

## SAVAHCS Creative Arts Festival REPORT 2023

This year's SAVAHC Veterans Creative Arts Festival was held August 22 & 23. It was held in the SAVAHCS auditorium and displayed beautifully around the room. The musical and drama entries were displayed on stage with a big screen and played ongoing throughout the festival, highlighting these art forms for all to enjoy.

This year we had 36 veterans enter the VCAF. 23 were new to the SAVAHCS VCAF. There were 72 art entries, and 64 entries were submitted to the National Creative Arts Festival. The veterans will be contacted sometime in December 2023 if their entry will be in the National Veterans CAF in Denver, CO in April 2024. Last year we had 4 gold medal artists from SAVAHCS, we are hoping that we will have representation again for the 2024 VCAF as well.

We had a unique collaboration with the Southern Arizona artist Guild in Tucson this year. The local 1<sup>st</sup> place winners in each category were invited to display their works of art in their gallery for the week after our CAF. This was a very rewarding opportunity for our veterans and created a new relationship among area artists. Everyone had very positive feedback and there is a plan to expand this relationship in the coming years and even create a month long display and recognition of veteran artists next year.

This was a very rewarding year for the ALA involvement in the SAVAHCHS VCAF. The ALA was instrumental on the day of the festival and in the planning. Local units provided refreshments for artists and for visitors. Unit 73 assisted each day with the refreshments and they were very well received and appreciated. ALA VAVS Representative , Kathy Szakonyi and Deputy, Dawn Davidson attended pre planning meetings, artists open house to assist apply, 2022 National gold medal winners recognition reception for the artists, created posters and ballots, and attended post wrap up meetings. We had more than 60 hours combined invested in this CAF. It was a terrific success.