

CREATIVE ARTS

APRIL 2026

Since 2000, the Auxiliary has co-sponsored the National Creative Arts Program, along with the Department of Veterans Affairs, to support the Auxiliary's mission of Service Not Self. Members, units, and departments support the local competitions. Your Unit donations make these events possible. When mailing your monetary donations to Department, please specify that they are for our local Creative Arts program.

Each year, veterans enrolled at VA health care facilities showcase their talents in local Creative Arts Festivals. The Creative Arts program is a form of rehabilitative treatment that promotes recovery and well-being. It involves art, music, creative writing, dance, and drama. The categories in the visual arts division range from oil paintings to leatherwork to paint-by-number kits. In the performing arts division, the categories relate to music, dance, and creative writing.

The Phoenix Arts Festival will be held May 7, 2026, in the Topaz Clinic, at Carl T. Hayden Medical Center in Phoenix. Please attend the Arts Festival, view the amazing artwork, and meet our talented veterans. Your presence and applause is a great way to honor their hard work and talent. Last year, Phoenix had four winners, Daniel Combs (Printmaking), Tofe Eslava (Leather Tooling), Felix Fortuna (Combat Experience), and Melissa Freed (Fiber Arts). 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.

Please help us wish Mr. Fortuna a happy 103rd birthday by mailing him a card:

Felix Fortuna
8300 E. McDowell Rd., Apt 3067
Scottsdale, AZ 85257.

REMINDER: Unit reports for the Carmelite Staker Creative Arts Award are due May 1, 2026.

Feel free to contact me or a team member in your area with any questions:

Phoenix:	Christie Slegers	christie.slegers@gmail.com
Prescott:	Sally Fine	mightyfine123@gmail.com
Tucson:	Theresa Marks	ALATheresaMarks@gmail.com

For Service Not Self.

Anita Ritter, Chairman
8020 East Thomas Road, Unit 128,
Scottsdale, AZ 85251-6668
Ritmar@cox.net
602-679-1785