



## 2021-2022 Year End Report for Luke Chapter MOAA

### 1. Legislative Affairs

**A. Legislative Liaison**, Colonel Phil Hanson, a former member of the Arizona Senate, kept members informed with a steady stream of emails and on-going status reports of bills in the state legislature. Captain Denny Bash who serves on Rep. Debbie Lesko's Military Advisory Board provided additional updates on his role in that position.

**B. Several Blast emails** to you kept the membership informed of **pending legislation** and many of you called Arizona legislature members regarding these issues. Col Pete Kloeber (Council President) and LTC Darren Venters (AZ Council Legislative Chair) on behalf of our Luke Chapter and the Arizona Council of Chapters met with Representative Debbie Lesko regarding National MOAA legislative priorities. Wearing both hats as a MOAA National Board Member and as a Luke Chapter Board Member, LTG John Regni also participated with Pete and Darren promoting "Advocacy in Action" to CW Debbie Lesko (and he reported she was very supportive).

### 2. Community Engagement

**A.** For the fourth straight year, you actively supported the **Marine Corps Reserve "Toys for Tots"** program. Your generous donations provided well over 50 toys to this effort.

**B. You supported other very worthwhile programs supporting military veterans:**

(1) \$100 to the Arizona Honor Flight program to support honor flights of veterans to visit national memorials in Washington, D.C.

(2) \$200 to the MOWW (Military Order of the World Wars) Leadership Academy

(3) \$250 to the Fighter Country Partnership (Luke AFB liaisons with local businesses)

(4) \$500 to the Arizona Stand-Down

**C.** During November 2021, your diligent Chaplain Fannalou Guggisberg coordinated and

provided a drop off site for the Luke Chapter **Turkeys for Troops program** which provided food and commissary cards to low-ranking Airmen at Luke AFB. **This year was another record setting year** as you donated well over 1,000 items for this cause, outdistancing last year's previous record of 900 items. In addition, \$1,500 (\$250 more than the prior year) in commissary cards were donated to make these young Airmen's Thanksgiving much brighter!



### 3. Community Support

A. **Scholarships:** Under the dedication and perseverance of the Scholarship Chair, Don Fordney, eighteen students received \$35,000 in scholarships to various institutions (\$5,000 more than the prior year). Scholarships ranged in size from \$1,000 to \$4,000 each.

B **Veteran Support:** For several years now, COL Mike Kramer has managed the veteran support program in an exemplary manner. Many thanks also go to the interview committees who extensively evaluated each applicant. Funding for veteran support came from National MOAA (\$7,500), Arizona Department of Veterans Services (\$4,999), Corporate donors, friends of the Chapter, and most importantly **your donations**. This year, 31 veterans in need were supported in one way or another, with total grants exceeding \$38,000. Nearly all of these honorably discharged veterans were in extreme need and may have ended up on the street without your help! Photo is of veteran Phylcia Bupp and her family.



C. **Fund Raising** (For a complete listing of donors, please see Appendix 1):

(1) Your Luke Chapter Community Fund led by LTC Ed McAvoy, held the Second Annual Chapter online auction on April 2, 2022, and raised a total of \$5,479.48 (an increase of \$1,630.42 over last year) from items you donated! Many thanks to Chaplain Guggisberg for offering her home, keeping an inventory of all items, and for coordinating everything to make this a big success! **Monarch Auctions headed by Robert Haynes** conducted the Auction at **no cost** to the Chapter (please thank him and recommend him!)

(2) There were 72 **individual donations** of \$41,858! Even though this was less than last year, it was a significant amount! Many thanks to everyone who donated!

(3) Twelve corporate donors provided \$8,400 (up \$850) to your Chapter.

(4) Non-Member donations added \$1,818 to the totals.

(4) **Total donations for 2021-2022 fiscal year: \$57,555.48 (Up \$2,061.42)**

(5) Special thanks go out to **Mrs. Pam Wojtas** for over 100 thank-you letters to donors!

### 4. Recruiting and Retention

A. **Members:** Currently, there are 192 active members of your Chapter. This number includes 33 who are Surviving Spouses (SS's).

B. **Recruiting:** Under the very capable direction of Major Marci Smith and Captain Ben Hayes (new Chapter Membership Chair) your Luke Chapter gained 18 new members this year, they are:

(1) Beckles, Benita

(2) Bergstrom, Susan SS

(3) Couzens, James

(4) Daly, Paul

(5) Eggert, Mavis

(6) Furcron, Wyckliffe

(7) Hyland, Bill

- (8) Jacques, Pete
- (9) Johnson, Beth
- (10) Jordan, Michael
- (11) McCamley, William
- (12) Morgan, Rachel SS
- (13) Palmer, Peter
- (14) Peterson, Jason
- (15) Pitcairn, Douglas
- (16) Robinett, Mike
- (17) Sims, Theron
- (18) Stephan, Kevin

Last year your Chapter welcomed 15 Officers and Surviving Spouses, so this year shows a 20% increase in new members. Please be sure and welcome them to the Chapter when you see them at the next Chapter meeting!

**C. Retention:** Even though everyone experienced a challenging year, you stepped up and we particularly thank you for continuing your Chapter membership. Our records indicate that we lost 25 members this year. Four moved out of state, at least five passed away and 16 others did not renew and were unable to be contacted.

## 5. Surviving Spouse Program (SS)

**A. New Approach:** A new and innovative program was implemented this year under the very able direction of Linda Wolverton and Co-Chair Rosemary Eaton. This revitalized program is a very important component of your Chapter – Surviving Spouses. It has received considerable recognition in the State of Arizona and MOAA wide. It was quite an honor to have Linda present a great overview of the new program to the Arizona Chapter at one of their meetings.

**B. The Mission** of this program is to connect with **ALL** Surviving Spouses and (as appropriate) care-giver spouses for support, friendship, encouragement, education, grief sharing, and other mutual benefits.

**C. Implementation** of this energetic program plan includes periodic meetings as needed, regular updates via the Chapter website, NewsGram, and by email regarding benefits, and visits to all SS's (with priority going to home-bound members). Especially noteworthy are the roster they created to the benefits programs of all the services, and brief stories published in the NewsGram about the lives and careers of several of our surviving spouses.



## 6. Programs

Your first dinner meeting program of the year started in November with former News Anchor Lin Sue Cooney representing Hospice of the Valley. Then in December, Thaddeus Rose again provided exceptional music at your Christmas dinner-dance. In January Dr. Eduardo Pagan, star of the PBS History Detectives series provided a great WWII Nazi spy story. In February, Steve Hosa had a particularly interesting presentation on the WWII Papago Park POW Camp. In March, COL Mark Tillman again joined us for more exciting stories about his experiences as the AF One pilot on 9/11. Belinda Gail,

America's Western Sweetheart sang her heart out in April and chapter member RDML Steve Kunkle ended the year explaining his role as Task Force Commander of Carrier Strike Group 5 during the Afghanistan war.



## **7. Community Fund Board Fully Staffed!**

**A. This past year** was a banner year for the Community Fund Board which now has a full board of directors!

**B. Community Fund Board Officers** for the coming year include:

President: LTC Ed McAvoy    Vice-President: CW3 Don Fordney    Secretary: CDR Charlie Kice  
Treasurer: MAJ Mike Robinett    Directors: RDML Steve Kunkle, COL Bob Coutchie, COL Mike Kramer, COL Lou Tronzo, COL Beth Johnson, COL Catherine Lassiter, Mrs. Pam Wojtas, CW2 Ron Walk

**C. Many thanks** to the Community Fund Board for taking on some challenging tasks. We look forward to more growth and exposure in the next year!

## **8. Other Important Programs**

**A. Chaplain:** Not only does she do an excellent job managing food donations and commissary cards at Thanksgiving, coordinating Toys-For-Tots donations at Christmas, managing donations for the online and silent auction but she also authors an informative article for each NewsGram and provides a moving blessing for each board and dinner meeting. She does it all! Chapter Chaplain, **MAJ Fannalou Guggisberg!**

**B. Community and Luke AFB Relations: COL Ted Stults** also wears many hats – keeping the Chapter informed of Luke AFB events including the annual Retiree Activities Day, working at and with the Retiree Activities Office and serves as Chapter representative on the NW Valley Veterans Association. Good work Ted! Chapter member COL Beth Johnson also lends a hand at the Retiree Office too!

**C. Compliance:** Making sure your Chapter operates in compliance with regulatory issues outlined by the Arizona Corporation Commission and the IRS for both your Chapter and Community

Fund, COL Mike Kramer, does an extraordinary job in handling these incredibly challenging and time-consuming tasks.

**D. Financial/Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve (ESGR):** COL Bob Couthie was a busy guy for the prior two years balancing the books each month for the Chapter and the Community Fund and his records were always perfect! Bob remains on both Chapter Boards and his expertise and advice is very much appreciated. Although the ESGR position does not get much press, it is extremely important towards ensuring fair treatment for Guard and Reserve members who are called to active duty and COL Bob Couthie very efficiently and effectively deals with these issues each year!

**E. Historian/Closed Captioning:** LTC Fred Williams keeps an outstanding record of your Chapter history, updating it regularly (ask him to show it to you sometime). Fred also spearheaded initiation of closed captions for your Chapter and Board meetings and makes sure closed captioning is always available!

**F. JROTC:** Captain Ernie Coudert made sure your Luke Chapter was represented properly by coordinating volunteers who each made an MOAA medal and certificate presentation to designated students at



12 of your Chapter's 13 JROTC schools and the other school was sent the medal and certificate. It is an extremely rewarding experience and **if you would like to be a presenter next year (May time period), please get in touch with**



**Ernie!** Photos are of Ernie Coudert presenting certificate and medal to Mikal Cain at Betty F Fairfax High School (R) and to Cadet Briawna Maese at Tolleson High School (L)

**G. Leadership Succession:** A challenging job to say the least, COL (Dr.) Steve Pohl, works tirelessly to make sure all positions are filled, and both the Chapter and the Community Fund Board positions are filled for the upcoming year! Thanks Steve!

**H. Reservations:** CWO3 Don Fordney was back at it again taking and managing reservations for Chapter meetings this year and he always does an outstanding job! We can all help him by making sure table reservations and requests are in on time.

**I. Transitions:** Although most Chapter members are not looking for jobs, Captain Bob Cowan still makes sure that job postings are added to the Chapter website! Many retiring officers look to your Chapter website for this information and thus your Chapter rises to the challenge of helping these newly retired officers in this area find jobs. Wearing his other hat, Bob selects and made dinner meeting table arrangements this past year and always shows up very early to make sure things go smoothly!

## 9. Awards and Honors



**A. Five-Star Chapter again!** Yes, you did it again! It was just announced on August 19, 2022 that your Luke Chapter has achieved a five star Levels of Excellence Award for the **sixteenth year in a row**. Congratulations to all who worked so hard to make this happen! Awards are reviewed by a board of officers based on Objective (45%) and Subjective (55%) scoring. Objective scoring is based on percentages of key chapter officers who are members of National; number of chapter members who are a member of National; use of the Committee Module for recruiting; designated Legislative and SSp chairs; the

chapter is enrolled in Electronic transfer of funds; if the chapter belongs to the state Council and the Chapter President receives the MOAA Newsletter. Subjective scoring includes active legislative affairs program, community engagement, recruiting and retention, leadership succession plan and 10 points of extra credit for innovative programs, events, and other outstanding community outreach.



**B. Marvin J. Harris Communications Awards:** The Luke Chapter Website and the NewsGram both won five star awards again! Bob Nelson, who now resides in Pensacola, FL manages your Chapter website ([www.lukemoaa.org](http://www.lukemoaa.org)) in an outstanding manner. Scott Phillips also does a super job of providing a great NewsGram eight or nine times a year! Several years of past NewGram's are available on the website and make for extremely interesting reading! Be sure and thank them for their hard work and long hours in bringing you top notch Chapter information. For a listing of Levels of Excellence awards received, please go to the Chapter website ([www.lukemoaa.org](http://www.lukemoaa.org)), click on President's Page, and then on Levels of Excellence awards.

**C. Induction into the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame:** This fiscal year, chapter member Captain Denny Bash, was inducted into the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame. As of June 30, 2022, sixteen Chapter members have been inducted since 2003 (go to: [www.lukemoaa.org](http://www.lukemoaa.org) (Local Interest) for a list of members.

#### 10. **Finances** Financial Status is Strong.

**A. Chapter Fund:** Your Chapter is in excellent Financial Health. As of 1 July, 2022, the Chapter Fund had a balance of: \$27,724.15. Of this amount, approximately \$8,000 in is restricted funds. Restricted Funds include Pre-Paid Dues and a National MOAA \$5,000 Grant.

**B. Community Fund:** As of 1 July 2022, your Chapter Community Fund had a cash balance of \$20,170.74 (this is after all 18 scholarship checks have been taken out for 2022. The Community Fund also has a PenFed account which shows a balance of \$46,790.22. The Community Fund always has a reserve in case the Chapter would have a slow year.

11. **Please keep in touch!** Contact any Board member at any time for commendations, complaints, or if you need more information on anything involving the Chapter. Board member email addresses are in the NewsGram.

Dennis A. DeFrain, LTC, US Army, Retired  
Immediate Past President

Appendix 1 – List of Community Fund Donors for 2021-2022