

October 2025
Americanism Heather Lyn

Hello Arizona,

Now that our winter members are coming back, we have more members to help spread the word on our programs. Here are some upcoming holidays and events that are great opportunities to show patriotism in your Auxiliaries and community:

- *Veterans Day – November 11
- *Pearl Harbor Day – December 7
- *Wreaths Across America- December 13

Don't forget to use your hashtags and post pictures of the great events you have been and are going to be doing. Did your Auxiliary do a POW/MIA event or a Gold Star event? I look forward to seeing what ideas you all have come up with to honor those people and events.

And for all the Fact lovers like me, being it is October, did you know Halloween holds a special place in American culture? It is because it brings communities together- people of all ages can come together to celebrate creativity, fantasy and fun. People get to explore different personas through costumes, partake in traditions that span generations and celebrate all things spooky.

As always, I am here if you have questions or fun facts you would like me to share.

Auxiliary Outreach 2025-2026

[#AuxiliaryOutreach](#)

[#az2526outreach](#) or [#az2526AuxiliaryOutreach](#)

Hello Department of Arizona Volunteers!

October is off to a great start! Thanks to all of the Auxiliaries who have posted on Facebook and utilized the hashtags! I was so sad to miss Fall Conference, but I know that Doug “Woody” reminded you all to be sure to use the **National hashtag #AuxiliaryOutreach to be included for consideration for the National award!** Another tidbit I’d like to remind you all is to please make sure you **mention your Auxiliary Number in those posts!** Many of you are able to post from your Auxiliary’s page, but some post from their personal accounts, so we want to make sure credit goes where it deserves to be recognized!

I found another link if you are looking to **PARTNER** with another organization to support and enhance, who needs assistance throughout Phoenix and other opportunities in the state. This one is HandsOn Phoenix: [Volunteer Opportunity Calendar](#)

Our National Ambassador would like to remind us of some upcoming nationally recognized special days that you may want to consider when **reaching out** to community partners:

[MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY - October 25, 2025 - National Today](#) - this is an annual National Day of Community service that was started in 1992. It encourages people of all ages to engage in acts of kindness and volunteerism to support their local communities

November 13, 2025: [World Kindness Day - The Be Kind People Project](#) – this day’s mission is to inspire individuals and connect nations to create a kinder world by fostering compassion and demonstrating how even small acts can generate a positive ripple effect of goodwill that strengthens communities and benefits everyone involved.

[FAMILY VOLUNTEER DAY - November 22, 2025 - National Today](#) It celebrates the power of families working together to support their

communities and neighborhoods. What a great way to extend to your members who have family within your own Auxiliary who may not be as involved as you are. Make volunteering contagious in your own family and Auxiliary!!

Keep up the hash tagging!! I've been watching for your outreach activities on Facebook! Please mention what you all did to help, too!!

This month's shout outs go to Pinetop/Lakeside Auxiliary 2364 who posted about the recent Race to the Pines Car Show and Tempe Auxiliary 3632 who used their hashtags to highlight a National Night Out activity and volunteering at a homeless shelter. Please remember to use the hashtag for **this program**. **Remember Auxiliary Outreach is the one for activities that DON'T fit into other Programs!!**

"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

Amy Bennett
Department of Arizona
amyaz@cox.net
(480) 510-4457

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BUDDY POPPY/NATIONAL HOME

Peggy Welch

We Are now coming into the Fall months with plenty of opportunities to promote “Buddy” Poppy and the National Home. Some upcoming “days” and holidays that could be a theme for distribution and education are:

- October 19: National Chocolate Cupcake Day
- October 26: Day of the Deployed
- October 26: National Pumpkin Day
- October 28: Statue of Liberty Birthday
- October 28: National First Responder Day
- October 31: Halloween and National Carmel Apple Day
- November 5: National Donut Day
- November 10: United States Marine Corps Birthday
- November 11: Veterans Day
- November 27: Thanksgiving

Using a theme for your event can help draw participation from the community and make it fun for your volunteers. Another thing to consider is location, location, location! An area that people feel comfortable stopping to chat and learn about “Buddy” Poppy and the National Home. Auxiliary 1433 held a Buddy Poppy/Membership Drive outside a local restaurant in the evening. Auxiliary members were joined by their Jr. Vice Commander, John DuTemple. It was a very successful event, and the time of the event fit the location.

Another important point is presentation. An identifying sign or tablecloth lets people know what we represent. Wearing your VFW I.D. badge, shirt, etc.

looks professional. Having poppies, brochures, fun poppy items, National Home literature, and prominent QR codes for those interested. Remember to smile and communicate with the public.

Some ideas from our National Ambassador, Sandra Jeffries:

- Share the video “The Veterans Behind the Poppy”
- Create “Buddy” Poppy centerpieces for food nights at your Post
- Always have a “Buddy” Poppy handy to give away along with an information card/brochure

Other talking points:

- Remind people that all money donated is for the welfare of veterans and their families
- Wearing your “Buddy” Poppy can spark conversation
- “Buddy” Poppies are distributed, not sold

The National 2025-2026 Auxiliary goal for the National Home is to create new ideas in each individual state of ways to show information to help us get in-need veterans and their families to the National Home for assistance. On the Comrade side, their National 2025-2026 goal is to Stock the Store. Our Department goal of having each Auxiliary buy a Life or Centennial Membership and a Tribute Brick can help with this. Fundraisers can also help with proceeds earmarked to Stock the Store.

The National Home is now 43 homes strong and the Department of AZ sponsors the Arizona House. What an honor to be able to help our eligible military and veterans with a home and a safe, supportive environment to help them succeed.

At Fall Conference in Parker, AZ, I was joined by the VFW Department National Home Chairman, Phil Erickson, in a skit which followed our family as we went through applying to the National Home, being accepted, starting the program,

day to day life at the Home, and completing the program. It was a fun way to educate the attendees about the National Home.

Be sure to continue promoting the eligibility criteria using the Helpline number, 800-313-4200, and the QR code. Remember, many military and veterans are not aware of the National Home and how the program can help. Getting the word out there can change lives.

Chief of Staff October Bambi Johnson

The National Chief of Staff has established the following Awards for the 2025-2026 Program Year. Please keep these in mind as the year progresses and I am sure we will have some wonderful entries that we can choose from to bring home a win for Arizona!

Awards for Members

Citation and a \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one member in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best assistance to the Chief of Staff in establishing a new VFW Auxiliary with the approval of the Department President.

Do you have any unaffiliated Posts (Posts without an Auxiliary), in your District or physical location? Have you reached out to them and asked if your Auxiliary members can assist them with a project, such as a Buddy Poppy or Membership Drive? The best way for an unaffiliated Post to understand the value of having an Auxiliary, is to see Auxiliary members in action.

Awards for District Presidents or Official Representatives

Citation and a \$25 VFW Store gift certificate to one District President or Official Representative in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the best assistance to the Chief of Staff with a struggling VFW Auxiliary by mentoring and maintaining a close relationship until the VFW Auxiliary becomes healthy, with the approval of the Department President. Use of MALTA Healthy Auxiliary tools and mentor training is required.

Any Auxiliary can run into issues that can affect their meeting their goals. It is essential that District Presidents, or their Official Representative, work with those Auxiliaries to get back on track for success.

If you feel you have someone to nominate for either of the Awards, the forms for each of are located under Extension & Revitalization in the Member Resources on Malta.

Please complete the form, singing the praises of your nominee and forward the form to me as Department Chief of Staff.

October Newsletter

Media Relations/Historian - Paulette Marshall

National President Lois Calahan has “From Sea to Shining Sea Honoring Veterans” as her slogan for this year, so it’s time to understand how to make a reel. Reel them in with actual “reels” in your social media. Reels are short videos that highlight your Auxiliaries in action for the Veterans. They may contain photos, videos of those things that really showcase the programs or activities that bring out the best of what you do!

This year the National Citation and \$25 to one VFW Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions with the most outstanding social media reel highlighting their VFW Auxiliary in action.

Did you know that the Meta Business suite is a cross platform that allows you to use both Facebook which most of us are very familiar with and Instagram in one fell swoop? This is a free tool that allows you to not only navigate the traditional social media with a wider range of people, including those who may not have the knowledge of their eligibility. This cross platform allows you to create your reel once and post to both with no extra steps.

Expand your horizons across the sea and reel them into your Auxiliary with a great reel.

Hospital October 2025

Amy Timbes

From the National VFW Auxiliary Hospital Program Ambassador's most recent promotion:

As the holiday season approaches, now is a suitable time to ask, "What we can do to help put a smile on our veterans' faces?"

As we always want to put a smile on our veterans' faces, the holidays are an opportune time we can help do that. In some cases, this may be the only way the veterans get to celebrate the holidays.

Remember, there are other places where veterans are outside the VA. So, make sure to check with your Auxiliary to see if there is another place where you may be able to volunteer.

Department of Arizona VFW Auxiliary Hospital Grant 2025-2026

The purpose of this grant is to benefit veteran patients in VA Medical Centers, those utilizing VA Clinics, or residents of State Veterans' Homes, rehabilitation facilities or homeless programs sponsored by the VA. Other types of care facilities will be considered on a case by case basis. [25-26HospitalGrantForm.pdf](#)

\$250 is the maximum amount that will be disbursed per Auxiliary per year.

The Auxiliary **must complete** a Hospital Project Report upon completion of the project and send it to the Department Hospital Chairman immediately following the completion of the project / donation. Receipts must be forwarded to the Department Treasurer.

Step One: Email completed Application to Department Hospital Chairman. Do not spend the grant funds until Auxiliary has received grant approval. If project is approved, check will be sent to the Auxiliary Treasurer

Step Two: Complete the Project

Step Three: Send Project Report to Department Hospital Chairman
Hospital Amy Timbes Email: thetimbesfamily@gmail.com Copy of Receipts to Department Treasurer auxvfwarizona@msn.com

Share with your Auxiliary and Veteran/Family Members:

The Arizona State Veterans Home Flagstaff is now open and accepting residents!

This is an 80 bed, skilled-nursing facility for eligible Arizona Veterans, located in north Flagstaff. The state-owned and operated facility is divided into long-term care beds, memory care unit and a Medicare/rehab-focused unit.

Located at 2100 N. Gemini Road, Flagstaff, AZ 86004

Main phone: 928-637-0600 Admissions: 928-637-0607

For more information including VOLUNTEER opportunities and counseling services:

[ASVH Flagstaff | Department of Veterans' Services](#)

Legislative October

Becky Baldwin

How to Complete a Call to Action in Action Corps Weekly

You signed up for Action Corp weekly and now every week, the **VFW Action Corps Weekly** lands in your inbox Here's how you can make your voice heard in just a few clicks:

Step 1: Open the Action Corps Weekly Email

- Look for the weekly email (see example #1). It's packed with news and updates, but what you're looking for is the **Action Alert** button or link.

Step 2: Click on the Action Alert

- When urgent action is needed, you'll see a red **VFW Action Alert** (#2). This is your sign that Congress needs to hear from you today.

Step 3: Read the Background

- Once you click through, you'll see a short message explaining why your voice matters right now (#3). This section highlights the priority issue, such as protecting veterans' benefits or passing a key amendment.

Step 4: Personalize and Send Your Message

- The Action Alert will already include a draft message addressed to your Senators or Representatives (#4). You can send it as-is or personalize it with your own thoughts to make it even more impactful. Just fill in your name and contact details, then hit **Send Message**.

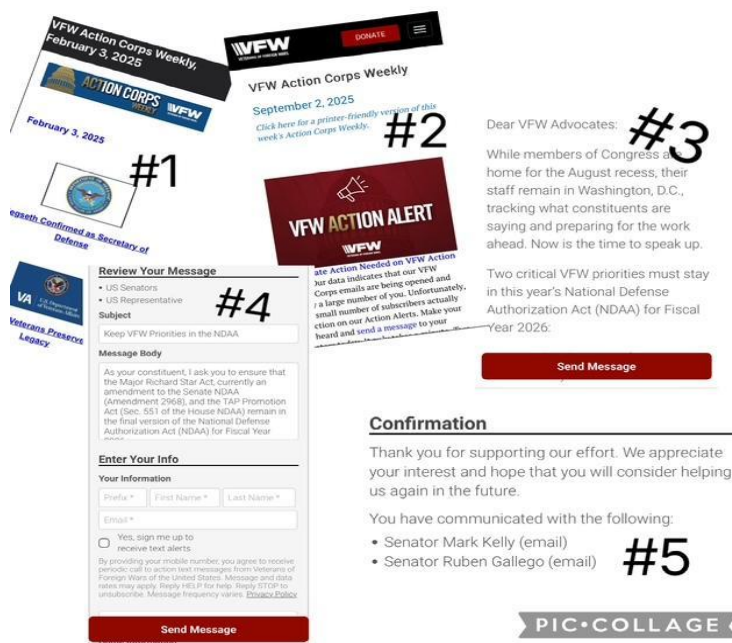
Step 5: Get Confirmation

- After sending, you'll receive a confirmation screen (#5) showing which lawmakers you've contacted. That's it—you've completed your call to action!

Why This Matters

Lawmakers pay attention when their offices receive a flood of emails on the same issue. By taking 1 minute each week (for real it takes 1 minute to do), you help shape legislation that directly impacts veterans and their families.

So next time you see that **Action Alert** in your inbox, don't scroll past—**click, send, and make your voice count.**



**Membership October–
Crystal McCarthy**



🎃 **Two Doors, One House –**
And a Spooky Twist 👻

At Fall Conference, VFW Membership Representatives and I joined forces to present “Two Doors, One House.” Think of it like the perfect Halloween haunt—two front doors, but one strong house standing together!

Through a side-by-side presentation, we showed how our organizations share the same mission: caring for veterans, their families, and our communities. Each “door” may have its own style—one decorated with Buddy Poppies, the other with Auxiliary programs—but inside, the foundation is the same: service, support, and belonging.

And just like trick-or-treating, it’s always better when everyone participates! When we walk side by side, Comrades and Auxiliary members together, we’re not putting on costumes or disguises—we’re simply showing our true colors. *No tricks, just treats for our veterans, their families and our communities.*

Spook-tacular Challenge Alert!

 Don't let this opportunity vanish into the night! The Beachcomber's Challenge runs until December 31, 2025. Auxiliaries who recruit 3 new members, rejoin one former member, and convert one annual members into Life Member will be recognized for their efforts. Every step strengthens our ranks, keeps the house standing tall, and helps us ride the wave to 100%+ membership. All the details can be found on the *Department website under Membership*. Don't miss out on your \$50 thank you from Brenda!  

Jack-O'-Lantern Pro Tips!

 Converting **Annual Members into Life Members** saves you the yearly work of renewals and keeps your Auxiliary strong season after season. Just like a glowing jack-o'-lantern on the porch, Life Members give us a steady light that lasts, helping our "one house" shine bright year after year.  

 Don't miss this month's **National Membership Ambassador blogs in MALTA** — it's full of practical tips and inspiration for every Auxiliary leader. Whether you're a seasoned pro or just getting started, there's something there for everyone and every program.  

We don't have to "dress up" our organization — when we follow a few simple principles, the real magic shines through.

So, as we head into the season of pumpkins and candy, let's remember: two doors, one house, one growing family and to reach out to me anytime you have questions about membership!  

Scholarships October

Irene Nowacki

Let's help!

The deadline for Patriot's Pen and the Voice of Democracy is coming up. October 31st, 2025. How have you helped the VFW to promote these contests?

We may not sponsor these contests, but we surely help to promote them. The more youth we reach that submit to these, the more money we can give away and a great way for us to support them and show off their talents.

Important information ahead!!

We also have our National Presidents special project the Continuing Education Scholarship. This is near and dear to Lois's heart as she has been a recipient of this scholarship. Her main goal is to raise the escrow fund to be able to give larger amounts of money to the winners. How is your auxiliary helping to raise funds for this? I would love to hear what you have done or are planning to do.

Scholarships you want to work for!

The Fall season has descended upon us. What better way to get the Scholarships and Art Contests out to the youth in the area than goodie bags with a little candy and these beauties in them.

Most auxiliaries have a Trunk or Treat or other event where they can interact with the youth and inform them of these wonderful activities, they can participate in.

Maybe you come across a child that has a great Halloween makeup job they did themselves. Maybe they are the artistic type that might be interested in the **3-D Patriotic Art contest or Young American Creative Patriotic Art contest**. Or maybe you overhear an older sibling saying that

they want to go to college, but it is so expensive. Show them the **Continuing Education Scholarship** application.

There are so many ways to get this information distributed besides just going to the schools. Be creative and be colorful. Use color and expression when promoting these contests. The more effort you put into it, the more you will get out of it in way of excitement from those that enter them.

Scan, Scan that code!

Don't forget the QR code. Make sure that you have it out and available to be scanned at your functions. This connects them with all of the scholarship and contest information and applications.



VFS October
Ray Williams

ALERT! YOU CAN HELP!!!

As was recently reported at the District 10 Meeting by National Guard Specialist Derek Hulsebus: The pantry shelves are empty AND INVITE the National Guard Families to YOUR Halloween Activity!

What a way for the VFW and VFW Auxiliary to visit with Active-Duty families in their time of need. **PLEASE REACH OUT** to the National Guard Specialist Coordinator for Arizona, James Puglia : james.v.puglia.civ@army.mil with grocery gift cards, food contributions for the pantries, baby items, upcoming meals events, and with all the VFW Halloween Children's Activities that are family friendly. This is an opportunity, in the immediate, to reach out to our families that may need a little extra assistance with the current shutdown.

From the National VFW Auxiliary Ambassador's promotion:
Boxes for our Troops: Shipping cutoffs tend to be right after Thanksgiving. You can expect to see deadlines for Army Post Office/Fleet Post Office/Diplomatic Post Office addresses around late October or early November, with recommendations varying by service type (Priority Mail Express, Priority Mail, First-Class Mail).

To stay informed, check the official USPS website around the holiday season for the official 2025 military mailing dates.

Military care packages should include a mix of essentials like toiletries (shampoo, soap, deodorant) and high-quality socks, and comforts such as non-perishable snacks (jerky, trail mix), entertainment (magazines, card games) and personal items (cards, drawings, etc.) to provide a morale boost. They also like having items like Christmas stockings, garland and other easy-to ship holiday decorations to brighten their areas since they are away from the comfort of their homes and families

The holidays also offer an opportunity to put together blessing bags for veterans experiencing homelessness. Items such as socks, hats, gloves

and toothbrushes can make a world of difference during the winter. Blanket drives assist in providing the gift of warmth, both for the veteran and for the Auxiliary distributing these items. (Blankets for Bryan: Department President Brenda Kinghorn's Special Project)

Veterans and Family Support National Citation

Most outstanding activity and/or event to celebrate/assist service members and/or veterans in the community. To include:

*Veterans job fairs *Unit homecomings *Mental health-related stand downs

Report, report, report. The Auxiliary hours, monies spent, number of Volunteers on the Post's Community Service Report. Hours = Advocacy

Youth October **JaNice Robertson**

Hello October! The days are getting shorter and cooler and the time for us all to work with our Youth. As the National Ambassador has said, "Our Youth Activities Program is one of our Programs that can be tied into almost every other Program in this organization." As we work with our Youth, they will remember the VFW as they get older and may be eligible for membership, they can make sure we always remember the Patriotic holidays in the future. They are our future and if we show them respect and kindness they will remember.

#auxreadingbuddy Always use this to promote what you and your auxiliary are doing in your Reading Buddy Program. Did you know that any Auxiliary member can be a Reading Buddy? Listen to them as they read to you. Use and promote the VFW Auxiliary "Patriotism Through Literacy" book list. The recommended reads are divided in so many ways for youth to find a book that will interest them and foster a love of books that leads them to a lifetime of learning.

The VFW Auxiliary Youth Program has many Citations and Certificates to let youth know they are seen and heard:

Youth Acts of Kindness Certificates (given to youth being caught in the act of kindness), [youth_act_of_cit\(1\).pdf](#)

Patriotic Youth Awards (designed to recognize individual youth for their patriotism and support to our veterans and their families),

[patriotic_youth_citation_\(1\).pdf](#)

Youth Groups Supporting Our Veterans Citations (This is a way our auxiliaries can recognize youth groups for their efforts and projects honoring our veterans), [youth_groups_supporting_o\(1\).pdf](#)

R.A.P. Cards (showing respect to Flag or reciting the Pledge of Allegiance),

[full_sheet_1.pdf](#)

and

Illustrating America Contest [illustrating_america_art_\(3\).pdf](#)

All of these can be found in Malta or at VFWAUXAZ.ORG. Use them to help teach our youth to become responsible adults through serving our country, communities and Veterans.