

Volume 10/ April 2024

UNWAVERING SUPPORT



FOR UNCOMMON HEROES®

## Arizona VFW Auxiliary Newsletter

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### President Bambi Johnson's Message

Last month I attended Legislative Week in Washington DC along with Commander Bill Schaeffler and several of our Arizona comrades and Auxiliary members, including Jim Ellars, our VFW Arizona Legislative Representative. Jim has been our representative and visiting with elected Arizona Congressional members for about 18 years. He was our guiding force as we moved throughout the congressional complex to speak on important veteran issues that we want these officials to focus on. We all noted that his presence helped with the visits. Jim had prearranged the appointment times

and was recognized by the Congressmen's staff as soon as we entered. It was very exciting to meet with these elected officials and have them, and/or their staff, REALLY LISTEN to the issues we brought to them!

Keep in mind that you don't have to visit your officials in Washington DC to accomplish our Legislative Goals. Legislation begins local...from your City Councils, County Supervisors to your State Legislature, we need to constantly bring attention to our veterans needs and their families in our communities.

The Voice of Democracy National contest also comes to a close during

Legislative Week. Commander Bill and I had the honor of escorting our Arizona finalist, Sophia Lin, in the Parade of Winners. Bill and I felt like proud “parents” to be there for her. The excitement kept building as they counted down to the final four contestants and Bill and I exploded out of our seats when Sophie was awarded **FIRST PLACE** and a check for the top prize of \$35,000!!! Sophia Lin is the first Arizona finalist to be awarded first place in this wonderful scholarship event!! I called back to Arizona and was able to have some Post and Auxiliary members meet her at the airport on her return.

The Program Year may have ended on March 3<sup>rd</sup>...but the Mission of the Auxiliary is every day! Keep working the programs and doing the good work we are dedicated to. Your incoming President Lynn Pierre has lined up her chairmen and as soon as Convention is done, the new Program Special Project forms will be ready for you to send for items starting in April. Keep moving forward in all you do!

Don't forget that Commander Bill and I are having a joint homecoming on April 6<sup>th</sup> in Apache Junction Post 9399 from 5-9 PM. If you did not arrange in advance, you can still attend the Western Hoedown. You can pay at the event and enjoy both a great BBQ dinner, the country band Reign Country, games raffles & Prizes! Contact Ruth Malick at 480-695-6791 for details.

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The District Corner and flyers are located on the webpage [www.vfwauxaz.org](http://www.vfwauxaz.org) under news/events. Be sure to check out all that is happening around the Department.

## News

**\*Uniting to Combat Hunger Grant** is open from Oct 1 thru June 1, 2024. The form is available on the Department webpage - [www.vfwauxaz.org](http://www.vfwauxaz.org) under programs/veterans and family support or resources/forms.



**\*Department President and Commander's Homecoming** will be a joint event on April 6th at Post 9399 in Apache Junction. Event begins at 5 pm and cost is \$25. Click [here](#) to see the flyer.

**\*National Sr. Vice President Brenda Bryant's shirt** is available to order. Click [here](#) for the order form.

\***2024 National CAFE** is at the VFW National Home on 9/7/2024. Registration is open from 6.1 through 8.7.24. The cost is \$40 which includes transportation and lunch. Register on your MALTA account.

\***2024 Western Conference** will be in Honolulu, Hawaii from Oct 31st - Nov 3rd. Registration is due by Oct 16th. Click [here](#) for more information.

\***2025 Aux Mid-Year** will be at an all-inclusive resort in Cancun from Feb 1st-Feb 6th. Click [here](#) for more information.

\*Irene Nowacki is running for **Department Guard** at the 2024 Department convention. Click [here](#) to read her brochure.

\*Department of Arkansas Kim Davis is a candidate for **National Guard** at the 2024 National Convention in Ky. Click [here](#) to read her letter and brochure.



\* **Department Sr. Vice** Lynn Pierre's order form for her shirt is now available. They need to be ordered by **April 6th** in order for you to receive it at Department Convention.

The Department is trying something new this year - pins must be ordered ahead of time. This way we know exactly how many to order and hopefully this will save money.

Click [here](#) for the form and remember to get your order placed so you don't miss out!

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## Department Convention

It's time to start thinking about Convention. This year it is **May 29th - June 2nd** at Loews Ventana Canyon in Tucson. Click [here](#) to see the convention flyer. Room reservations close on **May 7th** so don't delay!



AUXILIARIES ARE ASKED TO DONATE A BASKET FOR THE ANNUAL DEPARTMENT RAFFLE HELD AT CONVENTION.

If your auxiliary is able to donate, please bring your basket to the raffle area at convention on either Wednesday, May 30th or Thursday, May 31st.

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Hello, All Auxiliary Past President Club members!



This year will be quite a bit different from the past years. We will not have a room to hold the meeting in and due to the food costs being over the top, we will not be having a luncheon. With this being said, we will be meeting Friday, May 31st, @ 7:30 am in the main Auxiliary room before the Auxiliary meeting. At this meeting, we will have the reading of last year's minutes and the nominations and elections of officers for the 2024-2025 year.



We are humbly asking all auxiliaries in Arizona to please donate \$75.00 (or more if able) to the APPC so that we can cover our obligation, to meet the \$2000.00 that we have committed to give to our VA hospitals. Please either send checks made out to APPC in care of Ruth V. Malick @ 738 N. 97th street, Mesa, AZ 85027 ahead of the Department Convention or bring them Thursday morning to the APPC table and give them to Ruth Malick. Dues are still \$2.00 per person and are due at the meeting.

We will still be having a "Greenies" raffle for all auxiliaries. For every \$10.00 donated, your Auxiliary will receive 1 raffle ticket. Raffles winners will be pulled Friday morning by APPC President Janae Kemery. Prizes this year for 10 lucky auxiliaries will be \$100.00 GCs to Amazon. Please remember this is for past Presidents from all levels. Auxiliary, District and Department. If you need any other information, please don't hesitate to contact either Janae Kemery (602) 339-3192 or Ruth Malick (480) 695-6791.

Respectfully,  
Ruth V. Malick  
2023-2024 APPC Secretary/Treasurer  
March 30, 2024

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## YOUTH VOLUNTEERS

If you have a young family member  
(must be related to a VFW or Auxiliary member)  
between the ages of 10 – 15

And

They would like to volunteer at the 2024 Department Convention

Please contact the Department Secretary – Treasurer Kim Sloan  
at 520.307.7940

They must be accompanied by an adult who will be at convention and  
responsible for the young person when not “on duty”.

Unfortunately, we do not cover any of the costs for these volunteers.

We just want to expose them to the joys of volunteering and getting to  
know more about the VFW Auxiliary which they may want to join.

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### Issue Number: Tax Tip 2024-10

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## Military members and their families can get free tax help

Military personnel who want to file free federal tax returns have several options, including the Department of Defense's [MilTax](#) and the IRS Free File program. These programs offer online tax preparation, electronic filing and direct deposit of refunds at no cost.

### **MilTax**

The Department of Defense provides [MilTax](#) as a free tax resource for the military community. MilTax is a suite of tax services available for members of the military, as well as qualifying veterans and family members. There are no income limits.

MilTax is designed exclusively for the military community. The software was developed specifically to address the unique circumstances of military life that can affect taxes such as combat pay and dealing with multiple moves within the same tax year. Eligible taxpayers can use MilTax to complete and electronically file a federal tax return and up to three state returns for free.

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**Secretary/Treasurer  
Kim Sloan**



See the information below for District and Department Delegates. This Information on delegates can also be found on the website [www.vfwauxaz.org](http://www.vfwauxaz.org) behind member log in under Secretary.

There is also a memo from National on the dues increase starting July 1st.

### 2024-2025 District Delegates and Alternates Instructions

- **Review Bylaws Sec 303**

*Delegates and Alternates to Districts shall be elected at a regular meeting of the Auxiliary held not less than thirty (30) calendar days prior to the District Convention at which the District Officers are to be elected.*

All District Conventions this year will be held in April, so Auxiliaries should elect their Delegates and Alternates at the March Auxiliary meeting.

- **Number of Delegates and Alternates**

National Bylaws state that the number of Delegates and Alternates may be set forth differently in the Department Bylaws. Department of Arizona Bylaws call for one (1) Delegate and one (1) Alternate for every ten (10) members or fraction thereof in good standing in the Auxiliary at the time of the election.

**EXAMPLE:**

On the night Delegates and Alternates are to be elected, MALTA shows the Auxiliary has 102 members in good standing.

102 divided by 10 = 10.2 (.2 is fraction thereof and so you round up to 11)

Therefore the Auxiliary would elect 11 Delegates and 11 Alternates

- **Election**

Delegates and Alternates are elected by the members – they are NOT appointed. Most Auxiliaries have more Delegates/Alternates than attend Auxiliary meetings. Note that members do not have to be present to be elected as a Delegate or Alternate. The membership should consider those members who may not be able to attend Auxiliary meetings but do attend District meetings. All Delegates and Alternates must be members in good standing of that Auxiliary (life members or current annual members).

- **District Composition Members**

The Auxiliary President has his/her own vote at the District meetings and should be listed at the bottom of the form AND as an Alternate in the right column.

Any Past Department President, District Officer or Past District President that is a member of your Auxiliary has their own vote at District meetings/convention. They should be listed at the bottom of the form and should be considered for election as an Alternate.

*If the Auxiliary President is the only Delegate or Alternate at a District Meeting, he/she may choose to vote as a Delegate rather than as Auxiliary President. In the example above, the Auxiliary is entitled to 11 votes (each Delegate has one vote) plus the President's vote. But if the President chooses to vote as a Delegate (which he/she may do if one of the Delegates is not present) he/she would cast 11 votes instead of just the President's vote.*

- **PRINT OR TYPE ALL INFORMATION – If you have a large Auxiliary consider attaching list of Delegates and Alternates to the Delegate form.**

- **Submit to District Secretary**

2024-2025

District

Delegates and Alternates

District \_\_\_\_\_ Auxiliary \_\_\_\_\_

PRINT OR TYPE ALL INFORMATION

| Delegates |  | Alternates |  |
|-----------|--|------------|--|
| 1         |  | 1          |  |
| 2         |  | 2          |  |
| 3         |  | 3          |  |
| 4         |  | 4          |  |
| 5         |  | 5          |  |
| 6         |  | 6          |  |
| 7         |  | 7          |  |
| 8         |  | 8          |  |
| 9         |  | 9          |  |
| 10        |  | 10         |  |
| 11        |  | 11         |  |
| 12        |  | 12         |  |
| 13        |  | 13         |  |
| 14        |  | 14         |  |
| 15        |  | 15         |  |
| 16        |  | 16         |  |
| 17        |  | 17         |  |
| 18        |  | 18         |  |
| 19        |  | 19         |  |
| 20        |  | 20         |  |

USE SECOND SHEET IF NECESSARY

The following District convention composition members have their own vote.

| NAME | OFFICE                               |
|------|--------------------------------------|
|      | Auxiliary President                  |
|      | District Office - District President |
|      | District Office - (insert office)    |
|      | District Office - (insert office)    |
|      | Department President                 |
|      | Past Department President            |
|      | Past District President              |
|      | Past District President              |
|      | Past District President              |



## 2024-2025 DEPARTMENT Delegates and Alternates Instructions

- **Review Bylaws Sec 304**

*Delegates and Alternates to the Department Meetings and Convention shall be elected at a regular meeting of the Auxiliary held not less than thirty (30) calendar days prior to the Department Convention.*

Auxiliaries should elect their Delegates and Alternates at their April or May meeting.

- **Number of Delegates and Alternates**

National Bylaws state that the number of Delegates and Alternates may be set forth differently in the Department Bylaws. Department of Arizona Bylaws call for one (1) Delegate and one (1) Alternate for every ten (10) members or fraction thereof in good standing in the Auxiliary at the time of the election.

**EXAMPLE:**

On the night Delegates and Alternates are to be elected, MALTA shows the Auxiliary has 102 members in good standing.

102 divided by 10 = 10.2 (.2 is fraction thereof and so you round up to 11) Therefore the Auxiliary would elect 11 Delegates and 11 Alternates

- **Election**

Delegates and Alternates are elected by the members – they are NOT appointed. Most Auxiliaries have more Delegates/Alternates than attend Auxiliary meetings. Note that members do not have to be present to be elected as a Delegate or Alternate. The membership should consider those members who may not be able to attend Auxiliary meetings but do attend the Department Convention. All Delegates and Alternates must be members in good standing of that Auxiliary (life members or current annual members).

- **Department Composition Members**

The Auxiliary President has his/her own vote at the Department Convention and should be listed at the bottom of the form AND as an Alternate in the right column.

The National District Council Member, any Department Officer and Past Department Presidents, that are members of your Auxiliary have their own vote at Department Convention. They should be listed at the bottom of the form and should be considered for election as an Alternate. They will need to notify the Credentials Chairman if they are voting as a Delegate or voting their own vote.

*If the Auxiliary President is the only Delegate or Alternate at the Department Convention, he/she may choose to vote as a Delegate rather than as Auxiliary President. In the example above, the Auxiliary is entitled to 11 votes (each Delegate has one vote) plus the President's vote. But if the President chooses to vote as a Delegate (which he/she may do if all of the Delegates are not present) he/she would cast 11 votes instead of just the President's vote.*

**2024-2025  
DEPARTMENT Delegates and Alternates**

**Auxiliary \_\_\_\_\_**

**PRINT OR TYPE ALL INFORMATION**

| Delegates |  | Alternates |  |
|-----------|--|------------|--|
| 1         |  | 1          |  |
| 2         |  | 2          |  |
| 3         |  | 3          |  |
| 4         |  | 4          |  |
| 5         |  | 5          |  |
| 6         |  | 6          |  |
| 7         |  | 7          |  |
| 8         |  | 8          |  |
| 9         |  | 9          |  |
| 10        |  | 10         |  |
| 11        |  | 11         |  |
| 12        |  | 12         |  |
| 13        |  | 13         |  |
| 14        |  | 14         |  |
| 15        |  | 15         |  |
| 16        |  | 16         |  |
| 17        |  | 17         |  |
| 18        |  | 18         |  |
| 19        |  | 19         |  |
| 20        |  | 20         |  |

USE SECOND SHEET IF NECESSARY

The following convention composition members have their own vote.

| NAME | OFFICE  |
|------|---|
|      | Auxiliary President                           |
|      | National District Council Member/Nat. Officer |
|      | Department President                          |
|      | Past Department President                     |
|      | Past Department President                     |
|      | District President                            |
|      | Department Officer                            |
|      | Department Officer                            |
|      | Department Officer                            |



## VFW AUXILIARY

Unwavering Support for Uncommon Heroes™

# MEMO

**DATE:** March 26, 2024

**TO:** Department Treasurers  
Department Secretaries

**FROM:** VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters

**SUBJECT:** Official Memorandum of Annual Dues Increase

Per the vote at the 2023 National Convention Delegates, starting July 1, 2024, the National Headquarters portion of annual dues will be increasing by \$5.00 for the 2025 dues year. For annual members associated with a local Auxiliary, the National portion of dues will be \$10.00 and for annual members that are Department at Large, the National portion of dues will be \$15.00

Due to this change it is **imperative** that each Auxiliary and Department review the annual dues amount that will be collected from continuous annual members for the 2025 dues year by June 30, 2024, in MALTA to determine if it should be updated.

If an Auxiliary is not charging enough to cover the increase of the National portion of annual dues for \$10 and Department portion of annual dues of \$?, it could result in the organization not receiving any membership dues when members pay their dues. Please note that National and Department portions will be paid first from annual dues and then the remainder will be the Auxiliary portion. Please see example below:

**EXAMPLE:** Currently Auxiliary XXXX charges a continuous annual member \$20 per year for dues. Of this \$20, the Auxiliary keeps \$10, the Department's portion is \$5, and the National portion is \$5. If an Auxiliary does not update their dues amount collected in MALTA by June 30, 2024, then on July 1, 2024, MALTA will still charge their annual members \$20 for dues. Of this \$20, \$5 will go to the Department, \$10 will go to National and thus the Auxiliary will only receive \$5 instead of the \$10 it previously received.

To update the dues amount charged in MALTA, there are two options:

1. The Secretary may update this amount when filing the Installation Report for the 2024-2025 year.
2. The Auxiliary Treasurer may update the dues amount in MALTA by clicking the Edit Dues Amount in MALTA under their Treasurer Duties tab and then clicking the blue button labeled Change Dues. Please note that the Treasurer has the ability to schedule the dues increase for the future and does not have to wait until June 30<sup>th</sup> to input this information.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact your Department Treasurer and/or Department Secretary.



## Americanism Lori Schaeffler

I am hoping each of you had a fabulous Easter with family and friends. I hope to see you many of you April 6 at President Bambi and Commander Bill's homecoming in

Apache Junction.

This is a great time to not only enjoy spring and all the events out in our communities but to get out and replace the tattered flags that have become distressed from the wind and weather. Just a suggestion, why not carry a spare flag with you as you drive through your communities and offer to replace flag if

you see one tattered. It does let people know that the Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary is out in the community and willing to help. It also opens a line of communication to let them know what else we do.

HOW EXCITING WAS IT... to watch Voice of Democracy live as Sophia Lin won the \$35000 Voice of Democracy Scholarship for Arizona. Bambi told me that Commander Bill's heart rate was racing as it got closer and closer to being named the winner. And this is why we do what we do and all of our hard work of being out in the communities and passing the scholarship to our youth and to their families. It was so exciting to greet Sophia at the Phoenix Airport when she flew home. QM Hope Blood, Aux Presidents; Heather Lyn and Amy Bennett along with Don Roberts and myself waved American Flags for her as she walked off the plane. She could not believe we were there to greet her, but she was so excited. Did you know this is the first times someone from Arizona has won?

I'm hoping by now that the VFW comrades and the VFW Auxiliary in conjunction have got into the habit of using full words instead of acronyms. I had someone correct me the other day and I was like wow this does have an impact. It made me proud, that ya'll are in the habit now of not using just the letters. That was our goal!! Because Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary sounds so much better than VFW AUX.

On April 19th at Marana Veterans Cemetery at 12 noon, we will lay another Missing in Action Soldier that was killed in Action nearly 82 years ago. On April 9, 1942, Pvt Earl E.R. Siebert was among those captured in the surrender of the Bataan Peninsula. Pvt Earl E.R, Siebert died July 27<sup>th</sup> of that year while being held as a Prisoner of War. Welcome Home Soldier and another family has answers. It is a great time to get in the habit of using "full words" as they do have an impact on how people hear it. Memorial Day is right around the corner. When in a ceremony you hear the words Killed in Action or Prisoner of War, you can feel that weight of the words.

Just because March 31st was the deadline for programs to be done for this year it doesn't mean we quit working or have a vacation or a rest. We need to keep working for our veterans and our communities. Anything you do between now and July 1st is reportable, it just cannot be submitted before July 1st, 2024. Please keep track of those projects. My suggestion is you go ahead and fill a report form out using the old form from this year then transfer it to the new form. That way you don't forget what you have done, and you will not forget all the details.

Convention is at the end of May, and I am very excited about our programs next year. You do have until April 15th to get me your reports for this year. That way I can send any citations to National, and I am able to start planning for our State Convention and the awards that will be handed out.

Thank you all for your hard work all year long. You make me proud to be a VFW Auxiliary member!

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**Auxiliary Outreach**  
**Melissa Martin**



Hi everyone, I have so enjoyed all of your reports and seeing the great things you all have been doing.



I'm sure your communities are very grateful for all the help they have received from your Auxiliaries as well. Don't stop working out in your communities. You can still do things and save the report and get a head start on next year's reporting year.

I can't wait to see all of you get awards at convention.  
See you all soon.



## Buddy Poppy & VFW National Home Connie Hargraves

It's been said that April showers bring May flowers, but this year it's been March showers and snow bring April Flowers!

Speaking of flowers, we're looking forward to seeing your Poppy displays in Tucson at Department Convention. Links below to what is required for the three categories. April is loaded with District Conventions to bring your displays too!

<https://vfwauxaz.org/uploads/documents/buddypoppyorderformfortraditional.jpg>  
order form, traditional.

<https://vfwauxaz.org/uploads/documents/buddypoppyorderformfortinpin.jpg>  
new tin poppy.

<https://vfwauxiliary.org/wp-content/uploads/Buddy-Poppy-Display-Contest-rules.pdf>

<https://vfwauxaz.org/uploads/documents/BuddyPoppycontestform.jpg>

Good Luck all of you. Thank you for submitting your project reports. As of writing this article, I have received 35 reports using Poppies with other programs. Less for educating about National Home, although it was great to see how many of you worked at supporting the Home by promoting life memberships.

As you know, 2025 is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Home. What a great time to promote events and contests with the National Home in mind. Remember, "Buddy" Poppies help finance the National Home as well as your contributions and support including Health and Wellness donations.

Please check out the you tube video on how you can support VFW National Home: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84M-call4RY>

### How can You Help?

- Outreach to veteran support groups in your community.
- Outreach to VFW and non-VFW individuals and organizations
- Share National Home stories via blogs on websites.
- Share Facebook posts.

### Automatic Monthly Gifts

- Home Front Hero Program

- Reduces the amount of mail donors receives.
- Provides ongoing, steady support.
- Monthly gift charged to credit card or withdrawn from checking/savings.
- Most effective way to fundraise.
- Enroll on website donations page or reply envelope.

### **Planned Giving Program**

Planned giving is the process of making a significant charitable gift during a donor's life or at death that is part of his or her financial or estate plan. Including the National Home in will or trust.

- Qualified Charitable Distributions
- Gifts of appreciated Stock.
- Beneficiary insurance policy or retirement account

### **Charitable Gift Annuities**

- Minimum size of \$10,000
- Minimum age 65.

### **Tribute Park**

Net proceeds go into Amy Ross Endowment Fund. Items that are included in the park.

- Plaques
- Trees
- Statues
- Benches
- Rocks

### **Tribute Brick Program**

- 4 x 8 bricks
- 3 lines of 18 characters
- \$100

### **Centennial Garden Brick**

- 8 x 8 engraved brick
- 4 lines
- \$500
- Limited number of bricks available.

### **Life Membership**

- Life member
- Associate Life member (non-VFW/Auxiliary member)
- \$50, includes certificate, wallet and lapel pin
- Voting based on Department affiliation.
- Centennial Life Membership \$100. (Can upgrade from Life)

Facebook, Amazon Wish List and Fundraisers/special projects

The VFW National Home will be having a special Centennial Membership Program from April 1, 2024 through December 31, 2025. Click [here](#) to read more.

Congratulations and thank you to everyone for your hard work promoting "Buddy" Poppy and National Home.

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**Chief of Staff**  
**Johnnie DeBoard**

[National Ambassador's March 2024 Blog - Time to Help Red Flag Auxiliaries](#)

We are coming to the end of the 2023-2024 year and it's not too late to recognize the achievements of our members. Any member can give a good job award out. They are located under the Extension and Revitalization tab of member resources in **MALTA**. Every member needs to feel their involvement is appreciated.



Ask the membership at your next meeting for some ideas for a project to be done within the next few months. This will help in planning as a team. Teamwork is what our organization PAR'S needs most and hopefully you are working as a team to get all your PAR'S done and program activity reports. I know some auxiliaries don't like to do the project reports because they don't want recognition for what they do. But at least please do the Veterans and Family support report.

Look for next month's article, it will focus on ideas to start the next year. If you need any help with your project reports reach out to the chairmen, they are more than willing to assist you.



## Historian/Media Nancy Schatz

[National Ambassador's March Blog - Three Reminders For You](#)

Happy April Fool's Day everyone and Happy End of the Program Year!!!

Yes, as of March 31, 2024, the 2023-2024 program year has ended! I want to thank all the auxiliaries that have submitted their Historian/Media reports for this past program year...I am super impressed by the great work you all have accomplished!

I also want to thank those auxiliaries that submitted videos for this year! I really enjoyed watching them and hearing all the great things your legacy members had to say about their auxiliaries, the work being done, and their experience with the VFW Auxiliary...they were **AMAZING!**

Now that the 2023-2024 year has finished...don't let up...have a planning session at your next meetings and start to plan what you will do for the 2024-2025 program year. I know it seems early, but it's never too early to get a jump start on the year and capturing those memories!

I hope to see you all at President's Bambi's Homecoming on April 6, 2024...I bet it will be a "rip snorting" great time for all—see you there.

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**Hospital  
Denise Williams**

[National Ambassador's March Blog - Hard Work Is  
Recognized](#)



Good morning, everyone,  
First, I want to thank each one of you for your hard work this year. What an impressive job you guys did. Projects you did were impressive, thank you for helping our veterans. It is important that we do not forget our Veterans.

I received a lot of feedback about the apron idea and would love to see the finished projects. Someone was telling me about Fidget aprons and blankets you can get on Amazon. These aprons help the Veterans with their memory and their coordination. We have talented members that can also make these aprons as well. There are other things we can make like a fidget board. Those are just a couple of ideas we can do.

The year is ending; this year went by fast. Thank you all for the project reports you turned in. I am proud of all of you, taking care of our Veterans. Making them feel they are loved and needed. Just because the year is ending, does not mean we need to stop. We need to keep working year-round, they did not give up on us. So, we do not give up on them.

We all worked hard this year; I know a lot of it went unreported. Daily we are helping veterans, not even thinking about it. By taking them out to eat, or to the store not even realizing we are helping a veteran. Most of us it is just an everyday routine. I want to thank you for everything you do. You all are Rockstars in my book.

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**VAVS Region 3**

Please see the flyer below for a special VA Hospital volunteer appreciation event.

There will also be a VAVS Meeting that day. We want volunteers to understand what it means to be a VAVS Representative or Deputy to get more involvement from the community.

If you've never volunteered at the VA before, this is the event to come to! We want to welcome you as a volunteer and look forward to telling you about the volunteer opportunities.

This is for anyone interested in volunteering at the VA Hospital not just members, youth can also get involved attend to find out more information.

NOTE the RSVP deadline of April 15. Call 520-792-1450 ext. 1-6990

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# 2024 National Volunteer Week: April 21-27

**SAVAHCS Volunteers**  
Make a World of Difference!

**Save the Date**  
**Volunteer Appreciation BBQ**  
SAVAHCS Sports Park  
Wednesday, April 24, 2024, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
RSVP By: Monday, April 15, 2024

VA U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Health Administration  
Southern Arizona VA Health Care System (SAVAHCS)

## Legislative JaNice Robertson

[National Ambassador's March Blog -  
Reminders and Dates](#)

**Be an Advocate – Be Informed – Be  
Engaged**



**Wow! April already?  
Spring is here! Welcome April!**

This year is finished, but just because our programs have ended for this year that does not give us an excuse to stop advocating for our Veterans. We need to be there for our Veterans. Make sure that the ones we elect to Capitol Hill hear what we are saying and are listening. Inform yourselves. What are their views regarding our Veterans. Legislation is never over. It continues every day.

Keep your eyes on the Claim shark bill SB1308. Make sure you have let your senators know that it is not a good bill the way it got amended. Keep our eyes open on the Veterans home in Mohave County and what our Governor wants to do with the money that was allocated for that project. Keep reading the Action Corps Weekly and keep up with all of the news that comes down to us from our Senators and Congressmen.

Keep doing the programs that we have been doing, just report them on your

2024-2025 report forms when they come out. It is always a difficult transition in April, May, and June. All programs are to be done by the end of March and reported to the Chairmans of each program this is so we can get all of the behind-the-scenes jobs done. We have to have the time to check all of the reports and get them sent off to our ambassadors and they have to have the time to check them off and see who did the programs.

With our new year starting in July after our National Convention, we get excited to start all over again with new ideas and new challenges. It has been a wonderful year and I enjoyed hearing all you did with our legislators.

I have updated all of the program reports to Kim, if you do not see your auxiliary noted as turned in a report, **PLEASE** contact **me** so we can get it corrected not Kim. April 15th is coming quickly so we need all the program reports turned in as soon as possible. I have been receiving a lot of them this last week, so I hope to get even more in the time we have left.



## Membership Becky Baldwin

Happy End of the Program Year! All program activities should have been complete prior to March 31<sup>st</sup>, you know have till April 15<sup>th</sup> to get them into the Chairmen.

Is your Auxiliary missing a membership report? Did you make it to 100%? Write that up and send it in! This will check you off for turning in an Auxiliary Membership Report for the Outstanding Auxiliary Award.

Did you do something out of the box to obtain and retain members this year? Share those, write a report about them! Williams Auxiliary 12128 has membership charms and members can receive a charm for their bracelet each time they participate in a designated event and/or meeting. What a cool way to add a little bling to what you do.

Congratulations to you all for working hard to get Arizona over 100% in Membership this year!

## Mentoring for Leadership Doug Kinghorn

April is here!!!! Spring showers bring April flowers, pollen, sneezing, bloodshot eyes and blowing noses.

**LEADERSHIP -- EMPOWER -- INSPIRE --  
MOTIVATE**



**Recap:** Francine Cornish - National Mentoring for Leadership Ambassador

### **C.A.R.E.** – Ensure a Positive Member Experience

- Catch the member When they First Join
- Ask them to Participate.
- Remember what it Felt like to be New.
- Engage them in a Program that fits Them.

### **Mentoring:**

Advice, Coaching, Direction, Goal, Motivation, Success, Support and Training

#### **You are a Mentor.**

\*You have held a position, either as an Officer or Chairman.

\*You have helped with several Programs.

\*You are ready and willing to lend a helping hand.

\*People rely on you to remember how things are done.

\*You care about veterans, service members and their families.

\*The organization is important to you.

### **Encourage Participation in Learning and Training Activities**

During your Auxiliary meetings this month, time to nominate the next line officers and vote on who will be beneficial in the advancement into the next year.

Please have the officers that are going out, mentor the officers coming in. Names and pictures of outgoing and incoming officers would be nice.



### **Keith Doris Scholarship**

Wow, it's hard to imagine but April is already here, and we are in the last stages of our Scholarships for this program year.

It is so exciting that our Arizona Voice of Democracy first place winner, Sophia Lin, went to our nation's capital and was awarded First Place at National and received the highest award of \$35,000 for her education!

Today, April 1<sup>st</sup>, is the deadline for having applications to me for judging of our two Arizona Scholarships: The Arizona Auxiliary Merit Scholarship and the Arizona Educational Grant. Both of these will have one winner for \$1,000. Both the Young American Creative Art Scholarship and the #-Dimensional Art Scholarship entries should have been received by the local Auxiliaries by March 31<sup>st</sup>. Winners from Auxiliaries and Districts must be received by me no later than April 15<sup>th</sup> for Department judging so that our First Place in each can be received at National by May 5<sup>th</sup>. Winners for both the National scholarships will be announced at Nation Convention.

Every child that enters any of our scholarship contest is a winner! Remember to celebrate each entry as these children have all taken a great step forward by participating. If possible, hold an event that thanks them for entering. When students enter the Voice of Democracy or Patriot Pen contest – a thank you gift could be some school supplies. Art supplies would be a nice participation item for the Art scholarships.

I am excited to see what this year's entries are! We are surrounded by patriotic and talented children!

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My name is Dara McGuinness, and I am a Program Manager for the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. GLI is excited to work with the [US Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Legacy Project](#) to commemorate Veterans and service members interred in VA national cemeteries and VA grant-funded state, territorial, and tribal Veterans cemeteries through the discovery and sharing of their stories. As a part of this grant, we are launching the [2024 War II: Portraits of Service Awards](#)



According to the National WWII Museum, only 167,284 WWII veterans were still alive at the end of 2022, just one percent of the sixteen million Americans who served during the defining military conflict of the twentieth century. As the WWII generation recedes into history, GLI believes that it is essential to instill in younger generations a deeper understanding of their service and sacrifice. The Portraits of Service contest aims to encourage students to commemorate their stories.

Students will create a biographical portrait of a WWII veteran. Portraits could include written reports, eulogies, videos, podcasts, poems, or songs. A teacher or guardian can submit student work on their behalf. GLI will offer **ten \$500 awards** to top submissions, and winners will be featured on our website. The deadline to submit is **Friday, May 3, at 8:00 am EST**.

We are reaching out to you in an effort to involve the students in your network in this commemoration of Veteran history in the United States. Please help us in our mission by spreading the word and sharing the award info: <https://www.gilderlehrman.org/veterans-legacy-program/student-contest>

Please feel free to email me if you have any questions or wish to learn more about the program.

Thank you!

Best regards,  
Dara McGuinness

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**Veterans and Family Support**  
**Jeanne Hampton**





With all the news regarding Claim Sharks and SB1308 in the Arizona State Legislature, let's give Veterans a helping hand finding a legitimate Veteran Service Officer to process their claims or receive their earned benefits:

Find a Service Officer- help navigate the

process.

[https://www.vfw.org/assistance/va-claims-separation-benefits?\\_ga=2.1080757.560402724.1709690764-411891760.1706196641](https://www.vfw.org/assistance/va-claims-separation-benefits?_ga=2.1080757.560402724.1709690764-411891760.1706196641)

New! VFW's Press Kit- so much in one location <https://www.vfw.org/media-and-events/media-room/press-kit> New to the VFW.org website, one stop shopping for Veteran/Military support information.

April is the month of the Military Child "Purple Up! April 17, 2024, In Support" <https://mic3.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/5d-2024-Purple-Up-Ideas.pdf>  
Look for news about HB2246 Arizona Purple Star Schools passing Legislation.  
\*Have a Military Child read announcements (or lead the Pledge of Allegiance) at a meeting

About Purple Star Schools- information and Arizona "Pending Legislation"  
[Purple Star Schools - Military Child Education Coalition](#)

Arizona's Purple Star Schools (Military Installation Charter Schools) News  
[Helping Military Families: Luke Elementary becomes state's 1st Purple Star Candidate | Features | glendalestar.com](#)

[Arizona Purple Star Schools military program launches \(azpbs.org\)](#)

With AWESOME Military Family/Student Support Links [Welcome / Purple Star School \(schoolwires.net\)](#)

Two more Arizona Veterans have been invited to Honor Flight! Let's fill their "Mail Call" with good wishes and notes of gratitude:

Past Arizona State Commander Gene Wood will travel April 23-25 (Please send cards **NOW** due April 3)

Katie Vitale Gene Wood Trip is April 23-25, 2024. 1410 N. Kings Way, Unit 106 Fountain Hills, AZ 85268

And

Bobby Malick (with his lovely daughter Irene Nowacki) (cards due by April 15)

Katie Vitale Bobby Malick Trip May 8-10, 2024. 14910 N Kings Way, Unit 106 Fountain Hills, AZ 85268

Please Report Your Veterans and Family Support Activities:

[2023-2024 National Program Book\\_FINAL.pdf \(vfwauxaz.org\)](#)

According to the VFW Auxiliary National Program Book, page 3, "Circle of Excellence" Criteria for Departments, "All Auxiliaries MUST complete at least one project, activity or donation that benefits veterans by April 30, 2024. If not, the Department MUST submit a request for a suspension by that date."

ALL VFW Auxiliaries in Arizona are exceptional and serve the mission for our Veterans, Active-Duty Military, their families- PLEASE call me if you are stumped- let's talk and see what we can put in report form. WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!

Thank you for all you continue to do! It has been a LONG road this year and so many GREAT things have been accomplished after such a rough start. Let's



The After Wife  
By: Marcy Urban

Yes, I'm an after wife.

I will never understand the sheer terror of not knowing if your heart is coming home, nor did I share in the horror when you saw war footage on the news and knew your husband might be there.

But don't doubt that I too, have a backbone of steel and the heart of a warrior like you. You see, I chose the man who came back from the war with his spirit forever torn by the unspeakable, his eyes showed me the terror of those times after the nightmares that tore him out of bed.

I watch him fight his ravaged body, the physical wounds were minor, but the soul wounds are profound, then comes the PTSD and Agent Orange.

I, too, stand by good man, who proudly did his duty to come back to dishonor from his countryman. I too, know the unexplainable fear of knowing he might not fight his way out of this, that the heart issues caused by Agent Orange might take him, way too soon.

That the soul issues that brought on ptsd, will never allow me to see the man he once was. But I too, stand by a man, still fighting his way back home, fighting his way through a system meant to help him.

So, while I will never experience what you did, I get it. I too experience the fear and the terror daily, down deep in my soul, because I too, love a soldier and like you, we are still serving.

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**Youth**  
**Irene Nowacki**

Our future depends on the youth. How are you engaging the youth in your area?



As the program year for 2023-2024 is closing, it is just starting for 2024-2025. Do you have plans for the future? Get together and brainstorm how you can involve the youth and youth groups in your area to help you with the different programs that we work. You might be amazed with their ideas and suggestions and how they think outside of the box.

We need to think about involving them in every aspect of what we do. To keep our great organization alive, the youth need to be involved so that hopefully, they can become future members. With this knowledge early on of what we do, they might even go on to be great mentors and leaders of the Auxiliary and beyond. Keep working with your community youth and showing them that we are here to stay and are always ready to help and support them.

Hopefully you are all getting ready for Department Convention. It is going to be great. I hope to see all of you there so that we can celebrate all that you have done with the youth in your areas.

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## Program Activity Reports Lynn Pierre

You have all been amazing this year in completing your program activity reports and we thank you.

Just a couple minor things to address:  
Please remember to continue your reports. April starts the new year; we do not skip it.

It is important to note the Auxiliary number and your name when they're sent. Please keep in mind that even though we see the report and it comes with an e-mail it is not always identified from which Auxiliary which creates a great deal more work.

Brenda Kinghorn will be our new Program Activity Report chairman for the 24-25 year. Please hold on to those compiled numbers when you record them and as soon as the new form for the new year is out it will be posted on the web page. You can immediately start sending reports at that time.

We have all created an exemplary year and I congratulate you on the numbers and the projects you've completed. I am so proud to be a member of the VFW Department of Arizona.



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## Program Activity Reports

The PAR form can be found at [www.vfwauxaz.org](http://www.vfwauxaz.org) under Resources/Program Activity Reports as well as behind log in.

Login/Members Only, sign in and then click on Program Activity Report.

A black x means that the PAR was done using this year's form, and a red x means that the auxiliary used an old form from a previous year. For an auxiliary to receive the "Arizona Outstanding Auxiliary Award" they must use the current 2023-2024 PAR FORM.

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

[Unsubscribe auxvfwarizona@msn.com](mailto:Unsubscribe_auxvfwarizona@msn.com)

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