW/MIA Day.** We will always remember and honor our Nation's prisoners of war and those still missing in action and keep the promise as a Nation to bring all of our heroes home. A special thank you to our members who sacrificed by spending time as a POW. **Patriot Walter Ram** spent 18 months as a **POW in Stalag 17b**. You can read his story [here](#).



### **September 18<sup>th</sup> is the Air Force Birthday.**



Thank you to our **36 members who received Purple Hearts** while serving in the Air Force. For 76 years Airmen have been there to provide America with the airpower it needs to defend the nation and to deter or to defeat our adversaries.

John R. Moore  
Jr. Vice-Commander

### National Convention

The **National Convention** was held from August 14 to August 18 in Baton Rouge, LA. Our new national officers are:

- ◆ National Commander: Carder Ferguson
- ◆ National Senior Vice: Robert Olivarez Jr
- ◆ National Junior Vice: Tracey Brown-Greene
- ◆ Finance Officer: Ernie Rivera
- ◆ National Judge Advocate: Walter Kroptavich

### New Department Challenge Coins

Department challenge coins have been designed and ordered. They will be available for sale later this fall from the chapters at the chapter meetings. Cost is \$20. They are very nice coins and help fund the Order.



### Update Your Contact Information

Keep your snail mail address, phone & email address up to date. You can do this yourself at the MOPH National website at <https://national-moph.uc.r.appspot.com/#>. You just need your membership number to log-in. You can also email us at [adjutant.mophaz@gmail.com](mailto:adjutant.mophaz@gmail.com) and we can update your snail mail, phone & email address for you.

### Casitas for Homeless Veterans Project



On Sep 28<sup>th</sup> ground will be broken for the construction of 35 Casitas to house homeless veterans. 28 will be 600 square feet and 7 will be 400 square feet in size. The MOPH Department of Arizona will present a check for \$10,000.00 to help fund this worthy project at the groundbreaking ceremony. **Come join us for the check presentation at 10:00 AM on September 28<sup>th</sup>.** The location for the ceremony is 1803 E. Broadway, Phoenix, AZ.

### The Purple Heart Magazine

- ◆ National Inspector: David Jackson
- ◆ Sgt. at Arms: Gary Witt



L to R: Chaplain Carlton Cannon, NJVC Tracey Brown-Green, NSVC Robert Olivarez, NC Ralph "Carder" Ferguson, NA Eric Johnson, NFO (PNC) Ernie Rivera, SaA Gary Witt

**SHORT SUSPENSE:** National Sr. Vice-Cdr Robert Olivarez is looking for volunteers to serve on the National Bylaws Committee. If you are not sure what the committee does, download the bylaws from the National Website (<https://www.purpleheart.org/MOPHForms> - you must be logged in) and read Article XII - National Committees, Section 9 - Duties of the Bylaws Committee. If you are interested contact Adjutant: Larry Leighton [adjutant.mophaz@gmail.com](mailto:adjutant.mophaz@gmail.com)

### Department Purple Heart Brick Program



Order a 4" x 8" Purple Heart Brick to be placed at Wesley Bolin Plaza at the State Capitol to commemorate being a Purple Heart recipient

or order one to commemorate a family member or friend who received the Award. The cost of the brick, engraving, and placement costs are: \$35 Purple Heart recipients and \$40 for other veterans. Checks, along with a copy of your order form, should be made out to MOPH AZ & sent to:

Patriot Stephan Bobby

The **July/August issue of the National MOPH's Purple Heart Magazine** is available online at this [link](#).

### Department Adjutant



#### **Help Wanted!**

*Looking for an additional outlet for your creative spirit? Want to try something new? Already an experienced grant writer?* The Department needs Members, Associate Members, and/or Supporters to help raise funds for our many programs by researching and writing grants.

Tools are available to help find potential granters and to write good proposals. If you might be interested, please contact **Department Adjutant Larry Leighton** at [adjutant.mophaz@gmail.com](mailto:adjutant.mophaz@gmail.com) or 602-759-0878.

### **Department Americanism Officer Needed**

The purpose of the Americanism Program is to work with schools and other organizations to help promote U.S. history and the quest for freedom. It is administered by the National Americanism Officer. Patriot Bob Metzger, Chapter 691, resigned as our Department Americanism Officer this week after establishing and running our department program for several years. Bob made our program one of the best in the entire Order. We need someone to step up and take Bob's place in this Appointed Department Officer position. To find out more about what the position entails and what Bob has been doing, you can also contact Bob at [bobmet@cox.net](mailto:bobmet@cox.net) or 602-228-6520. If interested in filling this important and fulfilling position, please contact Department Commander Keith Gray at [commandermophaz@gmail.com](mailto:commandermophaz@gmail.com) or 623-285-5141.

### **Life Member Verification**

Every year, the department and chapters are responsible for **verifying the accuracy** of each individual person's membership profile. We need to make sure critical data is correct and complete. You can help! **By making sure your personal profile is**



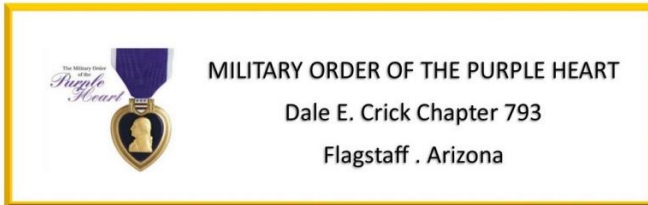
MOPH AZ PH Brick Coordinator  
4543 E. County Down Dr.  
Chandler, AZ 85249-7339

or

Download Order Form: [PH BRICK ORDER FORM](#)

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### Dale E. Crick Chapter 793 – Flagstaff, AZ



**Commander:** Rodger Ely [juggy64@aol.com](mailto:juggy64@aol.com)

**Sr. Vice-Cdr:** Daniel Reich

[daniel\\_r\\_reich@msn.com](mailto:daniel_r_reich@msn.com)

**Jr. Vice-Cdr:** Elmer Sangster

[sangster333@hotmail.com](mailto:sangster333@hotmail.com)

**Adjutant:** William Weldon

[baseballbillpaul@npgcable.com](mailto:baseballbillpaul@npgcable.com)

**Facebook:** [Chapter 793 Facebook](#)

**Next Meeting** – Sep 27

**Meeting time:** 12:30PM

**Meeting location:** VFW Post 1709

409 W Santa Fe Ave, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

**Meeting date:** Bi-monthly on 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday.

MOPH 793 participates in patriotic and welfare activities throughout Northern Arizona. The chapter participated in the Munds Park, AZ Community Fundraiser for Veterans on August 26. The chapter proudly Supports Initiatives of the Northern Arizona Veterans Stand downs (NAZVSD). In September the chapter will support the Williams, AZ Standdown and the Williams, AZ Patriot Day Parade.

You Are Always Welcome to Join Us!

Roger Ely  
Commander

The Williams Stand-Down will be held on September 8<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM at the Williams Recreation Center in Williams, AZ.

**up to date** (phone number, mailing address, email address) are up to date.

Life Member Verification is important for several reasons.

- When hard copies of Purple Heart Magazine can be produced and mailed again, we don't want to waste money having to pay for undeliverable mail.
- Getting digital news from all levels, National, Department, and Chapter relies on accurate email addresses.

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### Michael E. Mahoney Chapter 691 – Surprise, AZ



Chapter 691 Patriots,

Welcome back to the "light" after three months of "darkness"! I look forward to seeing all of you at **our September 9th meeting.**

Sonny Tapia, President of [Sportsmen For Heroes](#) will be our guest speaker (via Zoom). Please check in to Zoom about 10 minutes early to check your camera and microphone. Sonny will be first on the agenda right after opening protocols.

We will also make plans for monthly social gatherings so please think about the where and when you'd like to meet in the spirit of camaraderie.

There are obviously lots more events that could be highlighted, these are but a few. If you know of an event that should be advertised to our chapter let me know.

Cdr: Larry Leighton

[commander691moph@gmail.com](mailto:commander691moph@gmail.com)

Sr. Vice-Cdr: James Starkman

[karen4357@att.net](mailto:karen4357@att.net)

Jr. Vice-Cdr: Kenneth Burns

[ameriken81@gmail.com](mailto:ameriken81@gmail.com)

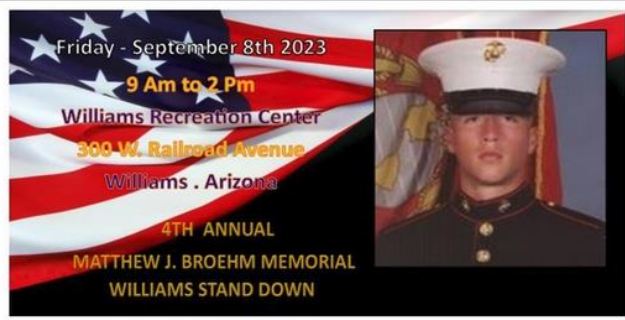
Adjutant: Larry Leighton

[commander691moph@gmail.com](mailto:commander691moph@gmail.com)

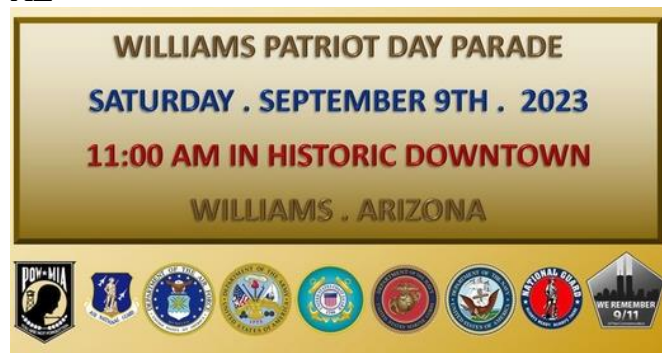
**Meeting date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday

**Meeting time:** 9:00 AM

**Meeting location:** Sands Chevrolet Surprise



The Williams Patriot Day Parade will be September 9<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 AM in downtown Williams, AZ



**WELCOME TO WILLIAMS . ARIZONA**

**PATRIOT DAY EVENTS**

**WILLIAMS PATRIOT DAY PARADE**

**SATURDAY . SEPTEMBER 9TH . 2023 . 11:00 AM**

**IN HISTORIC DOWNTOWN WILLIAMS . ARIZONA**

**GRAND MARSHALS**

**ROUTE 66 YOUNG MARINES**



**FEATURING THE WORLD FAMOUS**

**BILL WILLIAMS MOUNTAIN MEN**

**PARADE INFORMATION: 928.286.7446**

Registration For The Parade Is Easy  
Simply RSVP To:  
**nazveteranstanddowns@aol.com**

There Are No Registration Forms And No Fee's  
Or Charges To Have An Entry  
Once You Are Confirmed Additional Information  
Will Be Provided

Williams . Arizona Patriot Day Parade Information:  
(928) 286 - 7446

**THANK YOU FOR HONORING OUR HEROES**



You Are Respectfully  
Invited To Participate  
In The 2023  
Williams Patriot Day

**PARADE**

On Saturday  
September 9th 2023  
Beginning 11:00 Am  
In Historic Downtown  
Williams . Arizona

Parade Theme:

**VETERAN STRONG**

Chapter 793 held its Benefit Golf Tournament on August 26<sup>th</sup> at Pinewood Country Club in Munds Park, AZ. The chapter presented appreciation plaques to Pinewood Country Club,

Conference Room (16991 W Waddell Rd, Surprise, AZ 85388) Enter parking lot from N Cotton Lane.

Website: <http://691.mophaz.org/>

Facebook: [Chapter 691 Facebook](#)

**Note:** Meetings will also be via Zoom. Enter the meeting ID (842 2842 9701) and the password (879117). By phone, call 719 359 4580 and enter the id/password.

**Upcoming events are:**

Sep 1-8: Corte Bella Vets "[September Harvest](#)"

Online Auction - Bid on area restaurant gift cards.

Sep 9: Chapter meeting - [Come join us!](#)

Sep 13: we will help St Vincent DePaul Food Bank in Surprise

Sep 15: Nomination deadline:

*The Glendale Chamber of Commerce is seeking nominations to recognize service members, or their direct family members, who give back to the community. We will recognize these selfless individuals for their hard work at our [Military Appreciation Ceremony](#) on November 1 at Desert Diamond Casino – West Valley. [Click here](#) for the nomination form.*

Sep 23: Southwest Veterans Chamber of Commerce & Foundation Patriot's Ball Honoring Military Families because they also serve and sacrifice." Saturday September 23 at Pointe Hilton Tapatio Cliffs. [Register](#) or [Sponsor](#).

Quite a few of us had a good time at FatCats in Surprise on Purple Heart Day. We ate pizza, had drinks and some even ventured out to the arcade and glow-golf. All of us were too smart to risk injury by bowling. LOL



*America's Most Wanted or Beauty Contest? L to R. Kay Leighton, Karen Metz, Keith Gray, Kristi Gray, Noah Mulnix (Kristi's son and Keith's stepson), Cole Parker, Jason Parker, and Bob Metz.*



Mr. Troy Froderman, Mr. Gary Harper, & Mr. Eric Snelz in recognition for their exemplary community support for Northern Arizona Veterans.



*Parental protection or harassment? Kristi Gray, Noah Mulnix, Cole Parker, and Jason Parker.*



*Gunner and loader? Kristi and Noah.*

On September 13th, we will help St Vincent DePaul Food Bank in Surprise to assist with sorting bulk food items, creating food baskets and loading food into vehicles, helping in the process of providing food for families in need (closed toe shoes required). Let us know if you can help.

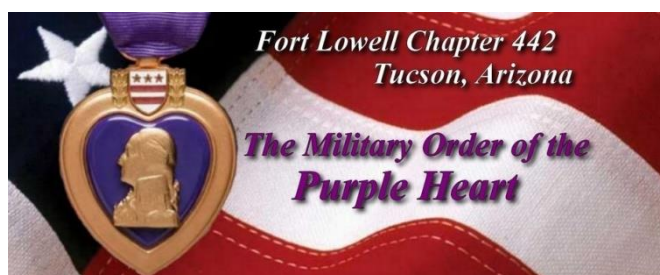
Congresswoman Lesko's Veteran Outreach Coordinators will be our guest speakers at our September 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. They'll give us an update on Congressional initiatives and what they can do for our local Veterans.

September is Suicide Prevention Month – each of us can play a part in reducing the terrible statistics. Read more at <https://988lifeline.org/promote-national-suicide-prevention-month/> and have the 988 line in your contacts where you can get to it quickly should the need arise. The Veterans Crisis Line: call 988 and then press 1 or 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1, text (838255), or chat (VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat).





### Fort Lowell Chapter 442 – Tucson, AZ



Fellow Patriots:

The chapter will meet again starting in September. The chapter is again hosting bingo for the patients at the Tucson VA Hospital. The next Bingo session will be held on September 30<sup>th</sup>. Come join us in hosting Bingo. In August we provided \$250 of food for homeless veterans housed at the Esperanza En Escalante project.

On Purple Heart Day visited the Arizona State Veterans' Home to honor the residents who are Purple Heart recipients.

**Our chapter website will close on 6 September.**

The hosting service is changing their business model. Once we have a new website up and running, we will post the address. In the

Do you know Patriots Day is NOT in September this year – or any other year for that matter? Patriots Day or Patriots' Day is on April 19th and honors the memory and meaning of the first battle of the American Revolution fought in the nearby then-villages of Menotomy (now Arlington), Lexington, and Concord on April 19, 1775. Read more: <https://www.boston-discovery-guide.com/patriots-day.html>. September 11th is Patriot Day and the National Day of Remembrance. Please find time in YOUR day to remember: “On September 11, 2001, ordinary Americans performed extraordinary acts of heroism. Firefighters and police officers rushed into crumbling buildings and raging fires to save others. EMTs, construction workers, colleagues, and strangers tended to the wounded. Passengers and crewmembers gave their lives to thwart another attack. And a generation of women and men answered the call of duty by joining our Armed Forces to defend our freedom and our democracy. These patriots—people of undaunted courage, uncommon resolve, and unwavering perseverance—are forever ingrained in our national character. They are reminders that we are a great country because we are a good people. On this Patriot Day and National Day of Service and Remembrance, we pay tribute to the heroes and victims who lost their lives on September 11, and we recommit ourselves to the spirit of unity, patriotism, and service that carried our Nation through in the days that followed.”

Yours in Patriotism,  
Larry Leighton  
Commander

### Chapter 2560 – Apache Junction, AZ

**Cdr:**



Michael Overmeyer

[moverme48@gmail.com](mailto:moverme48@gmail.com)

**Sr. Vice Cdr:** Chuck Byers

[seagb@cox.net](mailto:seagb@cox.net)

**Jr. Vice Cd:** James King

[kingjs6@live.com](mailto:kingjs6@live.com)

**Adjutant:** Michael Overmeyer

[moverme48@gmail.com](mailto:moverme48@gmail.com)

**Meeting date:** 2nd Saturday of the month.

**Meeting time:** 10:00 AM

meantime, our Facebook page is the best place to get information. [Chapter 442 Facebook](#)

Our next meeting will be on September 18th.

Yours in Patriotism,  
Mike Dyer  
Commander

**Commander** Mike Dyer – [mrdyer@comcast.net](mailto:mrdyer@comcast.net)  
**Sr. Vice-Cdr** Richard Perkins  
[rperkins823@gmail.com](mailto:rperkins823@gmail.com)  
**Jr. Vice-Cdr** John Grand – [jgrand5@cox.net](mailto:jgrand5@cox.net)  
**Adjutant** John Moore –  
[mophchapter442@comcast.net](mailto:mophchapter442@comcast.net)

**Website:** <https://mophchapter442.webs.com/>

**Facebook:** [Chapter 442 Facebook](#)

**Donate online:** [Donations Appreciated](#)

**Meeting date:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday (no meetings June, July, or August)

**Time:** 5:00 PM

**Meeting location:** Bridge Church at 8150 N Sandy Desert Trail, Tucson, AZ 85741. This is just off I10 & Cortaro Farms Rd. Go east on Cortaro Farms Rd to N. Sandy Desert Trail.

10:00 AM on September 30, 2023 the **Missing in America Project** will lay to rest and inter the cremains of 20 unclaimed Veterans at the Arizona Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Marana, AZ. 15950 N. Luckett Rd, Marana, AZ 85653. Join us to help honor these departed Veterans.

**Patriots John Grand, John Moore, Dave Bertagoli & Cody Phipps** visited the Arizona State Veterans Home Tucson.



**Meeting location:** Mesa Buckhorn Elk Lodge  
#2656 at 6718 E Avalon St, Mesa, AZ 85205

### Chapter 472 –Mesa, AZ



Cdr: James Pomush  
[landjpomush@gmail.com](mailto:landjpomush@gmail.com)  
Sr. Vice-Cdr: Ramiero Del Rio (602) 818-0796  
Jr. Vice-Cdr: Matthew Beatty  
[matthewcbeatty@yahoo.com](mailto:matthewcbeatty@yahoo.com)  
Adjutant: Jason Duren  
[jason@cidercorpsaz.com](mailto:jason@cidercorpsaz.com)

**Meeting date:** Last Thursday of the month (No meetings: Jun Jul & Aug)

**Meeting time:** 10:00AM

**Meeting location:** American Legion Post 26  
505 W 2nd Avenue, Mesa, AZ 85210-1202



### PACT ACT EXTENSION

PACT Act Extension is ending soon. Thanks to the [PACT Act](#), many Veterans are now able to enroll directly in VA health care without first applying for VA benefits – including Vietnam Veterans, Gulf War Veterans, Veterans who deployed to a combat zone and left active duty in the last ten years, and more. But for some Veterans, the time to apply is running out. Specifically:

Veterans who deployed to a combat zone, never enrolled in VA health care, and left active duty between September 11, 2001, and October 1, 2013, are eligible to enroll directly in VA health care – **but their deadline to apply is September 30, 2023.**

Veterans who deployed to a combat zone, never signed up for VA health care, and left active duty after October 1, 2013, are eligible to enroll directly in VA health care – **but their deadline to apply is 10 years after they left active duty (meaning that some Veterans' eligibility could expire as early as October 1, 2023).**



The Chapter visited the Arizona State Veterans Home to honor Purple Heart recipients; **Richard Ross**, **George Sievers**, & **Gerald Cornelius**, who are residents in the home. Each was presented a Certificate of Appreciation, a PH challenge coin, a PH Hat, a Badge of Military Merit, and a mini-Purple Heart.



Patriot **John Moore** presents veterans home Director, **Sam Nanez**, a check for \$500 for the welfare of the residents of the home.



Chapter & Department Patriot of the Year, **John Grand**, is the Arizona Honoree for the 2023 Purple Heart Patriot Project. John is receiving a paid trip for a week of tributes at the Purple Heart Hall of Honor, West Point, the 9/11 Memorial and other sites. To learn about the



If you fall into any of the above categories, VA wants you to apply for the health care you deserve today at [VA.gov/PACT](https://www.va.gov/PACT). Even if you don't fall into those categories, there are other ways for you to access [VA health care](#). And – of course – you can also still apply for [PACT Act disability compensation benefits](#) anytime.

<https://www.va.gov/res.../the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits/>

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### Purple Heart Combat Wounded Veterans of AZ



The Purple Heart Combat Wounded Veterans of Arizona is our department 501c3 entity. If for tax purposes, you or a donor is required to donate to a 501c3 use our online portal to make your donation. Funds designated for a chapter will go in their entirety to the chapter. Use the “Add/Write NOTE” field to specify the purpose of your donation. Thank you in advance for supporting Veterans! **Donate Online:** [Donations Appreciated](#)

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### The Purple Heart Hall of Honor



Add your story to the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor. Enroll at the url below:

<https://www.thepurpleheart.com/enrollment/>

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### Purple Heart Scholarships



Congratulations to the 2023 MOPH Scholarship recipients. Applications for the scholarship program are due every July. Information is available on the Purple Heart Scholarship Program at this [link](#).

Purple Heart Honor Mission, go to url:  
<https://www.purpleheartmission.org/>

### Bills in Congress

**H.R. 4424, the Vietnam Veterans Liver Fluke Cancer Study Act** is legislation directing the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to conduct an epidemiological study on the prevalence of cholangiocarcinoma in veterans of the Vietnam era. Bile duct cancer (cholangiocarcinoma) is a cancer of the biliary duct system, which includes the gallbladder, bile ducts, and certain cells inside the liver. One risk factor for bile duct cancer is past infection with tiny parasitic worms called liver flukes. Veterans who ate raw or undercooked freshwater fish during their service in Southeast Asia might have been infected. Please urge your Representative to support and co-sponsor H.R. 4424.

**HR 4061: This bill will require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish an exposure registry and conduct epidemiological studies to assess health outcomes associated with the Red Hill Incident.** On May 6, 2021, 20,000 gallons of fuel leaked from a storage tank at the Red Hill facility where it then flowed into the ground surrounding the facility and into an underground aquifer. The Navy's water well nearest to the Red Hill facility was found to be heavily contaminated with diesel and petroleum hydrocarbons associated with gasoline. H.R. 4061 would require the Department of Health and Human Services to establish an exposure registry and conduct epidemiological studies to assess negative health outcomes due to the water contamination. The Navy water system serves approximately 93,000 people on Joint Base Pearl Harbor–Hickam. Please urge your Representative to support and co-sponsor H.R. 4061

The **Restore Veterans' Compensation Act of 2023 (H.R. 3489)** would afford justice for ill and injured veterans by eliminating the unfair practice of VA recouping separation payments, which are based on their military service, and differ from Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability compensation. VA disability compensation can often be the difference between making ends meet



Thanks also to the nearly 210 candidates who sent in their applications and competed for these scholarships. It was an extremely tough field of applicants this year which made the evaluations extremely difficult. Hopefully, as we continue to grow this program, we will be able to increase the number of recipients for years to come.

Congratulations to the awardees!

Navy SEAL Michael P. Murphy Foundation Scholarship  
Awardee

• Edward Guck	Virginia Beach, VA	\$5,000
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#### Military Order of the Purple Heart Scholarship Awardees

• Chelsea Foltz	Vaughn, WA	\$2,500
• Bailey Eldridge	Bonifay, FL	\$2,500
• Kaycee Moyer	Ochelata, OK	\$2,500
• Vu Toan	Vancouver, WA	\$1,500
• Kaitlyn Snider	Virginia Beach, VA	\$1,500
• Kaylee Anderson	Belville, TX	\$1,500
• Cayla Messer	Phoenix, AZ	\$1,250
• Joshua Farmer	Fairfax Station, VA	\$1,250
• Kathrine Barclay	Edmonds, OK	\$1,250
• William Mcelya	Port Orchard, WA	\$1,200
• Alaina Clark	Redmond, OR	\$1,000
• Edward Guck	Virginia Beach, VA	\$1,000
• Sadie Buttram	Springdale, AR	\$1,000

Yours in Patriotism, Robert Olivarez Jr

National Senior Vice Commander



**The MOPH Fund, Inc., (“the Fund”)** a 501.c.3 non-profit public charity, is separate and not subordinate to the Military Order of the Purple Heart. The Fund Inc. is the official fundraising arm of the Military Order of the Purple Heart (the Order). Our sole purpose is to raise funds for programs executed by the Military Order of the Purple Heart.

The Fund has an eleven-person Board of Directors of which all but one is a Purple Heart recipient and members of the Order. While separate from the Order, the Fund’s bylaws require the National Commander, National Senior Vice Commander, the National Junior Vice Commander, and the six Region Commanders to be Directors on our Board.

We have engaged professional grant writers and just this month have submitted proposals totaling \$600K to different nationally recognized organizations. The Fund tries to ensure we find programs that will **DIRECTLY BENEFIT CHAPTERS** and the National Headquarters



& homelessness for many of our nation's disabled veterans, which is why the practice of withholding a veteran's VA disability compensation due to a non-related military separation benefit must end. Please contact your Representative and urge them to support this bill.

Exciting News! The **AUTO for Veterans Act** has been signed into Law! This vital legislation helps severely disabled veterans get the adaptive vehicles they need. Under the previous law, veterans were limited to a single automobile grant over their lifetime. But with the new AUTO for Veterans Act, veterans will now be eligible to receive a grant from the VA every ten years to purchase adaptive vehicles, ensuring they can drive safely and maintain their independence. With adaptive vehicles costing upwards of \$50,000, this change will significantly ease the financial burden for disabled veterans, enabling them to access work, medical appointments, and family commitments more easily.

You can download the PDF to file here:

<https://www.va.gov/find-forms/about-form-21-4502/>

**H.R.4566, the Providing Radiation Exposed Servicemembers Undisputed Medical Eligibility (PRESUME) Act.** The bill would eliminate VA's current practice of requiring radiation dose estimates for veterans claiming diseases related to radiation exposure. The Department of Justice (DOJ), Radiation Exposure Claims Act (RECA) program establishes compensation for individuals who contracted specified diseases related to atmospheric nuclear weapons development tests in the American southwest. However, radiation exposed veterans are held to a higher standard by the VA, than the DOJ for civilians exposed to radiation. This unfair practice must be halted. Please contact your Representative and urge them to co-sponsor and support H.R. 4566, T=the PRESUME Act.

**The Veterans Exposed to Toxic (VET) PFAS Act, H.R. 4249/ S. 2294,** would provide presumptive service connection for veterans exposed to perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) at military installations. PFAS are man-made chemicals, that do not break down in the environment and are present in fire-fighting foams (or aqueous film forming foam; AFFF) used

programs. While not every program will have the same revenue sharing formula, the Fund's programs are designed to reward the Chapters for the work they do to make the programs work.



We in the Fund hope the Order's members and associate members will embrace the Fund's programs to raise funds for CHAPTER and National Headquarters programs.

To learn about the specific Fund's fundraising projects currently available, simply click on the logo on the left or scan the QR Code.



If you have any questions about the Fund or the Fund's fundraising projects, please contact me.

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844-MOPHFUND (667-4386)

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### Purple Heart License Plates

#### **HB 2062 Vehicle license tax exemption for PH veterans:**

Many of our members are still not aware of this benefit. On registration of a vehicle, if the veteran submits satisfactory proof to ADOT that the person is a veteran and a bona fide purple heart medal recipient and was honorably discharged vehicle registration tax fee is waived. Can only be used on one vehicle. Specialty plate and personalization fees still apply.



by both civilian and military firefighters. Per DoD, it is estimated that over 700 U.S. military installations have PFAS contaminated water supplies. The VA does not currently recognize any diseases related to PFAS exposure. The VET PFAS Act would add high cholesterol, ulcerative colitis, thyroid disease, testicular cancer, kidney cancer, and pregnancy-induced hypertension as presumptive diseases to PFAS exposure. This bill would allow health care for veterans and family members who were exposed to PFAS on military installations and develop the same recognized diseases. We urge you to contact your elected officials to co-sponsor and support the VET PFAS Act H.R. 4249/S. 2294.

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### Newsletter Information

Please send information & photos that you would like included in the newsletter to [mophchapter442@comcast.net](mailto:mophchapter442@comcast.net). We would like to get the newsletter out on the last day of the month. Get me news information & photos by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

John R. Moore  
Jr. Vice-Commander

