



UNIFIED ARIZONA VETERANS
THE VOICE OF ARIZONA'S VETERANS

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MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

March 7, 2026 – 0900-1000

Attendees

- Via Zoom (26): Chair Hohman, IPC Burns, Vice Chair Harris, Secretary Forkner, Treasurer Bernard, Director McDermott, Director Miley, Director Jameson, Director (VFW) PC Yates, Chaplain PC Seago, Michael Welsh (PVAHCS), Maria Nguyen (SAVAHCS), Rita Hess (NAVAHCS), PC Dylan Dalzotto (ADVS), Kathy Upchurch (GSSA-PHX), William Jarvis (DAV Ch39), Dorn Farrell (JAVC), Rick Foster (DAV Ch27), Barbara Jeter (Proj Healing Waters), Bill Talcott, Jeanne Blaes, Karen Craig, Marlon Ruiz, Nancy Fassbender, Randy Meyer, Ravyn Crescent.

1. Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order by the Chair.

2. Opening Ceremonies

- **Invocation:** Delivered by the Chaplain.
- **Pledge of Allegiance:** Led by the Vice Chair.

3. Guest Speaker Update

- The **Arizona Coalition for Military Families** was unable to attend due to an unexpected issue with their presenter. Their materials may be shared later.

4. Approval of Previous Minutes

- Motion made and seconded to approve the February meeting minutes as distributed.
- A correction was noted regarding attendance and was amended.
- **Vote:** Approved as amended.

5. Treasurer's Report

- **Beginning Balance (Feb 1):** \$116,804.00
- **Income:** \$350.00 (primarily dues, Hall of Fame, scholarship contributions)
- **Expenses:** Fuel, box rentals, miscellaneous
- **Ending Balance (Feb 28):** \$116,719.00
- Accounts reconciled with the bank.
- **Report accepted.**

6. Chaplain's Report – Sickness & Distress

- No new requests reported.
- Cards sent to members previously identified.
- Visit made to **Eldora Engebretson** on March 1; she passed later that day.
 - **Services:** March 30 (details to be published).
- A newsletter notice will be included to ensure members can request support.

7. VA Medical Center Reports

Phoenix VA Medical Center

- **Leadership Update:** Mr. Ditter officially sworn in as Medical Center Director.
- **Veteran Support:** Emphasis on outreach and peer support during global stress events.
- **Health Initiatives:**
 - Heart Health Month activities
 - Colorectal Cancer Awareness (inflatable colon education events on March 10 & March 24)
- **Clinical Updates:**
 - da Vinci robotic surgery system (1,000th surgery milestone)
- **Outreach Events:**
 - Native American tribal outreach (San Carlos, Overgaard, Salt River)
 - Iwo Jima Flag Raising event
- **Fisher House:** Demolition funding delayed; donor options under review.
- **Upcoming Events:**
 - VSO Mixer – March 10 (VFW Post 9400)
 - Women Veterans Town Hall – March 12
 - Maricopa County Stand Down – March 12–13
 - Blood Drive – March 19
- **Fraud Alert:** Veterans should not pay upfront for community care appointments.

Southern Arizona VA Health Care System

- **Leadership Transition:**
 - Interim Director detail concluded; Dr. Kittel serving as Interim Director.
- **Upcoming Events:**
 - Adaptive Recreation Clinic – March 25
 - Tucson Veteran Engagement Resource Fair – March 27
 - Free Tax Preparation (Tuesdays & Fridays through April 3)
- **Construction Updates:** Primary care expansion and ER renovation ongoing.
- **Community Support:** Donations and volunteer engagement recognized.

Northern Arizona VA Health Care System

- **Leadership Update:** Dr. Jay Routson appointed Acting Deputy Chief of Staff.
- **Veteran Patient Salute Week:** February 8–14.
- **Rural Outreach:**
 - Lake Havasu, Parker, Quartzsite Stand Downs
 - Mobile medical units deployed
- **Upcoming Events:**
 - Navajo Women Warriors Day – March 19
 - Verde Valley Stand Down – March 27
 - Vietnam War Veterans Day Ceremony – March 27 (Prescott VA)

8. Arizona Department of Veterans Services (ADVS)

- **Veteran Donation Fund:**
 - 16 organizations awarded grants totaling \$2 million.
- **Arizona State Veterans Home:** New transport bus acquired.
- **Southern Arizona Veterans Memorial Cemetery:**
 - Celebration of Life Butterfly Release – May 2.
- **Stand Down Schedule:** Tucson, Maricopa, Gila River, Verde Valley.
- **Legislative Notes:**
 - SB 1803 (claim sharks) – UAV supports amendment requiring VA accreditation.
 - HB 2960 (Veterans Court Grants) – Passed committee unanimously.

9. Board of Directors Update

- Planned transition from Zoom to **Google Meet** beginning August 2026.
- Budget presentation expected at the next meeting.
- Reminder to participate in **Patriotic Awards** and Hall of Fame processes.

10. New Business

- No new business reported.
- Reminder: Subordinate organizations may now join automatically upon application.

11. Good of the Order

- Announcements included:
 - Memorial services and veteran passings
 - USS Arizona Memorial site progress (Lake Havasu)
 - Transitional housing grand opening for homeless veterans
 - Upcoming Vietnam Veteran recognition events
 - Youth Leadership Conference (June 7–12)
 - Marine Corps community support luncheon (March 20)

12. Closing

- **Benediction:** Delivered by the Chaplain.
- Chair thanked members for participation and adjourned the meeting.

A reminder to Zoom participants: Please ensure that you mute your microphone and turn off your video during presentations — this saves bandwidth and makes the meeting run more smoothly. Thanks!

Respectfully submitted,



Secretary, Unified Arizona Veterans

AVHOF Class of 2025

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