

Chapter meetings are held January – April and October – December at Saddlebrooke Ranch, normally on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month.



# Catalina Mountains Sentinel

March 2025 issue

## March 2025 Issue

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## 2025 chapter luncheons

Did you miss any of the past 2025 CMC luncheon meetings? Here is a recap:

**January 2025:** Our speaker was Steven Skeen, the president of Threat Awareness Consultants. Steve has spent most of his life engaged in the business of protection and threat awareness, including a long career with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). During his career in the CIA, Steve worked as an Officer/Para-military Skills Officer and dedicated a major portion of his service focused on countering terrorist threats.



**February 2025:** Our speakers were Bruce Hamilton, Chairman of Tucson Veterans Serving Veterans, and his son Justin, who is involved in veterans' services with the City of Tucson. Bruce discussed the mission of Tucson Veterans Serving Veterans, including its employment and housing assistance programs. Justin added additional details about the current homeless situation in Tucson and the steps being taken to continue the decrease veterans' homelessness.



**March 2025:** Doug discussed the functions and purposes of the Pinal County Assessor's office and highlighted some of the challenges and complications of Arizona property tax law. Lastly, he explained how to sign up for the "PAL" plan to help prevent the fraudulent transfer of real property located in Pinal County.



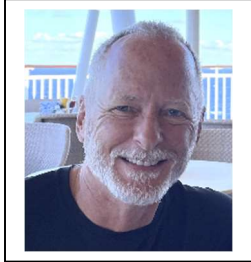
## Our next luncheon

Our next luncheon is scheduled for Saturday, 19 April at 11:30 AM in the Private Dining Room of the Ranch House Grill & Brewery at SaddleBrooke Ranch. See page 8 for additional information.

**National MOAA and the Catalina Mountains Chapter are nonpartisan.**

## President's message

Hello CMC members! Thank you so much for your support as I jumped into the President position in



January 2025. I have huge shoes to fill; Chuck Vaughan did a superb job leading our chapter for the past three years. Thank you, Chuck!

The new year started quickly with no time to rest! Please have patience as we navigate our monthly luncheon meeting room. CMC has grown to the point that previous meeting rooms won't accommodate our large number of attendees. But we will always find the right solution.

As far as past activities:

- We submitted both our annual MOAA LOE (Level of Excellence) Award application and our Communications Award application earlier this year. We will know the results in April or May. Let's hope we maintain our successful 5-star award level as in the past two years.
- As you know, EEE (Escalante En Esperanza) is a fabulous Veterans Support organization next to Davis Monthan AFB that we have supported in the past few years with chapter service hours and donations. Recently, we applied for an MOAA Foundation Community Outreach Grant. We should know the result also in April or May. The grant is for additional laptops and furniture to support those veterans (and veteran families) who successfully transition from EEE to self-sustainability. I will be providing much more detailed information about this worthy endeavor in the near future.
- On February 8<sup>th</sup>, Bill Nagy, David Bull, Don Timian and I represented CMC at the SaddleBrooke HOA-1 Recreation and Activities Fair. Thanks to all who helped at this annual event.

- CMC collaborated with the Veterans Club at SaddleBrooke Ranch to announce and attend the March 17<sup>th</sup> presentation by Francis Gary Powers (son of famed U-2 pilot, Air Force Veteran and CIA employee Gary Powers). Gary Powers is best known for his involvement in the 1960 U-2 incident, where he was shot down while flying a secret CIA spying mission over the former Soviet Union. The presentation was exceptional, and Francis Gary Powers has many books available on the internet.



With respect to future events:

- The next local Missing In American Program (MIAP) ceremony will be held at 10am on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Marana. This is the morning of our next luncheon meeting. Expect to see additional information on this ceremony in the near future.
- Our April 19<sup>th</sup> luncheon meeting will feature Ms Paula Pedene. You can read all about the speaker in the "Next Chapter Luncheon" of this newsletter, and also in our separate email that requests RSVPs for the luncheon.
- As a reminder, you can read about what is happening at both the Arizona state MOAA level and National MOAA level through the following links:
  - Arizona Council of Chapters (A CofC) website: <https://www.azcouncilofchapters.org/>
  - National MOAA website: <https://www.MOAA.org>
- As far as annual CMC dues and donations, please remember that the easiest way to accomplish both is by using the "Cheddar Up" online system at the following link: <https://my.cheddarup.com/c/cmc-moaa-2025-dues/items?cart>

2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Kurt McMillen, COL, USA, retired**  
*Chairman*

**Charles F. Vaughan, CAPT, USN, retired**  
*Member*

**Bill Nagy, COL, USAR, retired**  
*Member*

2025 CHAPTER OFFICERS

**Kurt McMillen, COL, USA, retired**  
*President*

**Bruce Huffman, COL, USA, retired** *First*  
*Vice President*

**vacant**  
*Second Vice President*

**Bill Myers, LT, CEC, USN, former**  
*Secretary*

**George Bone, LTC, USA, retired**  
*Treasurer*

ADDITIONAL CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

**Bill Nagy, COL, USAR, retired**  
*Programs Chari*

**Carol Smith**  
*Surviving Spouse Liaison*

**Don Timian, LTC, USA, retired**  
*Membership Chair*

**Jeff Peckron, Capt, USMC, retired**  
*Legislative Liaison*

**Ed Brogan, Col, USAF, retired**  
*Chaplain*

**Jeff Peckron, Capt, USMC, retired**  
*Audio/Visual Support*

**Cash Striplin, COL, USA, retired**  
*JROTC coordinator*

**Join Catalina Mountains Chapter of MOAA**

If you are not a member already, consider joining the Catalina Mountains Chapter. Why should you join our chapter? You should join so you can help us make a difference in the lives of some veterans and uniformed personnel. How can you make a difference? Through your gifts of time and money. Chapter members previously donated their time to do some exterior painting at Esperanza En Escalante and three chapter members placed wreaths at the Wreaths Across America event last December. If you can make a financial donation, chapter members sponsored a one-week camp for children of Esperanza En Escalante residents and contributed funds to purchase four laptop computers for Esperanza En Escalante residents.

To join the chapter, you must be eligible to join national MOAA. If you have any questions about joining the chapter contact our membership chair, Don Timian, at [dontimian@hotmail.com](mailto:dontimian@hotmail.com) or by phone at 571-216-3679.

Chapter dues at \$30 per calendar year. You'll have to wait another month or so before you can pay your dues online with national MOAA due to computer software implementation problems.

You can find a membership application at [https://www.catalinamountainsmoaa.org/CM\\_join.html](https://www.catalinamountainsmoaa.org/CM_join.html)

The Chapter received a 5 star Level of Excellence award for 2023 (our second 5-star award), shown below. MOAA chapters were graded as 3, 4, or 5 stars based on the performance of each chapter with 5 stars being the highest level of excellence. Thanks to all chapter members for making this happen!



## Arizona Legislative update by Tom Waddell, AZ Council of Chapters

There are currently four bills in the Arizona Legislature that are veteran specific that need our immediate support. Three are under consideration in the House and one in the Senate. Jeff Peckron, your legislative liaison, has two letters that you can cut and paste as desired to send to your legislators using the members links at [AZLEG.GOV](http://AZLEG.GOV). The HB2672 letter goes to your senators and the SB1155 letter goes to your representatives. Contact Jeff at [jeffPeckron@yahoo.com](mailto:jeffPeckron@yahoo.com) for copies of the letters.

**HB2672:** Property tax exemptions for 100% disabled veterans - Still no action in the Senate Committees

**SB1155:** Ensures pay and income tax equity for members of the U.S. Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. - Still no posted action from the Senate committees

**SB1704:** Authorizes the use of Veteran Donation Fund monies to support Arizona State Veterans Homes. - "Do Pass" from the House Federalism, Military Affairs & Elections committee on 3/10, no action in House Appropriations or Rules committees

**SB1021:** Grants in-state tuition to contracted ROTC cadets at state universities. - "Do Pass" from the House Appropriations committee, no action in the House Rules committee

## Catalina Mountains mission statement

The Chapter's mission is clearly spelled out in the by-laws of the Catalina Mountains Chapter, in Section 1.2 as follows:

"The Chapter is organized, and shall be administered and operated, exclusively for the following purposes, with the meaning of Section 501(c)(19) of the Internal Revenue Code: to promote the purposes and objectives of the national Military Officers Association of America (MOAA); foster fraternal relations among active duty, former, and retired officers of the uniformed services and their reserve or national guard components; protect the rights and interests of active duty, former, retired, and reserve and national guard component personnel of the uniformed services and their dependents and survivors; provide useful services for members and their dependents and survivors; and serve the community and the nation."

## Fly the flag dates

### April

April 5 (Sat) – Gold Star Spouse Day

April 6 (Sun) – Army Day

April 9 (Wed) – Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day

April 20 (Sun) – Easter

April 22 (Tue) – Earth Day

### May

May 4 (Sun) – Fallen Firefighters Memorial Day (fly at half staff)

May 11 (Sun) – Mother's Day

May 15 (Thur) – Peace Officer Memorial Day (fly at half staff)

May 17 (Sat) – Armed Forces Day

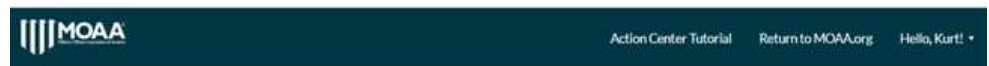
May 26 (Mon) – Memorial Day (fly at half staff until noon)

## MOAA Advocacy and the Legislative Action Center



The optimal location to obtain the most relevant and current legislative information at National MOAA level is on the National MOAA website at: <https://www.moaa.org/>. After logging into the site with your **User Name** and **Password**, click on the **“Advocacy”** link at top of the page. Here, you can click on any of the secondary links (shown to the left) in order to navigate all the most relevant and current legislative information at national level.

Much of the most important information applicable to CMC is within the **“Legislative Action Center”** (LAC) secondary link. Once you click on it, you will see the LAC page header shown below:



Not all CMC members are “registered” in the LAC. **Please register to help bolster our support of key service member and veteran related legislative issues!** **NOTE:** Individuals must register themselves. If you are not registered, the upper-right corner (where the name “Kurt” is shown, will instead show “Sign Up”. Then click on “Sign Up” and follow the instructions on the website. Additionally, under “MOAA Chapter Affiliation” make sure to select “AZ12 – Catalina Mountains Chapter”.

**A strong recommendation:** After you register and sign in, **DO NOT “Logout”**. If you do, the next time you enter the LAC you will have to re-register!

Once you are registered, will see this banner (plus a list of the top priority issues below the banner):

**Active Legislative Campaigns**

This is where you can send pre-written emails to all of your national legislative representatives (and modify them if you wish) and input personal experience on other items.

Please take advantage of this fantastic online capability so that your voice can be heard at national level.

## Member in the spotlight - by Kurt McMillen

When our Catalina Mountains Chapter (CMC) publishes the Sentinel newsletter, we enjoy highlighting the accomplishments of our CMC members. All our members have diverse backgrounds. We think you will appreciate our members' contributions over their previous career, and within CMC and outside of our chapter now.

This "spotlight" shines on our own COL(R) Marty Lenzini. An important prelude: The following condenses a significantly more detailed narrative of Marty's exemplary career. If you want further information, please see Marty to "fill in the blanks"!

Marty grew up as a kid from a working family in a suburb of Chicago. Marty had no previous military knowledge; his grandparents came from Italy and no family members served in the Armed Forces. Marty attended Catholic schools through high school and, as he now says, "The discipline at these schools kept him 'in check'", but Marty was well known for the corporal punishments he received at school and the trouble he got into when away from school. Years later, Marty looked back at how he grew up and realized his behavior actually shaped his eventual fighter pilot confidence.

Marty's family could not afford college tuition. A high school counselor "rescued" him and provided Marty a Navy ROTC scholarship application. Only two students from his high school graduation class of 200 won a prestigious NROTC scholarship (Marty was one of the recipients). Marty attended the University of New Mexico (UNM) because his dad grew up in Southern Colorado, and Marty had an uncle who worked at the Los Alamos Laboratory. At UNM, Marty chose to enter the

Marines due to his Marine Officer instructor; the instructor had a "warrior mentality", he was a good leader, and he was an excellent mentor. Due to the example set by the instructor, six of the top seven NROTC graduates in Marty's class chose the Marine Option and became Marine Second Lieutenants.

Marty's first stop after graduation was The Basic School (TBS) at Quantico, VA. At TBS, Marty learned that all Marines are riflemen, and this focus was instrumental in developing a bond between the infantry on the ground and the Close Air Support (CAS; and as Marty says, "the best CAS in the world"). Marty decided that becoming an aviator was the best fit for him in the Marine Corps.

Marty's next move was to Pensacola, FL (the home of naval aviation). He flew the T-34 and T-28 at basic flight training in Florida and the F-9F and F-11F at advanced flight training in Kingsville, TX. Marty received his Gold Wings 18 months after arriving in Pensacola in May of 1963.

Marty's first Marine squadron was VMA-533 at Cherry Point, NC where Marty was checked-out in the A-4B aircraft. Upon arrival Marty learned, "Whatever your job is, even if it is the coffee mess officer, treat it as the most important job in the squadron." Marty heeded this advice throughout his career. In 1965 (now a First Lieutenant), Marty was then selected to attend the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA and earn an advanced degree in Aeronautical Engineering. After the three-year coursework (now a temporary Major due to the build-up of the Armed Forces), he was ordered to MCAS El Toro for A-4 refresher training in VMA-214, the Black Sheep Squadron. In two months of refresher training, Marty accumulated 110 hours flight time training new Marine pilots.

Marty finally got to the Vietnam war in September 1968. He was assigned to VMA-211, Wake Island Avengers, at Chu Lai, Vietnam. Marty's job was Assistant Ops Officer. Marty completed 350 combat missions, was awarded four DFCs (Distinguish Flying Cross) and 24 Air Medals. Most of his DFCs were on



missions with troops in contact, bad weather and heavy enemy fire.

After Vietnam, Marty was ordered to the Attack Weapons Branch in Test Operations at the Naval Missile Center, Point Mugu, CA. He enjoyed being a test pilot and project officer for missile test and development. At the end of this three-year tour, Marty had qualified in the A-4, A-7, A-6 and F-4 aircraft.

The next tour brought Marty back to the Marine Corps at MCAS Yuma. He was assigned as the Ops Officer of the A-4 Training Squadron, where he trained new pilots and accrued a lot more flight time. At the one-year mark in the tour, the Group CO selected Marty to command the Tactical A-4F Squadron. Although still a Major, the Commanding General of the Wing concurred. Under Marty's command, the squadron quickly gained the reputation as a tough ACM (Air Combat Maneuver) adversary. After Yuma, Marty had a 12-month overseas tour with the 9th Marine Regiment. Initially, he was assigned as the

Air Liaison Officer (ALO) and later as the G-3 (a unique assignment for an aviator!). Returning stateside, Marty had multiple staff tours, including positions in OPNAV R&D (Research and Development) and one as the head developer of the Marine Corps POM (Program Objective Memorandum; a tough and important job). During Marty's tour as Development Coordinator for attack weapons and aircraft (OP-982), he designed a Laser Maverick development program which resulted in a strike weapon that the Marines and the Air Force rely on to this day. Marty subsequently attended the Naval War College and National War College.

While at the National War College, Marty was selected for promotion to Colonel and commander of the MAG-12 Aircraft Group in the 2nd MAW (Marine Air Wing). Being commander of the MAG-12 was a highlight of his career (which included a 12-month overseas tour in Japan).



Marty's final Marine Corps job was in Washington, DC at HQMC as the head of the Plans, Programs, and Budget Branch of Marine Corps Aviation. After three years of hard work, Marty submitted his retirement paperwork. Although he requested a small retirement ceremony with only the Aviation De-

partment in attendance, the USMC Commandant and the Secretary of the Navy showed up. This was a tribute to Marty's "above and beyond" performance and contribution throughout his career.

Shortly after retiring in October 1987, Marty went to work for Hughes Aircraft Company in Canoga Park, CA. At Hughes Aircraft Company he was assigned to the Strike Weapons Advanced programs. Marty retired from Raytheon Missile Systems (Raytheon bought Hughes Missiles in 1997) in 2009.

Marty's personal awards and decorations also includes two Legions of Merit. He has been a Member of the DFC Society Board of Directors for nine years and President of the Tucson Chapter of the DFC Society for ten years. Marty and his wife live in SaddleBrooke Ranch and have six grown children. Thank you, Marty, for your exemplary contributions to our national security and to CMC!

## Chapter birthdays

The following chapter members have a birthday in March:

John Coleman, Steve Didio, George Kalman, Lois Kelly, Marty Lenzini, Peter Melhorn, Clara Murray, Jeff Peckron, Bart Rice, Ken Riordan Jr., Ritt Schiano

The following chapter members have a birthday in April:

Ray Malaski, Steve Rizzo, Carol Smith

The following chapter members have a birthday in May:

Ed Brogan, Marty Chanik, Tom Grant, Dwight Mears, Bill Myers, Cash Striplin

## April luncheon speaker

Our next luncheon is scheduled for Saturday, 19 April at 11:30 AM in the Private Dining Room of the Ranch House Grill & Brewery at SaddleBrooke Ranch. The restaurant's address is 31143 S. Amenity Drive, Oracle, AZ 85623. Our speaker will be Paula Pedene, a primary 2014 Phoenix VA Scandal whistleblower.

In 2014, Paula became front-page news when she helped a doctor at the hospital expose the deceptive bookkeeping practices that were used to cover up how long veterans were waiting to receive medical care. She is also the co-author with novelist Doug Williams of the 2022 book on this scandal called ***A Sacred Duty***. At our April 19<sup>th</sup> luncheon meeting you will be able to hear "the rest of the story" that started as early as 2010! The significance of the VA hospital issues uncovered will shock you.

According to Congressman Jeff Miller, Chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee (Oversight and Investigations), "Paula Pedene is the invisible hero whose whistleblowing pioneered exposure of a national medical care breakdown for our nation's veterans. She speaks from the heart about the anguish, frustration, and stress from relentless retaliation as a Whistleblower. (cont on next page)





Anyone who wants to know what price you have to put on the line as an ethical public servant fighting the bureaucracy must read her book.”

Paula is a nationally recognized and award-winning public relations professional. She is nationally Accredited in Public Relations (APR) and is a prestigious Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) College of Fellows member. Paula is also the founder of two nonprofits supporting our nation’s military veterans, and is and an inductee into the Defense Information School Hall of Fame and the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame.

Reservations are required for the luncheon. To attend, please contact Col(R) Bruce Huffman at [bruceh426@gmail.com](mailto:bruceh426@gmail.com) or leave a voicemail for Bruce at 518-578-7089. Seating is limited. Spouses are always welcome.

### How to contact us

To contact the President, email Kurt McMillen at [kmmcmillen@gmail.com](mailto:kmmcmillen@gmail.com) or call him at 520-420-7475.

For membership questions, email Don Timian at [dontimian@hotmail.com](mailto:dontimian@hotmail.com) or call him at 571-216-3679.

For luncheon speaker suggestions, email Bill Nagy at [wjnagy@yahoo.com](mailto:wjnagy@yahoo.com) or call him at 520-355-5064.

For Surviving Spouse information contact Carol Smith at [carol.chisari.smith@gmail.com](mailto:carol.chisari.smith@gmail.com) or call her at 915-549-6917.

**Editorial Policy.** This MOAA newsletter, published periodically throughout the year, is solely for the benefit of members of the Catalina Mountains Chapter of MOAA. The opinions expressed herein are those of the authors or editor and do not necessarily reflect those of the national MOAA organization nor any official government policies or agencies.

Charles F. Vaughan, Editor, Catalina Mountains Chapter of MOAA