

April 1, 2026

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES®

Arizona VFW Auxiliary Newsletter

Visit our Website



*Incoming President, Melissa's pin and shirt forms are on the Department website under Resources/Forms. Shirts must be ordered by April 15th if you wish to have them by convention. Pins must be ordered by April 1st and only those ordered will be sold. Email Melissa at newfoundfreedom3@msn.com if you need either shirts or pins.

*All PAR's for this program year need to be completed by April 4th. Don't delay in getting your PARs completed!



*Department Convention is set for June 11th thru 14th. Click [here](#) for hotel information and [here](#) for banquet information.

*National Convention will be held in Reno in July. See the information below that was in the National E-Newsletter recently.

Every year, thousands of VFW Auxiliary and VFW Delegates gather to represent our combined membership of more than 1.3 million at National Convention.

Nestled along the Sierra Nevada Mountains in a high desert valley known as the Truckee Meadows, Reno was dubbed the "biggest little city in the world" in the 1920s. A century later, Reno is known as much for its live music and arts festivals as it is for its gaming outlets.

There are two ways to book your room:

- 1) Online: [vfw.org/convention](https://www.vfw.org/convention) - this is the quickest and easiest way to book a room and the VFW highly encourages all reservations to be made this way.
- 2) By phone: 800-223-7277 for all 3 properties
 - Silver Legacy Resort (VFW HQ): 775-329-4777; Group Code: SRVFW6
 - Eldorado Resort (Auxiliary HQ): 775-786-5700; Group Code: SRVFW6
 - Circus Circus Hotel & Casino: 775-329-0711; Group Code: SRVFW6D

Reservations must be made by phone or online by June 15, 2026. Reservations received after this date will be subject to availability. Please note ALL Department guest rooms will be held in a general room inventory so that any Department can book at any hotel. This is to avoid empty rooms sitting there until the cutoff. If you choose to stay with your Department, the VFW advises that you make your reservation as soon as possible. If you have any questions regarding reservations, contact jgagne@caesars.com.

**Don't delay, book your room for the
2026 National Convention in Reno, Nevada today!**

**Find more information here:
<https://www.vfw.org/convention>**

★ TRAINING CAMP ★ 2026

MEMBERSHIP INVOLVEMENT TRAINING

— **AUGUST 14-17, 2026** —

— EMBASSY SUITES • 4400 S RURAL ROAD, TEMPE, AZ —

PLAYBOOK

FRIDAY | 5:00 PM (Optional)

- 🏈 Kickoff Happy Hour & Appetizers
- ➔ Raffle: Win a One-Night Stay at the Next Winter Conference

SATURDAY | 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

- 📅 Program Day
- ➔ Training Sessions + Fun Games
- ➔ Lunch Sponsored by **Humana**

SUNDAY | HALF DAY

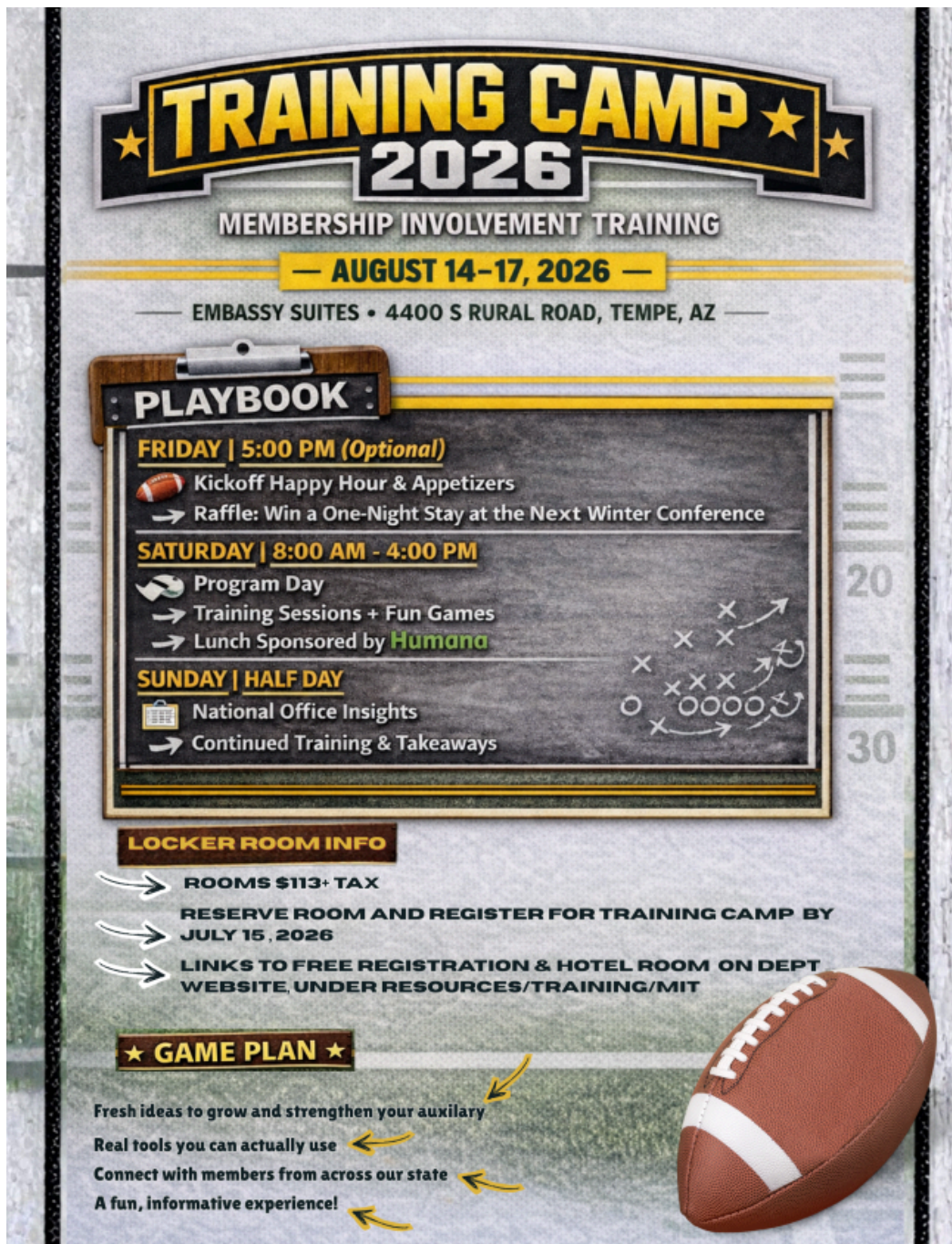
- 📅 National Office Insights
- ➔ Continued Training & Takeaways

LOCKER ROOM INFO

- ➔ ROOMS \$113+ TAX
- ➔ RESERVE ROOM AND REGISTER FOR TRAINING CAMP BY JULY 15, 2026
- ➔ LINKS TO FREE REGISTRATION & HOTEL ROOM ON DEPT WEBSITE, UNDER RESOURCES/TRAINING/MIT

★ GAME PLAN ★

- Fresh ideas to grow and strengthen your auxiliary
- Real tools you can actually use
- Connect with members from across our state
- A fun, informative experience!




President Brenda Kinghorn's Message

Welcome to the Month of April

February 28th, 2026, several Department of Arizona Auxiliary members went to the last **National C.A.F.E** in **Washington DC**. I, Sr Vice President, Melissa Martin, Jr Vice President, Jeanne Hampton and member Connie Hargreaves represented Arizona. The gathering was held just down from the Vietnam Memorial Wall. Afterwards, we were able to walk around the Memorial park. The following day we were joined by Department of Alaska Auxiliary President Willa Watts, as we went to Arlington National Cemetery. What a powerful experience!

March 2nd through March 4th, we stayed for the National Legislative Spring Conference, which was also held in Washington DC.

This was my first time in Washington, and I learned a lot from our VFW Department of Arizona Legislative representatives. There were about 15 plus members, consisting of both sides of the house. I felt so proud and I want to say thank you to Nedra Sealey and Jim Ellars, Department of Arizona Legislative chairmen, and Auxiliary members, Jr Vice President, Jeanne Hampton and Connie Hargreaves, for answering my questions and explaining the legislative process.

Our first stop was the Dirksen Senate Office building, to watch and listen to **National Commander in Chief, Carol Whitmore** deliver the Legislative 2026 priorities, like the Major Richard Star Act. There was standing room only. We were standing at the back of the room. I was pushed to front of the people standing so I could see. Of course everyone can see over my head, lol. Looking around the room seeing all the Veterans and Auxiliary covers, I felt so proud being on "The Hill" with my fellow Veterans of the Foreign Wars veterans and auxiliary members from all around the Nation.

Chief Whitmore's passionate testimony gave me goosebumps and a renewed awareness of why we, as members of the VFW and Auxiliaries are committed to veterans and their families around the world.

We then went to speak to the Arizona Representatives and their staff. I had the honor to meet Congressman Abraham Hamadeh, have my picture with him and be presented with his coin. I listened intently as the VFW Arizona and auxiliary members share their personal experiences with the representatives, connected with the Legislative talking points.

A couple of hours after Chief Whitmore gave her powerful speech, **Senator Ron Johnson of Wisconsin, turned down The Major Richard Star Act.**

As members of the VFW Department of Arizona, we are all invited and encouraged to attend the Legislative Conference. Doug and I will be going in 2027.

On March 28th, I was invited to **Sandy Coor Post 1433, Glendale, Arizona for the Post's 100th anniversary Celebration.**

Inside the Post, tables were set up with pictures and write ups on the history of Marine Corporal Sandy Coor and how the Post came to be. Founded on March 26th, 1926, the Post was established by World War I veterans seeking to ensure that those who served overseas would have a unified voice at home. The Post was named in honor of Sandy Coor, who gave his life in service to the Nation in France in 1919.

It was an honor to listen to **Ms. Judy Coor Ravella**, the niece of Sandy Coor. She told us a little bit of the Coor Military family and Sandy Coor. She is so proud of the Sandy Coor Post 1433 and their auxiliary for their accomplishments in the community and keeping Sandy Coor Post 1433 mission alive.

I also had the honor in meeting **State Senator Analise Ortiz and Mayor Jerry Weiers, City of Glendale.**

April is Military Child Month

Military Children and Youth: Strength in Every Story. These amazing kids face challenges and enjoy triumphs along the way, and while no military child's journey is the same, they each have a through-line that connects them by experience, globally. Recognize the military children in your communities, nurture the connections that help build strong children, nearly 2 million children.

Purple Up Day is on April 15th, 2026 – but it's always a good day to Purple up!

Headquarters Roundtable will be on Facebook Live, will be held on

Monday, April 13th, 2026, at 2pm CST, 12pm Arizona Time.

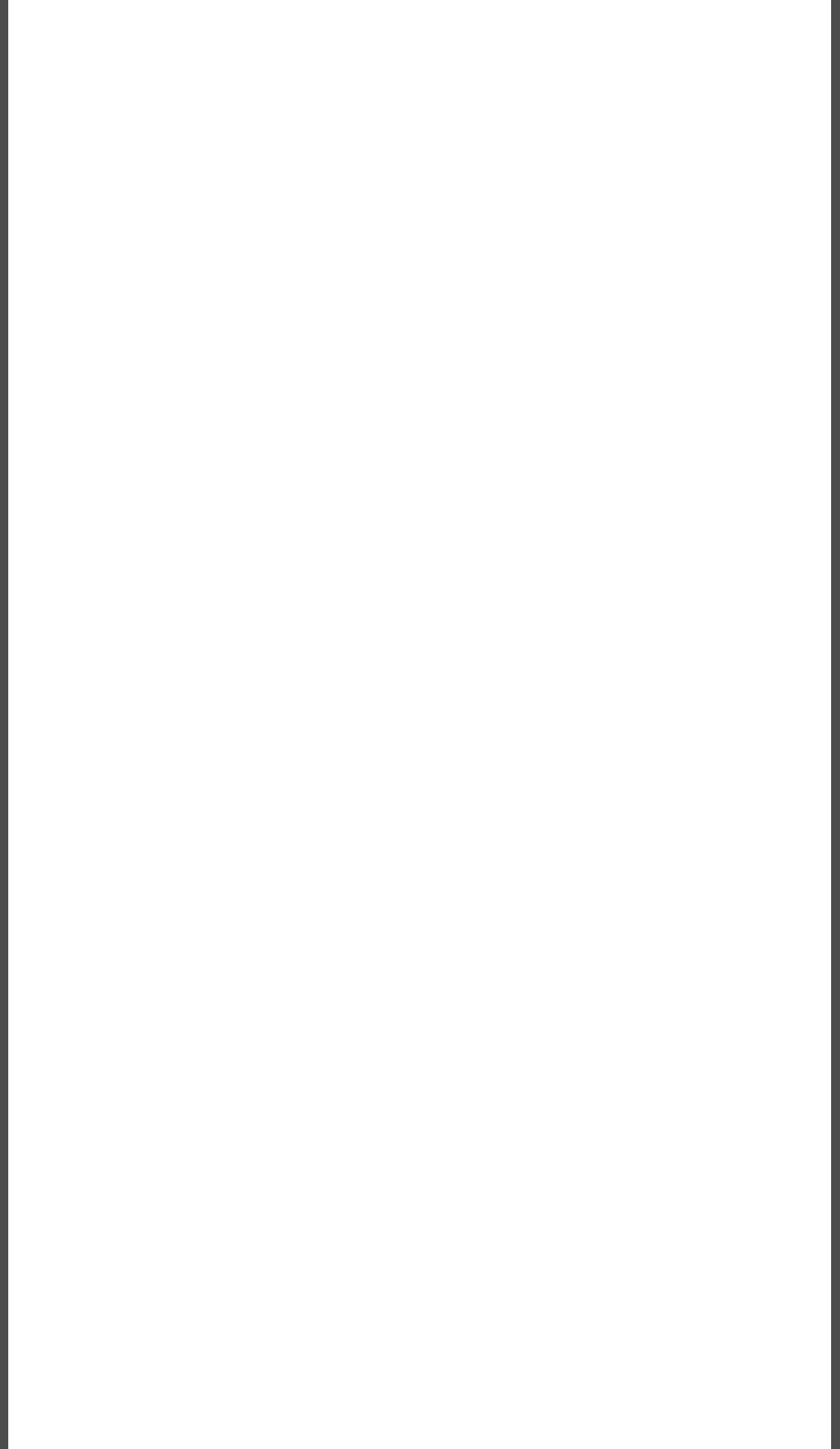
VFW Auxiliary National Secretary-Treasurer, Ann Panteleakos will be interviewing the **four National Guard candidates**. All four are from Western Conference.

Debbie Barnes (Neveda)
Renee Fulk (California)
Jeannette Garcia (New Mexico)
Mistie Hammond (Alaska)

Members, after you read my April news article, please put a flower on your Facebook and tag me. If you do not have Facebook, text me a picture of a flower, at 928-205-1066. I want to see who is reading my newsletters.



**Kim Sloan
Secretary/Treasurer**



TENTATIVE VFW AUXILIARY CONVENTION AGENDA

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday Registration Times TBD

Wednesday 4:00

Auxiliary Ritual Practice

Tentative Location

Salons J,K,L

All Officers and Ritual Team

TBA Memorial Service Practice

All Department Officers, Ritual

Team, District Presidents

Thursday 9:00 a.m. Joint Meeting

Salons B and C

Dress Officers - Official Look

Members and Guests - Patriotic

Outstanding Auxiliary Awards

Outstanding District Awards

Patriotic Art Awards

Merit Scholarship Award

Continuing Education Scholarship Award

Thursday 2:00 p.m.

APPC Lunch Meeting

Salon A

4:00 p.m. Auxiliary Ritual Practice

Salon A

7:00 p.m. Memorial Service

Salons B and C

Dress Officers – Official Look

Ritual Team – White blouse, Dark

Slacks

Friday 9:00 a.m. Auxiliary Opening Business Session

Dress – **Red** Shirt Friday!

Escort Past Department Presidents

Escort District Presidents

Cross of MALTA

Opening Ceremony

Roll Call

Convention Rules

Minutes, Financial

Auxiliary Program Awards

Friday Lunch on your own

Friday 1:00 p.m. Auxiliary Business Session Resumes

Finish Auxiliary Awards

Nominations

2026-2027 Announcement of Appointments

2026-2027 Program Kickoff

Saturday 9:00 a.m. Auxiliary Business Session Resumes

Dress – Department

President's Shirt

Visit VFW
National Resolutions
Department Bylaws Amendment
Elections
Closing Ceremony

Dept Pres, Nat Rep, Dept Sec
Review by National Representative

Saturday 4:00 p.m.	Installation	Salon A All 2026-2027 Officers, Appointed Officers, District Presidents Dress – After 5 Attire/Cocktail
5:00 p.m.	Reception	
6:00 p.m.	Banquet	
Sunday 9:00 a.m.	Council of Administration Meeting	Salon A Dress – Department President's shirt

Chief of Staff Bambi Johnson

Extension & Revitalization



Membership strength is not just a number. We are constantly working to build our membership numbers; however, we must not lose sight of the value and individuality of each of our members. How you welcome those new members and help them become involved with our mission is the responsibility of each Auxiliary and their current members.

Tips to engage and welcome new members:

- Send them a Welcome package either via mail or email.
- Ask a current member to be a Mentor to each new member.
- Hold an orientation for new members and ask about their hobbies, those hobbies can be matched with programs.
- Make a special introduction for them at their first attended meeting.

All members should be praised for their participation in Auxiliary events and area volunteerism. You can utilize the Good Job Cards & Good Job Awards available on Malta to show appreciation to members. If your Post home has events, it is a good time to present those so that members who do not regularly attend meetings, or potential new members, will know that we honor those who give of themselves.

Extend a welcoming hand to the new, hug the existing, and appreciate the giving!

Membership Crystal McCarthy



Spring Into Action:

Don't Let Members Slip Through the Cracks

April is that in-between month—busy, hopeful, and honestly a little easy to lose track of things. That's exactly why it's the perfect time to tighten up your membership admin game. Right now, some members are quietly sitting unpaid, some may think they're still in good standing, and others are simply waiting for a reminder that hasn't come. The reality is simple—if we don't reach them now, we risk losing them completely by June 30.

Take just a few minutes this week to pull your unpaid members list in MALTA and look for anyone who hasn't been personally contacted. A quick call, text, or even a “we miss you” message can make all the difference. Consider assigning outreach to officers or members so no one slips through the cracks—because personal contact truly works.

It's also important to remember that for some members, the issue isn't willingness, it's circumstances. Your Relief Fund, with a membership vote, is available to help those experiencing financial hardship, and sometimes a simple conversation is all it takes to understand what support is needed. As a reminder, members who have not paid their dues are no longer in good standing and cannot vote or hold office. If dues are not paid by June 30, they will need to reapply—something we all know is a much harder road back.



Making Waves: All National Membership Goals Achieved!

Take a moment and let this one sink in... **we made waves.** Every National membership goal—met. That doesn't happen by chance. That's Auxiliaries showing up, reaching out, and building something bigger than themselves.

Across the Department, you've helped create an **Ocean of Belonging**—one where every new member welcomed and every member retained adds strength to the whole. Whether you brought in one new member, ten, or simply made the call that brought someone back—you were part of this momentum. And here's the truth... strong oceans don't stay still.

Now it's about keeping that current moving—checking in, reaching out, and making sure no one drifts away as we close out the year. Let's celebrate what we've built, take pride in how far we've come, and stay focused on finishing just as strong as we started.

Retention is more than a number—it's about relationships. Every member you keep strengthens your Auxiliary, preserves your history, and builds your future. Let's not lose anyone simply because we didn't reach out.



Try email marketing for free today!