



April 2024

Volume 6 Issue 2

### Commander's Corner



Fellow Patriots,

Time is flying, year 2023/2024 is in the books for the department and chapters. We have accomplished a lot this year but there is still more to be done. In

March & April the chapters held elections.

**Congratulations to all the elected chapter officers.** I look forward to working with you and meeting you at the Department Convention. **The Department will hold elections on May 11<sup>th</sup>.** I encourage all of you to participate and volunteer for one of the **Officer positions available.**

We need to continue to adapt as an organization. The way to do that is by tapping into our most important asset, the members within order, who can provide great ideas that keep the order evolving. I know there has been some controversy in the past involving the order, but I ask that you put that behind us and show some of that resiliency that we have and so heavily relied upon while actively serving.

**To all outgoing officers, I want to applaud you for all your hard work and dedication to your respective chapters.** Your efforts make the department shine and set a standard for every other department to try and achieve.

**Take the opportunity to come to the Department Convention in Williams AZ.** We have some ideas that will set up the department for a great 2024/2025 year. Please bring your suggestions so we can make the best possible decisions for the department.

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, May 22, 2024**

Zoom Meeting ID: 842 2842 9701

Passcode: 879117 or Dial in: 669 900 6833.

### 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: **vacant position**

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

- May 3 – Kingman Stand-Down
- May 5 – Cinco de Mayo.
- May 8 – Victory in Europe Day.
- May 11 Department Convention, Williams AZ.
- May 12 Mother's Day.
- May 15 – High Country Stand-Down Flagstaff, AZ.
- May 18 – Armed Forces Day.
- May 27 – Memorial Day.
- May 30. – Moving Wall at Twin Arrows Casino.

### Update Your Contact Information

Keep your snail mail address, phone & email address up to date. Go to the MOPH National

Yours in Patriotism,  
Keith Gray  
Commander

### Junior Vice-Commander



# MEMORIAL DAY

CELEBRATE ★ HONOR ★ REMEMBER  
WE WILL NEVER FORGET



It is an honor and privilege for the Purple Heart recipients of the Department of Arizona to pay tribute to our nation's fallen heroes this coming Memorial Day, May 27<sup>th</sup>. Our members will attend and

participate in ceremonies in various locations in the state. We, as a Nation, owe the deepest debt of gratitude to those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. Many if not most of those we will honor were awarded the Purple Heart. The members of the Military Order of the Purple Heart are honored to represent the sacrifices of those who have gone before us. All who have been decorated with the Purple Heart gave some, but those we honor on Memorial Day gave their all.

Enjoy the Memorial Day weekend. Stay safe and remember you are a testament to our fallen.

John R. Moore  
Jr. Vice-Commander

### AZ Diamondback & MOPH Partnership

On August 8<sup>th</sup> to honor Purple Heart recipients the **Diamondbacks** are providing free

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](mailto:adjutant.mophaz@gmail.com) and we can update your snail mail, phone & email address for you.

### Robert J. Puskar Veterans Scholarship

The **Robert J. Puskar** Veterans Scholarship (\$5,000) is funded by the **Department of Arizona Military Order of the Purple Heart** and awarded annually to a veteran selected by the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame Society. **The 2nd annual Puskar Veterans Scholarship recipient is Sierra Mattos**. She is a seven-year US Navy veteran. She served as a Korean Linguist with tours of duty in Monterey, CA, South Korea, and Hawaii. She is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Speech and Hearing Science at Arizona State University. Her goal is to become a Speech Language Pathologist. The scholarship was presented at the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame Patriotic Luncheon in April. Congratulations Sierra! This scholarship is named in honor of U.S. Marine Corps **Captain Robert J. Puskar** who fought gallantly during the siege of Khe Sanh and at Dong Ha, Vietnam from 1967 to 1968. **Patriot Puskar was the former National Commander Military Order of the Purple Heart**. **Patriot Ron Capek & Patriot Billy Weldon** attended the awards presentation.



*Sierra Mattos & Ron Capek*

admission to the game against the Phillies for PH recipients. More info to follow. Your guests will have to pay but will receive a MOPH discount. MOPH members also get a discount on all home games this year if you use this link to purchase tickets: <https://fevo-enterprise.com/group/mophaz24>



*Patriot Capek & Patriot Weldon at presentation*

### The Purple Heart Magazine



The current issue of the Purple Heart Magazine is available [online](#). Enjoy!

### Visit Williams, Arizona



The Department Convention will be held in Williams, AZ on May 11th. Plan a weekend and enjoy the local attractions or visit the Grand Canyon on the Grand Canyon Railway. See what Williams has to offer at the [Williams Visitor Center](#).

### Department Adjutant



This is the last newsletter reminder for our Department Convention. The convention will be in the Williams, AZ Ramada by Wyndham on Saturday, May 11th. I encourage all members and associate

members to attend, either in person or by zoom.

The total hotel rate is \$146/night, and that rate will be honored Friday (5/10) and Saturday (5/11) nights. The Department will pay the hotel bill for one (1) night and pay \$0.30/mile (round-trip from your home) for anyone traveling more than twenty-five miles away (one-way). Call Ramada directly at 928-635-4114 to make your reservation. The code for our rate is "Rodger Ely - Purple Heart".

For those attending and wanting to mingle, there will be a no-host dinner available on both Friday and Saturday evenings. The meeting will start promptly at 0900 so come early. Those on ZOOM test your camera and mic early.

Join Zoom Meeting at this link or use the QR code. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88951277863?pwd=TWN6QnlZNIBCCnBJTDIwa0lXYWZQUT09>

Meeting ID: 889 5127 7863

## 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 May 25<sup>th</sup>. Join us in hosting Bingo.

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



MOPH Leadership Awards were presented in April to 10 of the 13 JROTC/ROTC programs at area high schools and the University of Arizona. 3 Awards will be presented in May.

The chapter will help place flags on the grave markers of the 4,400 burials in the Marana Veterans Memorial Cemetery on May 24<sup>th</sup>.

The chapter will participate in several Memorial Day ceremonies on May 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Associate Member Frances Johnson** gave a presentation on the book, **“Bipolar General” by Maj. Gen. Gregg Martin** at our April meeting. The book deals with coping with mental illness in the military and as veterans. The chapter has a copy available to read.

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:** Cody Phipps–

[cody.phipps@outlook.com](mailto:cody.phipps@outlook.com)

**Chaplain:** Danny Lemon -

[ddlemon@outlook.com](mailto:ddlemon@outlook.com)



Passcode: 676558  
Dial In: +17193594580

We will hold the election the officers for 2024/2025 during the Convention. YOU

CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE --- if you get involved. Remember all the positions are VOLUNTEER and none of them are full-time positions. We need YOU to strengthen and grow the Department.



I look forward to seeing you in Williams physically or on our Zoom

call. If you are traveling for fun, business, or just going back to your “other home,” be SAFE.

Larry Leighton,  
Department Adjutant

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



**Our May meeting will be May 18<sup>th</sup>, NOT May 11<sup>th</sup>**, to avoid the conflict with the Department Convention on May 11<sup>th</sup>. We'll meet at the same time in the **Sands Chevrolet training room**.

Check our website if you need directions or need to attend via Zoom.

We will **NOT be going “dark” in June this summer**. We will meet at our normal time and place on Jun 8<sup>th</sup>. We will not have a meeting in July or August.

**Chapter Patriot of the Year for 2023/2024** is **Patriot James Starkman**, our Senior Vice Commander. **Chapter Finance Officer Ron Capek** and **Chapter Trustee Keith Gray** presented Jim with the award.

**Adjutant:** John Moore –  
[mophchapter442@comcast.net](mailto:mophchapter442@comcast.net)

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

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

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

**Meeting date:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday (no meetings February, 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.

**Department Jr. Vice-Commander John R. Moore** & Chapter 442 member represented MOPH at **TSGT Harold Seifried's** funeral at **Marana Memorial Veteran's Cemetery**. TSGT Seifried was a WWII MIA. His remains were recently recovered and identified. Fort Huachuca's funeral detail did an excellent job with the ceremony. It was nice closure for the nephew and nieces in attendance.



*Ft Huachuca Funeral Detail*



*TSGT Seifried's nephew accepts the flag.*



*Patriot Capek, Patriot Starkman, & Patriot Gray*

We presented ROTC/JROTC awards during the month. **Patriot Eldon Meade** presented **Cadet Christopher Pickens** of Dysart High School JROTC with the MOPH JRTOC Leadership Award.



*Patriot Meade & Cadet Pickens*

Chapter officers were installed at our Mar meeting and are (L to R) **John Ballenger, Jr Vice;** **Ron Capek, Finance;** **Jim Starkman, Sr Vice;** **John Blehm, Chaplain;** **Jimi Sallmen, Trustee;** **Cheryl Packham, Trustee;** and **Larry Leighton** (on the Zoom screen), Commander.



*Newly installed Chapter 691 Officers*

**Patriot Cody Phipps** was elected as the chapter's **Jr. Vice-Commander** at our March meeting. Patriot Phipps was sworn in by **Dept Jr. Vice-Commander John R. Moore**



*Patriot Phipps & Patriot Moore*

**Patriot Jim Zimmerman**, Ft Lowell Chapter 442, presents the Military Order of the Purple Heart Leadership Award to **Cadet LT Athena Faith Andres** at the Nogales High School (Nogales, AZ) JROTC awards ceremony.



*Patriot Zimmerman & Cadet Andres*

**Patriot John Grand** presented the Military Order of the Purple Heart Leadership award to **Cadet**



Remember, if you have not 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 am a good listener (623-776-5443).

Stay safe and I hope to see you at the meeting on May 18<sup>th</sup>.

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: John Ballenger Jr.

[ejballenjer22@msm.com](mailto:ejballenjer22@msm.com)

Chaplain: John Blehm (623-628-6330)

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 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

### 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

[kings6@live.com](mailto:kings6@live.com)

**Adjutant:** Sandra King [kings6@live.com](mailto:kings6@live.com)

**Antonia Ortiz** at **Cienega High School**.  
Congratulations Antonia!



*Patriot Grand & Cadet Ortiz*

**Patriot Dave Bertagnoli & wife Cheri** attended the **University of Arizona Air Force ROTC** formal dining in and presented **Cadet Kevin Lewis** with the MOPH Leadership Award. Congratulations Kevin!



*Patriot Bertagnoli & Cadet Lewis*



*Patriot Bertagnoli & Cheri*



**Meeting date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month.  
**Meeting time:** 10:00 AM  
**Meeting location:** Mesa Buckhorn Elk Lodge #2656 at 6718 E Avalon St, Mesa, AZ 85205

It is getting to that time of year, where we start finding sponsors for the **Wreaths Across America Remembrance Day**, which will be held this year on December 14, 2024, at 9:30am at the **Mountain View Cemetery**. We had about 600 sponsors (you) and had Bashas with the Donuts, Coffee by Starbucks and Texas Roadhouse fed us a delicious BBQ sandwich after the wreath laying. This year, am pleased to say that Texas Roadhouse will be



doing this again. So please when you do stop in, tell James or Kari to thank you for doing this. Many of you came to this honorable day last year and I thank all of you in sponsoring Wreaths as well as volunteering not only preparing the day before but helping teach our youth what this means

and were there the following month to clean up the cemetery.

Many of you participated in the BOGO sponsorship in January. This helped us quite a bit as there are 2300 interred Veterans in this cemetery this year. If you know of any volunteers/sponsors who would like to help with sponsoring a wreath for \$17 or would like to sign up to be a volunteer, please email me at [nfass@hotmail.com](mailto:nfass@hotmail.com); If you or anyone would like to sponsor a wreath, please either go online at [www.wreathscrossamerica.org/az0190p](http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/az0190p) or send in a check payable to Wreaths Across America to **Nancy Fassbender** 4657 S Desert Dawn Dr Gold Canyon, AZ 85118.

This year, we will be at the **Memorial Day Event at Mountain View Cemetery** 7900 E Main, Mesa, AZ. This will be on May 27, 2024, at 9:00am. This is another special honorable event. Please come out and give honor to our fallen veterans. Please stop by our table and say hi! Thank you so much for your participation. Without you, our Veterans would not

**Patriot Dave Bertagnoli** presented the Military Order of the Purple Heart Leadership award to **Cadet Erin Posey** at **Tombstone High School**. Congratulations Erin!



*Patriot Bertagnoli & Cadet Posey*

**Patriot Danny Lemon** presents the Military Order of the Purple Heart Leadership Award to **Cadet Aiden Fordyce** at the **University of Arizona Army ROTC** awards ceremony. Congratulations Aiden!



*Patriot Lemon & Cadet Fordyce*

**Patriot Jim Zimmerman**, Ft Lowell Chapter 442, presents the Military Order of the Purple Heart Leadership Award to **Cadet Adrian Ochoa** at the **Cholla High School JROTC** awards ceremony. Congratulations Adrian!

*Photo next page*

be recognized, and our youth would not understand what the cost of freedom entails. Nancy was interviewed by the Wreaths Across America radio station. Yes, they have their own station! **If you would like to listen to the interview, go to:** <https://on.soundcloud.com/dMw6R39oQRZsXJk87>

Nancy Fassbender  
Honorary Member

Chapter 2560 held a spring social. It was an opportunity to get together with our part-time residents leaving for better weather. A great time was had by all. Travel safely back to the Northern environs.



A surprise birthday party was held for **Patriot Chuck Byers** for his decades of service to the Veterans community: a Silver Star recipient for his actions as a medic in Vietnam with the call sign Big Band-Aid to his life post military as Rep Lesko's Veteran rep and involvement in a plethora of veteran groups. Thanks to all to attended. Chuck was surprised due to all who kept it secret and to his wife Sherry's great work in motivating him to show up at a certain time.







*Cadet Ochoa & Patriot Zimmerman*

**PGA HOPE Tucson - Session 2 starts May 10th:** PGA HOPE is the flagship military program of the PGA of America. PGA HOPE is designed to introduce golf to Veterans and Active-Duty Military to support their social, emotional, and physical well-being.

<https://www.pga.com/thin.../events/pga-hope-tucson-session-2>



**PGA HOPE Tucson - Session 2**


PGA HOPE is the flagship military program of the PGA of America. PGA HOPE is designed to introduce golf to Veterans and Active Duty Military to support their social, emotional, and physical well being.

Join PGA HOPE alongside your fellow Veterans and Servicemembers. PGA HOPE has served thousands of Veterans and Servicemembers across the United States through one of our 300+ locations.

This introductory program is designed to welcome those of all ages, branches and eras of service, genders, and abilities to the golf course and share in camaraderie and fun together as a group. During this session you will learn the basics from grip to 9 holes of golf from PGA and LPGA Professionals.

- No golf equipment is required. If you do have clubs and/or any specialty equipment, please bring them with you.
- No prior golf experience necessary
- No VA disability rating required
- Veterans do not have to have combat or deployments in order to participate
- All expenses associated with PGA HOPE are covered

**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](mailto:juggy64@aol.com)



**Honorary Chapter Member Nancy Fassbender** is also with the USA Vietnam War Commemoration Commission. She has done over 150 ceremonies and traveled not only around Arizona but in other states. **On Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup> National Vietnam War Veteran Day** she was invited to be in Washington DC and asked to invite **3 Vietnam Veterans** from the area who were involved in the community. She invited **Patriot Michael Overmeyer, Commander of Chapter 2560**, Frank White, former VFW 7968 Commander, and Phillip Todd, They represented Arizona were in the ceremony at the Vietnam Memorial Wall. Each was assigned a military escort for the ceremony. All of us were so honored to be doing this. I am still flying off the ceiling. A video of the ceremony is at this [link](#).



*Nancy and SP4 Bethea*

**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** – Contact Chapter

**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. Chapter 793 supports the Northern Arizona Stand Downs in several Northern Arizona communities. You are always welcome to join us!

Roger Ely  
Commander

The **High-Country Stand-Down** will be May 15<sup>th</sup> at the Flagstaff Armory.

Chapter Commander **Roger Ely** attended the **Missing in America Project** burial at **Camp Navajo Memorial Cemetery** on April 18<sup>th</sup> as 10 previously unclaimed remains of veterans were laid to rest.



*Michael Overmeyer, Frank White, Nancy Fassbender & Phillip Todd*

### [Chapter 472 –Mesa, AZ](#)



Cdr: Jason Duren

[jason@cidercorpsaz.com](mailto:jason@cidercorpsaz.com)

Sr. Vice-Cdr: Ramiero Del Rio (602) 818-0796

Finance: James Pomush

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

Adjutant: Stephan Bobby

[veteranairborne@yahoo.com](mailto:veteranairborne@yahoo.com)

Chaplain: Ignacio Rivera

480-926-2278



**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

Congratulations to **Patriot Jason Duren**, the newly elected Commander 2024/2025 for Chapter 472.

**Patriot Stephan Bobby**, Chapter 472 oversees the **Purple Heart Memorial Brick Program** for the Department. 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**



The Moving Wall will be at Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort May 30<sup>th</sup> to June 3<sup>rd</sup>.



Every 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month, 10:00am to 3:00pm the Flagstaff Veterans CBOC will have a VA representative to help with various VA issues and help file disability claims.

Bringing VA Benefits to you

**Veteran Benefits Services**

Speak with a VA representative, get answers to VA disability compensation/pension claim and benefit questions, and file your disability claim.

Location: Flagstaff Veterans CBOC  
1300 West University Ave. Ste 200  
Flagstaff, AZ 86001

When: Every 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month  
10:00am – 3:00pm  
Beginning: March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024

### Department Challenge Coins

Coins are available from the Chapters. They cost \$20 and the Chapters net \$10 for each coin they sell. Chapters have very few left in stock. The department is ordering another 200 coins.



### The Million Veteran Program

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 ORDER FORM](#)

### 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](mailto:treasurer@mophfund.org)  
844-MOPHFUND (667-4386)

### 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





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/My VA](#)

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.

### [AZ Veterans Stand-Down Alliance](#)



- [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

### [National Memorial Day Concert](#)

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.

### [Purple Heart Scholarships](#)



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

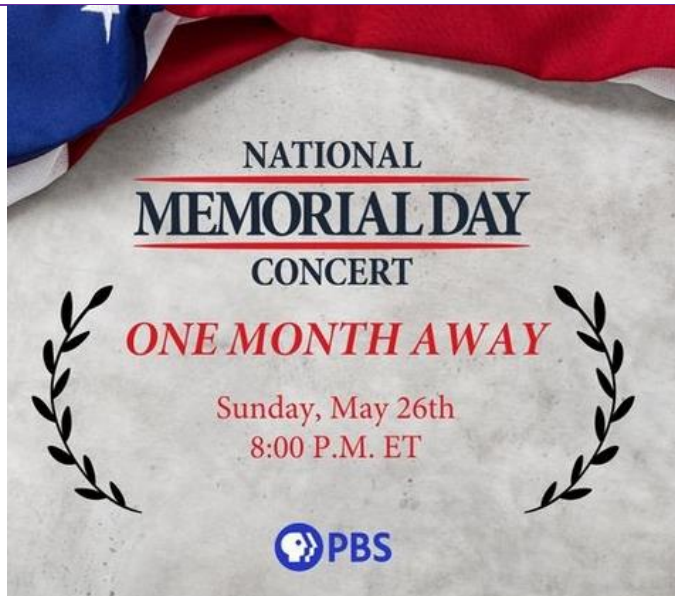
### [Purple Heart Combat Wounded Veterans of AZ](#)

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](#)



### [Bills in Congress](#)

**The Stuck-On Hold Act (H.R. 6656)** would reduce wait times for veterans making phone calls to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The bill would require the VA’s telephone call line to include an automated response system that would do two things: 1) advise the caller of the anticipated wait time and 2) offer the caller the ability to receive a callback if the wait time is excessive. The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) has 992,344 pending claims. One claim generates approximately eight separate contacts to the call



The National Memorial Day Concert information or live stream at this link: <https://www.pbs.org>

### 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](http://www.campcorral.org) for more info.

**2024 Summer Camp DATES & LOCATIONS**

Find out how we're more than a camp.

Applications for 2024 Summer Camp open **January 17, 2024!** Keep this card as a handy reminder OR pass it along to a military-connected family who would benefit from Camp Corral's programs.

APPLICATION DATE  
**January 17, 2024**

**★ CAMP ★  
CORRAL**

Strengthening America's military families one child at a time.

Find more information at [www.campcorral.org](http://www.campcorral.org)

Combined Federal Campaign #84788

centers. This means that VA could expect eight million calls this year. Veterans are having to wait on the phone for an extended period of time to receive assistance or the latest information about their claims or appeals.

We ask you to contact your Representative and urge them to co-sponsor and support H.R. 6656.

**H.R. 5530, the VA Emergency Transportation Access Act**, would limit the VA's ability to change payment rates for transporting veterans and eligible individuals on specialized transportation modes. Government reimbursement rates for certain types of highly specialized emergency transportation have been significantly lower than the true costs of providing such services. The VA finalized a proposed rule change to cut its reimbursement rate for emergency air medical transportation. During health emergencies, this reduction could put an estimated 4.7 million veterans living in rural and remote communities, who already struggle to get reliable access to health care, at greater risk. Contact your representative and urge them to co-sponsor and support H.R. 5530, the VA Emergency Transportation Access Act.

**H.R. 6452, the Veterans Scam and Fraud Evasion Act, or the VSAFE Act**, is legislation that would establish a Veterans Scam and Fraud Evasion Officer in the Department of Veterans Affairs. Over 74,000 military retirees and veterans reported instances of fraud or identity theft last year, resulting in a loss of \$350 million in earned benefits. The VSAFE Act aims to provide our nation's veterans with consistent guidance on how to identify, report, and avoid fraud and scam attempts. Additionally, this bill promotes identity theft resources, calls on the VA to develop training plans to effectively field fraud and scam inquiries, and fosters coordination with other federal departments and agencies.

Please contact your Representative and urge them to co-sponsor and support the VSAFE Act—H.R. 6452.

**H.R. 5247, the Expedited Hiring for VA Trained Psychiatrists Act of 2023**, aims to reduce wait times for veterans seeking mental health care by allowing the VA to establish a fast-track process for hiring psychiatrists. The National Center for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) noted in 2023, that PTSD is more common among veterans than

## The Purple Heart Hall of Honor

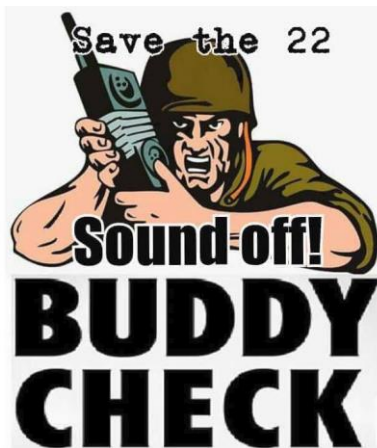
Add your story to the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor. Enroll at the url below:  
<https://www.thepurpleheart.com/enrollment/>



National Purple Heart  
Hall of Honor

## Buddy Checks!

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



## Recipe of the Month



*US Army SOS*

- 1 lb ground beef
- 2 Tablespoon butter
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1 cube beef bouillon

civilians. At some point in their life, 7% will have PTSD. In 2021, 6,392 veterans died by suicide. Many veterans struggle to get timely mental health services they need and deserve. Recruiting and hiring mental health specialists is challenging, which hinders VA's ability to support the growing number of veterans seeking help. More than half of VA's 139 medical facilities faced a severe shortage of psychiatrists.

Please contact your representatives and urge them to co-sponsor and support H.R. 5247.

**H.R. 7777 and S. 4047, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) Act of 2024:** This bill would increase VA compensation benefit rates for veterans and those in receipt of Dependents Indemnity Compensation (DIC). Without annual COLAs, many disabled veterans may not be able to maintain the quality of life they deserve. We must ensure that benefits keep pace for the many veterans and survivors who are on fixed incomes and rely on their compensation payments for basic necessities.

Please contact your Senators and Representative and urge them to co-sponsor & support the Veterans' Compensation COLA Act of 2024.



The National Convention will be held in **Orlando, FL** this year from **July 15-18<sup>th</sup>**. Hotel information is

3/4 teaspoon salt  
pepper to taste  
2 1/4 cups milk  
1/4 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

Brown beef in a large skillet over medium-high heat, breaking up the meat as it cooks. Drain excess fat and set beef aside. Melt butter in skillet over medium heat. Slowly add the flour, stirring constantly, to form a brown roux. Add the bouillon. Gradually stir in the milk and Worcestershire sauce, mixing well. Add the cooked ground beef, salt, and pepper. Bring to a simmer, stirring constantly. Serve hot over buttered toast.

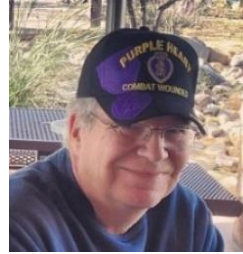


available on the [National website](#) or the Department of [Florida website](#).

---

---

### 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 news information & photos to us by the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month.

John R. Moore  
Jr. Vice-Commander