

American Legion Auxiliary VA&R REPORT
TUCSON VA MEDICAL CENTER
2-29-24

Major changes to mask requirements have finally happened. We are working very hard with the Recreation therapists to get our traditional events back up and running. We have wonderful volunteers for the second Saturday for Bingo at the Community Living Center but can use more help. Currently on the schedule is a Creative Arts awards ceremony to be held on March 21st to honor all of last year's medal winners and to promote participation for other Veterans. ALA will be providing refreshments. An Adaptive Sports Clinic is scheduled for April (either the 10th or the 17th). ALA will be providing refreshments. We need volunteers for the third Wednesday for Bridging at Building 90. Please contact me if your Unit can help.

Ward W2 (Dementia Ward) in Building 60 is currently seeking twin size blankets for their patients (this is an ongoing need). They request that the blankets be different colors/patterns so each patient will recognize their personal blanket. Thank you Unit 8, Unit 62 & Unit 66 for your generous donations. They are also requesting clothing donations (sweatshirts and sweatpants all sizes especially size small in "girly" colors for the two female Veterans, socks and shoes men's sizes 9 and above). Many of the Veterans they serve come in with no clothing. One female patient in Building 60 is 106 years young. She plays Bingo with us each month.

Southwestern Blind Rehabilitation Center (SWBRC) is continuing going on outings where they are invited. They would like to request support for outings which are not direct donations such as going to the movies, Pima Air & Space Museum, Botanical Garden, etc. These outings must be financed by donations of the purchase of tickets directly by the sponsor. They currently have a population of twenty.

Patriot Pantry is up and running at is currently supporting 40 to 50 Veterans with food insecurities. The current monthly cost for this program is estimated at \$1,500. VA funds can now be used to purchase the food and different donors are shopping and delivering the items to SAVAHCS. There is also a Patriot Pantry program at the Sierra Vista CBOC. Thank you Unit 73, Unit 131 and Unit 132 for your generous donations.

The grand total of monetary donations for the American Legion Auxiliary for May 1, 2023 to February 29, 2024 is \$1,352. Thank you Unit 32 for your generous donation to Fisher House.

The grand total of material and activity donations for the American Legion Auxiliary for May 1, 2023 to February 29, 2024 is \$19,194.63. Thank you Unit 62, Unit 73, Unit 109, Unit 131 and Unit 132 for your generous donations to support our programs.

Eight registered hospital volunteers donated time which was credited to the American Legion Auxiliary. The grand total of registered volunteer hours May 1, 2023 to February 29, 2024 is 830.5. Twelve occasional volunteers have contributed 110 hours as of February 29, 2024. We have on-boarded two new volunteers whose hours will benefit the American Legion Auxiliary. The Center for Development and Civic Engagement (CDCE formerly Voluntary Service) is bringing back many volunteers.

This chairman has volunteered 160 hours and logged 1,940 miles this year in service to the Tucson VA Medical Center as of February 29, 2024. This chairman has now logged over 4,000 hours in service to SAVAHCS. This chairman was re-elected to be the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the VAVS Executive Committee at the meeting on October 12, 2021. This chairman has been elected to fill a three year term on the VAVS Executive Committee. This chairman has attended every Executive Committee meeting and every VAVS meeting this year. This chairman is working with the Homeless Program to ensure that our Homeless Veterans and those in Transitional Housing have the food and beverages that they need. This chairman is actively supporting the Patriot Pantry at SAVAHCS. This chairman is working with the Recreation departments to purchase needed supplies for the National Veterans Creative Arts Program and other recreational activities. National Creative Arts winners were announced in December. Tucson had four medal winners and we are planning a celebration with refreshments on March 21st. We have already held an advance planning "meet and greet" and invited all interested Veterans. Unit 73 provided refreshments for this event. Annual Joint Review was completed November 28, 2023. VAVS Committee voted to fully fund transportation for the gold medal winners from NVCA at SAVAHCS on February 1, 2023. VAVS Committee voted to support the Patriot Pantry with a donation of \$3,000 on October 25, 2023. Respectfully Submitted, Kathy Szakonyi, VAVS Representative