

Squadron 97 Dispatch

"For Our Veterans, For Our Country"

Honoring Service and Sacrifice This May

As we welcome the month of May, we are reminded of the deep sense of patriotism, remembrance, and service that defines our mission as the **Sons of the American Legion**. This month, we focus on honoring those who have sacrificed for our country and continuing our commitment to supporting veterans, their families, and our community.

A History of Remembrance

Memorial Day dates to the years following the Civil War, when Americans began decorating the graves of fallen soldiers with flowers, flags, and wreaths. Originally known as Decoration Day, it became an official federal holiday in 1971, observed on the last Monday of May each year.

How We Can Honor Our Heroes

Sons of the American Legion, we believe it is our duty to ensure that the sacrifices of our service members are never forgotten.

Here are some meaningful ways to commemorate Memorial Day this year:

Participating in a Memorial Day Ceremony

On Monday, May 26th, host a special remembrance ceremony to honor our fallen heroes. Pay tribute with a wreath-laying, a moment of silence, and a reading of the names of local veterans who gave their lives in service to our country.

Observe the National Moment of Remembrance

At 3:00 PM (local time) on Memorial Day, Americans across the country will pause for a moment of silence to reflect on the sacrifices of our fallen heroes.

Wherever you are, we encourage you to take this time to honor their memory.



SONS OF THE
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Squadron 97



National Poppy Day: Why We Wear Red

Each year, as May draws to a close and Memorial Day approaches, a small but powerful symbol begins to appear across America — the red poppy. On National Poppy Day, observed this year on Friday, May 23, members of the Sons of the American Legion Squadron 97 join millions of Americans in honoring the sacrifices of our nation's heroes by wearing this humble flower.

But why the red poppy?



The tradition dates back to World War I, when the bright red blooms grew over the devastated battlefields of Europe. Inspired by the sight, Canadian Lt. Col. John McCrae penned the famous poem "*In Flanders Fields*," forever linking the poppy to the memory of fallen soldiers. After the war, the American Legion adopted the poppy as a national symbol of remembrance and hope.

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Today, wearing a poppy is a simple but meaningful gesture. It shows that we remember those who paid the ultimate price for our freedoms. It also supports living veterans and their families — funds raised through poppy distributions often go directly toward veteran care, rehabilitation programs, and scholarships.

This year, Squadron 97 encourages all members, families, and supporters to wear a red poppy proudly. We will be distributing poppies throughout the month of May at local events and gatherings. Donations are welcome but not required — the most important thing is to help keep the spirit of remembrance alive.

When you pin a red poppy to your shirt, jacket, or cap, you send a silent but powerful message: **We remember. We honor. We are grateful.**

Join us in wearing red this May — and in making sure our heroes are never forgotten. US.



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 **Celebrating Armed Forces Day with Pride**

On **Saturday, May 17**, the Sons of the American Legion Squadron 97 proudly joins the nation in recognizing **Armed Forces Day** — a day set aside to honor the brave men and women currently serving in the United States military.

First established in **1950** by President **Harry S. Truman**, Armed Forces Day was created to replace separate Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force Days, and to celebrate the strength and unity of all branches of the military under one Department of Defense. It's a time for citizens to come together and thank our active-duty heroes for standing guard over our freedoms.

Here at Squadron 97, we take great pride in supporting those who wear the uniform today, just as we honor the legacy of all who served before them.

Whether by volunteering in the community, hosting care package drives, attending flag ceremonies, or simply offering a handshake and heartfelt "thank you," we strive to show our appreciation not just on Armed Forces Day, but every day.

Armed Forces Day reminds us that freedom is never free — it is secured daily by the dedication, sacrifice, and courage of those in uniform. Let's stand together as a Squadron and a community to show our pride, our respect, and our unwavering support.

To all who serve today: we see you, we thank you, and we salute you.



SAL Squadron 97 Monthly Meeting

The Sons of the American Legion Squadron 97 holds its monthly meeting on the **1st Saturday of each month** at **10:00 AM**. These meetings are a great opportunity for members to stay updated on upcoming events, discuss important matters, and get involved in the squadron's activities. Whether you're a longtime member or new to the squadron, your participation and input are always welcome.

We encourage all members to attend and be an active part of shaping the future of Squadron 97. Your involvement is key to the success of our mission to support veterans and serve our community. Join us and help make a difference!

Next Meeting:
Date: May 3, 2025
Time: 10:00 AM
Location: San Tan Valley Veterans Center

Upcoming May's Events	
May 3- SAL Meeting 10-11 am	
May 3- Drone Program 11-12 am	
May 12-Post 97 General Membership Meeting. Social Hour 6 pm, Meeting 7pm	
May 17- Honor Guard Practice 10-11 am	
May 19-Riders Meeting 6-7pm	
May 26-Post 97 Memorial Day Pancake Breakfast 8am -12 pm	
Important Dates to Know	
 May 9 – Military Spouse Appreciation Day	
 May 13 – Children of Fallen Patriots Day	
 May 17 – Armed Forces Day	
 May 23 – National Poppy Day	
 May 26 – Memorial Day	

🍳 Memorial Day Pancake Breakfast — Join Us!

This Memorial Day, let's come together as a community to honor our fallen heroes and support our veterans.

Join Sons of the American Legion Squadron 97 for a Memorial Day Pancake Breakfast on Monday, May 26, from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM at the San Tan Valley Veterans Center.

Start your Memorial Day with a warm meal, good company, and a spirit of remembrance. Our breakfast will feature a delicious spread of pancakes, sausage, eggs, coffee, and juice — all prepared with gratitude and care.

Cost: Donations are welcome and appreciated! All proceeds will go toward Post 97's veteran support programs and community service projects.

After breakfast, we encourage everyone to attend local Memorial Day ceremonies to continue honoring the true meaning of the day — remembering those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

Bring your family, friends, and neighbors — let's fill the Veterans Center with the sounds of laughter, remembrance, and community spirit. We hope to see you there!

"They gave their tomorrows so we could have today."

- Details:
- 📅 Date: Monday, May 26, 2025
 - 🕒 Time: 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM
 - 📍 Location: San Tan Valley Veterans Center



🔧 Squadron 97 Assists in Veterans Property



On **Friday, April 19**, members of **Sons of the American Legion Squadron 97**, along with other members of the American Legion Family, rolled up their sleeves and got to work, lending a hand where it matters most — to our veterans and our community.

Starting bright and early at **7:00 AM**, Squadron 97 volunteers gathered at the future site of the **San Tan Valley Veterans Center** to assist in a major property cleanup effort. Over the course of the morning, the team cleared debris, removed brush, organized materials, and helped prepare the site for its next phase of development.

By **10:30 AM**, the transformation was already visible — a cleaner, more welcoming space that will soon become a place of support, community, and resources for veterans in the San Tan Valley area.

Supporting this project isn't just about building a center; it's about building hope, connection, and a future for our local veterans. Squadron 97 is proud to be a part of this important effort, and we look forward to seeing the Veterans Center come to life in the coming months.

A heartfelt **thank you** to all the Squadron 97 members and community volunteers who showed up ready to work and make a difference!

Together, we honor the past by building for the future.



From the Squadron Commander's Desk



Squadron 97 Commander John "Radar" Meyer

As we embrace the month of May, a time dedicated to honoring our military and reflecting on the sacrifices made for our freedoms, I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation to each of you for your unwavering commitment to our mission.

Membership Milestone

I'm proud to announce that we've achieved **100% membership** for the year! This is a testament to your dedication and the strength of our community. Let's continue this momentum by inviting others to join our ranks.

Memorial Day Observance

Memorial Day is a solemn occasion to honor those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation. We're coordinating with **American Legion Post 9** to hold a joint ceremony at the **Florence Cemetery**. Details are being finalized, and I will share more information via email as soon as possible.

Upcoming Elections and Convention

Our annual elections are approaching, providing an opportunity for members to step into leadership roles and shape the future of our squadron. Additionally, the **2025 Department of Arizona Convention** is scheduled for **June 26–29** at the **Crowne Plaza San Marcos Golf Resort in Chandler**. The **Sons of The American Legion State Convention** will be held on **Saturday, June 28**, at the same venue. Registration is open until **June 4**.

Let's continue to honor our past, serve our community, and build a strong future together.

For God and Country,

John "Radar" Meyer
Commander, Squadron 97



Squadron 97

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SAL National Website

<https://www.legion.org/about/American-Legion-Family/Sons-of-the-American-Legion>