

Americanism



Happy August Arizona VFW Auxiliaries! I hope everyone had a safe and fun 4th of July. Many of us are now ramping up for the new school year and many Auxiliaries also start getting very busy. Unfortunately, the weather in Arizona has also decided it is a great time for the monsoon storms to revisit us. At least we have the upcoming MIT training and Fall conference to help distract us through the rough weather! With the National Convention completed for the 2025/2026 program year the new National Program book is now available on Malta. This is a valuable resource for the 2026/2027 program year that is now in full swing. The new National President Donna Mills and her team have put in so much work to help each Auxiliary “be the shining stars that brighten the lives of our veterans, service members and their families.” The auxiliaries are being asked to promote or recognize any patriotic day or branch of service birthdays. To distribute or present American Flags or POW/MIA flags and keep track of how flags you pass out! Please don’t forget the Patriotic Appreciation Citations, Certificates of Appreciation to businesses in recognition of their patriotism. These are available on Malta. The Americanism ambassador Jessica Gardner is also asking to see auxiliaries create a pop art image to use on their social media or print media to help catch people's attention. This is a fun challenge and I can’t wait to see what the Arizona auxiliaries create! Of course, flag education, promote patriotism, and give attention on Prisoner of

War/Missing in Action Remembrance Day September 18. Lastly, don't forget to use the hashtags when posting on social media!

VFW Auxiliary Arizona Poppy Chairman



Are you ready to spread some respect, love and honor by using the remembrance VFW “Buddy” Poppy?

In 1922 Madame Anna Guerin of France connected with the VFW ahead of Memorial Day to coordinate the first nationwide poppy distribution.

This first event created a huge demand for the beautiful three-part flower for the 1923 Poppy event. The struggle of acquiring enough Poppies to fill the desire of the American people lead to the VFW electing to purchase the supplies from a New York City artificial flower shop and have them assembled by needy and disabled veterans.

Conversations by the veterans who assembled the three-part poppy inspired the name “Buddy Poppy”. The veterans would often refer to their fellow soldiers they served as Buddy while telling stories of their service. February 1924 the US Patent Office registered the Buddy Poppy.

This history demonstrates the continued practice of the VFW & VFW Auxiliary to evolve to fit the needs of our veterans, their families, our membership and community.

Here we are in August, and I am so excited to see the way our VFW Auxiliaries are pulling together to share their ideas to embrace the Buddy Poppies.

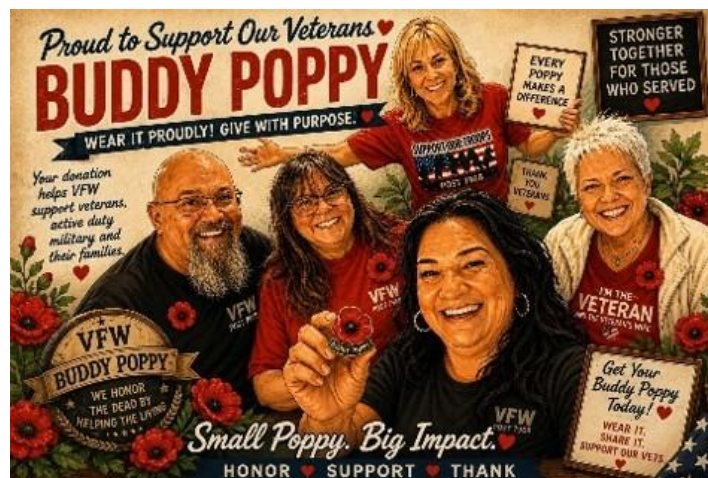
VFW Auxiliary Post 1433 had a Poppy Drive July 18th, 2026, at Charley's Place Sports Bar & Grill in Glendale AZ. Auxiliary members Cindy DuTemple and Stacey Lovelady distributed approximately 100 Buddy Poppys and raised \$261. Thank you, VFW Auxiliary sisters, for raising funds and getting 100 Buddy Poppys in front of our public.



Thank you, Apache Junction, for this flyer!

The National Poppy displays were incredible this year. Start planning now for next year, team up with your VFW post, and remember there is a lot of creativity sitting in our canteen.

If we accomplish our mission, the world will be better that we have existed.



**Department of Arizona VFW Auxiliary Hospital
Program 2026-2027
Patricia Stinson, Hospital Chairman
Plstin@yahoo.com**

What a great summer we are having here in Arizona. It's been hot, but so are our auxiliaries. We had a wonderful kick off to the New Year back in June with everyone looking forward to the New Year.

I presented the Hospital program and our National Ambassador's focal points with examples of how our auxiliaries can include them in their programs. I will also be asking for invitations to our district meetings to further my involvement and gather some great ideas to share with all of our auxiliaries.

One of the focal points is to celebrate some "different" holidays. I found a website that gives a nice list of these holidays at www.holidayscendar.com where you can look these days up by month. Here are some examples:

8-21-2026 Senior Citizens day

9-14-2026 National coloring day

10-10-2026 National Chess day

Another focal point is the Honor Escort Program. Auxiliary 10386, in Kingman, AZ, is using the hospital grant to buy flags to be used for this program. In addition, the VFW Riders, District 9, are going to match the \$250.00 to get additional flags. They will be distributed to a local nursing home that serves some of our veterans.

VFW Post 3513 in Scottsdale, AZ is using their hospital grant to buy computer parts for donated laptops/tablets that are then refurbished and donated to the veterans at a local nursing home that services 40-70 veterans. They also do things with the veterans there on a regular basis such as have ice cream socials.

These are great examples of how your auxiliaries can put the hospital grant to good use. Please send your hospital grant applications to me by either snail-mail @ 9831 E Greenway St., Mesa, AZ 85207 or at my email at plstin@yahoo.com.

I also want to emphasize the importance of volunteering your time and talents to our veterans that are hospitalized, in VA homes or local nursing homes. They fought for us, so let's make the effort to make sure they are seen and not forgotten.

Legislative

VFW Voices of Service

Stories in Action

Honor the Contract. Hear the Reality.

Our nation made a promise to those who served. Help lawmakers hear directly from you about what keeping that promise really means.



Scan to share your story.



TEAM ADVOCACY SCORES FIELD GOAL! BUT WE WON'T SETTLE FOR THAT!

The months of June and July saw a lot of calls, letter writing and responding to action alerts with our National Legislative Team and Department Officers and members hitting Washington in person, by mail and email and by phone to fight for our Veterans.

The Taking Care of Veterans Act (H.R. 9237/S.4744) although sounding good for Veterans it was a massive omnibus package that had over 60 bipartisan veteran bills in one measure. Sounded great, but it was full of harmful aspects and not enough safeguards and protections for our Veterans now and in the future.

Veterans should not have to accept paying or losing our own benefits to finally help those who should have already received help or for our caretakers to get the raise they haven't received in decades. Please watch for updates, it will probably be back and we need to take it to the goal for a touchdown for our Veterans and families. WATCH for action alerts, meet with your legislators during the break, and please VOTE with a Veteran in Mind this November. Let them know we are watching and that we will keep speaking up for our Veterans.

- Get your members signed up for Action Corps Weekly.
- Send out the Priority Goals and the Accomplishment brochures.
- Watch for the Auxiliary Legislative Day coming up here in Arizona.
- Hold watch parties.
- Attend Meet and Greets.

We are currently at half time, our legislators are on hiatus (vacation) and they are here in our districts, let's get out and meet with them, attend events, contact their local offices. If you are uncertain how to contact them check out vfwauxaz.org for more information under Programs, Legislation or google/search their office information online.

Let's be ready to rumble when half time is up and utilize our special teams to get our bills over the goal line and up the score for our Veterans, families and even our community.

Coming Soon, "A Day at the State Capital". Watch your emails and your September newsletter for more details. If you are attending MIT, you are getting the news FIRST!!!!

Congress as well as our states need to "Honor the Contract".

Historian Media Relations

Paulette Marshall

We survive and thrive, coming off the excitement of National Convention, it is always so busy coming back to your home post and catching up on everything you have missed. Ten days in Reno, were fantastic in meeting all of the line officers at the National level and getting a chance to speak one on one with my National Ambassador Teresa Price and get to see her passion for the preservation of each Auxiliaries' History. It is important not to only document our current activities, but to be eligible for the National Award, it is time to remember those who came before us. " Do you know who your first Auxiliary President was, the second, the third and so forth? Since the VFW National Auxiliary launched MALTA, it records who your past Presidents and Officers were, starting less than 10 years ago. Do you know when/how your Auxiliary got started? How have past members shaped the culture in your Auxiliary?" Research their history story and post on social media (any forum of your choice). More directions for this are listed in Malta under Member Resources in the Program Book which is available to all members. Feel free to contact me if you need help in creating the videos, there are great resources available to all of us. If I don't see you at the upcoming MIT,

hopefully we can connect either through email/phone call or at Fall Conference. Because this is a larger task for the National Citation, it will important to start earlier rather than later.

Membership Bambi Johnson

Membership is the heart of our organization, and we all have a part to play in its success.

Every member is a recruiter when they share our mission with potential new members and recruiting even one new member can start a chain of other new members as they share their experience with other potential new members.

Although we know that there are only a percentage of members that regularly attend monthly meetings, imagine if each attendee were to recruiter just one new member and bring them to the next meeting!

Using the Just One Pledge Card found in Malta in Membership Resources is an excellent way to set small membership goals in your auxiliary. Start by asking each member at your next meeting to take and application to carry and fill out and leave a Just One Pledge card to be with your secretary.

Don't overlook the times when you have nonmeeting members inside your Post home. When you are having an event or just a large crowd at your Post is also a great time to talk about the Just One Pledge card.

When a completed application is returned with the recruiter's name for anyone who did a pledge card, do something special to acknowledge their pledge being fulfilled.

Here are some ideas as a reward:

- Have a special poster in your Post home that celebrates recruiters that fulfilled their pledge.

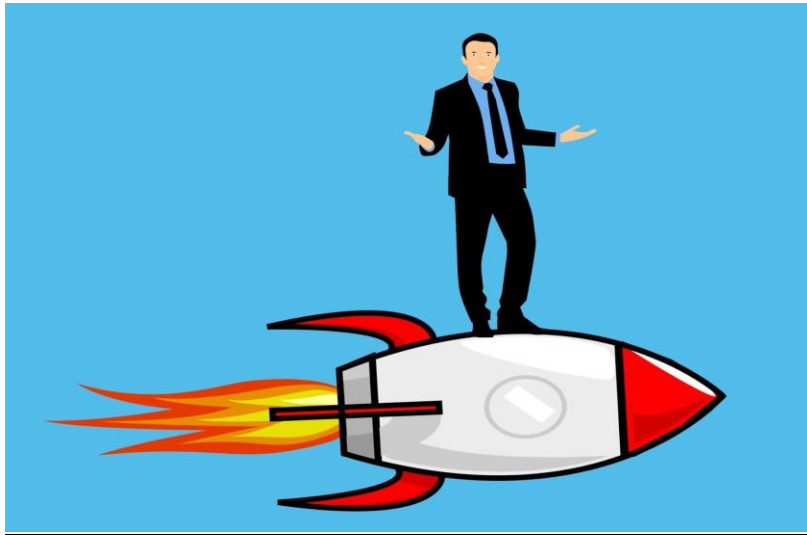
- Enter the name of each member who fulfilled their pledge into a drawing for some prize.
- Plan an appreciation celebration lunch or event every few months for anyone who fulfilled their pledge by a specified date.

The ways to celebrate their success are as individual as each Auxiliary and just have fun with it.

Keep in mind that your comrades are also recruiters and ask your Post Commander if they would like their members to also do a Pledge card. Together we can all reach for new members!

Scholarship

Alison McHose

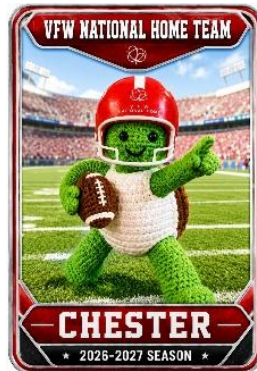


Like a rocket - we need to get started promoting our scholarship programs this month. August is back to school month (for most of Arizona) and your auxiliary needs to start reaching out to school guidance counselors, or teachers who teach history or civics. Know what you're asking in a clear and concise manner.

Call or email schools and know what you are seeking.

- 1) Time to present our scholarships either directly to students or directly to teachers who can forward the information to the students. Does the school promote a list of scholarships to both parents and teachers? How do we get our VFW Auxiliary scholarships to this list? Ask the schools if they can promote our QR code or can you leave physical applications at the school? Ask what number of applications are needed?
- 2) If you can present directly to students, decide what you are going to present and what you will bring for handouts. Does your VFW counterpart want to join you & have they reached out to schools already?
- 3) Get information out to the public in the form of social media posts, press releases to local newspapers and radio stations and any other means of promotion - posting flyers in strategic locations. Can you send an email to community groups who can pass the details on to students they serve? Any creative ideas to get the word out are welcome!

Always highlight our scholarship mission - supporting youth and adult achievements, promoting patriotism and assisting in the cost of education.



I would like to introduce Chester. He is helping me this year with my duties, and he has been busy reading the National Home Playbook. Look for Facebook posts on the VFW Auxiliary Department of Arizona page to learn more about the Home to help you develop your game plan. We have begun our Trivia questions and, if you are the first with the correct answer, you will receive a certificate. It is a fun way to learn more about the National Home!

This year we want to creatively educate about what and where the National Home is, and who is eligible for the services provided. This is right from the Playbook developed by VFW National Home Ambassador, Mary Anne Kreutz.

In July I was able to visit the National Home campus, and it was amazing. Staff is friendly and committed to serving our Military and Veteran families. Jerred Johnson, the Director, was in the Retail Store and shared some stories. One that resonated, was of a veteran who seemed “stuck” in the program until he became involved in the RAVE Program. It gave him purpose and the drive to graduate from the National Home!

There is so much happening there! The 4-H kids were finishing up the year by showing their animals at the county Fair. Teenage volunteers were helping with grounds maintenance. Residents were working in the garden for the RAVE Program. Veterans are learning the bees-ness of beekeeping and honey production in Heroes to Hives. Guitar lessons are being taught in Guitars 4 Vets. Military and Veterans are getting together for a “Cup of Joe” to

commiserate. These are the activities that you support when you buy bricks, memberships, Buddy Poppies, and donate in other ways.

Let's run some plays and get the word out so that we can help keep the homes filled (currently there are 2 vacancies).

Veterans and Family Support

Irene Nowacki

Team Arizona Auxiliary

National had their program kickoff and it was very interesting. Besides the audio hiccups, it was informative. Make sure you read your books! Just ask any line officer or chairman that was there.

Last month I said I would highlight each touch point that will help you towards possibly getting a National Citation. This year there are two possible citations. Will you go for just one or both!

The VFS National Citation #1 this year: Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the most outstanding promotion of VFW resources for veterans, service members and their families.

The VFS National Citation #2 this year: Citation and \$25 to one Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions for the most outstanding activity and/or event promoting resources, including those for PTS, and assistance for veterans and their families (resource fairs, mental health clinics, etc.)

Entry forms for these two citations are available in **MALTA under member resources** and must be filled out by the auxiliary and turned into the VFW Auxiliary department Veterans and Family Support chairman by March 31, 2027.

Citations will be mailed directly to the winning VFW auxiliary from National Headquarters and money will be deposited into the VFW Auxiliary account after the 2027 VFW Auxiliary National Convention.

Let's see just how many auxiliaries in Arizona get these citations. There is nothing like getting a little green for your efforts promoting these worthwhile programs.

Next month I will talk about Unmet Needs (National Military Services and National Veteran Services)



Hello Team Arizona from Youth Chair Crystal!

**Back-to-School
Season:
The Perfect
Time to
Start the
Game**



Every successful football team knows that championships aren't won on game day. They're built during training camp, in practices, and through countless hours spent mastering the fundamentals.

The same is true for our youth.

As students head back to school, we have a unique opportunity to help build a strong foundation for the next generation. That's why Play #1 in our Youth Activities Playbook is all about **Patriotism Through Literacy**.

Reading opens doors. It introduces young people to history, teaches critical thinking, sparks imagination, and helps them discover the stories of those who came before them. Through books, children can learn about our nation's founding, the sacrifices of our veterans, and the values that make our communities strong.

The good news? Building that foundation doesn't require a huge budget or a major event.

Consider hosting a book drive, donating patriotic or educational books to a local classroom, partnering with a school or library, or simply reading to children during a community event. If your Auxiliary has a lending library, now is the perfect time to refresh it and share it with families returning to their school-year routines.

Remember, every great play starts with a strong foundation. A single book placed in a child's hands today can inspire a lifelong love of learning tomorrow.

As we begin this new program year, I encourage every Auxiliary to look for one simple way to support literacy in your community. Small efforts can make a big impact, and together we can help our Future Playmakers develop the skills, confidence, and knowledge they'll carry for years to come.

So, huddle up, Arizona! Training camp is underway, and it's time to Build the Foundation.

Let's make this season a winning one.



Coach's Corner: August Audible Calls from the Sidelines

August 2 – International Friendship Day

Friendships help build confidence, teamwork, and a sense of belonging. Consider inviting youth to create friendship cards for veterans, participate in a community service project with a friend, or recognize the importance of kindness and inclusion in their schools and neighborhoods.

August 16 – National Tell a Joke Day

Laughter brings people together! Encourage youth to share family-friendly jokes, host a joke contest, or create a "Jokes for Heroes" display featuring funny notes and drawings for veterans in nursing homes, hospitals, or local posts.

August 21 – National Senior Citizens Day

This is a wonderful opportunity to connect generations. Youth can interview veterans and seniors about their life experiences, create handmade cards, assist with a visit to a nursing facility, or help preserve local history by listening to and recording stories from older community members.

August 26 – National Dog Day

Many veterans and military families share a special bond with their pets. Consider collecting pet supplies for a local shelter, inviting youth to create pet-themed thank-you cards, highlighting service dogs and their important work, or hosting a pet photo contest to encourage community participation.

Bonus Play for August

National Read-a-Book Month and **Back-to-School Month** continue all month long! Every book donated, every story shared, and every child encouraged to read helps us Build the Foundation for future success.

