



2025 – 2026

DEPARTMENT OF ARIZONA

BOOK OF REPORTS



DISTRICT 1 SUMMARY OF EVENTS

Units: 19, 56, and 46

By JoAnn VanDerWerken
District 1 President

District 1 has three units and a new baby unit (113 Quartzsite) which has not received its baby. Each unit has been busy in its own way, doing their thing

UNIT 19 - YUMA

The unit has been instrumental in assisting the Post with all the community parties. They include: Halloween, Christmas, Easter and the 4th of July celebrations.

The Bingo kitchen keeps the auxiliary busy every Friday.

Once a month the auxiliary host the meat draw.

Wreaths Across America is another project. With this money, wreaths are purchased for one of the local cemeteries and placed on our local veterans gravesites.

The auxiliary has sponsored several girls to Girls State.

Money was allocated to the local Marine Base during their time of need. The local service men were on a no-pay status and could not make ends meet. The unit donated \$5000 to the base chaplain in the form of Visa cards. These were distributed to soldiers in need with families.

Jessie's Closet and Christina's Closet were another recipient of funding. Both of these organizations assist our local veterans and community. They were given monies to assist them in providing for our veterans.

Another organization did not ask for money, they asked for duffle bags packed with underclothing, socks for foster care children ages toddler to teenager. A total of \$2000 was spent and donated.

In November the Veterans Day Parade is held. Our veterans are honored. A bar-b-que is held at the Post with District in charge of desserts and a raffle table. Items are raffled and money earned is placed in the district account. Some of our Junior members attend as well and ask for donations for the Poppy program.

Thursday evenings, during the winter months, are open for hamburger nights. A local DJ donates his time and plays for the community who attend. The auxiliary has a dessert table available with sweets for purchase. What is not sold on Thursday are saved for Bingo Friday evenings.

February is sweethearts. The auxiliary puts together a dinner dance for the community and is open to the public. Dinner is available and either a band or DJ donates their time playing for us. A raffle table is available and 50/50 raffle.

UNIT 56 – YUMA

This unit hasn't been as active as in previous years. The kitchen they had was closed. The auxiliary would have raffles for special holidays.

They sponsored several girls to Girls State.

A meat draw is held on Sundays.

UNIT 46 – BOUSE

A small but mighty unit. They are active maybe 4-5 months out of the year. The auxiliary has partnered with other organizations in the area and have held dinners for the community, raising money for the local school children to take a trip. Assisted several local veterans in the area. Sponsored

UNIT 113 – QUARTZSITE (baby unit but no baby yet)

They are a new unit in the district. Hopefully, they will be getting their baby at convention. Already they have hosted District meetings in their facilities. District held the picnic there, and members donated food and desserts.



American Legion Auxiliary

Arizona District 2 – Pima County

2025–2026 Year-End Impact Report

Serving Veterans • Supporting Military Families • Strengthening Communities

Prepared by

Jennifer Turner-Jones
District 2 President
American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Arizona

Reporting Period

May 1, 2025 – April 30, 2026

This past year, American Legion Auxiliary District 2 (Pima County) proudly demonstrated its unwavering commitment to the American Legion Auxiliary mission of serving veterans, military members, their families, and our communities. Representing 10 Units, with 8 Units reporting and 168 members, our District made a significant impact through thousands of volunteer hours, financial contributions, and community outreach programs.

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation

Serving our nation's veterans remained at the heart of everything we do. District 2 members volunteered an impressive 34,322 hours in support of veterans and active-duty military personnel. Members contributed \$26,092 toward programs and services benefiting veterans and assisted 22,095 veterans and military members throughout the year.

Our Units also facilitated 117 Veterans in Community Schools presentations, helping educate students about military service and sacrifice while fostering appreciation for our nation's heroes. Members secured \$11,517 in in-kind donations to support veteran programs and distributed 7,425 poppies and poppy-related items, raising \$15,944 through the annual Poppy Program to directly benefit veterans.

Military Families

District 2 remained dedicated to supporting military families across our communities. Members volunteered 1,156 hours, invested \$10,274 in programs and services, and directly served 490 military families. Through compassionate outreach and community partnerships, our Units helped ensure military families received the support and recognition they deserve.

Children & Youth

Investing in our youth continues to be a cornerstone of the American Legion Auxiliary mission. District 2 proudly sponsored 239 volunteer hours for American Legion Auxiliary Girls State and contributed \$10,800 toward this outstanding leadership program.

Members dedicated an additional 1,520 volunteer hours to Legion Family youth activities while investing \$5,530 in youth programming. Our Units provided \$16,267 in direct aid to children in need, demonstrating our commitment to supporting families during difficult times.

Additional Unit activities and youth programs totaled \$2,390, and together we served 1,009 children and youth throughout the District. District 2 also donated \$7,067 to child service charities, extending our impact beyond our own programs.

Community Service

Beyond our core mission areas, District 2 members contributed 4,097 volunteer hours to community service projects not otherwise captured in our reporting. These efforts included supporting local organizations, civic events, and community improvement initiatives. Members also invested \$7,207 to strengthen and support these community outreach efforts.

Scholarships

Education remains an important investment in the future. During the reporting year, District 2 awarded 8 scholarships, totaling \$13,300 to deserving students. Additionally, Units donated \$1,045 toward Department scholarship programs, helping expand educational opportunities across Arizona.

Looking Ahead

The accomplishments of District 2 this year reflect the extraordinary dedication, generosity, and compassion of our members. Through tens of thousands of volunteer hours, significant financial support, and countless acts of service, our Units have made a meaningful difference in the lives of veterans, military families, children, and communities throughout Pima County.

District 2 is incredibly proud of the impact achieved this past year and looks forward to continuing our mission of Service, Not Self, building on this momentum as we strengthen our communities and honor those who have served our nation.

ALA, Dept. of Arizona, District 11

Greetings from District 11 of Arizona,

It has been a privilege and an honor to represent the units of this district. I learned so much. I was very interested in the different ways each Unit celebrated Holidays, gave parties for children, raised funds, and worked together to accomplish so many needs for others. I enjoyed my official visits. Again, I love learning how each unit functions. We learn from each other. I am proud of the incredible teamwork and love for our Mission.

District 11 focus this year started with Membership. Our Membership chair, Kathy Amery, worked very hard to inspire units to raise their membership numbers. District 11 was assigned the Cars Movie for our membership race. She mapped out our road to follow and cities we needed to be at on a certain date. Each unit was given a book to record the goals reached. It was a lot of fun. She faithfully reported our progress every Monday.

There were many questions about units, laws, parliamentary procedures, committees, etc. Everyone was encouraged to go to as many Mission Trainings as possible. Units were given the menu to our website and information about National's website. Discussions were held about our guidebook. Members were challenged to read and investigate their questions before coming to someone. So now, we have more people to help educate others.

Some units did not have their governing laws or had not updated them. Units were educated on the importance of our Constitution, By Laws and the Standing Rules. Each Unit turned in their copies to me and to Department. My first year, most were completed. This year, it was not as successful. Our new president next year will take over this project.

It was surprising how many units do not turn in their end-of-year reports. Units were advised to read the bulletins each month. There is a lot of good information and great ideas to guide each chair throughout the year. From there, members were encouraged to be sure to log volunteer hours and personal money donations. The impact report was discussed many times. I am encouraged that our units are wanting to learn the proper way to lead their units and keep improving.

Regarding District 11's Impact Report, the following totals are given for each category:

Veterans, Military and Military families, including poppies:

Hours volunteered: 13,113.

Dollars Spent: \$53,351.00

Number of veterans, military and military families assisted: 9,634

In-Kind donations received: \$10,680.00

Service for Youth:

Hours volunteered: 2,755

Dollars spent: \$23,808.

Number of youth served: 2,407

Scholarships:

Number given: 5

Direct donations of units: \$9,000.

Donations to Dept fund: \$500.

Miscellaneous:

Hours volunteered: 3,629

Dollars spent: \$7382.

I expect these totals to be more next year as all units should be tracking volunteer hours consistently since our discussion of year end reports. Most were not aware that our reports are combined and a report goes to Congress. This is very important for all of us, especially our veterans.

My official visits this year consisted of a couple general meetings, an annual Post breakfast with Life Challenge, Ltd which is a family business providing services for persons with developmental disabilities and their families, three Children's Christmas parties, a pajama party to raise funds for Girls State , a judge for a talent show with Commander Barry, and stuffing goodie bags for children that attend the Phoenix Home and Garden show. All different. All meaningful.

Every meeting, each unit gives a report of their last 2 months. I enjoy hearing about all the events they do for their posts, etc. It is amazing how many ideas I have gained from these reports. I hope everyone can say that!

As my last year as District 11 President is coming to an end, I look forward to being Past President next year. District 11 has a dedicated and loyal group of members. I am looking forward to a great year.

For God and Country,

Donna Aronoff

President

District 11

ALA, Dept of Arizona

Book of Reports

American Legion Auxiliary – Department of Arizona

District 12 2025 – 2026

District 12 has 18 units within our District. The units are unit 2, 26, 27, 34, 35, 39, 41, 44, 58, 64, 65, 84, 91, 107, 114, 117, 124, and 138.

August 2, 2025, was our District 12 Organizational Meeting, hosted by Post 41.

District 12 had six scheduled meetings this year. September 21, 2025 was our first meeting hosted by Unit 2, November 16, 2025 hosted by Unit 34, January 18, 2026, hosted by Unit 35, March 15, 2026 hosted by Unit 65, and our May 17, 2026 hosted by Unit 91.

August 2, 2025 – Newly elect Barbara Aubrey held District 12 Organizational Meeting. President Barbara stated she was looking forward to a great year, communication being the key pillar. Her motto for the year continues to be TEAM = (Together Everyone Achieve More).

President Barbara joined many Auxiliary members at the National Convention in Tampa, Florida and was proud too he participation from District 12.

President Barbara attended all 18 unit meetings this year along with attending activity's our units were hosting for fundraisers.

District 12 continued to set and achieve our goals. We are dedicated to building stronger units and membership working together for our mission. All District members and units are continuing to be educated, about ALA programs, and chairmanship. Giving and showing them the tools they need to be a successful unit and member.

Department of Fall Conference did not disappoint. It was packed with informative presentations, program display boards and lots of fun for officers and members. District 12 Officers and members represented by wearing red which matched our membership car as we continued to cruise toward the department membership goals.

Unit 117 – Christmas card challenge was a success. District 12 had 19,000 Christmas cards sent to our active military this year.

District 12 Officers and members attended Mission Training in Las Vegas NV. Where we were educated on our programs and what ALA means to each and every member.

Lots of units showed their spirit and participated in the fun events at the District 12 annual BBQ held at Post 35 in Chandler.

Volunteers and members of Unit 41 attended the Candlelight Vigil and Sunrise Service at Piestewa Peak, which was open to the public.

Cindy Queen Girl State Chairman, organized the Arizona Girls State Orientation for District 12 at Post 27 hosted by Unit 27. There was a fanatic turn out.

District 12 Units cranked up their creative juices and produced some innovative ideas to raise funds for Auxiliary Programs. District 12 units

have shown resilience and strength in forging ahead to a greater tomorrow. Members are committed to the mission of “service, not self” and are always looking for ways to enhance membership and support our Veterans.

For God and Country,

Barbara Aubrey
District 12 – President

AMERICANISM 2025-2026
MAGGIE MONTIJO, DEPARTMENT CHAIRMAN

Units in Arizona participated in the Memorial Services and Veteran's Day Events and parades, that took place around the state. Most units helped with flag placement on the graves of Veteran's and those that have Juniors also had them participate. Poppies were distributed on Memorial weekend and units continued to have poppy making parties to help to help distribute them to other around the state of Arizona. Units also took time to help clean up cemeteries in their towns that needed some much-needed attention.

Units in Arizona continue to participate in Wreaths Across America giving their cemeteries a beautiful remembrance. Units did help with fundraising to have plenty of wreaths for their deceased veterans. A lot of Units continue to work together with their Posts and Sal, Units commanding the lead or helping the Legion with side dishes, set ups and clean ups for various events held. The teamwork shown by many Legion Families make a difference in all their communities. This Chairman is proud to say that the reports that were sent ALL units participated in providing meals or helping with dinners and breakfasts at their Posts.

Units have been working hard to continue with card signing parties to send cards to VA Homes and to those who are serving abroad. They signed over 200 cards that were to be delivered to the VA Hospital and the VA Nursing homes in Arizona. Units didn't just send cards for Christmas, the sent them for all holidays and even the months with no holidays, just a simple, "thinking of you cards", sent on months with no holidays.

Units in Arizona continue to support the 5 state homes in Arizona, Yuma, Flagstaff, Prescott, Phoenix and Tucson. Units continue to provide these nursing homes with snacks, donations, furniture and the monthly birthday parties filled with cake and ice cream.

Units in Arizona unfortunately didn't have many participate in the Americanism Essay Contest but the ones that did were well received and we were able to send up 2 from Arizona to national with one from each class I and II. Units continue to work hard to get into schools but still find it hard to have faculty be receptive, but some have found ways or contact with teachers to get information to them. Some have held flag presentations in classrooms, bulletin boards in their school hallway. Their efforts are working as we say baby steps.

Units help with donations to the ALLECA and donations to the JROTC in their communities. This year more units participated in the Oratorical program. The Department of Arizona has mighty warrior units making a difference in their communities!

Respectfully Submitted,

Maggie Montijo Department of Arizona, Americanism Chairman

AUXILIARY EMERGENCY FUND 2025-2026
BARBARA SHIELDS, DEPARTMENT CHAIRMAN

There were 28 units reporting.

There were 2 large donations from units, many small donations and this is wonderful. They all add up to good things.

There were also a handful of individuals who donated.

There were 3 individuals in AZ that actually received funds at some point from this fund to aid them.

Some fund raiseRs included bingo nights, dinners, 50/50 raffles and more. Good job Auxiliary.

Total amount reported as earned was 11,151.00 dollars.

American Legion Auxiliary – Chaplain End-of-Year Report 2025 – 2026, Department of Arizona, Chaplain DeDe Dexter

Reporting Year: 2025 – 2026

Unit participation in End of Year Reporting: 53%

District participation in End of Year Reporting: see below

District 1: 33%

District 2: 50%

District 3: 50%

District 4: 16%

District 5: 75%

District 6: 50%

District 7: 33%

District 8: 100%

District 11: 70%

District 12: 61%

1. Overview Of Chaplain Activities

This year, the Unit Chaplains provided consistent spiritual support ensuring proper ceremonial observance and offered compassion outreach to members, veterans, and their families. The chaplaincy focused on remembrance, comfort, and strengthening the spiritual foundation of the units reporting.

2. Prayers and Devotions

- Invocation and Benedictions were offered at **99%** of the units reporting.
- Grace at Meals was provided dinners, potlucks and/or celebrations.

3. Spiritual Outreach and Care

- **32 Units** provided spiritual counseling and support to unit members and their families.
- **48** Charter Drappings ceremonies were completed.
- **All** units Reported names of members who were ill at meetings.
- **182** ill members and/or veterans were visited in nursing homes and/or hospital.
- **1326** Get Well Cards sent.
- **215** Sympathy Cards sent.
- **605** Thinking of You/Joy Cards sent.
- **624** Phone calls, text or emails sent.
- **429** Birthday Cards sent.
- **86** Memorial Service/Funerals (COL) were attended.

- **13** Units participated in Initiation of New Members Ceremony with 186 new members initiated.
- **15** Units participated in Four Chaplain Ceremony.
- **18** Units participated in Wreath's Across America
 - o Donations? Y/N
 - o Placed Wreaths? Y/N
 - o Picked up Wreaths? Y/N
- **11** Units prepared a Prayer Book for the Unit President
- **3** Units participated in the ALA Arizona Chaplain Circle

Department Chaplain Activities:

The Department Chaplain maintained regular contact with members experiencing illness, grief, or hardship, offering prayer, encouragement and presence. The chaplain ensured all ceremonies were conducted with dignity and respect, honoring veterans and Auxiliary Traditions. The Chaplain continued to uphold the ALA mission by providing spiritual care rooted in service, respect, and love for God and Country.

- **152** ill members and/or veterans were visited in nursing homes and/or hospitals.
- **66** Get Well Cards sent.
- **42** Sympathy Cards sent.
- **252** Thinking of You/Joy Cards sent.
- **1017** Phone calls, text or emails sent.
- **12** Memorial Service/Funerals (COL) were attended.
- **36** Birthday Cards sent.
- Invocation and Benedictions were offered at Fall Conference, DEC meetings and will be done at convention, and Innovation offered an Post/Unit 62 Awards dinner; Invocation offered at National President's Arizona visit dinner at Post 109.

Recommendations for Next Year

- Increase communication with new members to build stronger spiritual connections
- Expand card-sending and outreach efforts to include more community partners
- Increase awareness on monthly bulletins on department's website. Only 3 units reported they joined the ALA Arizona Chaplain Circle. This was in most monthly bulletins' asking Unit Chaplains to join the circle and a display was used at the Fall Conference.
- Only 53% of Unit Chaplains provided a report this year. Chaplain called all the units not reporting and 5 of those units had no idea what the Chaplain was talking about. Reporting????
- Chaplain received (four) 4 Sharon Alley Service to God and Country Narratives.
- Attended three (3) Quarterly Chaplain Zoom calls with National Chaplain Nancy Maggins

Thank you for adding the Chaplain and Historian information to the 2026 – 2027 Unit Officers form. This will help in keeping in contact with the required officers.

The unit and Legion family members from Arizona are diligent, reliable, dedicated, and creative, However, many have under reported or have not sent in their year in reports for their Children And Youth programs. The numbers and activities, reported include fundraising for all aspects of the Children and Youth Programs. Units donated money, needed items, time, they cooked, cleaned, hugged, and brought bright smiles, and joy to military and community kids. There were many ways to volunteer some helped high school juniors with Girls State, some collected, counted, packed, and delivered Back to School Supplies. There held holiday fundraiser's and holiday parties for the children, Events for Gold and Blue Star families, Care Closets – for kids that need a little extra help, many adopted needy families for the holidays, some legion families toured group homes, foster care facilities, Veterans homes. Some units signed and delivered cards to veterans. These are but a few of the activities and events that were planned and executed in our state.

Collectively units contributed \$6,395.53 to the American Legion Child Well-Being Foundation. The ALCWF was promoted by educating and having open discussions with members at monthly unit meetings and district meetings. We also acknowledged the name change from Welfare to Well-Being. Hopefully it will be changed on all of our programs and forms.

How members celebrated April - Children & Youth Month:

Most members wore purple shirts on April 15th which is Military Kids Day. Units announced in their monthly meetings, posted on social media, created flyers and posters. Some set up tables to bring awareness of April 15th Military Kids Day with Purple-Up T-Shirts - Kids are Hero's too.

Honored Veterans and Families:

Parties were held for children; Halloween with candy, games, and spooky houses, Christmas with gifts and photos, train rides, and of course Santa. Held Easter parties, egg hunts. A few units adopted families at the holiday to improve their situations with food, gifts, and love. Many units helped their Post and Legionnaires with the Veteran's Day Events. Some units hold flag retirements and etiquette. Cards were handmade and sent to veterans.

Giving and donating:

Many Back-to-School Supplies and Backpacks were donated to all ages of students. Care Closet for instant easy to eat food, Pop-up Prom Store for donated evening wear and accessories for high school boys and girls, Care Closet for hygiene items for special needs students to be used for their Life Training Skills. Some toured and donated to a Group Home for foster youth. Some units collected socks and underwear for foster youth in their community. Showing appreciation for our Youth: Many units show appreciation for JROTC with Scholarship's, medals, and certificates.

Fund Raising:

Units held events for fund raising such as Sweetheart dinners, Luau, New Year's Eve Dance, bar bingo, 4th of July BBQ, and Past President's Parley Dinner for Nurses Scholarships.

Finally, the impact and results from the Units combined with their Legion Families raised a Combined total \$61,694.99 to go towards the Children and Youth Program, 3,411 kids were educated, challenged, fed, assisted, honored, entertained, clothed, awarded, or touched in some way by auxiliary volunteers who kindly donated 5,046 precious hours that have been reported by American Legion Auxiliary volunteers. Those who have volunteered anonymously are held in high esteem and are very much appreciated by the officers they have worked with during the course of this year.

Service, Not Self is exemplified by many units and legion family members throughout the Department of Arizona.

For God and Country, In Service Not Self,

Barbara Whitney

Department of Arizona

Children and Youth Chairman

Word Count: 624

COMMUNITY SERVICE 2025-2026
JOANIE WHITSETT, DEPARTMENT CHAIRMAN

The Arizona American Legion Auxiliary is proud to support and focus on veterans, their families, senior citizens and local community members. This Department of Arizona Community Service chairman has received community service reports from 38 units with several detailing their efforts in volunteering and logging many miles on their vehicles to support our veterans and community.

Unit calendars were active with programs supporting patriotism, service, community, veterans and members. Samples of these programs were; homeless shelters, nursing homes, local schools, churches, senior centers, food banks, adopt-a-family, school scholarships to students at local schools, military care packages, children's Christmas parties, American Legion Family Day, teacher appreciation breakfast, woven rugs made from grocery bags for veterans, highway cleanup, recycling cans, Heritage Presentation Commission, ice cream social, blood drives, Mayors Military Mission facilitating events to Veterans, raised money and had projects for the Presidents Special Project, Trivia games, Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners, Christmas meal baskets for veterans, monetary donations to various Veteran programs, car shows, Dream Flights, Donated to Honor Flights, donated Baby Packs with necessities of baby supplies, and a pet food collection.

Some of these unit programs had participation from American Legion Families i.e., Legionnaires, S.A.L., and Riders.

Units who stood out:

Unit 2 collected grocery bags that were woven into mats for homeless Veterans. This unit was also represented at a Gold Star Medal presentation at the Phoenix VA hospital dedication ceremony honoring Major Frannie McClendon, the last remaining WWII survivor of the Women's Army Corps.

Unit 27 for their collaborative effort with the Apache Junction Public Library Canvas Project, called America's Future in celebration of the United States 250 Semiquincentennial Anniversary. Several titles/canvases in red, white and blue tiles were created by Army Of Torches (AOT), ALA Unit 27 and the local youth and families. This unit raised \$1000 for the Apache Junction Library projects, \$3000 in donated items for the Women's Hope Charity, organized a military supply drive where 2800 items were collected for care packages, and had collaborations with JROTC.

Unit 86 put together a community pet food drive that generated a pickup truck bed full of donated pet food, harnesses, leashes, treats and beds for the local pet store to give to community members in need for free. For the Presidents Special Project, this unit purchased items for 30 caregiver baskets and delivered them to Hospice and Caregivers in the local community. This unit worked together with the community to gather donated items for approximately 150 military care packages that were prepared for a Soldier R Us project. Unit 86 put together a planning committee for Family Day involving 27 Legionnaires, S.A.L., Riders, Auxiliary and community members. A bounce house was donated for this event by a local business, there were game booths and prizes, a bake sale, raffles, 10 local craft vendors and 3 food vendors. A unit member coordinated a program with the local Senior Center and Post 86 to make available daily meals to veterans in need. These meals are available for dining in at the senior center or for takeout. This program has provided meals to 41 veterans monthly this past year.

Unit 4 helped the residents and businesses of Globe clean up mud and debris from the September and October floods. Donations of items were coordinated for 70 Christmas gift bags that were delivered to the local nursing home.

Unit 44 worked closely with the City of Scottsdale and the Veterans Advisory Commission who are committed to providing resources and support to the lives of our military and veteran community.

Unit 53 involved Blue Star Mothers in events raising awareness and fundraising to support the care package program. Auxiliary and Post members work with the City Patriotic Committee to bridge communications between the city and the American Legion Families. Collected blankets to donate to Festival Veterans Club for their holiday service project. Introduced the POW/MIA table to High School and youth programs.

Unit 65 put on a Family Day event with many community service groups to present resources, games and activities and food. All American Legion families were present to answer questions about the American Legion.

Unit 81 coordinated with the Dream Flights program to offer flights to a total of 9 veterans from WWII, Korean, Vietnam, and Desert Storm for an experience they will never forget.

The American Legion Auxiliary is a proud organization spending many hours dedicated to supporting veterans, their families, and local communities through various service and outreach programs.

It has been an honor to serve as Department of Arizona Community Service Chairman. Working with American Legion Auxiliary members in all levels has been an amazing experience.

Listed below are the combined numbers for each of the 38 units that reported:

Total Mileage: 71,147

Total Donations: \$212,969

Total Volunteer Hours: 124,044

**American Legion Auxiliary
Department of Arizona
Constitution and Bylaws Narrative**

Many units updated their C&B's this year.

Several units called with questions in which this chairman was able to answer, some with research.

This chairman was able to assist the units in reviewing their C&B's.

Barbara White
Chairman
Department of Arizona

Education
Year-End Report 2025-2026
Department of Arizona

The Auxiliary Education projects in the Department of Arizona were extremely successful. During the 2025-2026 Auxiliary year, forty Units in the Department of Arizona reported activity in the Education program, with approximately 955 Auxiliary members, 36 Junior members, and 625 Legion members participating. This Chairman informed the Units and Districts about the Education program via information packets distributed on the Department website following the 2025 Fall Conference, as well as monthly bulletins on the Department website. National Education newsletters were also shared on the Department website and Facebook page.

Units participated in American Education Week by providing thank-you notes, lunches, cookies, and treats to teachers at local schools. Thank-you cards were sent to staff members, including school nurses, custodians, and bus drivers. Units held in-person events, school supply drives, and drive-through events to collect and distribute school supplies and backpacks to children at local schools. One unit collected 11,563 items valued at \$2344.75. Units presented videos and booklets on flag etiquette and Halloween safety, and donated craft supplies. Monthly bulletin boards on patriotic holidays and the branches of the military were created in a school. Funds were donated to a food bank in honor of the teachers.

Units participated in the *Give 10 to Education* program by providing school supplies and educational materials to schools. Members of all Post entities donated school supplies or money toward purchase of school supplies. Other necessities such as backpacks, tissue, hand sanitizer, wipes, story books, toiletries, and shoes were collected and distributed to local schools. School wish lists were fulfilled. Twenty-three *Give 10 to Education* certificates were awarded to Unit Members.

All Units reporting also assisted needy students in many ways. Clothes were donated and delivered to a school district clothing bank where every student in need has access to free goods. Donations were also made for students in foster care, disabled students, and the homeless. Food pantries were stocked. Christmas Angels worked with local schools to provide gifts, toys, and food baskets for needy students. Units also delivered Easter, Christmas, and Thanksgiving food baskets. A Unit collected dresses, shoes, and jewelry for a Pop-Up Prom store valued at \$10,763 serving 385 students.

During the 2024-2025 school year, Units reported awarding 37 Unit scholarships, totaling \$28,325. Units raised funds for scholarships in several ways including dinners, raffles, contests, and sales. National scholarship applications and information were published in monthly Unit newsletters, distributed at school open houses, distributed at a Home and Garden Show, and delivered to local high schools through the mail, email, and in person. Units delivered information regarding the Past Presidents Parley nursing scholarship to community colleges and assisted with the Arizona State University's Veterans Program. In 2025-2026, seven applications for the *Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship*, two for the *Member Loyalty Scholarship*, two for the *Non-traditional Student Scholarship*, one for the *Spirit of Youth Scholarship* were received by this Department. The Department of Arizona has established the *Wilma Hoyal/Maxine Chilton Memorial Scholarship*. There are three scholarships of \$3000.00 available annually: one to Arizona State University, one to The University of Arizona, and one to Northern Arizona University. This scholarship is renewable provided the student meets the outlined criteria. Recipients must be enrolled as second year or upper-division students in Political Science, Public Programs, or Special Education. Submissions for this scholarship are not due until May 15 so results are not yet available.

Units involved the Legionnaires, the Sons of the American Legion, and the Legion Riders in donating time, school supplies, money, and labor to all the Education and Children's programs. They taught motorcycle safety classes, flag etiquette, and the meaning of Veterans Day. They assisted with Halloween safety programs, Christmas parties, and Easter parties. Legionnaires acted as judges for an essay contest, promoted scholarships, helped with Girl Scout activities, and attended the awards ceremony.

Units reported presenting "Veterans in the Classroom" programs. Veterans visited elementary schools for interviews, spoke at assemblies and in classrooms about the Poppy story, teaching the students to make poppies. Schools honored veterans on Veterans Day with flags, songs, and videos. Units presented programs on the accomplishments of our Veterans by honoring veterans on Veterans Day at local schools. A Veteran read books during Story Time. Veterans spoke about what it means to be a Veteran.

Units supported Veterans associations on college and university campuses by donating to JROTC, ROTC, and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Cadets were also recognized for outstanding achievements. In collaboration with the Arizona State University Pat Tillman Veterans Center, a Unit assisted a veteran's dependent in obtaining a nursing scholarship.

All reporting Units used many community resources or activities to assist students, teachers, or support personnel. Units donated to the Shop-with-a-Firefighter program. Monetary donations were made to a local mentoring program, JROTC awards, Girls State, Girls Scouts, Cub Scouts, baseball teams, Special Olympics, and 4-H Clubs. Units worked with libraries, parks and recreation, JROTC, NHS, and Student Councils to write letters for Packages from Home.

The Department of Arizona offers the **JEAN BATLEY PLAQUE** for Units with membership of 150 and under and the **CHRYSTEEN FRITZINGER PLAQUE** for Units with membership of 151 and over. The purpose of these awards is to stimulate interest in good participation in the Education program of the American Legion Auxiliary by giving recognition to the Unit which makes the most use of the available ideas in education, scholarship, and loan possibilities. These plaques will be awarded at our Department Convention in June.

The Department of Arizona recognizes that our young people are our future, and a good education is the key to their success. The members of the Department of Arizona are devoted to contributing to this success.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie M. Vietri

Julie M. Vietri
Education Chairman
Department of Arizona

(964 words)

Finance

This has been a banner year for ALA Arizona. Investments have been moved to Wells Fargo and as of this date, they are making money. Woop, woop. Department ALA Arizona has a credit card and all proper protocols are established and rigorously followed.

Filing of 990 forms continues to show improvement. Financial rules are governed by IRS: Gross receipts under \$50,000, file Form 990N (epost card) or Gross receipts over \$50,000 and less than \$200,000, file Form 990EZ.

Filing of the ACC Reports is improving. Arizona Corporation Commission requires yearly reporting by districts and Units. National ALA Headquarters recommends record retention of 7 years for accounts receivable/payable, budgets, internal audits, check registers, and 10 years for bank statements and reconciliations for all Units and Districts.

Please continue to send to Department:

Department Mandates, Dues, Creative Arts, Poppies, (10% of net profit), Welfare Pledge, Christmas Pledge, Hospital parties and social services, Gift Shop, Past Presidents Parley, Auxiliary Emergency Fund, Juniors, Girls State, Arizona Campaign Fund, Department Overhead, Cavalcade of Memories, Department Presidents Special Project. Please do not send funds to the Department office for other non-profits. They will be returned to you.

Remember that the Finance Committee welcomes question.

Funds belong to your Unit and Arizona is improving record keeping and reporting. Keep up the good work ALA Arizona!

Yolanda Bonilla, Chairman, 602-989-3321, yodobo@msn.com

Penny Maklary, Member, 520-364-5038, ahhpenny@aol.com

Barbara White, Member, 602-478-4909, barbara.white99@gmail.com

Virtue of Office: Dolores Chavez, chebeejs@cox.net, 928-386-0841, Stacey Mayberry, 702-403-4903, mayberry.stacey@gmail.com



Two Hundred five, young women from one hundred-forty High Schools throughout Arizona were scheduled to attend American Legion Auxiliary Arizona Girls State at the University of Arizona in Tucson from May 31 to June 7, 2026. Forty-five Units reported some form of Girls State activity.

Fifty-one Units sponsored one or more delegates to attend the 79th session. Eight High Schools without Unit representation sent delegates.

You name a way to make money...members of the Auxiliary did it, to generate the funds needed to sponsor each delegate. Because of today's economic conditions and the rise in Girls State fees, many Units needed contributions from other organizations, people and agencies... Legion Posts, Junior Groups, Legion Riders and SAL Squadrons were there to help.

Again, major focus was placed on a standard Orientation with everyone receiving the same information through a power point presentation. Orientations were emailed to all delegates who were not attending and downloaded to phones during Orientations.

We are missing a membership opportunity by not asking delegates if they are eligible to become a member of the Auxiliary. Information on the Samsung Scholarship was sent to delegates again this year...to apply you must be a **DIRECT** descendant of a Veteran. Were girls asked? Junior members attending this year can get a special Girls State Patch if you contact me.

Only one Unit submitted an entry for the **Yvonne Granger Plaque**, Girls State publicity was from local newspapers that covered the events as daily doings, from the Girls State website and Ring Your Bell.

Units rewarded contributors with certificates, plaques and thank you cards. Several Units reported returning the money paid by the Delegate if they attended Girls State and reported back to the Unit.

Three Hundred and Seventy art items were donated from delegates for Veteran's Medical Centers and State Homes.

The Girls State Yearbook is a success, and we will be taking orders again at Convention. Adds can also be purchased. We will continue to promote enrollment for Girls State Alumni Association and "Friends of Girls State". This helps with funding the two scholarships that are awarded each year.

The Units work within established Girls State guidelines and policy. This makes it fair for all schools and Units. Allotments and schools are changed each year to accommodate enrollments and bed capacity or Unit problems. **ONLY SPONSOR** of Girls State is the American Legion Auxiliary. All **OTHERS** are **CONTRIBUTORS** to the program. We will be working on online registration again next year. Completion of forms, pictures, school signatures and notarized signatures by email becomes easier for everyone.

We thank each of you for your **dedicated service and assistance** to the Girls State program. We more than appreciated that when asked to help with extra schools or delegates or take on other responsibilities, you were willing to do so for the program. We also appreciated your thoughtful contributions over the required fees.

Now for the Girls State updates.

The 79th session of the American Legion Auxiliary Arizona Girls State was held May 31-June 7 at the University of Arizona in Tucson. Governor Ava Campbell presided over the session along with Secretary of State Aarna Dharia.

There were 205 delegates registered to attend. Prior to the session 20 girls had been replaced with alternates. This year, again, every alternate that wanted to attend was able to do

so. We had 5 girls that did not show up for registration. That left us with 200 delegates. One girl went home during the session because of family illness, 1 because she didn't like the program and she took the girl that came with her. There was no other way for her to get home. One for a family emergency.

Elected Governor for the 80th session or for the year 2027 was Lena Haywood of Salpointe Catholic sponsored by Unit 7. The Secretary of State is Samantha Gaither of Catalina Foothills High School sponsored by Unit 36.

Delegates elected to attend Girls Nation were Elizabeth Robinson of Empire High School sponsored by Unit 109 and Dorie He of Arizona College Prep. The first alternate was Dylin Utsey of Mica Mountain High School sponsored by Unit 109. Second Alternate is Belle Godwin of Xavier High School.

The winner of the Samsung Scholarship was Arianna Danae Koch of Cactus High School, sponsored by Unit 115.

The Girls State Alumni Scholarships were awarded to Ella Day of Desert Mountain High School sponsored by Unit 44 and Brielle Zeiler of Boulder Creek High School sponsored by Post 128.

The Capital City was Saguaro with Rae Hopf, Advisor, and Outstanding County was Supai with Cindy Queen as Advisor.

We encourage you to check the Girls State Web Site for a listing of all election results. Did one of your delegates get elected to a City, County or State Office? You will find the answer there.

The Girls State Staff of 30 consisted of 23 Auxiliary members, 8 former Girls State Citizens, 4 Professional Educators, 2 Registered Nurses, 3 Store persons, 8 Office and Education personnel and 3 Junior Counselors.

This year we had Nine Cities and Three Counties. Three Cities and One County were taken off the map due to inter-structure problems. This help with amount paid for U of A services and to keep Unit cost down.

The date for the 80th session of Arizona Girls State is tentatively scheduled for the first week in June which means we will start on May 30. Confirmation must be given by the University.

Due to service charges, insurance, meals and rooms that keep going up, we are looking for any way to keep the cost down to the Units.

We will adjust the numbers for schools for our program. We are hoping to add more schools to the program as more High Schools have Junior classes now. Those schools will be responsible for the fee if there is no Unit available.

We would like to get back to the 12 Cities and 4 Counties that we had before the pandemic. Cost does not allow this to happen and that is why those extra donations to Girls State are so appreciated and welcomed.

National wants us to have funding for a full year, in case of an emergency. We are no where near that but continue working on that request when we can.

The renewed Girls State web site provides needed information to delegates, parents and Auxiliary members. It helped to promote donations given on Ring Your Bell and in the Yearbook.

Please check it out at azgirlsstate.com.

Check your Unit mail slot for the "Thank You's" that were written by girls attending from your Unit or as a replacement. I think they will renew your faith in the program and the girls that you sponsor.

At Girls State Blue Star Certificates were presented to girls having immediate family serving in the military to say "Thank You". The number keeps growing. Some had a Father, Mother and sibling serving.

We had a talent show and the Community Service project, "Art Projects for Veterans" received 370 items.

We encourage each of you to join "Friends of Girls State" or renew your dues. This is part of the Girls State Alumni Association and helps to award scholarships. Anyone that attended Girls State from its start in 1947 to now can be a member of the Alumni association, all others join as "Friends". Applications are available at Convention or through the web site. The cost is \$4.00 for a year's membership. Anyone can join as a friend that means pets too. You will also be able to order the 2026 Girls State Year Book for \$12.00.

Again, I cannot stress enough, how important it is for Auxiliary Units to become involved in the selection process of delegates which we hope will happen again next year. We do not want to lose schools so we step in to make it happen. This has become an overwhelming task.

Again on behalf of Arizona Girls State we thank each of you for your constant support, donations and assistance when asked. Please know that we **appreciate** your concern and help with the education of our future leaders.

...Look to Girls State and you'll find...tomorrow's leaders of mankind. Girls State...The Best State in the Land!

Penny Maklary...Chairman/Director

Committee Members: Donna Arnoff...Alisha Matteson...Mary Jo Ficklin

Department of Arizona History – Book of Reports Narrative

(2025–2026)

The 2025–2026 administrative year has been one of meaningful service, growth, and unity for the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Arizona. With 83 Units across 10 Districts, members demonstrated unwavering dedication to serving veterans, military families, and local communities. Their collective efforts reflect a strong year of mission-driven accomplishments that strengthened the Department and expanded its presence throughout the state.

Units engaged in a wide range of impactful projects. Many provided critical assistance during times of community hardship, including cleanup efforts following extreme flooding. Others focused on consistent service initiatives such as monthly fundraising dinners, care-package programs, and major holiday projects including Angel Tree, Christmas Stars for Veterans Hospital, and Post-family gift deliveries to VA homes. Holiday support was a major point of emphasis, with one Unit feeding 53 families for Thanksgiving and Christmas and others providing gifts, meals, and essential support to veterans and children across Arizona. Units also maintained strong community traditions through participation in events such as the Parada Del Sol Parade, annual car shows, and school-centered outreach including Back-to-School Drives and Purple Up Day.

Membership remained a significant success. Several Units achieved outstanding growth, including one reaching 137.93 percent and another surpassing 100 percent before April. These accomplishments reflect increasing community engagement and wider recognition of the Auxiliary's mission. Units also advanced the Department's historical preservation efforts. Some strengthened archival practices, and one Unit's Historian developed a digital community archive through video storytelling and memorabilia collection, preserving local heritage for generations to come.

Throughout the year, Units welcomed Department officers at mission trainings, meetings, celebrations, and special events. These visits supported leadership development, communication, and unity across the Department. Collaborative efforts with Posts and Legion Family partners further enhanced community engagement and strengthened statewide relationships.

Units completed a variety of improvement and outreach projects, including reconstructing handicapped ramps, contributing to Post facility upgrades, providing meals and support to veterans, and raising funds for recreation and service programs. Partnerships with schools, youth groups, and community organizations played a key role in expanding outreach efforts and ensuring that the Auxiliary remained a visible and supportive presence throughout Arizona.

The work accomplished during the 2025–2026 year reflects a Department rooted in mission, compassion, and service. Through their actions, members honored the Auxiliary's legacy and reinforced the Department of Arizona's commitment to making a meaningful and lasting impact on veterans, their families, and communities across the state. This year stands as a testament to what dedicated Units can achieve when united in purpose and service.

Book of Reports
Leadership/Arizona Mission Training
2025-2026

Karen Smith, Chairperson

Our Leadership team donated many hours to travel throughout the state and facilitate ten Mission Trainings. Nine out of ten districts attended with 40% of our members. Forty-five per cent of our units reported this year. Instructors were “Mission Driven and Family Focused” having a positive impact on our members. Those handling the training this year were: Rose Ficklin and Stacey Mayberry with assistance from Shannon Mead, President Dolores Chavez, Rae Hopf and Yolanda Bonilla.

Two of the trainings were Level 202. In level 202, the unit/district is asked to choose three or four areas of concern therefore instructors will focus deeper on those topics. Our Leadership team has done as a minimum ten trainings a year so we look forward to more Level 202 and possibly a third level while offering as many basic trainings as possible.

All Leadership awards are promoted and are listed on the department website as well as monthly bulletins. This year we had three entries for the LaVan Erickson Plaque awarded to the unit with most members attending a training. The Vickey Zwall Mentor of the Year Award goes to a member with most activities the current year. We had three entries. The Unit Member of the Year had nine entries. This award has six criteria that must be followed in order to qualify. Winner will have paid trip to the National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky and will be recognized on the National stage as well as Department Convention. This year our committee offered an “Academy Award” for member or unit taking most Academy courses available on the National website. We had three entries for this award. Thank you to all who sent entries.

Thank you to all who participated and volunteered in the Leadership program this year. Members wrote: information flowed clearly, I like learning this stuff, clear, concise and entertaining, good time control with time for questions, stayed engaged on topic, clarified areas of concern and so much more than I expected. Knowledge is a good thing!

BOOK OF REPORTS

LEGISLATIVE 2025 – 2026

The American Legion's grassroots advocacy continues to be the most effective way to support the legislative agenda for the 119th Congress, 2nd Session. Arizona Units were encouraged to contact U.S. Senators, U.S. Representatives, State and Local Officials, and the White House through online campaigns, mailed letters, phone calls, and direct engagement. Members were reminded that their voices, individually and collectively, remain essential to advancing legislation that protects and strengthens the lives of veterans, active-duty service members, and their families.

REPORTING PARTICIPATION

At year-end, **36 of 85 Units** submitted reports—an increase over last year and a positive sign of growing awareness of the Legislative Program.

- **9 Units** actively worked the Legislative Program
- **27 Units** submitted reports with no activity
- **3 reports** were received after the May 1 deadline

Of the 36 reports reviewed, seven included narratives for Department awards. These were judged by three individuals with no affiliation to participating Units to ensure fairness and impartiality. Units were actively engaged in the legislative process in a variety of ways.

This year's reporting reflects a continued effort to educate Units on the importance of documenting legislative activity. Even Units with no activity were encouraged to submit reports so the Department can accurately represent statewide engagement.

Some Units may not submit letters but remain active in other parts of the legislative process, such as voting and meeting with State and Local officials.

COMMUNICATION & EDUCATION

Legislative information was shared regularly through the Department website and social media, including:

- Call-to-action alerts
- Links to the *Dispatch*
- Monthly bulletins with legislative updates
- Guidance on contacting Arizona Senators and Representatives

The Legislative Chair communicated with several District Presidents to encourage reporting and promote member engagement. Members were urged to subscribe to Grassroots Advocacy to stay informed about legislation supported by The American Legion.

Throughout the year, Units were reminded that legislative advocacy is not limited to letter-writing. Staying informed, sharing information with fellow members, and participating in civic processes are all vital components of the program. This emphasis helped strengthen understanding of the program's purpose and broaden participation.

ADVOCACY ACTIVITY

Arizona members demonstrated strong engagement throughout the year:

- **1504** online grassroots letters
- **534** letters mailed via USPS
- **218** other contacts (visits, calls, direct emails)
- **1307** replies received from U.S. Senators, Representatives, State and Local Officials
- 6 replies received from the White House

Total Letters sent : 2256

Last Year: 1828

Increase: 23%

This represents a significant increase in legislative activity, with the majority occurring through online grassroots advocacy. The high number of replies received demonstrates that Arizona members are not only contacting their elected officials but are also receiving meaningful engagement in return. This level of responsiveness reflects positively on the Department's visibility and credibility with elected officials.

SPECIAL INITIATIVES

In April, a Department-wide challenge encouraged Units and Districts to contact legislators between April 1–15. One Unit alone completed **over 100 campaigns** during this period, demonstrating exceptional commitment.

Members also connected personally with State and Local officials at rallies, community events, and public forums. These interactions helped strengthen relationships with policymakers and increased awareness of veteran-related issues at the local level.

VOTING ENGAGEMENT

9 Units promoted voter participation by:

- Encouraging members to vote
- Assisting with mail-in ballots

- Serving as poll workers
- Meeting with elected officials on legislation related to veterans and their communities

These efforts supported civic engagement across the Department and reinforced the importance of participating in the democratic process.

NATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

In February, the American Legion Department of Arizona and two ALA representatives—a Unit member and the Department VA&R Chairman—participated in the National Conference in Washington, D.C. They joined national delegates in visiting Capitol Hill to advocate for legislation supported by The American Legion. Delegates met with congressional offices to discuss key legislative priorities, including veteran healthcare access, mental health support, and benefits modernization. These visits reinforced the importance of coordinated national advocacy and strengthened Arizona’s presence at the federal level.

CONCLUSION

Through strong grassroots efforts, the Department of Arizona played a vital role in assisting to advance legislation that benefits veterans, active-duty military, and their families. Members will continue to write letters, make calls, and advocate as needed to ensure veterans receive the support they have earned.

The Department remains committed to expanding legislative education, increasing Unit participation, and strengthening communication with elected officials. With continued dedication, Arizona will remain a powerful voice for those who have served.

For God and Country,

Kathy Amery, Legislative Chairman 2025-2026

MEMBERSHIP 2025-2026
MARGE CHRISTIANSON, DEPARTMENT CHAIRMAN

Arizona's framework for its "Membership" program is a large part of its growth success.

1. **Generate focus and enthusiasm-** Arizona holds a rally at their June Convention which promotes the National and Department President's Special project as applicable:
 - In 2026, members came back from lunch to find an American Flag and the words to "Why ALA?" on their chairs— we sang the new words to the karaoke version of the Village People's "YMCA". District Presidents had on patriotic hard hats and held signs with the qualifying relationships for membership (e.g., mothers, daughters, spouses etc).
 - Membership challenges were issued between Districts, Units and even members (e.g., highest percent on Veteran's Day, 5 New Junior members by year end; first Family Three form). Department membership chairman issued a "One for All and All for One" challenge whereby every Unit membership chairman would get a "Poppy Bling" pin if their overall District met the 85% National goal by March 15.
2. **Set thoughtful goals-** Recognizing that Units have different circumstances, the Department developed 2 different philosophies for setting goals:
 - For Units that had suffered a loss of membership from 2025 to 2026, we asked them simply to "stop the slide". If their kitchen had a fire and they were closed for a time, or their Unit President ran off members or whatever the circumstances—we recognized turnaround takes time. Just stopping the slide is a challenge for them.
 - For Units that grew, the goals asked them to carry the overall goal. Internal goals were a bit higher than our 1% commitment to National so that they Units that could not stop the slide would be covered by the Units who could grow.
3. **Reinforce the goals and provide tools**
 - Every District was given a theme to participate and compete within. In line with the America 250 theme, Districts started a road trip in their class of vehicle (e.g., hippy bus, rich and famous, pick-up trucks, Barbie Pink) and wore the appropriate clothing to Fall conference. District group photos were taken with them holding their District sign. The Department Membership Chair wore an amalgamation of all the vehicles.
 - Every Fall Conference attendee received a membership application in a plastic sleeve along with a promotional flyer.
 - Every Unit received 5 "America 250" postcards urging renewal or rejoin via the National phone number-- along with an order sheet to order more.
 - Incredibly important, Department's support for membership training, questions and issues is timely, accurate and friendly. 50 Units who have demonstrated membership processing competence are authorized to use full access ALAMIS.
4. **Provide consistent and meaningful feedback** using email, Facebook and website:
 - Department tracked challenges and congratulated winners/consolated losers on all media.
 - Provided weekly "Unit within District" reports to District Presidents and Membership chairs-- including last week's performance for weekly comparison. Highlighted changes (who hit the next goal, who's leading, who made big progress etc). Posted on the Department website in its own "Membership" section.
 - Offered suggestions for processing, engaging members, when notices were going out from National., etc.

- Asked Units to remember Juniors! While Arizona senior renewals were in the 90's; Junior renewals were at 65%. Consequently, Arizona has started a new direct mail program to engage its 400 Junior members. Juniors are divided into age groups and will be sent age-appropriate patriotic activity packages every other month. The first was poppy focused. Younger kids received the ALA Poppy Coloring book, a poppy and age-appropriate Junior poppy patch form. Older kids received material and instructions on how to make and share poppies. They received ribbons and a blank barrette to make a Memorial Day poppy barrette. Next mailing will be America 250 focused, with Presidential rulers, coloring books, stickers, flag and Americanism patch forms-- and for older kids, a pocket flag and instructions to fold and share. Can't wait for August to focus on Education and scholarships available to older Junior members.

5. Spotlight successes:

- Nearly 50 Facebook Posts for big wins on popular Facebook page were posted (e.g., every Unit hitting 100% was recognized).
- "One for all and All for One" prizes were delivered at District meetings by the Department Chair. The prizes included the poppy pin, a 3 Musketeers bar (we all know their theme) and 2 applications in sleeves (since the job is not done!). Some Districts had fun dressing in theme and singing the "Why ALA" theme song.
- Recognized Units that were consistently processing applications.
- At the Department Convention, Districts, Units and Members will receive a variety of awards highlighting successes.

6. Ask for Unit Feedback:

- The most consistent recruitment technique noted by Units was plain old personal interactions. While recruitment at public events was tried, the most effective events were those directly related to the Legion Family. Having knowledgeable members available to chat with people about why they should join was the most successful at open-to-the-public (and guest) events like Bingo, Fish Fry, craft sales. Unit 62 in Peoria gave members paper "event" bracelets at these types of events so Legion Family recruiters could identify who was NOT a member.
- Attaining renewals was simply persistence. Can't reach them by phone? Text them. No answer? Try email. No response, try the Post Card. The order did not seem to matter—if you have volunteers to call, great. If not, send a Post card first to whittle down the list before calling.
- Providing incentives to renew early were successful for members who generally renew eventually. Unit 107 in Phoenix has a membership renewal discount every Independence Day. Many others offer Early Bird dinners or raffle drawings for renewal on/before Veteran's Day.

As of May 5, 2026:

- **Current Arizona membership is at 16,301. Arizona has met National's 1% growth goal of 16,189 and is at 97.5% of Arizona's internal 4% goal of 16,715.**
- **2 of 10 AZ Districts have met their Arizona goals; 7 others are over 95%!!**
- **29 of 85 Units have met their Arizona goals; another 33 are over 90% of goal. Only 4 Units are less than 75% of goal!!!**

MUSIC YEAR-END REPORT

Alma Mattingly, Chairman

Out of 83 Units, 17 submitted reports to the Chairman either on or before the deadline of May 1.

From the reports submitted, three included some type of narrative. These met the Department guidelines for an award. A group of five individuals reviewed the reports with Department Chairman as witness. The winners will be announced during floor remarks at Convention.

I appreciate the efforts of all Units striving to keep their members and the Post involved in the Department Music program. I'm hoping for a better year to come. Thank you for your support and efforts.

In closing, Mid-Year Reports need not necessarily include a narrative, but the Unit's End of the Year Report must include a narrative that will meet Department's guidelines to be considered for an award. Reports must also be submitted to the Chairman on or before the deadline. The Department Chairman must compile all information and send to Department Secretary and President. This takes time, so your cooperation is appreciated.

You should be proud of your Unit's efforts!

Thank you for your time. Madame President, again thank you for this appointment. It has been my honor and privilege to work with you.

For God and County,

Alma Mattingly

Department of Arizona Music Chairman

National Security Report 2025-2026
American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Arizona
Chairman – Stacey Mayberry

Here are the highlights of the National Security work completed by the members of the American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Arizona, for the year 2025-2026

1. Our Department currently has 86 Units active in our Department. I received reports from 32 Units.
2. Eighteen Units reported that they conduct the POW/MIA Ceremony at each Unit meeting.
3. For support of active duty military families here are the statistics
 - a. 89 members participated in events for active duty military families contributing to the following:
 - i. 567 volunteer hours
 - ii. \$14,677.00 in donations
 - iii. 820 miles driven
4. USO Support
 - a. 206 members participated and reported 69 hours worked
 - b. Units and members donated \$3,290.00
 - c. Volunteers drove 362 miles for USO events
5. Quilt of Honor distribution – 20
6. Welcome Home events
 - a. 4 volunteers each with 4 hours
 - b. \$20.00 spent by the volunteers
7. ROTC/Jr ROTC
 - a. 67 volunteers contributed 148 hours
 - b. \$2,893.00 were donated to the program
 - c. Volunteers drove 233 miles
8. Blood Donations
 - a. 24 members donated blood
 - b. 47 hours were spent donating blood
 - c. 16 miles driven by volunteers
9. Blue Star Family Support

- a. 37 members spent 47 hours and spent \$176.00 on Blue Star Families and also drove 16 miles

10. Gold Star Families

- a. There were three Gold Star Families supported by Auxiliary members but the did not report any money, volunteer hours or mileage out of respect for those families. There were banners given to each family.

11. Coupon Clipping

- a. The Units didn't report how many coupons or hours spent but did add up the amount of \$9,027.05 in coupons sent to the military families.

12. Highlights

- a. Unit 58 – Fountain Hills, AZ that sent 171 boxes to troops overseas.
- b. Unit 117 sent more than 12,000 Christmas cards to troops.
- c. Unit 62 pays the dues for all Gold Star and Blue Star mothers each year.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacey Mayberry

Chairman, National Security

Department of Arizona



Department of Arizona Poppy Year End Report 2025-2026

The Poppy Program continues to thrive across the state through the dedication, creativity, and service of our units. While each unit carries out the program in its own way, many contributions often go unreported. Arizona's 83 active Units continue to make a meaningful difference across our state. This year, 27 Units submitted reports, representing 33% of our Units statewide. While this reflects a decrease from last year, it also highlights an incredible opportunity for growth, renewed involvement, and stronger statewide participation. Only three Units submitted award narratives this year, reminding us that every report, every story, and every effort shared helps showcase the powerful impact our members make each and every day.

This year alone, units ordered 24,500 poppies, while many units proudly handcrafted an additional 32,150 poppies using 78 people to make this astounding amount. These remarkable efforts united senior and junior Auxiliary members, veterans, Sons of The American Legion members, and community volunteers, all working together to honor and support our veterans. Poppy distribution took place in many impactful ways, including collaborations with Junior ROTC students, junior members, and units staffing tables and booths outside local businesses to educate communities about the importance and meaning of the Poppy Program.

Units across the state demonstrated extraordinary dedication to the Poppy Program this year, reporting an impressive 2,530 hours of service. Through these remarkable efforts, an estimated 1,144 veterans and veteran families received meaningful assistance and compassionate support. The impact reached far beyond financial aid, with approximately \$15271.51 provided in direct assistance, along with meals, outreach, and vital services tailored to the unique needs of veterans within local communities.

This year, three Units proudly submitted Poppy Posters for judging, reflecting encouraging growth and renewed participation in this meaningful program. In addition, one Unit will be represented in the Miss Poppy competition, marking another positive step forward from last year.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who took the time to submit reports and narratives for the Poppy Program. Your dedication, compassion, and commitment to serving veterans and their families truly deserve to be recognized and celebrated. The work your Units are doing is making a meaningful impact in communities across our state, and your efforts continue to honor the true spirit of service.

Wendy Hackney, Poppy Co-Chair
480-510-6824 wendy9rs@gmail.com

Kat Sticklin, Department Poppy Chair
928-322-1550 katsticklin2025@gmail.com

**AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
DEPARTMENT OF ARIZONA
PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL PROJECT REPORT 2025-2026**

"Angels In the Outfield"

**Bringing recognition and Honor to Hospice Caregivers, The Hospice Organizations,
and the importance of Hospice Care in End-of-Life Services.**

Submitted By: Dawn Davidson, PSP Chairman, 2025-2026

Appointed by ALA Department of AZ 2025-2026

President Dolores Chavez

Date Submitted: June 2026

It is with profound gratitude and a heart full of pride that I present this report on
the 2025-26 President's Special Project.

ALA Department President Dolores Chavez chose this theme for her special project to bring greater awareness to hospice caregivers, those receiving hospice services, and the importance of understanding hospice and end-of-life care. These are life experiences most of us will face, and the more informed we are, the better prepared we will be to make thoughtful choices during these difficult times.

Dolores and I started the year off with a presentation at the ALA Fall conference in Tucson. Sharing the info on the PSP, handing out information packets on hospice, where to get educated to learn more. and ideas to assist their local hospice organizations and VA Health care Services. We continued by visiting Unit and District Meetings. We presented an

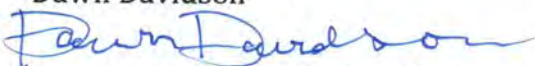
information program to those members attending, focusing on Hospice Support, PSP support ideas and what to expect when a loved one is entering hospice care. We both shared our hospice experiences with our loved ones in the last 3 years. We held a fundraiser raffle of calming diamond art kits. We raised \$330 + in these raffles.

We also attended special Unit events and stopped in at many AZ units & AL posts, the goal was to bring recognition to the PSP and give out information on hospice and caregivers. We were warmly welcomed and many members shared their thoughts on the PSP and also personal experiences in hospice and caregiving through the end of life. We really felt we were able to help many members, either by giving information, or sharing their personal testimonies. The members got to see their friends and ALA Sisters, tell of challenges in caregiving, things they had not shared with the membership before. We hope that will open up the conversation between these members.

Units held many special fundraising events and made generous donations to Hospice Organizations and the PSP fund. More than \$25,000 dollars was raised in the ALA Dept of AZ units and districts, both monetary and in-kind giving directly to caregivers and hospice organizations. We are so grateful that our message was heard and landed on so many generous hearts. This was a very difficult topic for some of our members, but we feel we will have had made some impact on our membership to normalize End of life services. We hope that this may be an ongoing topic in our membership and friendships, tell one another when we need help and support one another in these challenges. We acknowledge that this PSPProject is just the beginning of ALA supporting and volunteering in hospice and for caregivers who could use support, but we have hope that the ALA will continue this effort within our Units with what they have learned in this PSP.

Respectively Submitted,

Dawn Davidson



President's Special Project Chairman 2025-2026

For ALA Dept. of AZ President Dolores Chavez

PUBLIC RELATIONS 2025-2026
SHANNON MEAD, DEPARTMENT CHAIRMAN

This year was a great year for the Units in Arizona! One great thing that has grown is social media. Many units have created not only websites but Facebook, instagram and LinkedIn pages to help keep their members connected as well as reaching out to the community. Radio and newspapers have been improving this year on the reports as the local community newspapers seem to be opening up a bit more with available space. One noticeable thing with some local newspapers is that they are charging for stories on events if the event is not free.

This year our Department website was revamped and added many wonderful pieces of information. In the past it has been said that it was difficult to find certain things on the site. The web creator took this into account and created many wonderful tabs, drop down menus and navigational points of interest through the site. It is a work in progress and always being updated monthly.

It has been asked in reports to have a better way of getting information from Department out to the units. It is normally posted on the website as well as Facebook. All of the monthly bulletins are available for download but a lot of units state they have no idea where or how to get them and preferred the mail system. Mailing is costly and perhaps there needs to be a new way or more training for how and where to access these materials. PLEASE NOTE that a Department representative always covers how and where to find the information at each convention and conference.

This year the PR Chairman added in tips and tricks each month on the Ring your bell social media page as well as in bulletins. There were a lot of great pieces provided from Nationals for use. The National PR newsletter was also posted each month on the Ring your bell page to help spread the word and great tips. This is something that should continue to help ensure that our PR teams have great tools to use each year in promoting the mission.

One noticeable issue this year was lack of interest in free publicity surround the Luke Air Force base magazine Sound of Freedom. Emails were sent out as well as Facebook posts regarding free publicity for any and all events and press releases sent in. After speaking to the editor and sales representative it was noted that not a single thing was sent in from the American Legion family. Disappointing to say the least. Perhaps next year there can be emails and posts sent out during each deadline as a reminder.

Most units used social media, newspaper, newsletters and of course websites to get out their information as well as keeping members informed. Here is a breakdown of the media outlets used to help spread our mission.

- Unit 81 Lake Havasu used several outlets for getting our the word such as Speakout radio, Murphy

broadcasting, Radio Central River Scene on-line magazine, newspapers, Today's News Herald, Tri-City news and of course website and social media.

- Unit 6 Prescott used the Prescott Daily Courier, Chamber of Commerce, City of Prescott Facebook page, as well as social media and unit website.
- Unit 35 in Chandler utilized the local TV stations KTVK 3, KPHO 5 and Fox Channel 10 for stand downs and parade interviews.
- Unit 52 in Sierra Vista uses the local radio station as well as the town Facebook page called CoolFM to help spread the word.
- Unit 53 in Buckeye is very active and gets great help from the local town, chamber and schools with posting all upcoming events and community related information.

A total of 32 reports (same as last year) were turned in to the Department PR chairman out of 87 units. This has always been a struggle to get units to report at year end.

There were several Units put in for National Public Relations awards as well as Department awards. In all 2025-2026 was a great year and lots of events and promotion took place along with more use of the branding out in public to help start those elevator speeches.

An end of year is not something to be sad about. It is a great start to the next year with a great path to continue to change, evolve and follow. Blessings for the 2026-2027 year.

Shannon Mead

American Legion Auxiliary

Department of Arizona

Public Relations Chairman

**Veterans Affair and Rehabilitation
Department of Arizona
Book of Reports
2025 - 2026**

As the Department of Arizona concludes another productive year, I am pleased to share the highlights of our units' dedication to supporting our veterans. Our members have remained steadfast in their mission through activities such as organizing meals, hosting birthday celebrations, and providing handcrafted donations.

Several units achieved exceptional milestones this year:

- Unit 2 (William Bloys - Tempe): Presented a hand-stitched "fidget quilt" to Major Fannie McClendon, Ret., a 105-year-old WWII veteran and 66-year member of Post 2.
- Unit 6 (Ernest A. Love - Prescott): Volunteers documented 3,534.5 hours serving 1,440 veterans, in addition to 218 hours for military families and 1,500 hours of community service.
- Unit 27 (Apache - Apache Junction): Volunteers participated in the VA Christmas Store to support and provide meals for veterans during the holiday season.
- Unit 39 (Merrell-Mitchell - Gilbert): The Quilts of Valor program honored a combat veteran on January 11, 2026, and has a ceremony scheduled for May 17, 2026, to honor 7–10 additional veterans.
- Unit 62 (John J. Morris - Peoria): Donated \$7,000 to the local Guitars for Vets chapter, supporting therapeutic music instruction for veterans with PTSD.
- Unit 86 (John D. Wibby - Overgaard): Partnered with P.A.W.S.S. on a fundraiser to connect veterans with companion animals.

Additionally, the Department has committed to supporting veteran rehabilitation through the Creative Arts Festival, providing a platform for veterans to aid their healing process through artistic expression.

It has been an honor to serve as your VA&R Chairman. I value the collaboration with our Department and unit chairpersons and appreciate the leadership you provided during your tenure. I wish the incoming chairman much success.

Respectively;

Lynda Griffin
Department of Arizona
American Legion Auxiliary
VA&R Chairman
Lynda4ala@gmail.com

SERVICE TO VETERANS 2025-2026 SARA DECKER CHAIRMAN

Unit	Name	City	Hrs 2026	Vets Svcd	Expenses	Mileage	Narrative	EOY report
	2 William Bloys	Tempe	25193	13935	10275	29468	1	1
	4 Henry Berry	Globe	19		205			1
	6 Ernest A. Love	Prescott	3534.5	1440	3615.5	13413.6	1	1
	8 Fred A. Humpl	Casa Grande	32	65	624	2420		1
	14 Swaskegame	Kingman	559	4	40			1
	19 H. H. Donkersl	Yuma	1040	100				1
	24 Roy Fourr	Tombstone	4213	216	1611			1
	25 Verde Valley	Cottonwood	108	15	2550	268		1
	28 Lloyd C. Hill	Clifton						1
	29 Earl E. Mitchel	Glendale	17	23	155	21		1
	32 Swift Murphy	Safford	2456	15	1718	4020		1
	40 Bobby Bisjak	Chino Valley	2052.5	686	4051			1
	42 John Ivens	Grand Canyon	5960	15	50			1
	44 Sipe-Peterson	Scottsdale	15400	2759	2759	48854	1	1
	45 Vincent Manzi	Benson	4316	143	400	5815		1
	52 Bill Carmichae	Sierra Vista	102200	500		200		1
	53 Hazelton-Butl	Buckeye	841		100			1
	54 William David	Coolidge	70	185	400	480		1
	57 Robert Fulton	Ash Fork	1088	54	1140			1
	59 Cocio-Estrada	Tucson	52	80	200	30		1
	62 John J. Morris	Peoria	23081	5948	15500	5100	1	1
	81 Robert A. Ecke	Lake Havasu	9250	375	4000	9250	1	1
	86 John D. Webb	Overgaard	1040	479	1543		1	1
	91 Wayne V. Mc	Chandler	3316	375	2600	1800		1
	95 Lopez-Hernan	Solomon	198	6	2270			1
	108 Gary Streeter	Prescott Valley	4983	150	1290	200		1
	109 McCulloch-W	Corona	1742	229	2118	4861		1
	115 Daniel G Fern	Peoria	268	40	2500	250		1
	124 Conrad Franci	Guadalupe	780		5910	6500		1
	132 Oro Valley	Oro Valley	1371	5000	50	3000		1
	135 Cornville	Cornville	1825		606			1
	145 Eugene C. You	Peoria	11	200	150	78		1
	Totals		217016	33037	68430.5	136028.6	6	32

CREATIVE ARTS FOR VETERANS

2025-2026 YEAR END REPORT

The American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Arizona, held three Creative Arts Festivals. Veterans, their families, and friends, attended the Phoenix Creative Arts Festival on May 7, 2026. It was an honor to Chair this important program for the third year and see the value of the American Legion Auxiliary's continued contribution. Three Arizona winners were from Phoenix. The works of Daniel Combs and Felix Fortuna will be judged at our National Creative Arts Festival on June 9-14, 2026, in Columbia, SC, Department will cover hotel accommodations and ALA Unit 41 will provide funds for meal expenses for the Veteran, Daniel Combs, attending the National Competition. Charcuterie boards with fruits, cheese and crackers, home baked pastries, and Sparkling Juice were provided again this year. The Phoenix VA is looking for a larger space for next year's Festival.

The Creative Arts Festival in Tucson was held on August 15, 2025. Veterans, guests, and staff enjoyed the display boards for the Creative Writing. Crackers, cheese, and non-alcoholic "wine" was provided for attendees. After the Creative Arts Festival, the winning art was on display at the Tucson Mall for the public's enjoyment.

The Prescott VCAF was held September 5-7, 2025, at the Yavapai County Fair for the third year. The three days allowed visitors at the County Fair to view and enjoy the creative works of the local Veterans. Cake was served during the awards presentation.

This is such an important program which helps boost confidence in our Veterans. I was touched by the emotions expressed by those attending the festivals and seeing the accomplishments of the participants.

Of 84 Units, only 29 submitted year-end reports and reported donations totaling \$6,395.55. Our donations are vital to the program as the American Legion is the only co-sponsor with the Department of Foreign Affairs. Units reported 162 volunteer hours and various fundraising events such as raffles, talent show, fashion show, jewelry sales, rummage sales, a fair, food sales, cupcake and cookie decorating classes.

Unfortunately, one donating Unit did not qualify for an award due to not ordering Poppies as required.

A few units provided art supplies to the V.A. in lieu of a monetary donation and one Unit provided \$200 to assist the Veteran traveling to the National competition in Columbia, SC.

For Service, Not Self,

Anita Ritter

ALA Creative Arts Chair, 2025-2026

Department of Arizona

Veterans Administration & Rehabilitation Service Report– Sabina Iniguez

My name is Sabina Iniguez, and I am proud to serve as Chairman and vetted volunteer for the Veterans Administration & Rehabilitation at the Carl T. Hayden Veterans Hospital in Phoenix, Arizona, under the Department of Arizona Auxiliary.

Since June 2025, I have met with and visited more than 35 Veterans on a weekly basis while dedicating over 1,000 volunteer hours. The Veterans I serve are primarily patients and residents of the Community Living Center, many of whom are battling Dementia or Alzheimer's disease. Some are receiving end-of-life care through Hospice, while others are undergoing short-term or long-term rehabilitation.

The Veterans I visit come from all walks of life and from many different places throughout the United States. The one thing they all have in common is that they each have incredible stories to tell about their lives. Some spent their entire careers serving in the military, while others chose to serve for only a few years. Some traveled the world, while others lived quieter lives rooted close to home. Many raised families, while others remained single. Each Veteran carries a lifetime of experiences, sacrifice, and memories that deserve to be heard.

The majority of the Veterans I visit are elderly and facing debilitating illnesses that leave many bedridden and unable to participate in everyday activities. Many have outlived their spouses, children, family members, and close friends. Some never married or had children at all. During my visits, I do my best to truly listen and connect with them. I have spent hours talking with a single Veteran. Sometimes, all they want is someone to sit quietly beside them. Sometimes, they simply want a hand to hold. Other times, they ask if I will stay and watch a movie with them.

For some Veterans, I may be the only person they have to talk to, especially those without family or friends nearby. I often think about the loneliness they must feel. Knowing that I can brighten their day, even in a small way, means everything to me. Sometimes, simply being present is enough to remind them that they are not forgotten.

In my capacity as Veterans Administration & Rehabilitation Chairman for the Phoenix VAMC, I have also been able to make purchases through the Department of Arizona Auxiliary to help meet several high-priority needs identified on the Phoenix VA wishlist. These purchases have included nail clippers, shampoo, & conditioner, body wash, disposable razors, Tide Pods, catheter covers, magnifying glasses, mesh shorts, shirts and

remote controls, all of which are donated directly to the Community Living Center. Not only do these items meet the needs of our Veterans but they promote the feeling of a much needed home environment, which helps tremendously in the well being of our Veterans.

Additionally, I purchased a variety of art supplies specifically requested by the Recreation Therapy Department to support activities and programs for Veterans. Through a generous donation from an American Legion post, I was also able to purchase bus passes for Veterans in need. Since the VAMC is no longer able to purchase bus passes directly, these now rely entirely on outside donations. These passes are critically important in helping Veterans without transportation attend their medical appointments.

One project I have continued to maintain is a relationship with a local Crumbl Cookie location. Every Saturday, I pick up leftover cookies, and every Monday, I deliver them to the VAMC. The Community Living Center receives some of these cookies for the Veterans, and the Substance Abuse Unit also receives a large portion for the Veterans in their program. I also make sure our hospitality volunteers receive cookies as a small thank-you for everything they do. Many of our hospitality volunteers are Veterans themselves, and they deeply appreciate the gesture. The Veterans truly enjoy the cookies, and it is amazing how something so simple can bring such happiness and comfort. Sometimes, it is the little things that create the biggest smiles.

I absolutely love what I do, and I look forward to many more years of serving not only our Veterans, but also the Department of Arizona Auxiliary and its mission. It has been an incredible honor and privilege to serve those who have sacrificed so much for our country.

Sabina Iniguez
Dept of Arizona Auxiliary
VA & R Chairman
Carl T. Hayden Medical Center

ARIZONA STATE VETERANS HOME PHOENIX YEAR-END REPORT 2025-2026

This year has been busy. Donations provided craft supplies to make bracelets; t-shirts to tie dye; snacks and drinks for our pantry; greeting cards and stamps for residents to use; dignity shirt protectors; and lap blankets.

We continued to provide monthly birthday lists for the website so Auxiliary members can send cards to those residents celebrating.

Residents also enjoyed a Sock Hop with entertainment from TNT Entertainment. Department Music Chairman Alma Mattingly served as the DJ.

Chairman Candy Neagle

Phoenix Gift Shop Summary

The American Legion Auxiliary- Department of Arizona- 2025 Phoenix Gift Shop consistent of three (3) categories that directly served veterans and/or veterans' families. Categories included- the Phoenix Gift Shop; animated dogs, cats, and birds for veterans with dementia; and, gift bags for veterans diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress (PTSD).

The Phoenix Gift Shop foundation is the physical gift shop where veterans shop for a gift for themselves, their spouse, and children under 18 years old living in the household. Auxiliary volunteers "check-in" the veteran by viewing an official veterans' ID and logging the first name of their spouse, as well as the first name and age of their children. The volunteer then shops with the veteran in the gift shop. Additional volunteers then wrap each gift for the veteran.

The 2025 Phoenix Gift Shop continued support to veterans diagnosed with dementia through the purchase of animated dogs, cats, and birds. This gift service to veterans began in 2024, by the 2023 & 2024 Chairman Christine Paulson. This category of service was very near to Chairman Paulson's heart as her prior husband passed of the disease. This Chairman's father was diagnosed with dementia this year and is honored to continue this category of service.

A third category of direct service to veterans was added by this Chairman, gift bags for veterans diagnosed with PTSD. The Veterans Hospital publishes a list of these veterans' needs. Encouraging cards, color books, and key chains were placed in gifts bags for the hospital to distribute.

COVID & Location Move

The Phoenix Gift Shop moved from the Phoenix Veterans Hospital during COVID. This change was made to reduce the spread of COVID. This is the third year that the Phoenix Gift Shop was hosted by The American Legion (TAL)- Luke Greenway Post 1.

TAL Post 1 has been an excellent and gracious host! This Chairman strongly recommends continuing the Gift Shop at TAL Post 1. The location is close to the Phoenix Veterans Hospital and several VA Clinics which enhances the ability to reach veterans as they travel to their appointments. Finally, a consistent location will assist in continuous service to veterans.

+392%

2025 Increase in Veterans Assistance

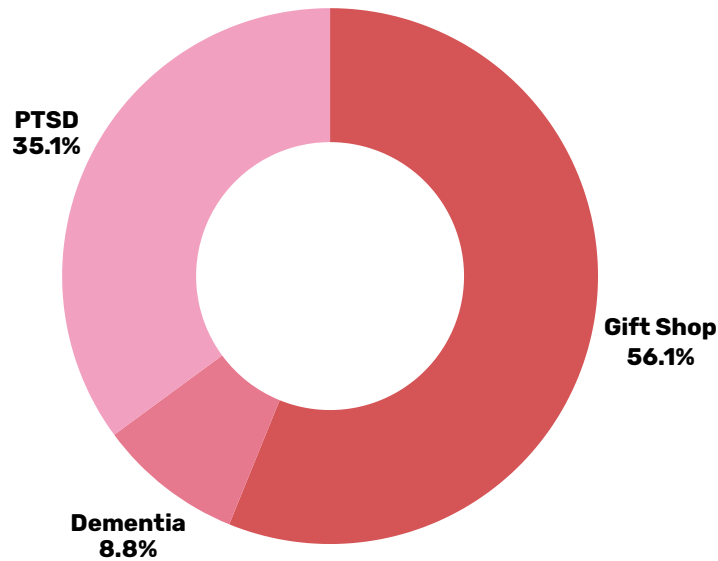
An increase in veterans direct service (from 49 to 192 veterans served) at the Phoenix Gift Shop was due to this year's partnership with the VA Hospital to distribute the Gift Shop flyer on FaceBook, Instagram, and printed flyers were distributed at the VA hospital and area clinics.

To ensure that the 2026 Chairman has the needed initial tools, this Chairman created a flash drive with the flyer, contacts, and other needed information.



Veterans & Families Served

Veterans Served



342 Veterans

56.1%

The Phoenix Gift Shop provided 192 (128 male & 54 female) veterans with gifts.

35.1%

PTSD gift bags were provided to 120 veterans.

8.8%

Thirty (30) animated animals (10 birds, 10 cats, and 10 dogs) were provided to veterans with dementia.

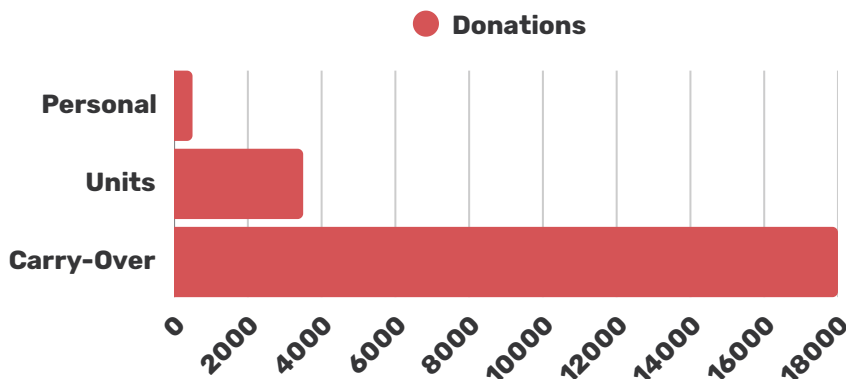
Veteran Families Served

The Phoenix Gift Shop provides an opportunity for the veteran to shop for both spouses and children, along with their own gift.

A 392% increase, or 342 veterans, were served through the 2025 Gift Shop. 192 veterans received gifts and shopped for 129 spouses and 235 childrens gifts at the Gift Shop.

129 Spouses

235 Children



Monetary Donations

The 2025 Phoenix Gift Shop was largely funded by carry-over funds from 2024.

Secondly, the American Legion Auxiliary Unit donations continue to their support of the Pheonix Gift Shop program.

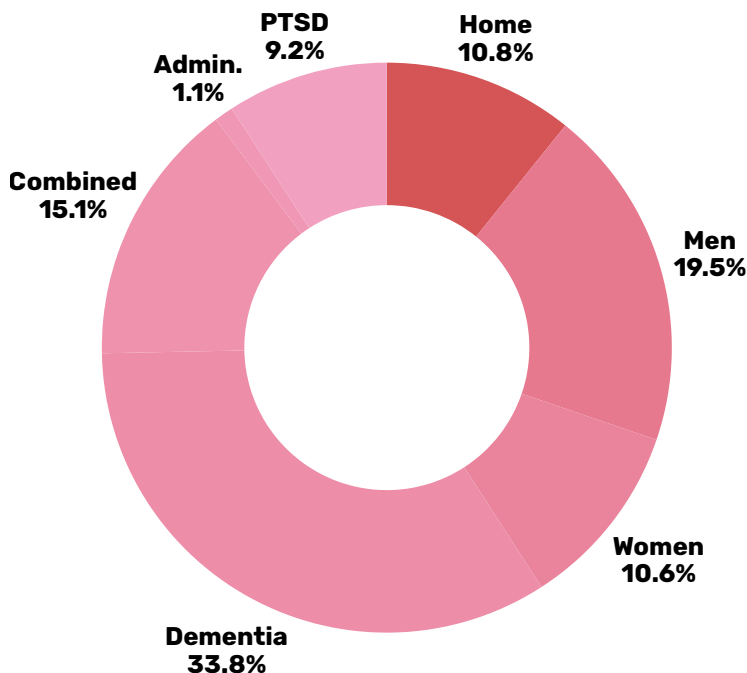
Thirdly, individual monetary donors continued their support. This year, this Chairman was honored by The American Legion Commander Gary Vaughn's visit and personal donation!

Phoenix Gifts Program Expenses

Veteran Families Served

The Phoenix Gift Shop provides an opportunity for the veteran to shop for both spouses and children, along with their own gift. This year 192 veterans gifted for 129 spouses and 235 children through the Phoenix Gift Shop.

Expense Categories



\$18,000 Expenditures

33.8%

DEMENTIA- the average cost of a 30 Joy animated animal is cost prohibitive for many veterans, at an average cost of \$112.11. \$3,363.22 total expense.

19.5%

MEN- Total expense \$1,935.65

15.1%

COMBINED Categories- Total Expenses \$2,718

10.8%

HOME- Total expense \$1,071.74

10.6%

WOMEN- Total expense \$1,055.91.

9.2%

PTSD- Total expense \$910.96

1.1%

SUPPLIES- Total expense \$106.51

Recommendations

Recommendations for the 2026 Phoenix Gift include, providing the promotional flyer to the Veterans Hospital Voluntary Services for distribution, as well as adding the flyer to the Hospital's FaceBook and Instagram accounts. This is crucial to obtain support from the Veterans' Administration to get the word out. A Phoenix Gift Shop Guidebook and supporting flash drive has been created for the new Chairman. This Chairman recommends that the 2026 Chairman use the guide to "hit the ground running." Further, This Chairman recommends utilizing grants to make the money spread farther. Finally, this Chairman recommends the use of Amazon and/or other on-line based stores to reduce milage and gas exdenditures.

Thank You

Madame President Chavez, thank you for this appointment and the opportunity to serve veterans and their families through the Phoenix Gift Shop program. Viki Jackson, Department Chairman

ARIZONA STATE VETERANS HOME (TUCSON)

I mainly get volunteers from districts 2 and 3. The State Veterans Home is used by districts 2,3,4 and 5. Units 8,24,36,45,59,66,68,109,125,131 and 132. I also get volunteers from The Sons of The American Legion and other organizations such as The VFW and The Moose Lodge . I also get donations from the units listed and a few other units. I have even gotten the last few Department State Commanders and district 2 Commander involved in some of the activities. We do activities such as once or twice month art and crafts. The third Thursday of the month is Birthday parties. Second Tuesday of the month is Pizza and Beer parties.

October we had Fall Carnival for Halloween . Face painting and games and train rides and cotton candy and popcorn and horses .Food and snow cones and cake walk with DJ being the MC and playing his tunes. The residents look forward to this every year. This is one of the biggest money makers for the home. We raises almost three thousand dollars.

November I had the units help me with deserts for Veterans Day celebration . We try and get local politicians to come out and speak. Give back to the Veterans. At end of month we decorated Christmas trees through out the home, The staff and residents love it when they see us working on the tree in the main lobby.

December is a busy month my co chair and I try and get gifts and stockings . My one brother plays the Grinch. The staff and residents love it . I try and get the units to bring food and goodies to eat.

February is super bowl month. It is a big deal at the home. We go all out with snacks and food. The residents love to hear my one brother talk sports . They get involved with him.

April pot plants and flowers . They like getting their hands dirty. It nice they can see something grow out of nothing.

May we hosted a bike show. I made 30lbs of Coke bbq beef along with my mother and one brothers help for sandwiches and 25lbs of potato salad, Riders from The American Legion and The Moose Lodge came out and supported me. It was to honor Armed Forces Day and end of nurses week. We was able to donate \$300 to The Veterans Home to help with funding and such. We haven't had one in over 8 years. The older residents that are still around remember it.

No I in Team! I couldn't do what I do without the help of volunteers

Respectfully Submitted by:

Nancy Morrow

Arizona State Veterans Home (Tucson) Chairman

Veterans Christmas Gift Shop TUCSON Southern Arizona VA Healthcare System

Our 2025 Veterans Christmas gift shop was held on December 2-5, 2025 at the Tucson VA Medical Center. We served **222 Veterans and their families** this year!

Co-chairs, Melani Ruiz-Pyland & Becky Ruiz thank **all the Units in Southern Arizona** who participated. KUDOS to you ALA members who donated items to the Giftshop. The photos below cannot adequately showcase the abundance and generosity of the Units.

Our Heros are ALA Units: 7, 8, 32, 36, 45, 54, 59, 65, 95, 109, 131, 132; VFW 549, VFW Post 50, SQD 68, American Legion Post 59, 65, 109, 131, 132. You made this year's Giftshop a success!



Adult/youth Gifts



Children's Gifts

Volunteers worked over 5 hours getting everything unpacked and sorted on Tuesday. We also spent another 4 hours sorting and packing items at the end of the event on Friday. We cannot thank you enough.

Every Veteran and many VA employees thanked us for hosting the Giftshop. Some Veterans were surprised at the recognition for their sacrifice and service. Many are far from their families for the holidays. For others in long-term care and this was a welcome change from the routine they have. We hope our efforts have helped to cheer their spirits and make the days easier to bear.

We wish to acknowledge the help from VA Community Development and Civic Engagement and the **SAVAHCS** volunteers that came to help! We appreciate the help of you volunteers and staff. You were a key to our success. You offered resources and volunteers to help us Setup, Shop with Veterans, Wrap gifts and Pack items on Friday. **THANK YOU!**

Auxiliary members worked alongside the VA volunteers to visit the acute and long-term patient units to offer gifts to Veterans that were unable to visit our Shop. Many of the VA volunteers stepped up on their free days to serve our Veterans and their families. We owe them a debt of gratitude.

THANK YOU to all who contributed your time, resources and encouragement to the Gift Shop team! Your work reminds us of the American Legion Auxiliary motto: *"in Service to Others, not Self"*.
MERRY CHR ISTMAS!

Melani Ruiz-Pyland, Chairman
Veterans Christmas Giftshop Tucson
Department of Arizona 2025

PRESCOTT ALA WHIPPLE CHRISTMAS GIFT SHOP & VAVS REPORT

Northern AZ VA Health Care System

The Prescott Gift Shop was held on **December 17, 2025**. It has evolved into a gift distribution that is meeting the needs and interests of the Veterans served by this facility. We currently provide gifts to the Veterans receiving treatment through the Domiciliary (DOM) and Community Living Center (CLC).

Thanks to volunteers from Units 108, 78, 13, 40 and AL 108. We started the day in the CLC with a holiday party, complete with refreshments, music, social time and, of course, Santa Claus gave out gifts to each Veteran. This year each Veteran received a snap flannel shirt or fleece jacket and several fun/useful items to enjoy or pass along to family members. The group also went to individual rooms to distribute gifts and treats and to share holiday greetings from the Auxiliary. After lunch, we proceeded to the DOM where we set up tables with backpacks, fleece blankets, socks, personal care items and treats. Veterans made their way past the tables to choose the items that they wanted for themselves or family members. Our refreshment table consisted of traditional holiday party fare. Again, everyone enjoyed live music and plenty of time to enjoy the company of the Auxiliary and each other.

I have incorporated funds from the VA Voluntary Service (VAVS) account into the holiday festivities by using it to supply the refreshments for the parties. In addition, the VAVS fund has been used to provide passes to the local movie theater for both the DOM and CLC, ice cream socials for CLC, and new clothing for the Clothing Room. Those items included underwear, shoes, jeans, sweatpants and shirts, and long/short sleeve t-shirts. Clothing is available to Veterans in need through a process that starts with his/her social worker. A change this year is the VA no longer accepts women's clothing; they maintain a fund to purchase items as the need arises. We do continue to accept new clothing, shoes, underwear, and jackets for men; they can be donated through the CDCE office in Building 15 – please call 928-776-7013 prior to bringing in.

ALA donations recorded from May 1, 2025 – April 30 totaled \$19,124.34.

The ALA has one regularly scheduled volunteer at the Prescott VA with 129 hours and 148 occasional volunteer hours recorded. Occasional hours do not appear to be correct and is an area that can be improved by ensuring all activity that includes ALA support be reported to the CDCE office.

Respectfully submitted by:

Patricia (Trish) Aljets

VAVS Deputy Representative

Whipple Gift Shop Chairman