



May 2025

Volume 5 Issue 9

DEPARTMENT COMMANDER Patriot Cody Phipps

Dear Patriots and Purple Heart Recipients,



I am honored to serve as your new Commander for the Department of Arizona. First, I'd like to say congratulations to **National Adjutant Keith Gray**. Thank you for 3 years of leadership, and so many more of service and sacrifice for our nation and its Veterans. Best of luck in your new role, I will do my best to keep driving the mission forward at the Department level. Thank you for representing Arizona Veterans with pride.

I served 8 years as a 13B Field Artilleryman in the US Army. After training I served in Korea at Camp Casey for 2 years driving and gunning on Paladin self-propelled howitzers. I took a permanent change of station to Germany where we trained up and deployed to Afghanistan. Our unit was tasked as part of an Infantry Brigade Combat Team, so they took our big guns away and gave us rifles and trucks. I was wounded in an IED blast on a foot patrol through the local village. I re-enlisted there to go airborne and serve as a paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne Division at Ft Bragg, NC. I separated from service in 2015 to pursue a business degree from the University of Texas at Arlington. My family moved to Marana, Arizona about 3 years ago and we love it here. Chapter 442 Tucson took me in as a stray and put me to work. I am also proud and honored to serve as the Chapter 442 Commander.

Together we are going to accomplish great things for Veterans and their families in Arizona. We are going to do what we all have always done - drive on with the mission. We are going to foster an environment of goodwill and camaraderie among combat wounded Veterans. We are going to support the necessary legislative initiatives. We are going to MOST IMPORTANTLY, provide service to all Veterans and their families.

We are going to make sure our fallen are honored throughout the year. As we approach Memorial Day, we remember those we lost on the battlefield and off, those we lost after we came home, and those we have lost in the years since. We reflect on their courage and sacrifice. We make sure they are never forgotten. This is what the Purple Heart Medal represents to me.

We are going to focus on preventing Veteran suicide. This is very personal to me and to many of you patriots. We want the Department of Arizona to be in that environment of goodwill and camaraderie that you need on the dark days. We will continue to explore programs, training, and partnerships with other organizations who are also trying to combat this tragic problem facing our warriors. Preventing "Veteran Suicide" is my motivation for serving.

We are going to prevent and assist with Veteran Homelessness. By supporting organizations around Arizona, we are going to get our brothers and sisters out of the desert and into the treatment and resources they need to heal. We're going to feed them, cloth them, get their children's school supplies, and provide addiction resources and employment counseling. We're going to do whatever it takes because that's what we do. All the way.

We as a department exist to amplify what the chapters are doing and assist in your mission. Please get involved, speak up, voice your ideas and let us know what you need. There are some department positions vacant, if you're interested in serving, please speak up.

Finally, I want to say thank you. To **Jon Lunkwickz**, the late State Commander of TX who got me involved with MOPH. To **John Moore** for nominating me, keeping the chapter organized and serving tirelessly at both the

chapter and department levels. To **Larry Leighton**, for squaring me away and giving me the confidence to push myself into new challenges. To all past Commanders and Officers, volunteers, associate members, and the Combat Wounded Heroes who continue to serve every day, Thank you!

Yours in Patriotism,
Cody Phipps
Department of Arizona Commander
Military Order of the Purple Heart of the USA Inc.

DEPARTMENT JR. VICE-COMMANDER Patriot John Moore

ARMY BIRTHDAY: June 14th is the **Army's 250th Birthday**. The Military Order of the Purple Heart Department of Arizona wishes the United States Army a happy birthday.

Thank you to all who have served in the Army and thank you to each of our 600 members who served in the Army.

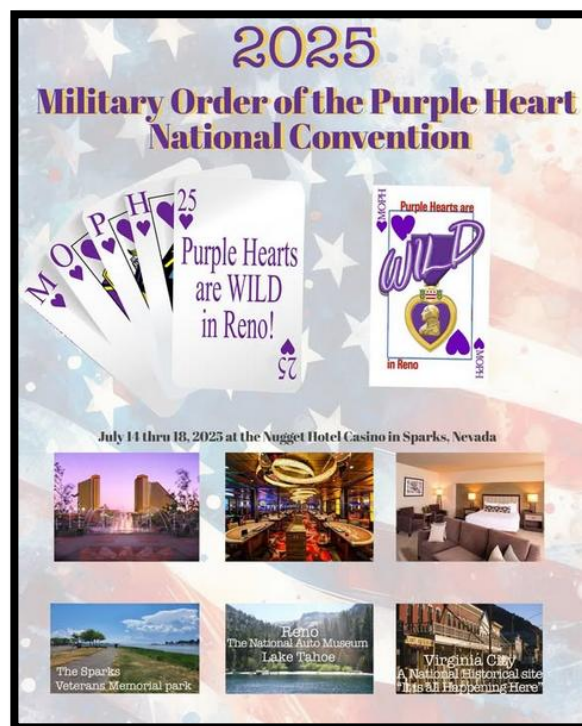


FLAG DAY: June 14th is Flag Day. Thank you to our members who display the National Flag. Displaying the flag shows our membership's pride in the flag of our country. Many have sacrificed their lives for its honor. Your patriotism is appreciated by the department.

CALENDAR:

- June 6 > D-Day Remembrance
- June 14 > Army Birthday
- June 14 > Flag Day
- June 27 > Korean War Armistice Day

National Convention: The National Convention will be held in Sparks, NV July 14th through July 18th. **Nugget Hotel Casino** | 1100 Nugget Avenue, Sparks, NV 89431 is the host hotel. This is reasonably close by and a good opportunity for members to attend the National Convention.



Registration: Here is the registration link for the National Convention at the [National MOPH website](http://www.purpleheart.org)! To register, members **must** log in to their www.purpleheart.org accounts on the website. You ****must log in**** before attempting to register.

Hotel Rates: Sunday-Thursday: \$132.37 per night (fees & tax). Friday & Saturday: \$164.82 per night (includes resort fee & tax) **Use Group Code: GMOPH2** & call 775-356-3272

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

DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT
Patriot Larry Leighton

AMVETS: On May 5th, the Department hosted the Phoenix stop of the **AMVETS ONE Tour Across America**. The tour's theme was *Leaving No Veteran Behind*. While the participation was lighter than anticipated, we did receive some good publicity on Fox News and with the AMVETS ONE press releases.



UNIFORMED SERVICES IN ACTION 2026

CALENDAR: Don't forget to pre-order your copy of the *Uniformed Services In Action 2026 Calendar*. Get a discount if you do so before **June 1st**! For only \$50, you get a great looking calendar AND 55 opportunities to win



one and maybe more **Scheels \$300 Gift Cards**. Use [the link](#) or scan the QRC to order to get yours and extra for gifts for your friends and family.

Remember the business who would sponsor us can't if they are not asked! **Don't be afraid to ask – you never know they might say YES.**

BUDDY CHECKS: Keep the communications open. Contact your fellow Veterans and say hi. We don't want anyone to feel isolated or alone.
Call a Veteran today!

AZ VETERANS' HALL OF FAME SOCIETY:

Past Department Commander **Ron Capek** briefed the attendees on the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame Society Patriotic Awards Luncheon. **Amanda Mendez** is this year's recipient of the **Robert J. Puskar Scholarship** provided by the **Military Order of the Purple Heart**.



(L to R): Larry Leighton, Dottie Puskar, Amanda Mendez, Ron Capek, Jim Starkman.

Amanda was raised in Utah and embarked on a life of service at eighteen, enlisting in the Air Force as a medic. Over the past 14 years, she deployed to Kuwait, Iraq, and Curacao, where she supported a counter-narcotics unit and played a critical role in the Rescue Squadron at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, providing medical support to the elite Guardian Angels-specialists in personnel recovery and combat search/rescue. Amanda currently serves as an Independent Duty Medical Technician-Paramedic in a reserve rescue unit. Inspired by the resilience and unseen wounds of those who served, she is passionate about bridging Western medicine with holistic healing, pursuing a master's degree in Traditional Chinese Medicine with a focus on acupuncture at the Arizona School for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine. Above all, she finds purpose as a devoted mother to her daughter, Isabella.

SAFETY: Remember to drink plenty of water. If you are feeling thirsty, you are probably already dehydrated! Be SAFE! Be as HEALTHY as you can! Have FUN!

Enjoy the summer holidays and wear **PURPLE** on **August 7th, National Purple Heart Day.**

Larry Leighton
Adjutant

DEPARTMENT CONVENTION Patriot Larry Leighton & Patriot John Moore

CONVENTION NOTES: The Convention has come and gone for another year. We did not use any hotel rooms, everyone who attended drove in for the meeting. We had 13 Patriots, three Associate Members, and one guest attend in person and four Patriots attended via video conference. New department officers and former department commanders are in the photo below. (L to R): PDC Ron Capek, PDC Rodger Ely, PDC Billy Weldon, PDC and Jr Vice John Moore, PDC Keith Gray, Commander and POTY Cody Phipps, Sergeant At Arms John Ballenger, Finance Officer Jim Starkman, Adjutant Larry Leighton, Stephan Bobby.



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

- **Commander Cody Phipps** (442; 817.239.2073; commanderazmoph@gmail.com)
- Senior Vice Commander – Vacant
- **Junior Vice Commander – John Moore** (442; 520.744.9768; mophchapter442@comcast.net)
- **Finance Officer – Jim Starkman** (691; 708.638.2321; karen4357@att.net)
- Judge Advocate – Vacant
- Inspector – Vacant
- Finance Committee x 3 – Vacant
- **Sergeant At Arms – John Ballenger** (691; 602.245.0437; cjballenger22@msn.com)

VACANT OFFICER POSITIONS: After the convention, **Commander Phipps** was able to

PATRIOT OF THE YEAR: Congratulations to **Patriot Cody Phipps**, Chapter 442, who was selected as the **Department of Arizona Patriot of the Year**. He has been nominated for Region VI Patriot of the Year. *Region VI consists of Arizona, Nevada, Utah, California, Hawaii, & the Pacific Islands.* Good Luck Cody. **Commander Gray** presented the Patriot of the Year award.

From L to R: Patriot Phipps & Patriot Gray



His citation reads in part “Patriot Phipps is a reliable presence for chapter activities and meetings. As a chapter member he provides common sense practical advice and opinions to improve chapter functions and operations. He provides insight into the needs of the younger veterans. Based on Cody’s combat and military experiences, in addition to his journey with the VA healthcare system he is a sincere advocate for veterans’ issues.”

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD:

Commander Keith Gray was presented with a **Distinguished Service Award** for his dedication and determination to improve the operations and prestige of the Department of Arizona, Military Order of the Purple Heart of the USA, while serving the Department Commander from May 1, 2022 – April 30, 2025. *From L to R: Commander Gray and Adjutant Leighton.*

contact several Patriots who agreed to fill some of the vacant positions. Once elected by the Department Executive Committee, they will assume their duties.

- **Senior Vice Commander Mike Smaydy** (691; 928.445.3792; michaeljsm@hotmail.com)
- **Inspector Stephan Bobby** (472; 480.266.9268; veteranairborne@yahoo.com).

APPOINTED OFFICERS: At the time of this writing the appointed officers are shown below and Commander Phipps is currently working to confirm other appointments as well.:

- **Adjutant Larry Leighton** (691; 623.776.5443; adjutant.mophaz@gmail.com)
- **Americanism Officer Will Hunker** (691; 910.644.7742; william.hunker@icloud.com)

OUTSTANDING EDITOR AWARD:

Commander Gray (R) presented Vice Commander John Moore with the *Outstanding Editor's Award* for his work as Editor of "The **Hurple Heart Artery**." The newsletter, published monthly in digital format, has increased readership and includes informative content, local chapter activities, and veteran stories.



CONVENTION PHOTOS:



MEMORIAL SERVICE: Vice-Commander Moore and Adjutant Leighton read the names of our members who have passed away since the last convention. **Sgt-at-Arms Ballinger** rang the memorial bell after each name was read.



DISTAFF AT THE CONVENTION: These ladies kept the group going whenever the pace got to slow! *Top row: Kristi Gray (r), Cindy Capek; Bottom row: Kay Leighton (r), Karen Starkman*

Photo below



CONVENTION PHOTOS:



FORT LOWELL CHAPTER 442 – TUCSON, AZ Commander Cody Phipps

Patriots of Chapter 442,

It is a great honor to serve as your chapter Commander. Thank you to **Mike Dyer** for so many years of dedicated service, and for setting the example for leadership in our chapter. You have been the commander since I got to the chapter, and I look forward to working with you to advance and scale the chapter's impact on Tucson.



We have already hit the ground running. We are fostering an environment of goodwill among Combat Wounded Veterans. Our monthly luncheons grow every month. Thank you for coming. It means a lot to me and to your fellow patriots. This is the most successful portion of our Veteran Empowerment Plan to combat Veteran suicide. We need your support. We are promoting patriotism around Tucson through JROTC awards, wreath dedications, and making sure our fallen and living Heroes are honored throughout the year. We are supporting legislative initiatives; We had 3 outstanding patriots from Chapter 442 receive Congressional Honors this year. And MOST IMPORTANTLY, we provide service to all Veterans and their families. I like to stress the words “most importantly” because I think they are very intentionally used in our mission. We are providing food to transitioning Veterans. We have increased our financial support to partners who are keeping our Brothers and Sisters in

Arms housed, fed, and getting them the resources they need to get back into the fight.

And this is just the start. We have accomplished so much together, so fast. I am forever grateful for the trust you have placed in me. I promise to give you my best effort to continue our mission. I am beyond grateful for the opportunity to serve.

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](#)

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.

MARANA VETERANS' CEMETERY: On the Friday before Memorial Day Ft. Lowell Chapter 442 assisted in placing flags on the 5,600 graves in the Arizona State Veterans' Memorial Cemetery Marana. It was a beautiful morning as **Ft Lowell Chapter 442** joined other Veterans' groups and community volunteers to **place flags for Memorial Day** at the **Arizona State Veterans' Memorial**

MONTHLY PURPLE HEART LUNCHEON:

Our next luncheon is on June 18th at noon in Oro Valley, AZ Location will be The Guadalajara Original Grill at 7360 N Oracle Rd, AZ 85704. All members are invited to attend and enjoy fellowship with other combat wounded veterans.

May Luncheon in Green Valley, AZ

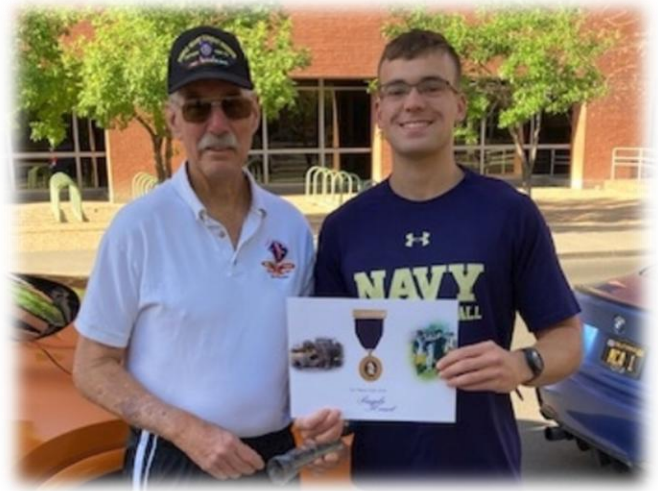


NAVY ROTC AWARD UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA: Patriot **David Bertagnoli** presented the MOPH ROTC Leadership Medal and Certificate to Cadet **Alex Beck** at the **University of Arizona Navy ROTC program**, Tucson AZ, May 2nd. Congratulations to Cadet Beck. This is an after the ceremony photo.

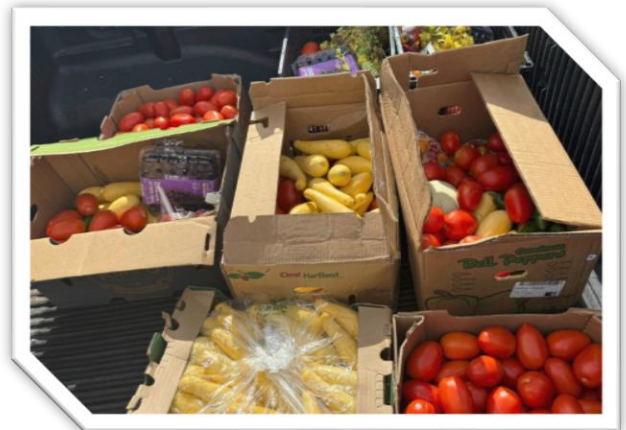
Cemetery in Marana, AZ. Thank you to all the veterans and community volunteers who came out to help. **Commander Cody Phipps, Patriot John Moore, Patriot John Grand, and guest Tony Day** represented the chapter.



Congressman Juan Ciscomani helped place flags



FOOD FOR ESPERANZA: On Memorial Day, to honor the fallen, Ft Lowell Chapter 442 delivered about 200lbs of fresh produce to Veterans in transitional housing in Tucson. The product was donated by Borderlands' Produce On Wheels With-Out Waste and delivered to **Esperanza - A Fresh Start for Homeless Veterans**. Tomatoes, squash, butternut squash, grapes, sweet peppers, jalapeños, cilantro and more were provided. Thank you so much to Borderlands for donating the food to Veterans who need it and keeping it from going to waste. **Patriot Cody Phipps, Patriot John Moore, & Patriot Roger Gilbert** attended Esperanza's is barbecue on Memorial Day. We met the transitioning Veterans and had lunch with them.



Borderlands' Produce On Wheels With-Out Waste was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation and a challenge coin from **Commander Phipps** for the donation to Esperanza.

Patriot Grand & Patriot Phipps



MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY: Chapter 442 took part in the Memorial Day Ceremony at South Lawn Cemetery and dedicated a wreath to the Nation's fallen. **Patriot Cody Phipps, Patriot John Grand, Patriot Jim Zimmerman, & Patriot John Moore** represented the chapter. View video of the ceremony at this [link](#). We are at the 30-minute mark.

Patriot Moore, Patriot Phipps, Patriot Zimmerman & Patriot Grand



JROTC AWARD CHOLLA SCHOOL: Patriot **Jim Zimmerman** presented the MOPH JROTC Leadership Medal and Certificate along with a \$200 stipend to **Cadet Steven Espinosa** at the Cholla High School, Tucson, AZ, awards ceremony on April 30th. Congratulations to Cadet Espinosa.

From L to R, Patriot Zimmerman, Cadet Espinosa, & Major Spiece.

Photo next page



ARMY ROTC AWARD UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA: Patriot **John Grand** presented the MOPH ROTC Leadership Medal and Certificate to Cadet **Jonny Ellwanger** at the University of Arizona Army ROTC awards ceremony, Tucson AZ, May 7th. Congratulations to Cadet Ellwanger. This is an after the ceremony photo. **Bear Down Arizona!**

Cadet Ellwanger & Patriot Grand



MOPH SUPPORTS CAMP CORRAL: Ft. Lowell Chapter 442 Adjutant, **John R. Moore** & Chapter Commander **Cody Phipps**, presents Golden Corral manager **Tim Peeler** with a **\$500 donation to support the Thornydale Golden Corral's raffle** in support of sending children of veterans and military in need to Camp Corral.

L to R: Patriot Moore, Mr. Peeler, Patriot Phipps
Photo next page



ESPERANZA – A FRESH START FOR VETERANS: The staff of Esperanza - A Fresh Start for Veterans spoke at our chapter meeting on May 19th. Commander Cody Phipps presents **Clinical Director Allison Stoner & CEO Suzanne Bond** with a chapter challenge coin. Esperanza provides transitional housing for homeless veterans. Chapter 442 provides \$500 per month to Esperanza to help feed the residents.



PURPLE HEART PARK: Purple Heart Park is much cleaner thanks to volunteers, Isabel, Cassie Slan Vildusea, Mark, Ruben, and Jason. Four bags of trash were collected.



JROTC AWARD NOGALES HIGH SCHOOL: Patriot **John Grand** presented the MOPH JROTC Leadership Medal and Certificate along with a \$200 stipend to Cadet **Erika Belem Lizarraga** at the Nogales High School, Nogales, AZ, awards ceremony on April 29th. Congratulations to Cadet Lizarraga.

Patriot Grand & Cadet Lizarraga



LEARN ABOUT OUR CHAPTER: Our video presentation explains our mission, who we are and what we do. View the video at [this link](#) or click on the photo below.



TRI-CITIES CHAPTER 472 – MESA, AZ

Commander Ignacio Rivera



Cdr: Ignacio Rivera (480) 381-6618

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

Finance: James Pomush landjpomush@gmail.com

Adjutant: Stephan Bobby veteranairborne@yahoo.com

Chaplain: vacant

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

FISHER HOUSE VISIT & DONATION: On May 8, 2025, Patriots of MOPH Chapter 472 met with **Michael Ramsey**, SAVAHCS Fisher House Manager 3601 South Sixth Avenue Tucson AZ, to **present a donation in the amount of \$7,500.00**. We toured this beautiful facility which provides gratis housing for military and veteran families, while a loved one is hospitalized at the Tucson VA Hospital! We were honored by Mike and his staff!

photo left to right

Genevieve; Mike Ramsey; Ruben Del Rio; Ron Del Rio; Ignacio Rivera; Jim Pomush; Monica; Stephan Bobby; Melissa



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.



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. Order a 4"x8" 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

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



MICHAEL E. MAHONEY CHAPTER 691 – SURPRISE, AZ
Commander Larry Leighton

I hope everyone had a great Memorial Day weekend and were able to attend at least once ceremony remembering the fallen.



The weekend was another great opportunity to enjoy time with friends and family. The next few months are also full of holidays that create opportunities for other things that might not be so fun. There will be lots of people rushing about trying to get to the lake, shooting off fireworks, and just generally not paying attention so that means you have to be even more diligent than ever. We want everyone to come back safe and sound after the summer months.

We're having our **June meeting on the Army's Birthday and Flag Day, June 14th** Our newest member, **Steve Alexander**, will give a presentation about **The Battle of Al Kasik Iraqi Military Base, 7 August 2004**, and then we'll cut the cake! You don't want to miss this one. If you cannot make it in person, don't worry, we'll still eat the cake without you but you can join us for the presentation by zoom at this link: (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81559570914?pwd=U29JaDIEMUR0bTdlWUySUftOVRRQT09>).

Remember we will not be having a regular meeting in July or August but there might be some *irregular meetings* where we can get together as comrades and family. Watch your email for the invites.



Currently, we do not have anything firm for National Purple Heart Day, but even if we don't do something together, please wear your Purple Heart hat and shirt when you go out. Let folks know you are a member.

When we come back in September, we'd like to have a guest speaker. If anyone reading this would like to volunteer to tell their story or to invite some to be our speaker, please give me a call at 623-776-5443 or email me at commander691moph@gmail.com.

I hope to see you at the Chapter meeting. You can always get the latest meeting information and video connection on our website at <http://691.mophaz.org/>.

Yours in Patriotism
Larry Leighton
Commander

Cdr: Larry Leighton -
commander691moph@gmail.com

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

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

Chaplain: Jimi Sallmen -
jimisallmen@gmail.com

Adjutant: Larry Leighton -
commander691moph@gmail.com

Meeting date: 2nd Saturday

Meeting time: 9:00 AM

Meeting location: Sands Chevrolet Surprise

LAKE PLEASANT CRUISE:



Jr. Vice-Commander Jimi Sallmen and his wife enjoy the Department Purple Heart Cruise on May 3rd at Lake Pleasant, AZ.

The cruise was organized by Chapter 691.

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.

JROTC AWARD MARYVALE HIGH



SCHOOL: Patriot Larry Leighton presented the MOPH JROTC Leadership Medal and Certificate to **Cadet Command Sergeant Major Fabian Barton** during the school awards ceremony. Congratulations to Cadet Barton. From L to R, Cadet Barton & Patriot Leighton.



JROTC AWARD CACTUS HIGH

SCHOOL: Patriot Keith Gray presented the MOPH JROTC Leadership Medal and Certificate to **Cadet Eli Ballard** during the school awards ceremony. Congratulations to Cadet Ballard. From L to R, Patriot Gray & Cadet Ballard.

JROTC AWARD AGUA FRIA HIGH



SCHOOL: Patriot Eldon Meade presented the MOPH JROTC Leadership Medal and Certificate to **Cadet Jacob Powers** during the school awards ceremony. Congratulations to Cadet Nazario. From L to R, Patriot Meade & Cadet Powers.

JROTC AWARD DYSART HIGH SCHOOL:



Patriot Steven Alexander presented the MOPH JROTC Leadership Medal and Certificate to **Cadet Captain Madilyn Cortez-Pantaleon** during the school awards ceremony. Congratulations to Cadet Cortez-Pantaleon. From L to R, Patriot Alexander & Cadet Cortez-Pantaleon.

ROTC AWARD EMBRY-RIDDLE

AERONAUTICAL UNIVERSITY: Patriot Al



Battista presented the MOPH ROTC Leadership Medal and Certificate to **Cadet Liam Rodgers** during the school awards ceremony at the Prescott, AZ campus. Congratulations to Cadet Rodgers. From L to R, Patriot Battista & Cadet Rodgers.

JROTC AWARD TREVOR BROWN HIGH



SCHOOL: Patriot Eldon Meade presented the MOPH JROTC Leadership Medal and Certificate to **Cadet Sergeant Dulce Nazario** during the school awards ceremony. Congratulations to Cadet Nazario. From L to R, Patriot Meade & Cadet Nazario.

JROTC AWARD BUCKEYE HIGH SCHOOL:



Patriot Eldon Meade presented the MOPH JROTC Leadership Medal and Certificate to **Cadet Anyla Summerall-Allen** during the school awards ceremony. Congratulations to Cadet Summerall-Allen. From L to R, Patriot Meade & Cadet Summerall-Allen.

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

Fellow Patriots,



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. Our chapter is honored to be able to participate in patriotic events and support veterans' needs in Northern Arizona. The High-Country Stand-Down was held during May in Flagstaff. Several Northern Arizona communities became Purple Heart entities during the past month. Thank you, Page Arizona, Tuba City Arizona, and Nazlini Arizona (Navajo Nation).

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 VETERANS VBOC: Flagstaff Veterans VBOC is held every **first 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.



COCONINO HIGH SCHOOL JROTC AWARDS CEREMONY: Chapter 793 presented JROTC Leadership Medal at the Coconino High School, Coconino AZ, Army JROTC awards ceremony. From left to right are **Rex Stermer, Cadet Kee Blackrock, Cadet Aiden Simonsen, & Patriot Billy Weldon**. Congratulations to the cadets!



Bob Stump Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center

500 Highway 89 North
Prescott, AZ 86313-5001

[Get directions on Google Maps](#)

Main phone: [928-445-4860](tel:928-445-4860)

VA health connect: [877-252-4866](tel:877-252-4866)

Mental health care: [928-445-4860](tel:928-445-4860), ext. 7500



Flagstaff VA Clinic

1300 West University Avenue, Suite 200
Flagstaff, AZ 86001-7228

[Get directions on Google Maps](#)

Main phone: [928-226-1056](#)

VA health connect: [877-252-4866](#)

Mental health phone: [928-445-4860, ext. 7500](#)

CHAPTER 2560 – APACHE JUNCTION, AZ Commander Mike Overmeyer



Cdr: Michael Overmeyer > moverme48@gmail.com

Sr. Vice Cdr: Chuck Byers > seagb@cox.net

Jr. Vice Cd: James King > kingjs6@live.com

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

Chapter 2560 supports Wreaths Across America annually: We are reaching out to any sponsors who would like to **purchase a wreath for \$17** to be placed on an interred Veteran's grave.

For every wreath sold, WAA will give \$5 back to the local veteran community!

To volunteer for December or to order wreaths, please contact Nancy Fassbender on 520-280-4715.



WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA: Do you know an outstanding Wreaths Across America volunteer? Help us celebrate the incredible people who take that extra step to make this mission possible—whether they lead by example, give selflessly, or inspire others. Now is the time to recognize their impact! **Nominations for Wreaths Across America's Annual Awards** are open now through **May 18!** These awards honor volunteers who go above and beyond in support of the mission to Remember, Honor, and Teach. Recipients will be notified in early June.

Learn about the different awards and submit your nomination for a deserving volunteer:
[https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/New.../AnnualAwards/...](https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/New.../AnnualAwards/)

Learn about Wreaths Across America's Mission to Remember, Honor and Teach

[wreathscrossamerica.org](https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org)

Learn about Wreaths Across America's Mission to Remember, Honor and Teach



WREATHS
— across —
AMERICA

OTHER INFORMATION

VA TRAVEL VOUCHER FORM: As a reminder, the old beneficiary travel voucher claim form has officially expired. The new forms are now out for use. The forms can also be found online at <https://www.va.gov/find-forms/about-form-10-3542/>.

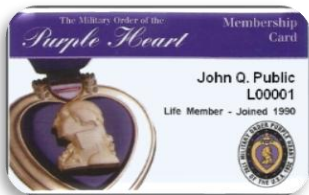
CLELAND-DOLE MENTAL HEALTH COPAY EXEMPTION: Good news for Veterans who owe copays for outpatient mental health and substance use disorder visits. **VA is canceling and refunding the first three mental health and substance use disorder copays in each calendar year between June 27, 2023, and December 29, 2027.** Click [HERE](#) to learn more.

UPDATE YOUR MOPH CONTACT INFO:

Keep your snail mail address, phone & email address up to date. Go to the [MOPH National website](#). You need your membership number to log in. You can then update your contact information. You can also email us at adjutant.mophaz@gmail.com and we can update your snail mail, phone & email address for you.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS: Replacement membership cards are available on the National Website you can login to your account and print a paper one or you can order plastic one at

<https://www.purpleheart.org/store>



PURPLE HEART CAP: Like most veteran organizations, 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, with a George Washington emblem sewn on it. The chapter number and the words "Life Member" may be added with white

MY HEALTHEVET & VA.GOV TRANSITION:

The VA's patient portal, **My HealtheVet**, is moving to **VA.gov**. With the new My HealtheVet on VA.gov portal, Veterans will have a more secure, single online location to manage their health care and other VA benefits and services.

As of January 31, 2025, Veterans are no longer able to sign in using My HealtheVet user ID and password. The two-remaining **sign-in options will be Login.gov**, which offers streamlined set up and integration with other federal services like TSA Precheck and FEMA, **and ID.me**, which provides additional verification methods, including video calls, and can be used for military discounts.

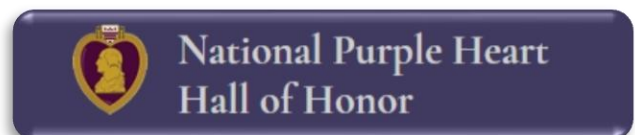
BADGE OF MILITARY MERIT SOCIETY:

The purpose of the Badge of Military Merit Society is to preserve and perpetuate the history and legacy of the Purple Heart Medal, to support and honor its individual recipients, and to support the organization known as the Military Order of the Purple Heart of the USA, Inc. (MOPH) through the MOPH's MOPH Fund. Donate to support MOPH at this [link](#).



MYVA HOTLINE: The MYVA is at **1-800-MyVA411 (698-2411)** and is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to serve veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors.

PURPLE HEART HALL OF HONOR: Add your story to the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor. Enroll at this [link](#) or click on the image.



letters as appropriate. Order for \$29.95 at [Keystone Uniform Cap](#).

HELP YOUR CHAPTER: Visit the **MOPH Fund website** (<https://mophfund.org/>) on the Partners and Ambassador pages. Anything you buy from those pages generate funds directly back to your Chapter and to the National Headquarters for our programs.



PURPLE HEART LICENSES PLATES: 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.

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](#).

ARIZONA STANDDOWN ALLIANCE: The Arizona Veterans StandDown Alliance (AVSA) holds resource fairs in 13 of 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.

[Rim Country StandDown](#)

Saturday, July 26, 2025

Mazatzal Hotel & Casino (Highway 87, Mile Marker 251, Payson, AZ 85541)

[White Mountain StandDown](#)

Saturday, August 16, 2025

Show Low Elks Lodge (805 E. Whipple Street, Show Low, AZ 85901)

PURPLE HEART COMBAT WOUNDED VETERANS OF ARIZONA: 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 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](#)

SUPPORT CAMP CORRAL:



Yavapai County StandDown

Friday, September 26, 2025

U.S.VETS Prescott (1040 Whipple Street, Prescott, AZ 86305)

Cochise County StandDown

Friday, October 17, 2025

Ethel Berger Center (2950 E. Tacoma Street, Sierra Vista, AZ 85635)

Navajo County StandDown

Friday, October 24, 2025

Navajo County Fairgrounds (404 E. Hopi Drive, Holbrook, AZ 86026)



STAND DOWN
(The Stand-Down concept used during the Vietnam War to provide a safe retreat for units returning from combat operations.)



VETERANS

Rim Country Stand Down
July 26, 2025
Mazatzal Hotel & Casino
Highway 87, Mile Marker 251, Payson, AZ 85541
10:00AM TO 2:00PM

- Free Hot Lunch
- Health Services
- Dental, Vision
- Hair Cuts
- Job Services
- Veterans Benefits
- And much more

Sponsored By:



VETERANS! **BARNEY H. KENGLA MEMORIAL WHITE MOUNTAIN**

Saturday, August 16, 2025
10AM to 2PM

Show Low Elks Lodge No 2090
805 E. Whipple
Show Low, AZ 85902

Proof of military service required

STAND DOWN

This event is open to all Veterans in the Arizona White Mountains area who are in need of the following resources:

- Free Hot Meal
- Health Services
- Job Services
- Veterans Benefits
- Security Security
- Veterans Court
- Hair Cuts
- Other Services

For more information, please contact:
(928) 369.8455
fishersforveterans@gmail.com

Sponsored By:



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 for us by the 25th of each month.**

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