

2nd Vice President's Report – May 4, 2023

- Invitations for MOAA Memorial Service event cohorts. Positive responses received from Buglers, Atrisco Heritage Academy MCJROTC Color Guard, Chaplain Knudeson, and Audio-Speaker support for the May 13th MOAA Memorial Service.
 - KAFB 377th Wing Chaplain LtCol Jason Knudeson will support our event.
 - Sound Amplification – speakers, microphone, microphone stand, and podium stand arranged.
- Met with the chorus program director to discuss a 2023 program and song selections and number of songs for the event. Program Director report that the chorus did not want to be associated with the military and would not support our event.
- Attempt being made to cobble a last minute trio or quartet and musical arrangement for a smaller group. Obviously did not have the right connections to acquire a group for a fair appearance and performance price.
- 2023 Program at Print Now.
- Still need volunteers to assist with set up: 3-tables, 6-chairs, social table refreshments (1 Vol.), flag stands on stage, reception greeters and program hand-out.
- In the event of winds on morning of May 13th, the Color Guard will present the colors for the buglers playing “The Colors” and pledge of allegiance and then retire the colors. The garrison flag on the field at the NM Veterans Memorial Park remains for the ceremony.
- Meredith Beaton (LCDR (R) USN) Honor Bell Ringer
- Need name caller for deceased being honored
- One last Mailchimp blast to get participants and volunteers

- I am attending the coordination meetings for CABQ sponsored Memorial Day ceremony and program at the NM Veterans Memorial Park Amphitheater. **No members response** to Newsletter “need help” for 6-8 volunteers to act as VIP and invited guest seating ushers at the event. The task for support from the CABQ will go to the UVC for support. MOAA is a UVC member and participant.
- I coordinated with the Dukes of Albuquerque band director to have cascading TAPS played by three buglers to honor deceased veterans PRESENT, PAST, AND FUTURE. I prepared the program description for the ceremony emcee’s script describing the purpose for playing cascading TAPS following the Rifle Team volley; and history of military bugle calls and particular reference to battlefield TAPS history that will be printed in the program for the Memorial Day ceremony.

Memorial Day Observation Preparation, Friday, May 26th Santa Fe Veterans National Cemetery

Among the purposes of the Albuquerque Chapter MOAA is to “support veterans’ memorials and monuments.” A pre-Memorial Day opportunity to contribute in support of that organizational mission can be accomplished at the Santa Fe National Veterans Cemetery. The Santa Fe VFW Post organizes and conducts the Memorial Day Observation Preparation on Friday, May 26th. Individuals, couples, and organizations will rendezvous at the Santa Fe Veterans National Cemetery after 0900 hours to receive flags to place at a headstone or columbarium across the cemetery. The distribution of over 72,000 American Flags will be made to volunteers for marking gravesites. That is an increase of over 6,000 graves and markers decorated for Memorial Day last year.

Direct questions concerning the event preparation at the Santa Fe Veterans National Cemetery to 2ndvice@alburnoaa.org or 505-271-6454 and I will assist in getting you information. Due to the vastness of the S.F. Veterans Cemetery and the irregular individual arrival times, an initial area to meet and assemble as an MOAA Chapter members participating will be near the communal shelter in Section 5 of the cemetery. It always is appropriate to ensure flags are posted along the highway visible gravesites in Section 9 & 10 of the cemetery. That will be our starting point in the

morning. Later in the day as weather and the number of volunteers available dictate, we can move north to Columbarium 4, Section 24 and 25.

Albuquerque MOAA Quarterly Social is confirmed for July 16, 2023 from 11:00 to 13:00 at the NM Veterans Memorial Park Visitor Center conference room and kitchen.

June 10 2023, Saturday is the NM Department of Veteran Services (DVS) 2023 Women Veterans Conference. The event will be held in Albuquerque at a UNM Travelstead Hall from 8:00 AM to 3:30 PM. As DVS expected the event is oversold and RSVP early and reserve seats at the event are no longer available.

DVS point-of-contact is theresa.figueroa@affidvs.nm.gov.

I attended the MOAA Transition webinar and presentation for SBP Open Season enrollment and withdrawal as a result of the federal statute change that corrected the SBP-DIC offset / "Widows Tax". The briefing slides from the presentation will be available after May 15, 2023. Each service component pay-center will receive and process requests and intent letters from retired veterans who did not enroll at the date of their retirement and wish to enroll with their spouse or disabled child in SBP during the special enrollment window ending December 31, 2023. In order to enroll veterans who previously did not enroll for SBP will be required to pay the monthly 6.5% premiums for SBP benefits starting at the date of retirement, plus a one-time buy-in factor that is computed on the retiree's monthly base pension amount. Retirees opting to enroll in this window still are responsible for completing the statutory requirement for 360 monthly retirement premium payments (30 years) prior to receiving eligibility for the SBP benefits.

If you become aware of a retiree wishing to enroll in this SBP window who needs assistance, refer them to me and I will help them get started with the intent letter for mailing to the service pay-center for evaluation.

Michael Houck
LTC (R) USA
2nd Vice President