



UNIFIED ARIZONA VETERANS
THE VOICE OF ARIZONA'S VETERANS

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UAV MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

May 2, 2026 – 0905-1000

Location: Zoom videoconference

Presiding: Chair Glenn Hohman

Secretary: Carl Forkner

Attendees

- Via Zoom (33): Chair Hohman, IPC Burns, Vice Chair Harris, Secretary Forkner, Treasurer Bernard, Director (VFW) Yates, Director McDermott, Director Milem, Director Morrow, Chaplain Seago, Executive Director Ditter (PVAHCS), Executive Director Lockridge (SAVAHCS), Nurse Administrator Kanzer (NAVAHCS), Deputy Director Ochoa (ADVS), Barbara Jeter, Caroleen Culbertson, Chris Gahan, Colleen Heck, Commander Burnett (DAV Ch 8), Commander Jarvis (DAV Ch 39), Vice President Craig (AVHOFS), Kathy Upchurch, Jeanne Blaes, Director Heard (NCA), Ravyn Crescent, Deputy Director Torres (ACMF), Chris Gahan, Carol Rundell (DAVA), Kathy Upchurch, Sr. Vice Commander Hage (AZ DAV), Adjutant Foster (DAV Ch 27), Marlon Ruiz, "Bill"

Opening (Chair Hohman)

- The meeting began with greetings and a prayer for world peace, military personnel, and Arizona veterans. Attendees were reminded to support each other, especially those facing illness or distress.

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Previous Minutes (Secretary Forkner)

- Motion made and seconded to approve last month's minutes. No corrections or omissions noted; minutes approved as distributed.

Treasurer's Report (Treasurer Bernard)

- April opening balance: \$116,633.
- Income: \$410 (administration account, mostly dues), \$3,083 (donations, primarily from Mighty Cause).
- Expenses: \$396 (insurance premium), \$5,000 (deposit for upcoming ceremony).
- Closing balance: \$112,030, matching bank records.
- Books are balanced; report accepted.

Sickness & Distress (Chaplain Seago)

- No new reports. Members are encouraged to notify leadership if anyone needs support.

Congressional & Healthcare Reports

- Minutes from Gallego's legislative meeting report will be posted and distributed.
- Combined report from Healthcare System Directors to be sent out.

Phoenix VA Medical Center Updates (Executive Director Ditter)

- Hiring for clinical and nursing positions, part of a 30-day onboarding pilot.
- Volunteer onboarding delays acknowledged; efforts underway to expedite.
- Expansion planned for Northwest clinic, including gym and mental health spaces.
- Recent inspections: Community Living Center reopened, aiming for 98 beds; mental health inpatient unit received positive OIG inspection.
- Faith leader roundtable held for mental health and suicide prevention.
- Sustainability fair and volunteer appreciation events highlighted.
- Patient Experience Week was celebrated with activities for veterans and staff.
- Special recognition for a WWII veteran, Mr. McCalf, with a centenarian coin and certificate.
- Updates on Fisher House project, creative arts festival, veggie markets, VSO mixer, caregiver resource fair, and VA2K walk and roll.
- Social media reminders for updates and news.

Southern Arizona VA Healthcare System (Executive Director Lockridge)

- New director introduced; recent CAP survey (lab accreditation) went well.
- Upcoming events: Milestones event (May 14), Veterans Health Fair (May 18), Mental Health Open House (May 28).
- Reminders: Veterans should not pay for VA community care appointments upfront; use secure messaging for timely responses.
- Volunteer drivers are needed in Sierra Vista and Yuma.
- Construction updates: Clinic expansion and emergency department renovations.
- Fisher House received \$40,000 donation from American Legion Riders.
- Faith leader roundtable and creative arts festival with 7,000 entries from 4,500 veterans.

Northern Arizona VA Medical Center (Nurse Administrator Kanzer)

- National Volunteer Week and Patient Experience Week celebrated.
- Director attended Arizona Coalition for Military Families symposium.
- Outreach events: Page Regional Veterans Standout, Hope Code Talkers Recognition Day, tribal outreach in Western territory.
- Upcoming events: Blood drive (May 5), Veteran Resource Fair (May 8), High Country Standout (May 15), VA2K walk and roll (May 18–21).
- Donation boxes for homeless veterans at events; volunteer opportunities for flag placement.

National Memorial Cemetery (Director Heard)

- Memorial Day ceremony: Flag placement (May 23), flag removal (May 26), ceremony (May 25).
- Parking details and volunteer information to be distributed.

Arizona Department of Veteran Services (Deputy Director Ochoa)

- Copper Star Award was presented to Mr. Joe Larson.
- Home Depot Foundation completed renovations at Phoenix skilled nursing facility.
- Flagstaff facility preparing for VA recognition survey; Tucson facility maintains 5-star rating.
- Cemetery expansions are ongoing in Marana and Sierra Vista.
- Legislative update: Property tax exemption for 100% disabled veterans includes income requirement; efforts underway to remove this restriction.

Arizona Coalition for Military Families (Deputy Director Torres)

- Symposium and Be Connected Communities Academy highlighted.
- Four key pillars: Early intervention, building bridges, providing real solutions, closing the gap to reduce veteran suicide rates.
- Projects underway in Hopi Nation, Cochise County (transportation), Maricopa County (resource guide).
- Ten counties participated; ongoing efforts to expand community engagement.

Board of Directors & Organizational Updates (Chair Hohman)

- No votes taken; scholarship endowments discussed.
- Recognition for patriotic awards luncheon.
- Reminder for member organizations to update leadership information.
- Commander's forum planned for fall; meetings go dark in July and August.
- September meeting to be held on Google Meets.

Closing (Chair Hohman)

- Benediction delivered by Chaplain Seago.
- Next meeting scheduled for June 6th via Zoom.

Action Items & Reminders:

- Notify leadership of any members in distress.
- Volunteer opportunities for Memorial Day ceremonies and flag placement.
- Update leadership information for member organizations.
- Check newsletters for meeting updates and event details.

Respectfully submitted,



Carl B. Forkner
AVHOF Class of 2025
Secretary