

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