



February 2024

Volume 4 Issue 2

Commander's Corner



Fellow Patriots,

Two months of the new year are over, how time flies. As you can tell the year is off to a fast start. With the new year coming we will face new endeavors; I am asking

all of Arizona's Purple Heart Patriots to reengage with your chapter and help us show why Arizona is the best Department in the order. Please provide your ideas for what you would like to see the department become, events, and fundraising. I want to challenge each member in Arizona to attend at least one chapter meeting and one event this year.

As chapter and department elections approach, those of you with more free time on your hands please consider running for an elected position within your chapter or at the department level. We need your participation to ensure those currently holding a position do not get burnt out. Your involvement is vital to ensure the chapters and department are constantly evolving with fresh ideas.

Our Department Convention will be held in Williams, Arizona on May 4th. If you come up on May 3rd, the Ramada Inn, Williams is our host facility. Schedule and details will be out soon.

I look forward to working with all of you to make this year one for the record books!

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

Time: 06:30 PM Arizona Time, March 27, 2024

Zoom Meeting ID: 842 2842 9701

Passcode: 879117 or Dial in: 669 900 6833.

Yours in Patriotism,
Keith Gray
Commander

Department Officers 2023/2024

Cdr: Keith Gray commandermophaz@gmail.com

Sr. Vice Cdr: Rodger Ely juggy64@aol.com

Jr. Vice Cdr: John Moore

mophchapter442@comcast.net

Adjutant: Larry Leighton

adjutant.mophaz@gmail.com

Finance Officer: Ron Capek ronluccap@gmail.com

Sgt-at-Arms: **vacant position**

Inspector: **vacant position**

Judge Advocate: **vacant position.**

Americanism Officer: **vacant position**

Chaplain: John L. Bhelm jblehmsr@gmail.com

Legislative Liaison: Jim Muhr 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

- March 13/14 – Tucson Stand-Down
- March 15 – Parker Stand-Down
- March 21/22 – Maricopa County Stand-Down
- March 27 – Verde Valley Stand-Down
- March 27 – Department Commander's Call
- March 29 – National Vietnam Veterans Day
- March 31 – Easter

Update Your Contact Information

Keep your snail mail address, phone & email address up to date. Go to the MOPH National website at <https://national-moph.uc.r.appspot.com/#>. You need your membership number to log-in. You can also email us at adjutant.mophaz@gmail.com

Junior Vice-Commander



National Vietnam War Veterans Day: In March our chapters will participate in ceremonies for National Vietnam War Veterans Day in various locations around the state. In 1973 March 29th, was the day the last

U.S. combat troops departed Vietnam. This now is a day each year when we honor the 2.7 million Americans who served in Vietnam during the Vietnam War, honor the 58,000+ soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen who made the ultimate sacrifice and thank those who never received the recognition they deserved for their service during the war. Thank you to each of our 664 Patriot members who received Purple Hearts while serving in the Vietnam War.



Department Challenge Coins:

Coins are available from the Chapters. They cost \$20 and the Chapters net \$10 for each coin they sell. Get one while supplies last.



John R. Moore
Jr. Vice-Commander

and we can update your snail mail, phone & email address for you.

National Convention

The **National Convention** will be held in **Orlando, FL this year from July 15-18th**. Hotel information is available on the National website and you don't even have to log in first (<https://www.purpleheart.org/NationalConvention>).

The Department of Florida is planning another fun event for all. The Auxiliary is helping to build the excitement by having a Bahamas cruise the week prior. Get the details and signup at <https://www.purpleheartauxiliary.org/cruise>

Department Adjutant



The Department Convention will be in Williams, AZ in May. We hope to see a large number of our members attend. Details will be announced soon but it will be a great time share some camaraderie with other Patriots from outside your immediate Chapter.

Department elections will be held during the Convention. Your help is needed to ensure the Department remains a viable organization and to strengthen and grow our programs supporting Veterans and Families. Remember all of our positions are filled with VOLUNTEERS and none are fulltime positions. you can make a difference – if you get involved. I look forward to seeing you in Flagstaff but if you cannot make it there physically, on our Zoom call.

Don't forget to let us know what's happening with you and in/around your community. We'd like to see your shiny face and hear your story in the newsletter and The Purple Heart Magazine (publications@purpleheart.org).

Larry Leighton,
Department Adjutant

Fort Lowell Chapter 442 – Tucson, AZ



Fellow Patriots:

The chapter hosts bingo each month for the patients at the Tucson VA Hospital. The next Bingo session will be held on March 30th. Come join us in hosting Bingo.



In February, we provided \$250 of food for homeless veterans housed at the Esperanza En Escalante Project.

Chapter elections will be held in March. If you would like to serve or would like to nominate someone to a chapter office let us know.

JROTC/ROTC awards will be presented in April to the area high schools we support and to the ROTC programs at the University of Arizona. If you would like to present the ROTC Award to one of our schools let us know.

Yours in Patriotism,
Mike Dyer
Commander

Commander Mike Dyer – mrdyer@comcast.net

Sr. Vice-Cdr Richard Perkins
rperkins823@gmail.com

Jr. Vice-Cdr: John Grand – jgrand5@cox.net

Chaplain: Danny Lemon –
ddlemon@outlook.com

Adjutant: John Moore –
mophchapter442@comcast.net

Website: <https://442.mophaz.org/>

Facebook: [Chapter 442 Facebook](#)

Donate online: [Donations Appreciated](#)

Meeting date: 3rd Monday (no meetings February, June, July, or August)

Michael E. Mahoney Chapter 691 – Surprise, AZ



For those who were not able to attend, you missed a great meal and good fun at our 2024 George Washington Luncheon. The food was fantastic and the comraderie was great.



Jerry “Geronimo” Martin was our guest speaker. He kept the audience engaged and captivated as he spoke about Geronimo, the Apache Warrior and Medicine Man who was his great, great, grandfather. Although we did not plan to make any money at this event, we raised \$1,000 above our cost by selling raffle

tickets and having a silent auction for many, many donated items.

Senior Vice Commander Starkman along with several other Chapter members and wives (**Ron and Cindi Capek, John and Karen Blehm, John Ballenger, Karen Starkman, Ken Burns, Harold Thomas, and myself**) spent time at the Wickenburg Gold Rush Days event Feb 7-9. You can see pictures and how we did in another article in the newsletter.

Chapter elections will be held at our April 13th meeting. Please consider helping guide the Chapter by volunteering to hold a position or run a program.

If you haven’t talked to another Vet from your past lately, pick up the phone and make his or her day! If you just want to talk to someone, you can always call me – I’m a good listener (623-776-5443).

Cdr: Larry Leighton
commander691moph@gmail.com

Sr. Vice-Cdr: James Starkman
karen4357@att.net

Jr. Vice-Cdr: Kenneth Burns
ameriken81@gmail.com

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.



Fellow Patriots, it is with great sadness that we report that **Patriot Johnny Thompson** has passed away. Over the years Johnny did much for our veteran community. He is a hero who served 3 tours in

Vietnam. The burial will be at 12:00 noon March 22nd at the AZ State Memorial Veterans Cemetery, Marana. Here is a link to a news article about Johnny from a few years ago.
https://tucson.com/.../article_29472549-62fb-58f9-b09c...

The annual Tucson 4 Chaplains Ceremony was held on 4 February at the Kino Veterans Memorial on Ajo Way. **Patriot Jim Zimmerman** and **Patriot John Grand** placed a wreath to honor the Four Chaplains. **Patriot John Grand** read the biography of one of the Four Chaplains. **Patriot John Moore** made remarks on the significance of the Purple Heart award.

Patriot John Moore gives remarks on the history and purpose of the award of the Purple Heart.



Patriot John Grand reads a bio of one of the Four Chaplains.

Chaplain: John Blehm (623-628-6330)

Adjutant: Larry Leighton

commander691moph@gmail.com

Meeting date: 2nd Saturday

Meeting time: 9:00 AM

Meeting location: Sands Chevrolet Surprise 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.

Yours in Patriotism

Larry Leighton, Commander

From the **Sr. Vice-Commander Jim Starkman:**
Members from Chapter 691 set off from the Sun City/ Surprise Area to Wickenburg to participate in their Annual Gold Rush and Rodeo Days February 9-11, 2024. After setting up the display booth, our Combat Wounded Veterans set out to educate the public on the mission of the Purple Heart Organization and the meaning of being awarded a Purple Heart. Even though our primary reason for participating was to raise awareness and educate the public we also set out to utilize the venue to raise funds for our Veterans throughout Arizona. Men, women, children, and fellow veterans stopped by our booth to meet and talk with our combat wounded Veterans throughout the three-day event. We successfully raised \$2,545 in donations and 50/50 raffle ticket sales. We also were honored to be awarded second place for our booth display by the Wickenburg Chamber of Commerce.



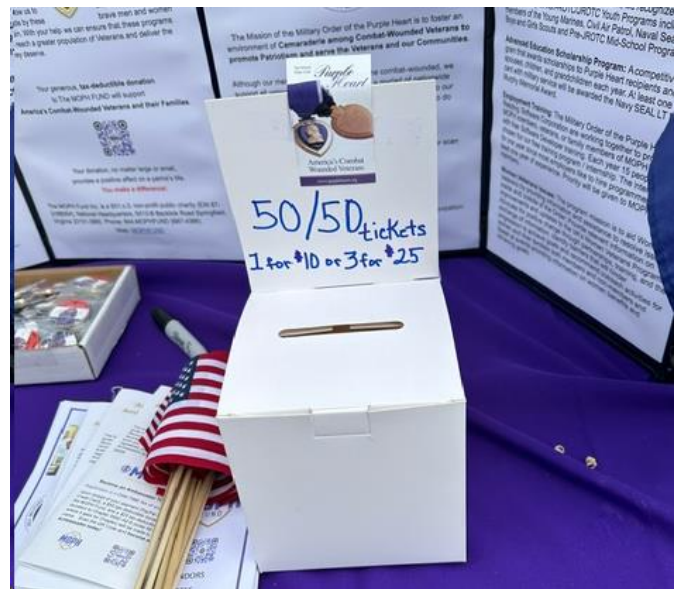


Patriot Jim Zimmerman, Patriot Walter Ram, Patriot John Grand, and Patriot John Moore placed the Purple Heart wreath.



Chapter 442 officers and the **Department Commander Keith Gray** attended a dinner/social hosted by **Patriot Dave Bertagnoli** in honor of General Washington's birthday. **Patriot John R. Moore** was presented with a National Commander's Coin for Excellence award. The chapter toasted departed **Patriot Johnny Thompson** and had a missing man table setup for him.

Patriot John Grand and **Patriot Dave Bertagnoli** could not out do **Patriot Walter Ram** for war stories. Walter has 2 Purple Hearts and spent 2 years in Stalag 17b during WWII.





Department Commander Keith Gray presents **Patriot John Moore** with the National Commander's Coin for Excellence Award.



Missing Man Table was setup for departed **Patriot Johnny Thompson**.



The **Tucson Veteran Stand-Down** will be held on **March 13 and 14**. The location this year will be

Chapter 2560 – Apache Junction, AZ

Cdr:



Michael Overmeyer

moverme48@gmail.com

Sr. Vice Cdr: Chuck Byers

seagb@cox.net

Jr. Vice Cd: James King

kingjs6@live.com

Adjutant: Michael Overmeyer

moverme48@gmail.com



Meeting date: 2nd Saturday of the month.

Meeting time: 10:00 AM

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

We welcome all Purple Hearts Veterans and their spouses!

Chapter 2560 has been busy the last couple of months. Wreaths Across America offered a BOGO for one month for all sponsors. We have been busy trying to find sponsors and volunteers to help us with this year's event. To become a sponsor, the wreaths are \$17 each. If anyone is interested, please either go online at

www.wreathsassamerica.org/az0190p or send in

a check payable to Wreaths Across America to **Nancy Fassbender** 4657 S Desert Dawn Dr Gold Canyon, AZ 85118



We also just finished at the Mesa Marketplace weekend. We had a great time talking to the Veterans who stopped by our booth and visiting with other Purple Heart Veterans who were from other states.

Since we are partnered with the 50th Vietnam War Commemorative for the Welcome Home

the Ramada Inn at 777 Cushing Ave. Use this link to sign up to volunteer:
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C44ABA62BA2F4C16-46798651-2024#/>



Veteran Stand Down March 13
from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
and Career Fair March 14
from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

* Please bring extra copies of your resume; business casual attire for the career fair

Open to ALL Veterans, National Guard and Reservists in the local area in need of the following resources:

- Clothing/ hygiene items
- Substance abuse counseling
- Disability claims
- Haircuts
- Treatment referrals
- Benefits applications
- Housing options
- Legal matters
- Pet care
- Veterans Court
- Employment assistance and job training
- Service Organizations
- Mental Health and Religious counseling

Lunch will be served

For event Information contact
623-687-5552 or tucsonvetservingvets@gmail.com

NO ALCOHOL • NO DRUGS • NO WEAPONS



Vietnam Veterans, we pinned 170 Vietnam Veterans.

We also had service dogs visit our booth and this one took everyone's heart.



Chapter 472 –Mesa, AZ



Cdr: James Pomush
landjpomush@gmail.com
Sr. Vice-Cdr: Ramiero Del Rio (602) 818-0796
Jr. Vice-Cdr: Matthew Beatty

matthewcbeatty@yahoo.com

Adjutant: Jason Duren 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

Dale E. Crick Chapter 793 – Flagstaff, AZ



MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART

Dale E. Crick Chapter 793

Flagstaff, Arizona

Commander: Rodger Ely juggy64@aol.com
Sr. Vice-Cdr: Daniel Reich
daniel_r_reich@msn.com
Jr. Vice-Cdr: Elmer Sangster
sangster333@hotmail.com
Adjutant: William Weldon
baseballbillpaul@npgcable.com
Facebook: [Chapter 793 Facebook](#)
Next Meeting – Contact Chapter

Department Purple Heart Brick Program

Order a 4"x8" Purple Heart Brick to be Placed at Wesley Bolin Plaza at the state capitol to commemorate being a Purple Heart recipient or to 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
MOPH AZ PH Brick Coordinator
4543 E. County Down Dr.
Chandler, AZ 85249-7339
or Download Order Form: [PH BRICK ORDER FORM](#)



The Million Veteran Program

Join the Million Veteran Program is on a mission to redefine the future of healthcare, and we need YOU to be a part of this monumental journey. MVP is assembling a community of over 1,000,000 Veterans to uncover how genes, lifestyles, military experiences, and exposures impact our health and wellness. Help revolutionize medicine and enhance the lives of Veterans worldwide. Join here:
<https://www.mvp.va.gov/pwa/>

Whitehouse VA Hotline

The Whitehouse VA Hotline and MyVA411 have merged. **1-800-MyVA411 (698-2411)** is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to serve veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors.

Meeting time: 12:30PM

Meeting location: VFW Post 1709
409 W Santa Fe Ave, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

Meeting date: Bi-monthly on 4th Wednesday.

MOPH 793 participates in patriotic and welfare activities throughout Northern Arizona. You Are Always Welcome to Join Us!

Roger Ely
Commander

Chapter 793 supports the Northern Arizona Stand Downs in several Northern Arizona communities.

3rd Annual Verde Valley Stand Down



3rd Annual Verde Valley Stand Down taking place in Sedona on March 27, 2024

When:

Wed. Mar 27, 2024, 9:00 am – 2:00 pm MT

Where:

Sedona Elks Lodge No. 2291
110 Airport Road
Sedona, AZ

Chapter 793 participated in the **79th Anniversary of the Iwo Jima Flag Raising Ceremony** in Sacaton, AZ on Feb 24th. Chapter 793 and Department members attended the ceremony and rode in the Purple Heart truck in the parade.



Recipe of the Month



Potato Chip Nachos from
Patriot John Grand.

Ingredients

- 4 cups kettle-style potato chips
- 2 cups cheddar cheese, shredded.
- 1/2 cup bacon cooked and crumbled.
- 1/3 cup sour cream
- 1/4 cup tomato, diced.
- 1/4 cup chives finely chopped.

Directions

Step 1 -Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Step 2 -Line an 18x26-inch baking sheet with parchment paper.

Step 3 -Evenly layer the potato chips on the prepared baking sheet.

Step 4 -Evenly sprinkle the cheese over the potato chip layer and top with the bacon.

Step 5 -Bake until the cheese has melted, about 5 minutes.

Step 6 -Top the nachos with the sour cream, the tomatoes, and the chives.

Step 7 -Serve immediately.

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/>

AZ Veterans Stand-Down Alliance



The Arizona Veterans Stand-Down Alliance is pleased to announce the **2024 Maricopa County**



Stand-Down will be held Thursday and Friday, March 21-22, at the Arizona State Fairgrounds. Information on housing, supportive services, connections to VA or Social Security benefits, dental services, legal assistance, and more will be available to veterans. Organizations wishing to host a booth or provide services at the event are invited to learn more and [register online](#).

Listing of all Arizona Stand-Downs

- [Tucson Veterans Stand-Down & Career Fair](#) Wednesday, March 13, 9am - 3pm (Stand-Down) Thursday, March 14, 10am - 3pm (Career Fair) [Ramada Inn](#) 777 W Cushing Tucson, AZ 85745
- [Parker Stand-Down](#) Friday, March 15, 9am - 3pm [VFW Post 7061](#) 516 S Hopi Ave Parker, AZ
- Maricopa County Stand-Down Thursday and Friday, March 21-22 [Arizona State Fairgrounds](#) Legal Services will be offered for veterans at the Stand-Down, with assistance offered in advance. Learn more [here](#).
- [Verde Valley Stand-Down](#) Wednesday, March 27, 9am - 2pm [Sedona Elks Lodge 2291](#) 110 Airport Road Sedona, AZ 86336
- [Kingman Stand-Down](#) Friday, May 3, 10am - 2pm [Mohave County Fairgrounds](#) 2600 Fairgrounds Blvd Kingman, AZ 86401
- [High Country Stand-Down](#) Wednesday, May 15, 9am - 1pm [Flagstaff Armory](#) 320 N Thorpe Rd Flagstaff, AZ 86001

AZ Department of Veteran Services

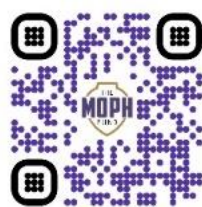


The Purple Heart Fund

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.



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 above or scan the QR Code.



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

Larry Leighton
Treasurer, MOPH Fund, Inc.

treasurer@mophfund.org
844-MOPHFUND (667-4386)

Arizona State Veteran Home - Tucson is hiring!
To see the list of current openings and to apply
visit <https://bit.ly/3V12PRS>



Help design the new Arizona National Guard's license plate for Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs! For more information, guidelines, & to submit your design by March 29th visit <https://dema.az.gov/licenseplatecontest>

Camp Corral

MOPH supports Camp Corral. Camp Corral has announced the 2024 Summer Camp dates. The Arizona camp is 9 to 14 June at The Triangle Y Camp in Oracle, AZ. Help send the child of a veteran or military member who needs camp.

Applications to attend camp opened on January 17th. Go to www.campcorral.org for more info.



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.

Private School Tax Credit

Patriot Joe Kobes' son Hudson is a sophomore at Brophy College Preparatory High School in Phoenix. If you are so inclined to support this program and could use another tax break on your AZ taxes, you can contribute on Hudson's website for the tax donations: <https://action.ibescholarships.org/SIXD8Q>.

If you know of any other student with a relationship to the Arizona Military Order of the Purple Heart, We will gladly distribute the same information for them. For any private school Arizonans can allocate a tax credit to a student at a private school, and it will cost them nothing. It's a terrific program in Arizona. This is the IRS tax code covering it. <https://azdor.gov/tax-credits/credits-contributions-certified-school-tuition-organizations>

Purple Heart Scholarships



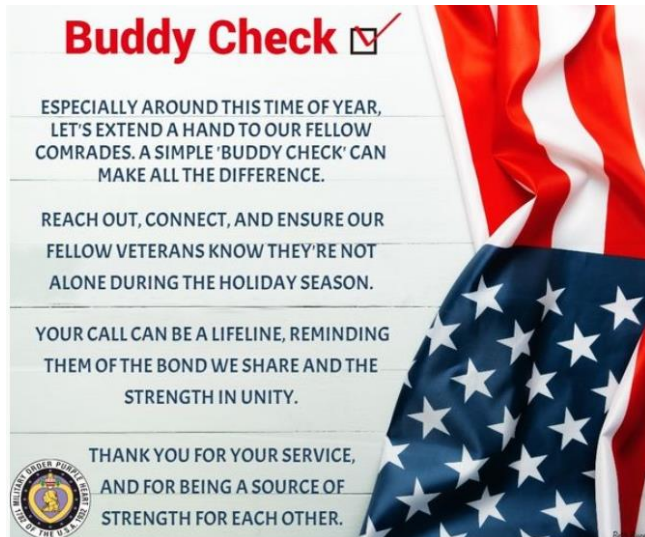
Applications for the scholarship program are due every July. Information is available on the Purple Heart Scholarship Program at this [link](#).

Bills in Congress

H.R. 2413, the Dental Care for Veterans Act: This bill would require the Secretary of the

Buddy Checks!

Let's not forget to check on our buddies, friends, and family. This year a simple 'How are you?' can make all the difference. Let's spread warmth and care and remind people, they are not alone!



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](#)



Pet of the Month

This is Sasha. She is a 13-year-old Collie German Shepherd mix owned by **Patriot Jim Zimmerman**. Jim has had her since she was a puppy. She has traveled with Jim and his wife, Joey, to Montana and back about 10 times.

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to furnish dental care in the same manner as any other medical service and defines a 4-year implementation plan beginning with veterans in Priority Groups 1 and 2 (veterans with service-connected disabilities rated at 30% or more) in year one. Dental care is an important part of overall health care. Most clinicians agree there are strong associations between certain dental conditions and other adverse systemic health outcomes. Gaps in dental coverage often affect people with lower incomes and complex health needs the most.

Urge your representative to support H.R. 2413.

Donate Your Vehicle to Help a Veteran

**Donate any of
your used vehicles!**
i.e cars, motorcycles, boats, ATV's, dirt bikes, etc



Your Generosity Heals!
By donating a used vehicle, you are helping a veteran get the treatment they so desperately need for their TBI and PTSD.



Healing Arizona Veterans
Email: healingazvets@gmail.com
Phone: 520-222-6036
<https://healingarizonaveterans.org>



Ride of the Month

This is a blast from the past. This is **Patriot Jimi Sallmen's** all time favorite car. It is a 1970 Plymouth Roadrunner. Photo is of Jimi on leave

Sasha's sister died last year from blood cancer. At 13 Sasha is still frisky and healthy.



Newsletter Information

Please send information & photos that you would like included in the newsletter to mophchapter442@comcast.net. We would like to get the newsletter out on the last day of the month. Get news information & photos to us by the 15th of each month.

John R. Moore
Jr. Vice-Commander

just prior to deploying to Vietnam in 1971 and giving his car at final check.



Visit Williams, AZ



The Department Convention will be held in Williams, AZ on May 4th. Plan a weekend and enjoy attractions in Williams or visit the Grand Canyon on the Grand Canyon Railway. See what Williams has to offer at the [Williams Visitor Center](#).