

CREATIVE ARTS FOR VETERANS JUNE 2025

The Tucson Arts Festival was held August 15, 2024, and 97 veterans submitted entries. Six veterans from Tucson received seven ribbons at the National Festival in Denver, Colorado, on May 18, 2025.

Prescott held their Arts Festival on September 6, 2024, at the County Fairgrounds. Several veterans shared the story behind their works. I was invited to help present the awards to the winners. Three veterans won medals at the National Festival in Denver. Sally Fine graciously treated me to lunch before I returned to the Valley.

The Creative Arts Festival was held at the Carl T. Hayden Medical Center in Phoenix on May 8, 2025, and we had many veterans, their family and friends in attendance. Seventy-five veterans participated with 145 entries, an increase over last year. Margaret Ellis and I handled the refreshments which were a big hit. Please view the video on the VA website and on Face Book.

Your financial contributions enable our veterans to express their creative talents. Thirteen Units donated a total of \$5,657. Funds were raised by holding Bar Bingo, Meat Raffle, Karaoke Contest, 50/50 Raffles, Queen of Hearts, and food sales. A member purchased 100 Diamond Art Kits which were donated to Tucson, Prescott, and Phoenix.

There are 86 Auxiliary Units in Arizona. Thank you to the Thirty-three Units who submitted reports this year.

The Creative Arts Representatives are Margaret Ellis in Phoenix, Sally Fine in Prescott, and Kathy Szakonyi in Tucson. Their continued dedication and commitment in being part of the Team and assistance with the local Creative Art Festivals are greatly appreciated. Thank you to the Units who volunteered and donated to make therapeutic programs for our veterans possible.

It has been a great experience serve as Chairman for the Creative Arts for Veterans program. Meeting the veterans and having them share the stories behind their projects were really moving.

I hope to see many of you at Department Convention.

In the spirit of service, not self,

Anita Ritter
ALA Creative Arts Chairman, 2024-2025
Department of Arizona