



March 2026

Volume 6 Issue 7

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER
Patriot Michael Smaydy

Greetings Patriots,



Mike Smaydy

As you read this, we will be in the final month before the Department Convention on May 2nd. The Convention was changed to North Phoenix just off Interstate 17 to have it more centrally located for all Patriots that have a desire to attend. I encourage every member to try and attend not just officers in a chapter. This is where we make the decisions for the coming year and elect your Department officers. There are also numerous appointments for Department Positions to be made. If you are interested in holding any position whether elected or appointed, we can surely use your help. One of the goals this year is to have all positions filled so you will have a contact for your interests. If you are interested in a position but don't know what it entails, reach out to me or any officer and will help explain what the position entails.

By now the Chapters should have had their elections or have them scheduled. Congratulations to all the newly elected officers and appointments. The Department is here to aid and assist you in any way possible. Please reach out to us if you have any questions.

We had four chapters submit entries for Patriot of the Year. Their resumes were submitted to the Patriot of the Year committee consisting of Past Department Commanders. The winner selected, who will be announced at the Department Convention, has been forwarded to the Region Commander as required in the National By-Laws. My thanks to the committee for doing a difficult job in picking a winner.

Once again, I would like to remind everyone that this is your Department and your Chapters. We need your input if we are to be successful.

Remember to wear your Purple Heart hats and apparel in public so we can receive as much exposure as possible and spread the word about us.

Respectfully yours in Patriotism,

Michael J. Smaydy
Commander
Department of Arizona
Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH) of the U.S.A., Inc
(928)445-3792

DEPARTMENT SR. VICE-COMMANDER
Patriot John Moore



John Moore

WARRIORS HONOR CRUISE: Congratulations to **Patriot John Grand**. John applied for the free cruise offered to Purple Heart recipients and was accepted for the October 2026 cruise. [Warrior Honor Cruise](#) is a non-profit that gifts free cruises to Purple Heart recipients. John, enjoy your Caribbean cruise! Get on board for next year at the link above.

PURPLE HEART CHAPTER CAP: The Military Order of the Purple Heart has its own uniform cap. This distinctive purple military style cap is the basic item of the Military Order of the Purple Heart uniform. Chapter caps are purple with white piping and white lettering. The chapter number and the words "Life Member" may be



added with white letters as appropriate. Department and chapter officers should have the Order's official headgear. Order for \$29.95 at [Keystone Uniform Cap](#). Get yours before the convention.

NATIONAL CONVENTION: The 2026 National Convention will be in New Bern NC. The Dates are July 13th -July 17, 2025

To register use this

link: <https://www.purpleheart.org/NationalConvention>

Departments & Chapters If you would like to donate or if you know of an organization that is willing to be a sponsor please use this link:

<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/sponsor-93rd-annual-national-convention?>



DEPARTMENT CALENDAR: Event details are at other locations in the newsletter. Not all events are listed here. The full calendar is online at this [link](#).

- April 4 > Nighthawk Ceremony Tucson
- April 4 > Tillman Honor Run Flagstaff
- April 7 > Chapter 691 Meeting Surprise, AZ
- April 9 > Former POW Recognition Day
- April 9/12 > Wall that Heals Surprise, AZ
- April 10 > Billy Weldon Ceremony Flagstaff
- April 14 > Air Force Reserve Birthday
- April 20 > Chapter 442 Meeting Tucson
- April 22 > Chapter 442 Luncheon Tucson
- April 23 > Army Reserve Birthday
- April 23/24 > Page StandDown
- April 30 > Chapter 472 Meeting Mesa, AZ

Yours in Patriotism
John R. Moore
Sr. Vice-Cdr

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT
Patriot Larry Leighton

GREETINGS PATRIOTS,



Larry Leighton

Congratulations to all the new and re-elected and appointed officers and committee members! You are in the envious position of making the 2026-2027 year exciting and better for our Patriots and Families and all Veterans and families around the State.

Patriot of the Week! In case you missed it in the last issue, the Department wants to learn more about our members. We'd like to hear from you! While the program is called "Patriot of the Week", there is no actual limit on the number of entries and no selection process. Every story submitted, preferably with your picture, will be greatly appreciated and posted to our Department communication media.

If you have any questions or just ready to tell us about yourself, contact me at 623-776-5443 or send your story to andjutant.mophaz@gmail.com.

Reminder - Events! We try to keep the Department Calendar (<https://www.mophaz.org/events>) up to date with events that may be of interest to the members but I know we often miss some or get them posted late. If you know of any upcoming events you think might be pertinent, send me the essential details (fliers are acceptable) and we'll try to let the Department know and post them to the calendar. Many chapters are going to be "dark" over the summer months but that does not mean we truly hibernate. The Purple Heart Artery Newsletter and Purple Heart Magazine will still be published. Let us know what you are doing or planning so we can share with fellow Patriots.

Life Member Rebates will be based on accurate personal contact information on the National roster. In addition to being the way you can be contacted and hear about what is going on, the information is also used to verify our status as a Veteran Organization (501.c.19). When the headquarters is audited, they check facts like how many members are in each age group, how many served in each service, and how many care enough about the Order to keep their personal profiles up to date. If you need help checking or updating YOUR profile, contact your chapter adjutant or, if you are a member at large, contact me and I'll give you a hand.

Department Convention details are included elsewhere in this newsletter but I wanted to take this opportunity to invite you to step up and become a Department Officer or Member of a committee. **We always need new and excited Patriots and Associate Members to guide the Department to new heights!**

Remember our state is known for being hot. We have already broken many temperature records in March and no one knows if that signals a generally hotter summer or not, but regardless of the records, it is up to you to be aware of heat related injuries and to take action to prevent them for yourself, your family, and your friends. There are lots of resouces on the internet you can use to learn about the types and symptoms heat related injuries as well as treatments. One of those sites is <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/heat-stress/about/illnesses.html>

Be SAFE! Be as HEALTHY as you can! Have FUN! Call a Veteran today!

PS. I hope to see all of you at the Convention, either in person or on Zoom.

Yours in Patriotism

Larry Leighton
Adjutant

adjutant.mophaz@gmail.com

AMERICANISM OFFICER
William Hunker

Americanism in Action: Our Cadets Need Us There



William Hunker

As this school year begins to close soon, our Chapter Americanism Officers have been working at full speed across Arizona. Over these last few weeks, ceremony dates, times, and cadet names have continued to come in, and the pace has not slowed. That means our mission is reaching one of its most important moments, “Award Season” mid-April to end of May. Now is the time for Patriot Volunteers to step forward and stand with us as we recognize these outstanding young men and women who have chosen service, discipline, leadership, and love of country.

These award ceremonies are about far more than presenting a medal or certificate. They are a visible reminder that patriotism is still alive, that character still matters, and that the next generation is watching to see whether we will show up for them. Every time a Chapter member, Patriot Volunteer, or supporter attends one of these ceremonies, it sends a message to a cadet that their effort matters, their sacrifice matters, and their commitment to our Nation is seen. We need more volunteers willing to attend, represent the Military Order of the Purple Heart with pride, and help us honor these cadets in the way they deserve.

Recent ROTC news reminds us exactly why this work matters. At Old Dominion University, Army ROTC cadets were recognized after helping stop the gunman who attacked their classroom on March 12, 2026. Lt. Col. Brandon A. Shah, who led the university’s ROTC program, was killed in that attack. In a private ceremony held March 22 and publicly reported March 24, Secretary of the Army Dan Driscoll and Sergeant Major of the Army Michael Weimer awarded eight Meritorious Service Medals and two Purple Hearts to the cadets involved. Their courage under fire prevented even greater loss of life and stands as a powerful example of the kind of leadership and selfless service our cadet programs help build.



Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael R. Weimer and Army Secretary Dan Driscoll present awards to Old Dominion University Army ROTC cadets, acknowledging their bravery and sacrifice during a classroom shooting earlier in the month.

That is why your presence matters so much. The cadets we honor today are tomorrow’s leaders, officers, public servants, and defenders of this Nation. They deserve to see that patriots are still willing to stand beside them.

Please contact your local Chapter Commander and let them know you are ready to help. Volunteers are always welcome, and right now they are greatly needed. Let us finish this school season strong by showing up, standing together, honoring the very best among our youth. Thank you for your continued service and dedication to Americanism.

Respectfully,
REV. SFC (RET) William E. Hunker (Will)

Department Americanism JROTC/ROTC Officer
Email: hunkermoph@icloud.com
Phone: 623-688-3142

DEPARTMENT OFFICERS

ELECTED OFFICERS: These are the Department Officers for the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

- Commander - **Mike Smaydy** 928.445.3792; michaelism@hotmail.com
- Senior Vice Commander - **John Moore** 520.744.9768; mophchapter442@comcast.net
- Finance Officer – **Jim Starkman** 708.638.2321; karen4357@att.net
- Inspector – **Stephan Bobby** 480.266.9268; veteranairborne@yahoo.com
Sergeant At Arms – **John Ballenger** 602.245.0437; cjballenger22@msn.com

APPOINTED OFFICERS:

- Adjutant - **Larry Leighton** 623.776.5443; adjutant.mophaz@gmail.com
- Americanism Officer - **Will Hunker** 910.644.7742; william.hunker@icloud.com

VACANT POSITIONS: If you would like to fill one of these positions let us know.

- Junior Vice Commander - elected
- Chaplain - appointed
- Judge Advocate - elected
- Legislative Officer – appointed

DEPARTMENT CONVENTION – MAY 2, 2026

DEPARTMENT CONVENTION REMINDER:

The Department Convention will now be held in **Phoenix instead of Tucson**. The date has not changed, it is still **Saturday, May 2nd**.

It will be held at the [Courtyard Phoenix North/Happy Valley](#) (2029 W Whispering Wind Dr, Phoenix, AZ 85085).

The meeting is scheduled for 0900 - 1630. The Department will provide breakfast and lunch. The convention schedule is being finalized and will be sent out soon.

There will be no-host social on Friday, May 1st, in the evening between 1700 and 2000 in the hotel's restaurant/Bistro area.

For those wanting to stay at the hotel on Friday and/or Saturday, please use the link below to reserve your room at our group rate. We have a small block of rooms on hold. **Any rooms not booked by April 6th will be released** to the public, but our rate will still be good after that date based on availability. (<https://app.marriott.com/reslink?id=1773770812402&key=GRP&app=resvlink>)

The total room price is \$129 x 13.07% tax rate= \$145.86. There are no additional resort fees, parking fees, etc. Service dogs are allowed. Anyone traveling 50 miles or more from home to the convention will be reimbursed at the current per diem rate of \$0.30/mile and for one night's lodging.

For Patriots and Associate Members who are not able to attend the Convention in person, here's the zoom information.

Join Convention Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84228429701?pwd=bXY1QlJSODBKcC9qMFp2RDNBbk02dz09>

Meeting ID: 842 2842 9701

Passcode: 879117

Dial in: 253-215-8782



FORT LOWELL CHAPTER 442 – TUCSON, AZ
Commander Cody Phipps

Patriots of Chapter 442,

Let me first thank our Vietnam Veterans and say, Welcome Home. America is grateful for your service and sacrifice. I am grateful for your mentorship and guidance as we serve Veterans and their families.



Cody Phipps

March 29th was National Vietnam War Veterans Day. We gather each year to recognize the brave men and women of the Vietnam War. I realize America is a very different place now than it was 50 years ago. I wasn't around back then to say it, but I'll say it now. Welcome Home and thank you. The chapter placed a wreath at the Tucson Vietnam Veteran War Memorial.

Chapter 442 continues to do what we are good at, which is helping Veterans. From financial crises like rent, and emergency shelter for a Veteran whose home flooded. We continue to partner with National Community Health Partners to grow our Veteran Empowerment Plan to combat Veteran Suicide. We are driving on and continuing the mission of the Military Order of the Purple Heart.

This month we helped get a veteran into housing for two nights while her place was being repaired. We assisted another veteran with rent/utilities so he could stay in his home.

Join us for our chapter meeting on April 20th and at our monthly Purple Heart Luncheon on April 22nd.

Thank you from my heart for your service and for your continued service to our Nation's Veterans.

Yours in Patriotism,
Cody Phipps
Commander

Commander Cody Phipps –

cody.phipps@outlook.com

Sr. Vice-Cdr Dave Bertagnoli – dbertagnoli@Q.com

Jr. Vice-Cdr: Mike Dyer – mrdyer@comcast.net

Chaplain: Danny Lemon – ddlemon@outlook.com

Adjutant: John Moore –

mophchapter442@comcast.net

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

Facebook: [Chapter 442 Facebook Page](#)

Donate online: [Donations Appreciated](#)

BINGO AT TUCSON VA Hospital: Ft. Lowell Chapter 442 hosted bingo for the patients at the Tucson VA

Meeting date: 3rd 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.

NATIONAL VIETNAM VETERANS DAY: Vietnam Veterans Day, March 29 is a day Chapter 442 came together to remember and honor those who bravely fought for our country in the Vietnam War. When it wasn't always the popular thing to do, these warriors answered their nations call to duty.

Hospital March 28. Thank you to **Patriot Dave Bertagnoli, Patriot Cody Phipps, & Patriot Danny Lemon**, who conducted bingo and to volunteers **Cherie Stallman, Susan-Lea Campbell Skuhr, & Sam Phipps**, who helped the patients. Thank you to the Canyon Del Oro Bible Church quilting group for the lovely handmade quilts we raffle off each month. This month's winner was **Mr. Lopez, a 100-year-old World War 2 Veteran**.



Patriot Lemon, Cdr Phipps, Susan-lea Skuhr, Cherie Stallman, & Patriot Bertagnoli



Susan-Lea with 100 yr old Mr. Lopez who won the grand prize

MONTHLY PURPLE HEART LUNCHEON: Chapter 442 will hold its monthly **Purple Heart luncheon on April 22nd** at noon at the Old Father Inn at 4080 W Ina Rd, Tucson, AZ 85741 This is near I10 & Ina Rd.

NATIONAL COMMUNITY HEALTH PARTNERS NEWSLETTER: Fort Lowell Chapter 442 was featured in the National Community Health Partners March newsletter. Their **Best is Yet to**

Fort Lowell Chapter 442 helped honor our Vietnam Veterans at the **Tucson's Vietnam Veterans Day Ceremony at Kino Veterans Memorial Park**. The names of Pima County's 107 Vietnam fallen were read and wreath presented in their honor. Vietnam Veterans, America is grateful for your sacrifice every day.



Patriot Zimmerman reads names of Pima Count's Vietnam Fallen



Chapter 442's Wreath



Chapter Members Render Honors

Come program has so much outstanding suicide prevention information. Thank you again Samantha, Kathi and Hayley for the QPR training and for all you do for Veterans.

Thank you to MOPH Chapter 442!



Last month our BYTC program was honored to provide a QPR Gatekeeper suicide prevention training to American Legion Post 132 and The Military Order of the Purple Heart Fort Lowell Chapter 442. Cody Phipps, Commander of the MOPH Chapter 442, then presented our Health Educator-Trainer Samantha Bunker with a certificate of appreciation, challenge coins and a merit badge and our Case Managers Kathi Finrock and Hayley Reyes with challenge coins and merit badges.

The work we do matters but we cannot do it alone. Partnerships allow us the opportunity to provide life saving support for those in need and cast a wider net for those struggling with their mental health.

Thank you to Commander Cody Phipps and MOPH Chapter 442 for hosting our team and for the work you do in creating a safe and welcoming environment for Veterans struggling with their mental health.

1 VETERAN FOUNDATION: On April 18, 2026, we're hosting a Meet & Greet with Veteran + Service Dog Teams at Frank and Teresa's Anchor Bar in Tucson. This event is an opportunity to meet some of our local veterans and their incredible service dogs, hear their stories, and learn how these partnerships help veterans navigate the invisible battles they face every day.

MEET & GREET
with Veterans and Service Dogs

APR 18TH
2:00PM - 6:00PM
ANCHOR BAR
7080 E 22nd St #104, Tucson, AZ

Together, we can change and save lives!

Meet local veterans and their incredible service dogs, hear their stories, and learn how these life-changing partnerships help veterans navigate invisible battles.

Enjoy great food and good company while supporting a meaningful cause.

All proceeds from this event will benefit 1 Veteran Foundation and their "Save a Pet, Save a Vet" Program.



Patriot Bertagnoli, Patriot Zimmerman, Patriot Grand, Cdr Phipps, & Sam Phipps




Cdr Phipps

CHAPTER ELECTIONS: Elections were held at the March meeting. The elected officers are Cdr is Patriot Cody Phipps, Sr Vice-Cdr is Patriot David Bertagnoli, Jr. Vice-Cdr is Patriot Mike Dyer, Finance Officer is Patriot James Zimmerman, Sgt-at-Arms is Patriot Roger Gilbert. Trustees are Patriot John Grand & Patriot Fred Lohman. Patriot John Moore was appointed as the adjutant & Patriot Danny Lemon was appointed as the chaplain.

SUICIDE PREVENTION TRAINING: Chapter 442's Suicide Prevention Class from the SGT Fox Foundation was held on Feb 25th. About 2 dozen members of Chapter 442 and American Legion Post 132 attended this valuable training.. The training focused on using the QPR Gatekeeper Model. Our goal was to equip Southern Arizona

NIGHTHAWK MEMORIAL SERVICE: The Nighthawk-72 Memorial Service in Marana, AZ on **April 4th at 10:00 AM**, is an annual ceremony honoring 19 U.S. Marines killed in an MV-22 Osprey aircraft crash during a training mission at Marana Regional Airport on April 8, 2000. Held at the **Nighthawk-72 Memorial Park (1700 W. Avra Valley Rd)**, the service features a wreath-laying, rifle salute, and taps. Fort Lowell Chapter 442 will place a wreath.

*Next Time You Hear Thunder In The Sky
Know It's 19 Marines Yelling
SEMPER PARITUS*



Please Come Out and Show Your Support!

Honoring The 19 Marines
Lost on April 8, 2000

26th Anniversary Memorial Service

April 4, 2026 • 10:00 a.m.
Marana Regional Airport Nighthawk-72 Memorial Park

Watch at home via livestream at Facebook.com/MCL1344
Contact Terry Byron 520-982-0023 • Nighthawk72MCL@hotmail.com
www.Nighthawk-72mcl.org




PURPLE HEART HONOR MISSION: Fort Lowell Chapter Member, **John Moore**, a three-time Purple Heart recipient, has been selected as **Arizona's representative** for the **2026 Purple Heart Patriot Project**. This event honors America's combat-wounded heroes and is organized by the National Purple Heart Honor Mission. Patriot Moore will participate in a multi-day tribute featuring visits to historic sites such as the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor. More information is available at this [link](#) and this [link](#).

(photo below)

Veterans with tools to recognize suicidal behaviors in our fellow veterans and refer our Brothers and Sisters in Arms to help. **Samantha Bunker** and her staff did an excellent job presenting the QPR training.



Cdr Phipps presents the trainers with Purple Heart Challenge Coins



Cdr Phipps presents Samantha Bunker with a Certificate of Appreciation.

SOLDIER'S BEST FRIEND: Soldier's Best Friend is set to open a new training facility in Tucson on May 1, expanding its services to veterans in Southern Arizona. Located at the Winterhaven Shopping Center on Fort Lowell Road and Country Club Road, the 1,788-square-foot facility will serve as a hub for veteran-dog pairing, training classes, community engagement, and outreach. The organization aims to enhance its support for veterans in Pima County by **providing greater access to its program, which pairs rescued dogs with veterans at no cost.** More information is available at this [link](#).



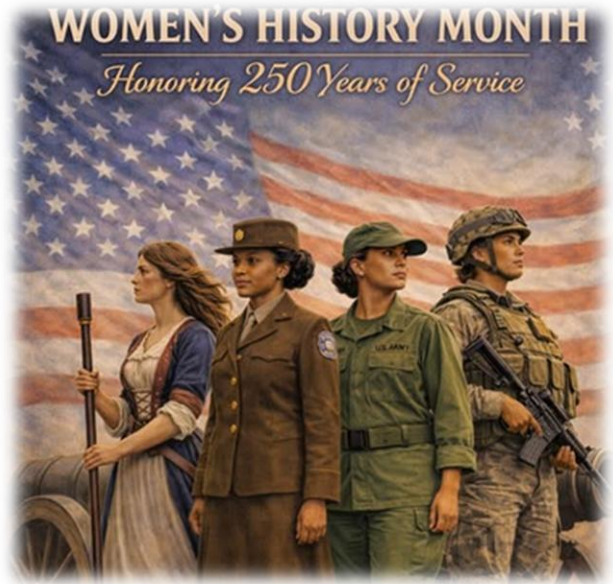
WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH: Thank you to all of our nation's women who have served or are



1st LT John Moore in Vietnam in 1968



...serving in the military and a special thank you to chapter members **Patriot Deidra Estrada, Patriot Angela Blue, & Patriot Mary Herrera** who have been awarded the **Purple Heart**.



TRI-CITIES CHAPTER 472 – MESA, AZ
Commander Stephan Bobby

Fellow Patriots,



Stephan Bobby

Welcome to Chapter 472. Our meetings are on the last Thursday of the month at 10:00 AM at the American Legion Post 26. Come and join us!

Commander: Stephan Bobby > veteranairborne@yahoo.com

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

Finance: James Pomush > landjpomush@gmail.com

Adjutant: Stephan Bobby > veteranairborne@yahoo.com

Sgt-At-Arms: Lorenzo Longoria > Longo1836@gmail.com

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

Meeting time: 10:00 AM

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

Yours in Patriotism
Stephan Bobby
Commander Chapter 472

PURPLE HEART BRICK PROGRAM: Patriot Stephan Bobby, Chapter 472 oversees the Purple Heart Memorial Brick Program for the Department. The



bricks are installed at the **Purple Heart Memorial at Wesley Bolin Plaza** at the state capital. **Three**

newly ordered bricks will be installed at the plaza on Purple Heart Day, August 7th. Order a 4" x 8" Purple Heart Brick 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
MOPH AZ PH Brick Coordinator
4543 E. County Down Dr.
Chandler, AZ 85249-7339
Download Order Form: [PH ORDER FORM](#)

MESA VET CENTER: Mesa Vet Center is located at 1303 South Longmore, Suite 5, Mesa, AZ 85202. The hours are 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM. Phone # is 480-610-6727.



Bataan Memorial Death March

CIDER CORPS: My buddy **Mark Hoerrmann** completed the Bataan Memorial Death March on March 21st. Mark is one of those guys who fully understands the weight, mentally and physically, of **what the Purple Heart means.** He brought our **Cider Corps Purple Heart** cider with him and



shared it with veterans along the way... and these photos say everything. The Bataan Death March isn't just history. It's sacrifice. It's suffering. It's resilience at a level most of us will never fully understand. And every year, men and women choose to honor it the hard way, by walking in their footsteps.

At Cider Corps, **Purple Heart isn't just a cider. It's a reminder.** A symbol of those who were wounded, those who carried out the fight, and those who never made it home.

Seeing it in the hands of these veterans after miles of grit, pain, and perseverance means more than words can capture.

This is why we do what we do. Drink great cider. Honor and great sacrifice. Cider Corps is owned by **Patriot Jason Duren** and his brother.



Bataan Memorial Death March

MICHAEL E. MAHONEY CHAPTER 691 – SURPRISE, AZ
Commander William Hunker



William Hunker

It is my honor and privilege to serve as the new Commander of Chapter 691, Military Order of the Purple Heart. I am deeply grateful for the trust placed in me, and I look forward to working alongside our members to strengthen our chapter through patriotism, service, and community involvement. As I begin this role, I also remain committed to my Department duties in Americanism, continuing efforts that support veterans, youth, and our nation's values. My vision for Chapter 691 is to build a chapter that is more involved, more united, and more visible in the community while honoring the sacrifice and legacy of all Purple Heart recipients. With the support of my wife of 20 years, Danielle P. Hunker, and our 14-year-old son, I remain dedicated to serving others and helping move this chapter forward with pride and purpose.

Thank you for your continued service and dedication to Americanism.

Respectfully,

REV. SFC (RET) William E. Hunker (Will)

Commander of Arizona Local Chapter #691 Military Order of the Purple Heart

E-mail: commander691moph@gmail.com

Phone: 623-688-3142

Cdr: William Hunker -

commander691moph@gmail.com

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

Jr. Vice-Cdr: Sal Salinas- salsalido@gmail.com

Chaplain: Kristy Gray – mrsklgray@icloud.com

Americanism Officer: Karen Starkman-

karen4357@att.net

Trustee: Keith Gray - Kjgray86@icloud.com

Sgt-at-Arms: John Ballenger -

cjballenger22@msn.com

THE WALL THAT HEALS: The Wall That Heals Tour is coming to Arizona. It will include a 75% size replica of the Vietnam Memorial located in Washington D.C. It is free to the public and will be at **Mark Coronado Park 15960 North Bullard Ave Surprise, AZ 85374**. It will open on April 9th, 2026, and be accessible 24 hours per day. It will close on April 12th at 2:00 pm when Taps is played for last. Follow this [link](#) for a complete breakdown of the weekend. If you ride a motorcycle, there will be an Escort Ride for the wall. If interested, please

Meeting date: 1st Tuesday

Meeting time: 10:00 AM

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

Note: Meetings will also be via [Zoom](#). Enter the meeting ID (ID: 815 5957 0914) and the password (328403). By phone, call 253-205-0468 and enter the id/password.

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

Facebook: [Chapter 691 Facebook](#)

HONOR FLIGHT ARIZONA:

Honor Flight gratefully continues the mission of taking WWII, Cold War, Korean War, and Vietnam War veterans who have served in the United States Armed Forces, to see their memorials in Washington D.C. at NO cost to the veteran. Go to <https://honorflightaz.org> for more information or watch this [presentation video](#).

contact Cecelia Covarrubio -
cecilia.covarrubio@surpriseaz.gov



VOA NORTHERN ROCKIES: VOA Northern Rockies is offering “FREE” Veteran “Moral Injury Retreats with dates such as: ‘June- 5-7, 12-14, 26-28: July- 24-26: Sept- 25-27 is a Women’s Only Weekend. Go to this link to apply or get more information.
<https://www.voanr.org/services/mi-retreats/>

LUKE AIR FORCE BASE AIRSHOW: Here are some pictures from the Luke Days Airshow by Karen Starkman. The Blue Angels were awesome. It sure was very very hot and dusty but the performances were wonderful!



Arizona Coalition for Military Families 2026 Statewide Symposium: April 15th and 16th, information available at this [link](#).



Veterans on Honor Flight trip to D.C.

LAKE PLEASANT CRUISE: Special Lake Pleasant Boat Cruise Open to ALL Veterans and their Families; Sponsored by American Legion Post 94 on May 24th. Boarding begins at 11:00 to 11:30 AM. Boat will sail at 11:35 AM and return at 1:00 PM. There is a no-host dinner at Dillion’s to follow. Hurry! There are only 79 seats left. Use this [link](#) to purchase tickets.



VA OUTREACH EVENTS: VA Outreach Events connects Veterans, service members, families, and communities. Discover resources, benefits, employment opportunities, and wellness programs designed for Veterans and caregivers. Together, we’re empowering Veterans, caregivers, service members, and families to thrive, building brighter futures and stronger communities. Go to this link to locate [Outreach Events](#).



DALE E. CRICK CHAPTER 793 – FLAGSTAFF, AZ
Commander Rodger Ely

Fellow Patriots,



Rodger Ely

Welcome to Chapter 793. Our chapter participates in patriotic and welfare activities throughout Northern Arizona. Chapter 793 supports Northern Arizona Stand Downs in several Northern Arizona communities. Several Northern Arizona communities became Purple Heart entities this past year. Thank you, Page Arizona, Tuba City Arizona, Nazlini Arizona, & White Cone, Arizona (Navajo Nation). In March, we participated in the Verde Valley Standdown.

You are always welcome to join us at our meetings or any of our activities!

Commander
Rodger Ely

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

Chaplain: Rupert Osequeda – rupert@swiftaz.net

Facebook: [Chapter 793 Facebook](#)

Next Meeting – contact the chapter

Meeting time: 11:30 AM

Meeting location: VFW Post 1709

409 W Santa Fe Ave, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

Meeting date: Bi-monthly on 4th Wednesday.

FLAGSTAFF VA CLINIC:

1300 West University Ave, Suite 200

Flagstaff, AZ 86001

Phone: 928-226-1056

Mental Health Phone: 928-445-4860, ext 7500

Website: [Flagstaff VA Clinic](#)

BOB STUMP VA MEDICAL CENTER:

500 Hwy 89 North

Prescott, AZ 86313

Phone: 928-445-4806

Mental Health Phone: 928-445-4860, ext 7500

Website: [Bob Stump VA Medical Center](#)

BILLY WELDON BUST CEREMONY: All chapter and community members are invited to the unveiling of the Patriot Billy Weldon Bronze Bust at

FACEBOOK: Facebook is the best place to find information on the chapter and stay current with our activities. Our Facebook page is at [Chapter 793 Facebook](#).

CHAPTER 793 PATRIOT OF THE YEAR: Patriot Dan Reich is the MOPH 793 Patriot of the Year. Dan was recognized by the chapter for his effort in supporting veterans and chapter activities. Patriot Reich has been nominated as a candidate for the Department Patriot of the Year. Good Luck, Dan!




Patriot Reich accepts POY award from Patriot Weldon

VERDE VALLEY STANDDOWN: Chapter 793 participated in the Verde Valley Standdown on March 28th.

Marshall Elementary School, 755 N. Bonito St., Flagstaff. Ceremony is at 8:30 AM on April 10th in the school's front courtyard. See flyer below for details.

Marshall Elementary Presents:

The unveiling of Mr. Billy's Bronze Bust



Presented by artist Neil Logan

All community members are invited to join us on Friday, April 10th from 8:30-9:00 a.m. in the front courtyard at Marshall School, 755 N. Bonito St., Flagstaff

The morning will include the National Anthem presented by Marshall's choir and guest speaker, Jake Bacon.



Patriot Weldon & daughter Amry

NORTHERN ARIZONA STANDDOWNS:

- Page StandDown**
Thursday & Friday, April 23-24, 2026
Page Elks Lodge 2498
- High Country StandDown**
Friday, May 15, 2026
ASVH-FLG Flagstaff, AZ



Billy Weldon and members of the Yavapai Apache Nation



Chapter 793 Patriots at the Verde Valley StandDown

FLAGSTAFF VETERANS VBOC: Flagstaff Veterans VBOC is held every **first Tuesday of the month, 10:00am to 3:00pm.** The VBOC will have a VA representative to help with various VA issues & 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.

Contact: 1-800-827-1000

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

When: Every 1st Tuesday of the month
1000 a.m. – 1400 p.m.
Beginning: October 1, 2025

TILLMAN HONOR RUN: The annual Tillman Honor Run will be held on April 4th at 10:00 AM at Ft Tuthill County Park in Flagstaff. The run benefits the Tillman Scholars program at Arizona State University. See flyer for details or scan the QR code for information/registration.

3. **Williams StandDown**
Friday, September 11, 2026
Williams Recreation Center, Williams, AZ.
4. **Twin Arrows StandDown**
Friday, October 2, 2026
Twin Arrows Navajo Resort, Flagstaff

PHYSICAL THERAPY AT NAVAHCS: Walk ins are available daily from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM.



SAME DAY PHYSICAL THERAPY

DON'T LET PAIN STOP YOU!

PROVIDING YOU THE RIGHT CARE WHEN YOU NEED IT MOST!

SAME DAY ACCESS TO CARE

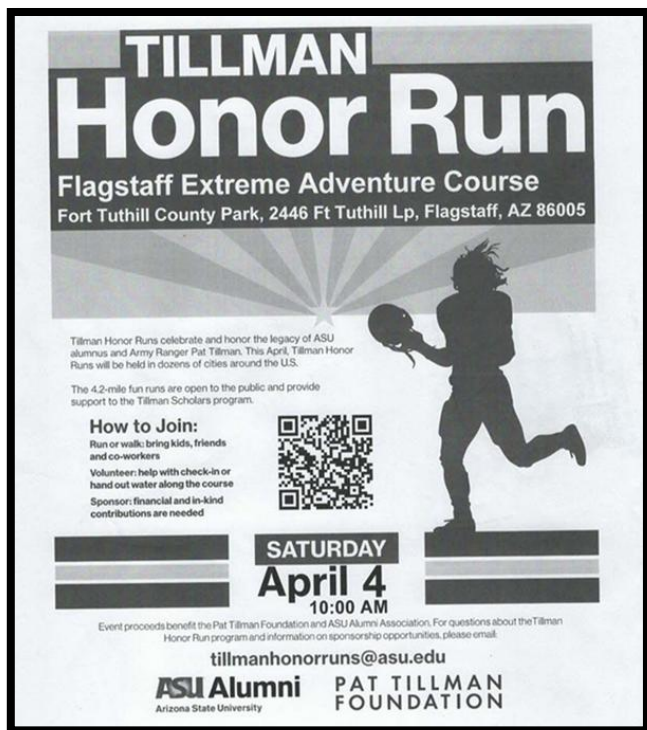
Walk in Hours
Subject to availability
Monday - Friday
08:00 AM - 15:00PM

CONTACT INFORMATION
928-445-4860 ext 6087
Northern Arizona Veterans Affairs
500 HWY 89 North
Prescott, AZ 86313
Walk-In Clinic Bldg 117 Room 102

HOW TO GET PHYSICAL THERAPY AT NAVAHCS
Check in building 117 (Cherokee entrance) Room 102
Be seen before or after your primary care visit.
Choose with your PACT team if PT is PACT or not.

PACT PT BEST SERVES PATIENTS WHO:

- Back and neck pain
- Joint pain
- Muscle strains
- Dizziness
- Mobility issues
- Falls
- Headaches
- Mobility equipment needs
- Recent D/C from SNF/Hospital



TILLMAN Honor Run

Flagstaff Extreme Adventure Course
Fort Tuthill County Park, 2446 Ft Tuthill Lp, Flagstaff, AZ 86005

Tillman Honor Runs celebrate and honor the legacy of ASU alumnus and Army Ranger Pat Tillman. This April, Tillman Honor Runs will be held in dozens of cities around the U.S.

The 4.2-mile fun runs are open to the public and provide support to the Tillman Scholars program.

How to Join:
Run or walk, bring kids, friends and co-workers
Volunteer: help with check-in or hand out water along the course
Sponsor: financial and in-kind contributions are needed

SATURDAY April 4 10:00 AM

Event proceeds benefit the Pat Tillman Foundation and ASU Alumni Association. For questions about the Tillman Honor Run program and information on sponsorship opportunities, please email: tillmanhonorruns@asu.edu

ASU Alumni PAT TILLMAN FOUNDATION
Arizona State University

CHAPTER 2560 – APACHE JUNCTION, AZ
Commander Alex Gualdoni



Alex Gualdoni

Cdr: Alex Gualdoni > alex.gualdoni84@gmail.com
Sr. Vice Cdr: Mike Overmeyer > moverme48@gmail.com
Jr. Vice Cdr: Chuck Byers > seagb@cox.net
Adjutant: Sandra King kingjs6@live.com
Chaplain: Frank Sonntag Jr. sfcfrank2003@yahoo.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

Yours in Patriotism

Alex Gualdoni
Commander Chapter 2560

NEW CHAPTER 2560 WEBSITE: We have a new website at 2560.mophaz.org. Make sure you bookmark the address in your web browser.

CHAPTER 2560 WEARS RED ON FRIDAYS: Patriots, including about a dozen Purple Heart recipients meet for **Wear Red at Friday's breakfast**. We wish you could have joined us to share the camaraderie of the Patriots attending the weekly Friday



Jewish War Veterans Coffee Drive: Chapter 2560 took part in Jewish War Veterans Post 619's coffee drive. The goal was to collect donations of coffee to support the US Vets transitional housing at their



assemblies. We look forward to your presence on Fridays as we send a shout out to America's deployed service members. A buffet breakfast is served beginning at 7:30

AM (\$12 pp + gratuity), and the program starts promptly at 8:15 AM. See you on Fridays!! Bring a friend. American Legion Post 27, 1018 S. Meridian Rd., Apache Junction, AZ.

Join us EVERY Friday for Breakfast at 7:30am to 8:15am.
Cost for breakfast is \$12.00 Meeting starts at 8:15am.

Place: American Legion Post #27
1018 S. Meridian Rd
Apache Junction, AZ 85120

We wear RED on Fridays to Remember Everyone Deployed
Everyone is invited. Veterans, Spouses, Patriots and Guests
No Membership required...

YouTube.com: EastValleyR.E.D.FridayPatriots

I WEAR RED
REMEMBER EVERYONE DEPLOYED
ON FRIDAYS



Phoenix location. That location serves 142 transitional veterans on a daily basis. Donations of coffee help mitigate one of their greatest expenses, as they have coffee available 24/7. Chapter 2560 donated 27 40 oz cans of coffee, enough for more than 10,000 6 oz cups. **Patriot Chuck Byers** and **Patriot Alex Gualdoni** delivered these cans on behalf of the Chapter to US Vets Executive Director Michelle Jameson and JWV Member Gabe Forsberg at Post 619's February 22, 2026, meeting. More than 380 cans of coffee were collected in total.



From L to R: Gabe Forsberg, JWV 619; Chuck Byers, MOPH 2560; Alex Gualdoni, MOPH 2560; Michelle Jameson, Exec. Dir. US Vets



That is a lot of coffee!

RELATED MOPH & VETERAN INFORMATION

PURPLE HEART HALL OF HONOR: Add your story to the Purple Heart Roll of Honor to help inspire future generations of citizens. Enroll at this [link](#).

PURPLE HEART GEAR: The Purple Heart Store is a company devoted to Honoring Purple Heart Recipients and their family members. It has served PH recipients for over 20 years and is a veteran



National Purple Heart Hall of Honor

PURPLE HEART VEHICLE REGISTRATION FEES:

Vehicle license tax exemption is available for PH



veterans. 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 **the registration tax fee is waived**. Can only be used on one vehicle. Specialty plate and personalization fees still apply.

ARIZONA STANDDOWN ALLIANCE: The Arizona Veterans StandDown Alliance (AVSA) holds resource fairs in 13 Arizona's counties. These events allow veterans and their families who are experiencing housing instability and homelessness to get and stay connected to housing and supportive services.

1. [Page StandDown](#)
Thursday & Friday, April 23-24, 2026
Page Elks Lodge 2498
2. [Kingman StandDown](#)
Friday May 8, 2026
Kathryn Heidenreich Adult Center
3. [High Country StandDown](#)
Friday, May 15, 2026
ASVH-FLG
4. [Williams StandDown](#)
Friday, September 11, 2026
Williams Recreation Center
5. [Twin Arrows StandDown](#)
Friday, October 2, 2026
Twin Arrows Navajo Resort



owned business. Visit the [store](#) for hats, shirts, ties, etc.

VA VETERANS' DAY POSTER CONTEST: For those of you that are artists or graphic artists the 2026 Veterans Day Poster Contest is open. **Entries are due NLT than April 21st**. Details are at this [VA Link](#).



SCAM ALERT FROM VA: Important info from the VA on SCAMS.

SCAM ALERT

We want to alert you to a new scam. Veterans have reported that they received texts claiming to be from the VA, asking them to "update their information."



These texts included a link to a very convincing website where people could unknowingly enter their sensitive personal information. **Please be aware that this is a scam!**

While the VA does send text messages to provide updates on benefits, resources, and appointment reminders, we urge you to be extremely cautious if you receive any communication requesting personal information or immediate payment.

If you receive a suspicious text message or email, please report it to the VHA at (866) 842-4357. Any scams related to VA benefits (VBA) should be reported to (833) 388-7233. For non-VA scams, contact the Federal Trade Commission at (877) 382-4357 or online at <http://reportfraud.ftc.gov/>. These resources are available 24/7.

Remember, always block, delete, and report suspicious messages. And most importantly, **never click on any links in these messages!**

FREE TUITION FOR VETERAN SPOUSES: Spouses of honorably discharged veterans enrolled at an Arizona public university, or a participating community college are eligible to receive free tuition on a first-come, first-served basis. Learn more at the [AZ Board of Regents](#).



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. For the March issue **get news information & photos in by the 28th of the month**. Thanks!

Yours in Patriotism,
John R. Moore
Jr. Vice-Commander