

Hello Arizona Auxiliaries,

Hope you all found great ways to honor our Veterans for Veterans Day. Did you post your Auxiliary's event or events you attended on social media? Did you use the Hashtags? Make sure to use them so we can see what great things the Auxiliary is doing.

Have any of the things your Auxiliary has done met the Americanism National Citation criteria? If so, the entry form, which is required, is available in MALTA under Member Resources. This completed entry form (with photos, please) is due to me as the Department Americanism Chairman by March 31, 2026 for judging.

Life is busy right now with the holidays and preparation; let's keep in mind those affected in our community. Whether seniors, active duty or even a neighbor that may be struggling, reach out and invite them to your holiday gathering. Being Patriotic and civic minded comes in many forms and one is caring for our community.

Another way the Auxiliary might show support is through "Blankets for Bryan", the special project of our Department President Brenda Kinghorn. Collect and take blankets, hats, gloves, and clothing donations to the local homeless shelter. Consider taking gently used blankets, towels and pet food to the local animal shelter, also. When doing so remember to use the #BlanketsforBryan to share the wonderful work the Auxiliary is doing in your community.

Hope you all have a happy and safe Thanksgiving.

Heather Lyn  
Department of Arizona  
Americanism chairman

## **Auxiliary Outreach 2025-2026**

**[#AuxiliaryOutreach](#) and [#az2526outreach](#) or [#az2526AuxiliaryOutreach](#)**

I love the feel of the crisp and cool mornings now that Autumn is here! What a perfect time to get out and enjoy the weather! Many of our comrades enjoy the outdoors as do many Auxiliary members. Have you thought about volunteering at a local, state, or national park with your Post members or even with another Auxiliary in your area? Here's a great link to find out how you can help out at a State Park in your area: [Volunteer Opportunities in Arizona State Parks: Conservation & Education](#)

Over this past weekend, I had the opportunity to connect with many community partners and asked them if they need helpers with their programs. I spent time with our Comrades at the AZ State Fair and talked with the public about how we, as a veteran's organization, want to partner with others outside of our standard realm. It spurred a lot of great conversations and goodwill! And then I attended "Yes Day for Autism Research" and checked in with the vendors there picking up information on their organizations and how we can help. Autism is also an adult disability, and some organizations need assistance with this precious group of people. In fact, December 3<sup>rd</sup> is International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

As the holidays come upon us, please think about how to partner during this time to give thanks! Now is the time to think about the magical winter season, too! SO many holidays!!!

December 4<sup>th</sup> is National Sock Day! This might be a good one to work in with President Brenda's Blankets for Bryan by helping distribute blankets at a local park made or collected by a local church. And wear some fun socks while you're at it!

Keep up the hash tagging!! I've been scrolling for your outreach activities on Facebook! Please mention how you helped your community partners!!

This month's shout out goes to the White Mountains Auxiliary 9907 who is partnering with Tails of Love, an animal rescue and adoption center. They are volunteering on the board of directors and helping with fostering homeless animals until they can be adopted - time and effort - now that is what I call engagement!

**"As you shine your *light*, the world grows *bright*, you are a beacon of *love*."** Sara Manke,  
National Ambassador, Auxiliary Outreach, 2025-26.

Remember, You've Got a Friend in Me! Please don't hesitate to ask me if you have questions!



Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary  
Auxiliary Outreach Program

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## BUDDY POPPY/NATIONAL HOME PROGRAM

Go Team Department of Arizona! We are going strong to meet our Buddy Poppy/National Home goals! Some reports from Auxiliaries are noted:

- Auxiliary 2066 – September 9<sup>th</sup>: Presentation to the Nogales High School AF JROTC classes on scholarships, Buddy Poppy, National Home, Auxiliary, Veterans and Family Support, Americanism, POW/MIA, and Blankets for Bryan. 150 cadets attended over 6 classes.  
October 15<sup>th</sup>: Partnered with the Santa Cruz Workforce Development for 2025 job Expo & Services community event. Comrades and Auxiliary promoted Membership, Americanism, Scholarships, and Buddy Poppy. Giveaways and business cards were available.
- Auxiliary 1433 – September 20<sup>th</sup>: Hosted a joint VFW/Auxiliary Membership, Buddy Poppy and National Home Drive outside a busy restaurant from 6-9 pm. Timing and location helped make it successful with Relief Fund donations and 5 applications for the Auxiliary.
- Auxiliary 9972 – November 4<sup>th</sup>: Stuffed gift bags for Veterans in care facilities, including Buddy Poppies.  
November 6<sup>th</sup>: Membership and Buddy Poppy Drive
- Auxiliary 10254 – October 12<sup>th</sup>: Held a Buddy Poppy Drive with a bake sale outside the General Store. Donations were received for the Relief fund and the fund to help rebuild Post 10254.
- Auxiliaries 2190, 10386, 11014 – October: Attended JAVC's Standdown/Resource fair and promoted Scholarships, Buddy Poppy, Americanism, Membership, Youth, and Legislative Programs and had some creative giveaways.
- Auxiliary 1677 – For Halloween, 1850 bags of candy were tied with a Buddy Poppy and handed out at the Halloween stroll on Main Street. Youth were involved in bagging the candy.

Great activities! You have shown creativity, collaboration with Comrades and other Auxiliaries, thinking "outside the box" on venues and times, and inclusion of other Programs. We truly have great events and we inspire one another! If I have missed your

activities, please send your information to [sunlover1102@gmail.com](mailto:sunlover1102@gmail.com) and USE YOUR HASHTAGS with Facebook posts.

November and December are going to be busy with special days. We have Thanksgiving, Pearl Harbor Day and Bill of Rights Day (12/7), Hanukkah (12/14-21), Kwanzaa (12/26-1/1), and Christmas. November is also Native American Heritage Month and National Caregivers Month. Let's not forget some other fun national days: World Kindness Day (11/13), International Men's Day (11/19), Universal Children's Day (11/20), National Apple Pie Day (12/3), National Cookie Day (12/4), National Hamburger Day (12/21), Thank a Soldier Week (12/21-27), and National Bacon Day (12/30).

Start thinking about applying for a National Citation Award for your Buddy Poppy and National Home Programs. The entry forms are on MALTA. An award is available for each. For Buddy Poppy you must describe your outstanding activity/event with your VFW Post to educate your community about the VFW Buddy Poppy. For the National Home you must describe your outstanding activity/event that creates awareness and education of eligibility and who qualifies for help from the National Home and promoting it within their Department to help Veterans and their families. Each must be mailed by March 31, 2026, for judging.

Keep working on our Department Goals:

Buddy Poppy: Order your Poppies now. The Comrades have to order them, but the Auxiliary can help purchase them. Keep a Buddy Poppy "kit" with you to distribute. WEAR YOUR BUDDY POPPY EVERYWHERE. People notice, so be prepared to educate. Brainstorm ideas for your Buddy Poppy Display Entry at Convention.

National Home: Get the information on eligibility criteria out to your members and the public. Make business cards with the Helpline (800-313-4200) and the QR code. Buy your Life Membership NOW. The price goes up to \$100 on January 1<sup>st</sup>. Until then you can purchase a Life membership for \$50 and a Centennial Membership for \$100. Purchase your Tribute Brick. If you want a Centennial Brick, go in with the Auxiliaries in your District. Support our Comrades goal of "Stocking the Store" to supply residents with needed store items. Western Conference Auxiliaries and Comrades are collecting together to purchase a bench in The National Home Memorial Garden and appreciate our support. Currently 10 homes have been vacated and 32 homes are occupied. The Washington House had a great success story – the family was accepted and graduated in just 7 months!

Keep going strong, AZ. Let's flood Arizona with Buddy Poppies

## November 2025 Hospital

Let's jump right in. Holidays are here and are lonely for a lot of people. Volunteer and visiting opportunities are based on the facility where you go. Whether it is a VA facility or a local hospital, assisted living, or nursing home bet you find some veteran family members.

When looking for projects you could consider making up some cards or bookmarks with positive affirmations. You will find a wealth of these affirmations on the internet. I googled positive affirmations for mental health. We all need these. Here are examples:

I am worthy of love and happiness.

I am enough, just as I am.

I am grateful for my unique qualities.

I have the strength to overcome any challenge.

I choose to focus on the positive aspects of life.

I focus on the small moments of joy.

There are many, many more. Print it on a "thinking of you" card or attach it to a small flag or use your imagination. Pick something that makes you smile. Then tell me about it.

There are 40 plus auxiliaries. Each has the chance to apply for a \$250 grant to do something cool for veterans. Less than half took advantage last year. So far this year only 4 have applied. What's up, folks? Today \$250 is easy to spend. Let's get on it.

Remember BE THE ONE spread the help line number 988.

Encourage the EMT community, police, your local cemetery and medical examiner to carry a body size flag for any veteran to be transported at time of death. They deserve this small token of our appreciation for their sacrifice.

The Phoenix VA hospital wish list is available on the department website.



HAVE A BLESSED AND HAPPY THANKSGIVING with family and friends,

Amy Timbes

## November Legislative Newsletter

Becky Baldwin

### **Catching the Legislative Waves: Arizona Auxiliaries Making a Splash!**

Arizona Auxiliaries are riding high on this year's **Legislative Wave**, and the tide of advocacy is strong! Here's who's been hanging ten with **#az2526legislative**  

#### **Auxiliary 1433 – Surfing for Knowledge**

Members dove right into the **Arizona Legislative Session** and came back with a wave of valuable information to share. Knowledge is power!

#### **Auxiliary 10386 – Making Waves on Social Media**


By posting about **VFW Legislative Priorities**, they're helping our message roll through the social media surf — keeping the focus on what truly matters for veterans and their families.

#### **District 10 Auxiliary – Hosting a Town Hall Tide**

They caught the perfect advocacy wave by hosting a **Town Hall Meeting** with local legislative leaders. That's how you turn a ripple into a full-on swell of community engagement!

#### **Auxiliary 5990 & District 9 – Riding the Call to Action Current**

These wave riders hit social media with **Call to Action alerts**, urging members to contact their legislators and help keep VFW priorities front and center in the **NDAA**.

Keep catching those waves, Arizona! 

Don't forget to **sign up for Action Corps Weekly** to stay in the know — and when you share your advocacy adventures, tag **#az2526legislative** so we can see your legislative surfboards in action!

Let's keep this legislative tide rolling — together we're making waves that matter!  

October Newsletter

Paulette Marshall

Media Relations/Historian

Certainly, it is the time of the year when we give thanks for not only our Veterans' but also just the ability to serve our communities. As I know that many of you have multiple activities planned, what can you share with the world about your activities? I know personally that I love to take pictures of our activities but get wrapped up in the moment often at my Post home, living in the moment and forget to document the day. But I am so thankful for those share those photos for our social media.

This is the prefect time to show your patriotism/Americanism, your community service, and the season to visit our Veterans in the Hospital. The programs we all participate in from Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving, Flags and Flower, coming in strong to Wreaths Across America, Christmas are all covered under one of the programs in the program book. There is no doubt that your Program Chair would love to see what you do, how you do it, and celebrate those you are serving, so be sure to use your hashtags and when you have done something spectacularly interesting be sure to share with them individually.

I also wish to share so tag me at #az2526media, or email me at [daphine2@hotmail.com](mailto:daphine2@hotmail.com). I do stalk your pages if you have friended me on Facebook, but just as it is your busy time, we are also an active Auxiliary, so sometimes I miss those posts.





### 🦋 Grateful Hearts, Strong Auxiliaries 🍁

As we gather around tables this season, it's the perfect time to pause and remember what we're truly thankful for—**our members**. Every single one of you is a vital part of our Auxiliary family, and your presence makes our mission possible.

We're thankful for the ones who show up at every meeting, always ready with a helping hand. We're thankful for the Life Members whose commitment keeps our foundation steady, year after year. We're thankful for the "canteen crowd," the ones who may stop by for a drink or a meal but whose membership still strengthens our numbers and keeps the doors open. We're thankful for the volunteers who put in hours behind the scenes—whether it's cooking, cleaning, decorating, or just showing up with a smile. Lastly, we're thankful for our Auxiliary officers who guide, organize, and keep us moving forward together.

Just like a Thanksgiving feast, every dish on the table has its place—and every member brings something valuable to our Auxiliary. From the turkey to the cranberry sauce, from the mashed potatoes to the pumpkin pie, it all comes together to make something memorable.

### 🍁 Small, Simple Ways to Say "Thank You"



- **Handwritten notes** tucked into meeting agendas or left at the canteen.
  - **Candy treats with little tags** ("You're sweet to our Auxiliary!").
- **Shout-outs on social media** or in the newsletter to highlight contributions.
- **Small tokens** like a Buddy Poppy pin, a magnet, or even a sticker of appreciation.
- **Verbal thanks** at meetings—calling someone out for their efforts goes a long way.
- **Special recognition tables** (for officers, Life Members, or frequent volunteers) with a little sign that says "Reserved for Our VIPs."

## **Thanking Our Veterans and Community**

We would be remiss if we didn't extend our deepest gratitude to the veterans we serve and the community that supports us. Veterans are the reason we exist—the true centerpiece of our table of service. To them, we say: *thank you for your sacrifice, your courage, and your example.*

And to our community partners, friends, and neighbors who stand beside us—whether through donations, volunteer hours, or showing up at our events—we are so very grateful. Your support keeps our mission alive and helps us continue to serve in meaningful ways.

This Thanksgiving season, let's remember: **together, we are stronger, together, we are family, and together, we can serve with grateful hearts.** Don't forget to show off your “thankful for...” membership activities.

 **A Personal Note:** As we celebrate this season of gratitude, **I want to thank *each* of you** across the Department of Arizona for the heart, time, and energy you pour into keeping our membership strong and growing. I'm truly thankful for all you do. 

Irene Nowacki

## Scholarships Chairman

Now that we are all coming out of our sugar comas from all that Halloween candy, hopefully you have all had the opportunity to hear some of your applicants' speeches and essays for VOD & PP. Are you planning to have an awards ceremony, dinner or celebration for those that were chosen to go to the next level? Let's show these contest winners some appreciation and love. We sure do have some truly talented youth out there.

Speaking of talented youth, now is the time to push those art contests. Schools will be out for the upcoming holidays and what a better chance to take the time planning their project and getting a head start on it. [3-D Patriotic Art and Young American Creative Patriotic Art](#) contests will be due before you know it. The end of the year always flies by in the blink of an eye.

Deadlines for these two contests are **March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026**, to the sponsoring VFW Auxiliary for judging. Open to youth in grades 9-12. If you know of a crafty youth in your area, get them this information. Let's get a plethora of entries this year. We love to see the talent each and every year.

Since we are talking about scholarships, let us not forget our two, yes two, Department of Arizona scholarship and Grant. Auxiliary Merit Scholarship and Auxiliary Educational Grant.

The [Auxiliary Merit Scholarship](#) is open to a son, daughter, sister, brother, grandson/daughter or a member themselves of the VFW or VFW Auxiliary. **Deadline for this is April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026, and must be sent to the Scholarships Chairman.**

[Auxiliary Educational Grant](#) is open to current members of an Arizona VFW Auxiliary and must be 18 years of age or older. This is \$1000 to the first-place winner to help further their educational endeavors. **Deadline for this is April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026, and must be sent to the Scholarships Chairman.**

Does this sound familiar? It should. There is another scholarship that is super special this year. The National Presidents special project, [Continuing Education Scholarship](#). Open to VFW Auxiliary members, their spouse and their children. This also awards the winners money to use for their education. There is 1 winner from each conference. The winner will get \$1250.00. Hopefully after this year the escrow will go up and they will receive more. Our goal this year is to do some fundraising for this scholarship to help raise the prize money. **Deadline for this is February 15, 2026.**

Information on all these Scholarships and contests is available on the department website [www.vfwauxaz.org](http://www.vfwauxaz.org). Behind log in, click on Programs. There is a link to all the applications and the criteria for each under Scholarships.

Let's get out there and get as many applications handed out as possible. I would love to see a whole bunch of projects to judge. Good luck!

<https://vfwauxaz.org/uploads/documents/25-26Documents/25-26DeptAZMeritScholarshipApplication.pdf>

<https://vfwauxaz.org/uploads/documents/25-26Documents/25-26AZVFWAuxEducationalGrantApplication.pdf>

<https://vfwauxaz.org/uploads/documents/25-26Documents/25-26ContinuingEducationScholarshipapplication.pdf>

<https://vfwauxaz.org/uploads/documents/25-26Documents/25-262DPatrioticArtContest.pdf>

<https://vfwauxaz.org/uploads/documents/25-26Documents/25-263DPatrioticArtContest.pdf>



Happy Thanksgiving to each and every one of you!

With the Holidays upon us and the youth having days off from school now would be a wonderful time to start a reading program. Any Auxiliary member can be a “Reading Buddy” which is the member listening to children read. Host a Reading Buddy event at your post with hot chocolate, cookies and a good book. Be familiar with the “Patriotism through Literacy” book list. [25-26Patriotismthroughliteracylist.pdf](#) Check to learn if the local library has some of these books or if not consider suggesting donating some from the Auxiliary.

Holidays can be an especially difficult time for shut-ins and those away from home. Invite Youth Groups to help with filling boxes for our Troops, those in need, holiday food drives, placing Wreaths at a Wreaths Across America Ceremony (Dec. 13), coloring wreaths for Veteran or hospital patient shut-ins. A note from a child to help someone feel not forgotten will be 2-fold rewarded.

Remember to encourage youth to participate in the “Illustrating America Contest” [illustrating\\_america\\_art\\_\(5\).pdf](#) This contest is for students in grades K - 8 and is a great way to introduce future Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest entries. Speak with the school Art teacher if available and see if you can get them to include this contest into their curriculum by having students draw, paint or color a patriotic picture. Place Illustrating America contest applications at Art Stores or Libraries to reach a wider audience.

Please use the NEW Youth “Acts of Kindness Certificates” to show good deeds and acts of citizenship do not go unnoticed. Look for students that go out of their way to be kind and helpful. [youth\\_act\\_of\\_kindness\\_cit\(4\).pdf](#)

As always, carry the R.A.P. cards and a small American Flag pin with you so when you notice a child honoring a veteran or saluting a flag they may be rewarded on the spot. Positive reinforcement goes a long way.

Encourage involvement from an early age in all Auxiliary Programs. Help the Youth of today to remember the VFW Auxiliary as they grow- they may be the

members in our future ensuring our flag and patriotic holidays will be preserved.

Remember to use #Reading Buddy, #AZ2526Youth whenever you put something up on social media.

## Veterans and Family Support November 2025

This time of year, can be the most overwhelming with feelings of isolation and loneliness. People wishing you to “be of good cheer” and “Happy Holidays” when one is away from home or feeling helpless, drowning in the day to day, may add to personal anxiety. Recognizing signs of distress, offering to include someone, being willing to listen – may save a life.

The residual effects of the government shut down, articles claiming Veterans are taking advantage of the system, and pride- we have been trained to be proud and problem solvers, may leave long lasting, unseen scars.

How can we as Auxiliary, Veteran, Caregivers, Family, Community help to ease this anxiety?

Stealing from Crystal’s Challenge- \*Make a business card with helpline numbers and your contact information- include the Veterans and Family Support link on the back [2025 2026 veterans family.pdf](#) (MALTA under V&FS)

Invite people to join you at the Post for the holiday program or offer to bring them a plate or something back from the activity. Inviting someone to a gathering- with no expectations- could make all the difference.

Do a Buddy Check- never underestimate the power of a hot pumpkin pie or fresh baked batch of cookies. Even if it is not their favorite, the fact you thought of them could save a life.

Little ones will be out of school- therefore, potentially without a meal. Check in on neighbors, be informed about the VFW National Home eligibility, offer to share your holiday dinner.

Holiday cards from Youth, little-hand designed cards or construction paper stockings with words of gratitude, glue and glitter are genuinely appreciated.

What it boils down to, we wish each other well- at times we need to take it one step further and go beyond our comfort to in-person ensure others know we care.

Know your Chaplain.

Know the number for BeConnected 866-4AZ-VETS 866.429.8387

Know the number for the VFW National Home 800.313.4200

Make a Business Card with the VFW QR Code Veteran and Family resources.

Continue to do the amazing work you do for Veterans, Active Duty, their families and our community.

May God bless and keep you, and your family, during this holiday season.