

THE HIGH DESERT BUGLE

**Mojave Desert Chapter
Military Officers Association
of America**



VOLUME 39, ISSUE 7

JULY 2026

CHAPTER MEETING IN JULY WILL BE FUN & INFORMATIVE



The July celebrations commemorating the 250th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence will continue at the High Desert Chapter's monthly meeting on the 22nd. All members are encouraged to join the camaraderie, enjoy a sumptuous lunch put on by the Bear Valley Country Club staff, and

participate in an opportunity drawing featuring a variety of semi-valuable prizes.

The main presentation at the meeting has yet to be determined, but according to one person who wishes to remain anonymous, there is some chance that it could be the "best ever."

The meeting will be held at the Bear Valley Country Club on Wednesday, July 22. The social hour will begin at 1100 hours; lunch will be served at noon. The cost is \$28 per person. PLEASE RSVP before Monday, 20 July to Chapter President LTC Michale Moticha, by email at michaelwmoticha@verizon.net or by phone at 760-792-5004. 📞





Mojave Valley Chapter



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Mission Statement

The Mojave Desert Chapter of the MOAA embraces “Never Stop Serving” our uniformed service retirees, veterans, those currently serving, their families and surviving spouses, through advocacy at the Federal and State levels on issues relating to the unique challenges of uniformed service. Additionally, we are committed to volunteer engagement with the needs of the communities, jointly and individually.

The Bugle is published monthly by the Mojave Desert Chapter (TMDC), an affiliate of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) and is available to our membership in both email and postal mode.

MOAA and its affiliated chapters are non-partisan.





President's Narrative

LTC Michael W. Moticha

**Continuing the effort to
promote our Chapter
Providing 53 years of service
in the High Desert**

CELEBRATION OF 250 YEARS

During the month of July, the 250th year of our United States founding will be celebrated across the country. Many activities are being held locally this month, and even a few began in 2025 to honor our nation's birthday. My acknowledgement of this event will be a combination of a quiet prayer of thankfulness and a few hollers of exhilaration. I am looking forward to attending as many celebrations and birthday parties as I can. Below I have listed a few of my calendar entries that the uniform of the day will be Red, White and Blue. By the time this newsletter is distributed, most of these events will probably have taken place along with others not included.

1. The Spring Valley Lake's 21st annual Fireworks Show on 27 June. This event was a wonderful display of fireworks on the lake. I was most impressed with the close proximity which I was able to view the presentation from. These blasts were only a block away and a few hundred feet high. Most of the performances I have attended have been blocks, even miles away.
2. The Inland Saltwater Anglers Club dinner and meeting on 1 July. This event, down the hill in Upland, was held with little fanfare directed towards the Nation's Celebration but was a break for everything else listed on my calendar.
3. The Mojave Desert Chapter's Board Meeting on 2 July. The Board Members competed verbally for positions on subjects requiring a vote giving an "air" of the "Democratic Process" our nation thrives on.

4. The High Desert Marines' monthly breakfast on 3 July. Held at the Moose Lodge in Hesperia each month, the Marines always find a way with a theme, songs, decorations, gifts and appropriate food, to celebrate any occasion.

5. The Riverside Philharmonic Orchestra's Concert for Heroes on 3 July. An early arrival with food for an evening's meal, listening to Classical, Traditional, Modern and Military-Themed Music in the open air and ending the performance with a fireworks display set to music, makes for an outstanding evening.

6. The Town of Apple Valley's Annual Freedom Festival on 4 July. Held at Brewster Park, the event will include live music and entertainment, family activities, food vendors and a fireworks show will close out the night. Living a few blocks from the park, I can bring out a comfortable chair, place it on my driveway and enjoy the show.

7. The Ascension Lutheran Church's BBQ in Apple Valley on 5 July. The church is inviting veterans and their families to attend a celebratory festivity at 12:00 PM on Sunday. The church is looking to develop a Veteran's Ministry, and the BBQ is their way of beginning the effort towards this goal.

I hope your calendar is just as full of events and activities to celebrate this 250th Birthday/Anniversary as mine. God Bless the USA.

SURVIVING SPOUSES

Are you a possible future Surviving Spouse? I know such a topic or question is not something one would want to currently discuss. However, it may happen any day and you must be prepared to take on the role. In the May issue of MOAA's Military Magazine, there is an outstanding and informative article for future surviving spouses on page 59. Titled "Traversing a Tough Time," it outlines, using surviving spouse examples, the entitlements available and the steps necessary to receive these benefits. Tragically, these benefits do not automatically appear upon the death of a retired spouse. A surviving spouse must take timely and deliberate steps, after their veteran spouse dies, to receive what is rightfully theirs.

President's Narrative

Continued

From the article, the two most important pieces of paperwork to begin these steps are the veteran's DD Form 214 and his/her death certificate. Make lots of copies. Obtaining help for this activity as a surviving spouse, can come from your local chapter's Surviving Spouse Liaison Officer, MOAA's Surviving Spouse Virtual Chapter, or a Military Base's Retiree Activity Office. The RAO at Edwards Air Force Base, (661) 277- 4931/0237, at Fort Irwin, at the Marine Corps Logistics Base and at March Air Force Base, have all been used in the past by our Chapter's Surviving Spouses. The help is available; you just have to ask. You also need to consider this topic now.

MEMBERSHIP MISINFORMATION

An important function of any organization is to ensure its members are properly identified and the necessary information to be able to contact any member is correct and up to date. Changes taking place in our lives are personal and dealt with by us, on a need-to-know basis. However, new phone numbers, addresses, email identifications and locations created by those changes need to be passed on to the chapter. Sometimes it is weeks, or even months, before communications are reestablished. Besides the normal turbulence brought on by new communication equipment, the dissatisfaction of public services, a residential movement, or the passing of members from this life to the next, each have the ability to create misinformation.

As president, I dislike not being informed and unable to communicate with each member. I ask that each of you ensure that your contact information is current and that you take the needed steps to provide any changes when necessary. If you have had adjustments to your contact data or lives in the last few months and are not sure if the changes were provided to the chapter, please check with me or any Board

Member. Due to MOAA's restrictive personal information program, no Mojave Desert Chapter directory for its members has or will be published for distribution.



COMMUNITY PROJECT DONATIONS

A major change has taken place in the financial donation scene for two of our Chapter's Community Projects. The High Desert Community Foundation will no longer provide its fiscal sponsorship program effective December 31, 2026, to the Parade of Pianos and the Apple Valley/Victor Valley Legacy Museums. Both organizations have chosen to enter into a new fiscal sponsorship program with new organizations.

As of 1 August 2026, The Parade of Pianos will now be associated with and receive their fiscal support from the Apple Valley Sunrise Lions Foundation.

The Apple Valley Legacy Museum and the Victor Valley Legacy Museum will now be associated with and receive their fiscal support from the Mohave Historical Society.

All checks written providing donations to these two Community Projects, whether given directly by Chapter members or passed through the Chapter's treasury for a single donation check, will be written out to the appropriate fiscal supporter/sponsor and the projects name noted in the memo line of the check. These changes are important and must be followed to ensure all donated funds go directly to the correct organization (additional information is on page 7). 📖



Treasurer's Report

Maj Ronald Matsuda

We began the month of June 2026 with \$6,934.05 in our chapter's accounts. We had revenues of \$2,168.30 (including \$1,000.00 from an anonymous donor) and expenses of \$1,062.85 resulting in a current balance of \$8,039.50.

A check for \$100.00 from MOAA Vacations went to the Youth Awards fund. As a result we now have \$3,902.81 in the Youth Awards fund, \$133.00 in the Barstow Veterans Home and none in the other three funds.

Remember that dues paid to our Chapter goes exclusively for our administrative costs. Please note that our administrative costs are comparatively low as our dues are \$35.00 per year and \$10.00 for Surviving Spouses and active duty personnel. If you have a question as to whether or not you have already paid for 2026 please email me at rmatsuda@outlook.com and I will advise you as to whether or not you have paid for the year.

When sending dues payments please send your check, made out to TMDC-MOAA, to TMDC-MOAA, PO Box 785, Victorville, CA 92393-0785.

Members are encouraged to renew their dues using the form on found on the last page of this newsletter. If you don't use the membership form please use the memo line on your check to designate "Dues," "Youth Awards," or any of the other charities that we support. 🗣️

MOAA SIGNATURE GROUPS

Join MOAA Leadership and your fellow MOAA members on these hosted cruises and land tours.

AFFORDABLE TRAVEL — Every MOAA Signature Group is a negotiated special which is not available to the general public — only MOAA members and their guests can attend. You can, however, bring as many friends and family members with you as you like.

EASIER, SAFER TRAVEL — Vacations are meant to be an escape. It is your time to relax and unwind, explore, and discover. So, let us take care of the details. This is valuable time that doesn't have to be spent worrying about how you're going to get there or, what you're going to do when you get there.

INCREASE THE FUN FACTOR — Being surrounded by like-minded people offers you the chance to share experiences and make new memories together. Group travel can give you the chance to meet people and make new friends. You'll meet individuals who are also passionate about travel and have experiences that are similar to your own. With shared military backgrounds and values, camaraderie forms naturally and often leads to lasting friendships.

2026 & 2027 SIGNATURE GROUPS

July 12-21, 2026	Highlights of Eastern Europe River Cruise	9-nights from \$3,999
October 1-10, 2026	Western Europe Yacht Cruise	9-nights from \$4,999
April 25-May 2, 2027	Castles Along the Rhine River Cruise	7-nights from \$4,199
July 19-27, 2027	France & Spain Yacht Cruise	8-nights from \$5,799
September 14-25, 2027	Circle Iceland Yacht Cruise	11-nights from \$8,999
Sept. 25-Oct. 4, 2027	Battlefields of WWI & WWII Tour	10 days from \$6,495

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A group photo of attendees at the MOAA's Western Regional Conference held in San Diego on May 28 & 29. Participants from the High Desert Chapter included Maj Ron Matsuda and MAJ Meera Maheswaran.



Newsletter Notes

CPT Byron Ward

AI: ANOTHER FAIL

When I was seven or eight years old, way back in the early 1960s, my favorite TV show was *McHale's Navy*, a comedy series about the WWII adventures of Lt. Cmdr. Quinton McHale (Ernest Borgnine) and the whacky crew of misfits assigned to PT-73, a patrol torpedo boat. I don't remember much about that series, but I do recall two or three episodes in which the PT Boat sank an enemy submarine, each time depicting the sinking utilizing memorable stock footage of a sub blown in half and lifted out of the water in the shape of an inverted "V" (two screen shots shown below).



So recently I was pondering the question of exactly how many submarines McHale's PT boat sank during the show's four-season, 138-episode run, and for the answer I turned to that high-tech, inexhaustible font of infor-



How many submarines did PT-73 sink in the TV series *McHale's Navy*?

PT-73 did not sink any submarines in the TV series *McHale's Navy*.

A search of episode guides, plot summaries, and historical overviews of the show reveals **no instance** in which PT-73 destroys a submarine. The series was a light-hearted wartime sitcom, and its combat action was generally comedic rather than tactical. None of the available sources describing PT-73's exploits mention a submarine sinking. [bing.com +1](#)

mation, Artificial Intelligence. The reply that AI gave me (above) was that the number of subs sunk was **ZERO**. Well, I may not have yet celebrated my ninth birthday at the time, but I knew what I had seen and that the number was at least two.

What to do? I turned to the Internet and discovered that all 138 episodes of *McHale's Navy* are available on YouTube. I went through them all, which was not as time-consuming as it sounds because of rapid scrolling and the fact that scenes at sea are easily discernable from non-combat scenes on land, which constitute over 95% of the series.

The answer? PT-73 torpedoed and sank **NINE** enemy subs during the series' run. Three were sunk in Season 1 episodes (1-2, 1-28, and 1-30), and all were depicted utilizing footage of a flaming submarine model sinking by the stern (below). The other six episodes (2-9, 2-19, 3-2, 3-21, 3-36, and 4-8) all utilized the inverted "V" footage that I remembered.



Nine is not zero; I win, AI loses. Big. The first lesson to be learned is the same as last month: DO NOT automatically trust AI. The second is that AI is obviously not as advanced as many claim. I found the answer on the Internet, which is where AI lives, so AI should be capable of evaluating videos found online like I did, only taking seconds to do so. 🐛



Community Projects

Project Leaders

YOUTH FUND FOR JROTC, YOUNG MARINES, CALIFORNIA CADET CORPS

The Chapter is currently in need of donations to support scholarships and other financial support that will be presented at next year's Annual Youth Awards Ceremony, tentatively scheduled for April 2027. Our project supports worthy recipients from five High School JROTC unit programs, the 18th Brigade of the California Cadet Corps, and the Excelsior High Desert Marines.

PARADE OF PIANOS

The president of the High Desert Community Foundation Board recently sent out letters to all 36 projects it supports informing them that the HDCF would no longer be serving in the capacity of fiscal sponsorship of the projects. POP Director Kaye Walraven was pleased to announce that Parade of Pianos has found another fiscal sponsor through the Apple Valley Sunrise Lions Foundation.



APPLE VALLEY & VICTOR VALLEY LEGACY MUSEUMS

Marcy Taylor

Like Parade of Pianos, I also recently found out that the High Desert Community Foundation will no longer will be serving in the capacity of fiscal sponsorship to our organizations.

My two museums are also fortunate to be able to continue operations by partnering with the Mohave Historical Society as "satellite" locations under their umbrella and 501c3. This will not be much of a change, as the three organizations have been long-time partners in terms of membership, community events, field trips, and support with sales of books and logo wear. We will open an additional checking account at Flagstar Bank for museum finances under the main MHS bank account, so there will be no problem will comingling of funds. Any donations for either organization are still fully tax deductible. We appreciate your past support and look forward to working with you in the future.

Summer movie nights are on the horizon. Friday July 17 will feature *Foxfire*, shot partially at the Apple Valley Inn in 1955, while Friday August 21 will feature the 1992 Roy Rogers Tribute produced by Happy Trails Children's Foundation. A \$5 ticket includes a drink, a cookie, popcorn, a raffle ticket, and a movie under the stars. You can't beat that for a cheap date night! Hope to see you there!

Community Projects

Continued

BARSTOW VETERANS HOME

In support of the Barstow Veterans Home, the Chapter has allocated \$200 toward the purchase of sundries for the facility's residents. The effort is being spearheaded by Phyllis Skirvin.

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE FLIGHT TEST MUSEUM

The Chapter is pleased to have as one of its Community Support Projects the Air Force Flight Test Museum at Edwards Air Force Base, the mission of which is to preserve, display and educate the public to over 75 years of flight test research, both at Edwards and the surrounding area. The inventory of the Air Force Flight Test Museum includes over 80 historic aircraft.

SUPPORT THE CHAPTER'S COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Members are encouraged to donate to one or more of the Community Projects in order for the membership to provide the best service we can to these worthy causes:

YOUTH FUND	\$ _____
LEGACY MUSEUMS	\$ _____
PARADE OF PIANOS	\$ _____
VETERANS HOME	\$ _____
FLIGHT MUSEUM	\$ _____
TOTAL	\$ _____

Please make checks out to TMDC/MOAA and mail to P. O. Box 785, Victorville, CA 92393, and please accept our greatest thanks for your generosity. 🙏



Above: MAJ Meera Maheswaran checks out a rifle with Mark Hotchkiss from High Desert Marines
Below: Meera considers the benefits of a handgun over larger armaments





Newsletter Extra

CPT Byron Ward

As announced by Marcy Taylor on page 7, the Apple Valley Legacy Museum will be holding two Summer Movie Night events in July, on Friday the 17th and the following Friday the 21st (flyer at upper right).

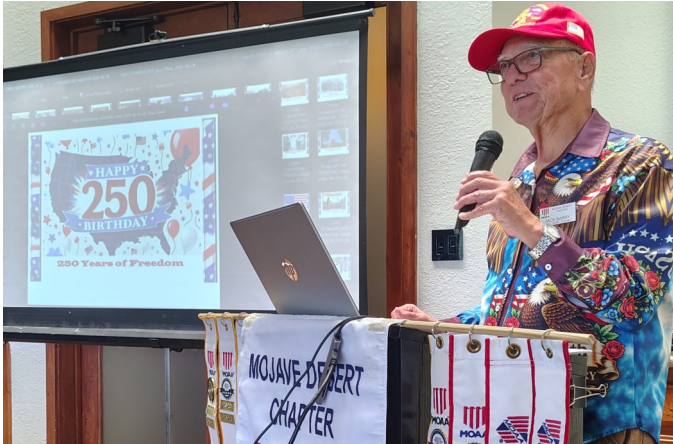
A few years ago I became very familiar with the movie being shown on the 17th, *Foxfire*, after recognizing that the Apple Valley Inn was the shooting location of several scenes. This motivated me to visit the Inn to take a few pictures that matched up with scenes from the movie. Below, stars Jeff Chandler, Jane Russell, and Dan Duryea drive a Jeep into the Apple Valley Inn complex. At right, Jane Russell and Dan Duryea relax by the pool (now without a diving board and empty). At lower right, Jeff Chandler walks out of the Inn's main building.





Photo Gallery

Member Contributions





Most Highly Decorated

CPT Byron Ward

CDR SAMUEL DEALEY



The sixth-most-highly-decorated servicemember is a legendary submariner. Sam Dealey was born on September 13, 1906, in Dallas, Texas, also the location Dealey Plaza, the site of John F. Kennedy's assassination. The plaza was named for George B. Dealey, a Dallas civic leader and Sam's uncle.

Like almost 99% of WWII submarine commanders, Dealey graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy (Class of 1930). He then served aboard the battleship USS *Nevada* (BB-36) and the destroyer USS *Rathburne* (DD-113) until 1934, when he entered the Submarine School at New London, Connecticut. After completing sub school, his prewar service in-

cluded stints on five submarines and posts as the executive officer of both the battleship USS *Wyoming* (BB-32) and the destroyer USS *Reuben James* (DD-245), which, following Dealey's departure, became the first American warship sunk in World War II (31 October 1941).

When Pearl Harbor was attacked, Dealey was commander of the submarine USS S-20 (SS-125), which patrolled Atlantic waters. A year later, in December 1942, he assumed the command of the brand new fleet boat, USS *Harder* (SS-257), and embarked on a series of outstanding war patrols in the Pacific. After four successful patrols (from June 1943 to April 1944), during which Dealey sank tens of thousands of tons of Japanese shipping and earned four Navy Crosses, *Harder* was ready for even more intense action.

On war patrol five, Dealey took *Harder* deep into enemy waters and engaged convoy escort ships like no other submarine in the Pacific, reportedly sinking five destroyers in four days (although a post-war assessment credits him for sinking three and damaging two). For this amazing patrol, Dealey was awarded the Army's Distinguished Service Cross by General Douglas MacArthur and, eventually, the Medal of Honor.

Tragically, that Medal of Honor was awarded posthumously, because in August 1944, the *Harder* was sunk by depth charges from a Japanese patrol boat, making Dealey the only person in the top 20 most highly decorated servicemembers to be killed in combat.

Commander Sam Dealey, the most highly decorated Navy man in history, remains on eternal patrol with 79 other members of the USS *Harder's* crew.



Next month, #5: the most highly decorated enlisted man in history, who is also the most highly decorated Marine. 🎖️



**THE LARGER OUR NUMBERS
THE GREATER YOUR VOICE**

FORM FOR NEW AND RENEWING MOJAVE DESERT CHAPTER MEMBERS

PLEASE CHECK ONE:

☐

NEW MEMBER

☐

RENEWAL

NAME _____

(RENEWING MEMBERS- INDICATE ANY CHANGES BELOW, OTHERWISE LEAVE BLANK)

RANK _____ **BRANCH OF SERVICE** _____

____ **RETIRED** ____ **FORMER** ____ **SURVIVING SPOUSE** ____ **ACTIVE OR NG**

SPOUSE'S NAME _____

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TO COMPLETE ENROLLMENT OR RENEWAL, SCAN AND EMAIL THIS FORM TO michaelwmoticha@verizon.net, OR PRINT THE COMPLETED FORM WITH A CHECK PAYABLE TO TMDC-MOAA AND MAIL TO

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