

September 20, 2026

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



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Arizona VFW Auxiliary Newsletter

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Keep your face always
toward the sunshine,
and shadows will fall
behind you.

WALT WHITMAN



Some of you have asked to be able to read all the articles in their entirety in one place. On our webpage - www.vfwauxaz.org under the Arizona VFW Auxiliary Newsletter you can now find each month's articles all together. Click [here](#) to go directly there.



Americanism Christina Maiville

Happy September VFW Auxiliaries! I am so excited for the fall season and the pumpkin spice everything, though I am the person that must wait until the first day of fall to partake in the first pumpkin spice latte! As we move into

the latter part of 2026, I want to look back for just a moment at everything that has happened in the last two months. MIT was A LOT, but such a great

opportunity to learn and share a vast amount of information. A big thanks to Amanda Granillo and Jeanne Madlangbayan from Humana for joining in the Auxiliary shenanigans!

Even though Fall Conference fell on the Holiday weekend the VFW and Auxiliary still created a weekend packed full of learning, camaraderie, laughter, and a few tears. If you were unable to attend I suggest you look into the story of Capt. Ronald Forrester, his daughter Karoni Forrester was the keynote speaker at the Banquet and told us about her experience with DPAA bringing her father home. The entire story is also available on Youtube "Missing and Not Forgotten".

To read the rest of this article click [here](#).

Buddy Poppy Raelene Lam



While you are planning your Buddy Poppy Distribution Event, remind your team that they have an opportunity to meet the public, invite them to post functions, and make them aware of programs. A lot of the public have never been to the VFW and are not aware that we are more than a canteen. We love our canteen, but we are so much more. We are a team that is still serving our community and helping our veterans and families with personal needs and legislation.

Stay relaxed, have a good time together, make new friends, and sweetly put a poppy in the hands of every person that wants one.

Here is my suggested ABC's Checklist:
Preparing for Buddy Poppy Distribution go through your checklist

To read the rest of this article click [here](#)



Historian/Media Paulette Marshall

Wow, what a ride these last few months have been! I have been so happy to meet everyone in Arizona (well it feels like the whole state, but the VFW and Auxiliary are wonderful). We just got done with Fall Conference in Tucson, two weeks

earlier was the MIT and I know most of us have had our 1st district meeting already.

I was truly honored to be able to speak with those who attended the MIT and give a joint presentation with Greg Algori during the Fall Conference. I hope that we gave some insight into the media side of promoting and recognizing those who help with events that the Auxiliaries and Post are doing. If there is

something you are still unclear about, please feel free to reach out and if I don't have answer, I will do my best to find out for you.

To read the rest of the article click [here](#)

Hospital Pat Stinson

Hello everyone!! Happy almost end of summer in Arizona!! I am very happy to tell you all about our amazing MIT that we had in August. We had a so much fun on Friday night with the reps from Humana. It was a great way to meet new friends and catch up with old ones.



GRANTS

On Saturday we did our trainings and all of the participants were excited to be there and learn about the programs. It was especially great to see so many participants from the comrades' there. I did my best to make sure to cover all of the points that our National ambassador is advocating. I also pushed my own favorite point, our Hospital Grant program.

Speaking of which, I want to give you some great ideas for using the grant!! We have VFW Auxiliary Post 10227 using it to buy socks for the VA hospital in Prescott and the VA home in Flagstaff! VFW Auxiliary Post 12128 is using the grand to get holders for DVD players and game controllers as well as tablets for our bed-ridden vets at the VA home.

To read the rest of the article click [here](#)

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.



Legislative Connie Hargreaves

What a wonderful Fall Conference this year! VFW and Auxiliary working together as a team and sharing ideas for this year's programs. Such great and creative SWAP ideas for all Auxiliaries to utilize. Thank you, Comrade Anthony Hernandez and Comrade

Robert McDermott, for including the Auxiliary in the conversation.

TCAVA, the Take Care of American Veterans Act will be hitting the congressional floors again and we need to raise our voices, letters or emails to let our representatives know to vote no on this act. Taking the easy way and piling on 60 bills to expedite some that hurt veterans and/or makes veterans pay other veterans is not the correct way to do things and the VFW will be hitting Capital Hill in force shortly after this newsletter comes out to let them know just that. So, we can back our VFW up by contacting our Senators and Representative.

Please check your local event calendars, contact your candidates and let's get out to meet, talk and tell the candidates what we want to see happening for Veterans on both the State and Federal level. Be polite, let them know what veterans would like and be sure to get their contact information. Let's get our voices and our stories heard. Remember we want them to come meet and talk with us in our community Posts sometime this state legislative session.

To read the rest of this article click [here](#)

Membership Bambi Johnson

We kicked off the Just One Pledge push at our Membership Involvement Training last month. At the Fall Conference, we rolled out a new Just One Pledge card that features BOTH the VFW and the Auxiliary as we have a major focus on being the strongest VFW and Auxiliary team possible!



Every member of both organizations is eligible to receive a Best Team Ever pin for recruiting one Auxiliary member. Department President Melissa's coin will be given for recruiting 5 new members and we are continuing our membership pin with year rocker for 10 new memberships.

At Fall Conference we also showed what each Auxiliary can earn as the 2026-2027 the Membership banner. We have honored National President Danna Mills love of football with this year's design. Your Auxiliary can receive the banner at Winter Conference as if your 2026-2027 membership has reached the *Red Zone* with at least 95+%!

The special Department President's butterfly *Touchdown* football is awarded at 100+% and an additional Gold *Field Goal* Football pin will be awarded at 102+%.

To read the rest of this article click [here](#)



Scholarship Alison McHose

Scholarships are in full swing in September!!

I hope all auxiliary scholarship chairs are busy spreading the word about all of our amazing scholarship opportunities. The goal is to get the word out to as many students, parents, community members and groups as possible.

We need applicants! Time is ticking away (like the game clock - when it works - on the football field) with deadlines fast approaching for the VFW's Voice of Democracy oral essay and the Patriot's Pen written essay.

Veterans and Family Support Irene Nowacki

MIT was so much fun! Sports overload for sure. Hopefully you all had at least one member from your auxiliary attend that brought back some great information to share.

This month I will be highlighting National Unmet Needs, National Military Services and National Veteran Services. Plus a newer program, VFW Operation Uplink.



The VFW's Unmet Needs Program provides grants up to \$1500.00 to eligible service members, veterans and their families facing financial hardships that are related to military service.

- Household expenses: mortgage, rent, repairs, insurance, utilities and primary phone
- Vehicle expenses: payments, repairs, insurance
- Food and clothing, including children's clothing, diapers, formula
- School or childcare expenses
- Medical bills, prescriptions, and eyeglasses

To read the rest of this article click [here](#)



V F W
N A T I O N A L H O M E

VFW National Home Peggy Welch

Hello Arizona! What a great Fall Conference. Thanks to all Chairmen for your dedication to the VFW and Auxiliary programs. As I listened to the presentations, I realized how the VFW National Home embodies our program missions.

The Home promotes Americanism in their activities and Flags in front of all Homes, and it is founded on the support of the Buddy Poppy financially and by Honoring the Dead by Helping the Living. By keeping our Auxiliaries healthy to aid the Home, Extension and Revitalization helps. The National Home has a strong Media and website presence in which it shares current and past History. In the past, an Auxiliary supported Hospital was on campus. Legislative members are frequent guests for speaking and information gathering. Scholarships are available to enhance the education of residents. Veteran and Family Support is a key component of the goal-oriented program. Every family is evaluated for eligibility and is valued as a Member (Membership). Youth are a priority focus with activities, day care, 4-H, the Buddy Poppy Child, and numerous holidays and special events. The all-around goal, To Build Strong Families, is truly covered in our programs.

That being said, know this: most events and activities could be a chance to Promote the National Home and to Educate on Eligibility. Facebook and other social media platforms can help with your promotion, as well. Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be a useful tool, and it can help you come up with fun ways to educate. If you are using any logos, remember, they **MUST** be accurate. Check your facts before posting and **USE YOUR HASHTAGS**: #az2627nationalhome, #VFWnationalhome, #az2627media, #vfwauxaz, #vfwauxiliary, #vfwaz, #vfw. Add your Auxiliary hashtag – i.e. #vfwauxiliary10254.

To read the rest of this article click [here](#)

Youth Crystal McCarthy



Play #2: Draft Your Team

The Season Is Underway — Who's on Your Roster?



The foundation is built. The kids are back in school. Friday night lights are on, fall activities are underway, and it's officially time to get off the sidelines.

Play #2: Draft Your Team is about making connections.

Youth Activities doesn't mean we have to create every project ourselves. Some of the best opportunities are already happening in our communities — we just need to find them. Look around your hometown. Who is already working with kids? Schools. Marching bands. FFA. 4-H. Scouts. Sports teams. JROTC. Church youth groups. Libraries. Homeschool groups. Youth service organizations. Clubs you may not have even heard of yet.

At Fall Conference, we had the opportunity to hear directly from several of those community organizations. They gave us a look at what they are doing with Arizona's youth — and, more importantly, helped us see where the VFW and VFW Auxiliary might fit into that picture. Those are your potential draft picks.

This month, challenge your Auxiliary to choose **one youth organization you aren't currently working with** and make contact.

But here's the important part: don't lead with what you want from them. **Ask: "What are you working on, and how can we help?"** Maybe they need volunteers at an event. Maybe they need judges, mentors or an extra set of hands. Maybe they'd love veterans to speak to students. Maybe there's a project where their youth could work alongside your members. You won't know until you ask.

And remember — a partnership goes both ways. We're not simply looking for youth to participate in *our* programs. We're building relationships where we show up for their programs, too. That's exactly what the VFW Auxiliary Youth Activities Program encourages: working with youth groups and giving young

people positive opportunities to serve their communities, veterans and service members.

To read the rest of this article click [here](#)



If you have questions or need help with the website or the newsletter, contact Becky Baldwin at beckybaldwin10@gmail.com or Kim Harney at kharney02@gmail.com

Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary in Arizona | 326 E. Burrows St. | Tucson, AZ 85704 US

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