

# National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona

## MEMORIAL DAY



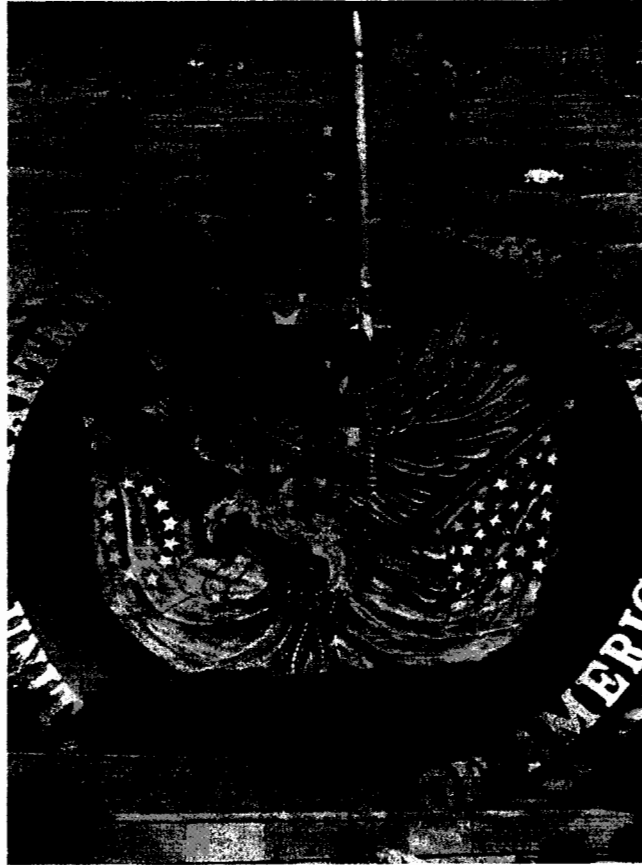
**May 25, 2026      8:00AM**

### **IN FLANDERS FIELDS**

**In Flanders fields, the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly,  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.**

**We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.**

**Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.**



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## **NATIONAL MEMORIAL CEMETERY OF ARIZONA**

In 1926, Mr. Ivan Williams a long-time member of the American Legion contacted U.S. Senator Henry F. Ashurst about another National Veterans' Cemetery in Arizona. In the following years hundreds of veterans joined in the effort to accomplish this task, but their efforts were in vain due to the fact that the National Cemetery in Prescott was still open for burials.

In 1970 Department Commanders of the three major Veterans Service Organizations, with full support of their predecessors and membership, pledged to establish a State Veterans Cemetery with the ultimate goal of becoming a National Cemetery.

A corporation was formed to acquire land for this purpose and Phoenix attorney, Anthony O. Jones was named the corporation attorney responsible for drafting the petition and guiding it through proper channels. Land Commissioner, Andrew L. Bettwy was diligent in working with the corporation leaders and a section of land was eventually located in Phoenix at Cave Creek and Pinnacle Peak Roads that was deemed acceptable on a lease fee basis.

The commanders presented the information to their organizations and requested approval for and obligation of the organizations to pay lease fees on the full section of land while seeking a governing authority.

State Law was passed in 1976 and signed by Governor Raul Castro authorizing development of up to six hundred forty acres for a Veterans Cemetery with \$50,000 being appropriated. Seventeen acres of the leased land was conveyed to the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) with twelve and a half acres to be developed initially.

The Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery was dedicated December 9, 1978, with first burials occurring on March 14, 1979. A total of \$291,700 was received from the U. S. Veterans' Administration Federal-State Matching Funds Grant Program for construction improvements. The State Legislature created the Arizona Veterans' Service Commission (AVSC) in 1982 and operation of the cemetery was transferred to AVSC from DES.

In 1985, an additional two hundred twelve acres were conveyed to the AVSC bringing the cemetery acreage to two hundred twenty-five acres. In 1988 the legislature appropriated \$300,000 for capital improvements. Additional improvements were authorized and completed through donated funds of many veterans, fraternal and other service organizations.

The cemetery with burial space available for 200,000 graves was transferred to the Veterans Administration on April 1, 1989. The three Department Commanders were: Disabled American Veterans Commander George E. Egel; Veterans of Foreign Wars Commander Charles "Chuck" G. Hastings, and American Legion Commander James J. Murphy.

GOVERNOR KATIE HOBBS

# ARIZONA PROCLAMATION

**WHEREAS**, Memorial Day was first observed on May 30, 1868, and today, 158 years later, we continue to take time to commemorate those who have died in service to our country; and

**WHEREAS**, Memorial Day is observed on the last Monday of May to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. We mourn the loss of these honorable service member; and

**WHEREAS**, this occasion serves as a heartfelt tribute, acknowledging that our debt to these brave men and women in service can never truly be repaid; and

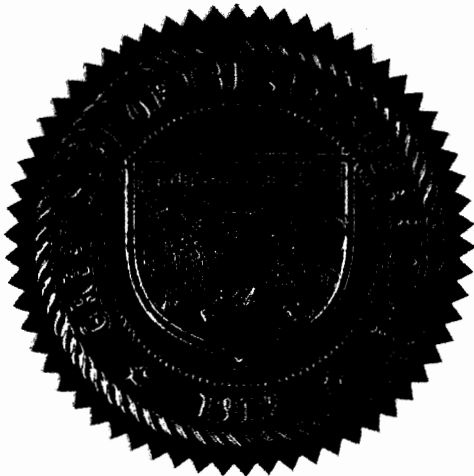
**WHEREAS**, we extend our heartfelt sympathy and gratitude to the families who have lost loved ones in service to our country; and

**WHEREAS**, the State of Arizona is home to proud military families, veterans, and active-duty service members whose commitment to duty strengthens our communities and upholds the enduring principles of freedom, democracy, and justice; and

**WHEREAS**, on this day, Arizonans are encouraged to pause in remembrance, participate in community commemorations, visit memorial sites, and reflect upon the legacy of those who laid down their lives so that future generations may live in peace and opportunity.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Katie Hobbs, Governor of the State of Arizona, do hereby proclaim, May 25, 2026, as,

## ARIZONA MEMORIAL DAY



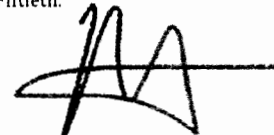
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Arizona



GOVERNOR

DONE at the Capitol in Phoenix on this twenty-fourth day of April in the year Two Thousand and Twenty-Six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the Two Hundred and Fiftieth.

ATTEST:



SECRETARY OF STATE



### THE ARMY SONG

Over hill, over dale,  
we have hit the dusty trail  
**And the Army goes rolling along.**

In and out, hear them shout  
Counter march and right about  
And the Army goes rolling along.

Then it's Hi! Hi! Hey! The Army's on the way  
Sound off your numbers loud and strong.  
For where e'er you go, you will always know  
That the Army goes rolling along;



### THE SPACE FORCE HYMN

Semper Supra (Always Above)  
We're the mighty watchful eye  
Guardians beyond the blue

The Invisible front line  
Warfighters brave and true

Boldly reaching into space  
There's no limit to our sky  
Standing guard both night and day  
We're the Space Force from on high



### THE MARINES 'HYMN

From the halls of Montezuma  
To the shores of Tripoli  
We fight our country's battles  
In the air, on land and sea;

First to fight for right and freedom  
And to keep our honor clean  
We are proud to claim the title  
Of United States Marine.



### COAST GUARD

Semper Paratus  
(Always Ready)

We're always ready for the call,  
We place our trust in thee.

Through howling gale and shot and shell,  
To win our victory

"Semper Paratus" is our guide,  
Our pledge, our motto too,  
We're "Always Ready" do or die! HEY!  
Coast Guard we fight for you!



### ANCHORS AWEIGH

Anchors Aweigh my boys,  
Anchors Away

Farewell to college joys,  
We sail at break of day ay, ay, ay!  
Through our last night on shore,  
Drink through the foam,  
Until we meet once more

Here's wishing you a happy voyage home



### HEAVE HO! My Lads, Heave Ho!

Merchant Marines

Heave Ho! My lads, heave ho!

It's a long, long way to go,

It's a long, long pull with our hatches  
full

Braving the wind, braving the sea,

Fighting the treacherous foe,

Heave Ho! My lads, heave ho!

Let the sea roll high or low,

We can cross any ocean, Sail any river,

Give us the goods and we'll deliver

Damn the submarine!

We're the men of The Merchant Marine



### THE AIR FORCE HYMN

Off we go into the wild blue yonder  
Climbing high into the sun  
Here they come  
Zooming to meet our thunder  
At 'em boys, give 'er the gun.

Down we dive,  
Spouting our flame from under  
Off with one hell of a roar!

We live in fame, or go down in flame,  
Hey! Nothing can stop the U.S. Air Force

## Memorial Day Program

"GOD BLESS AMERICA"  
CW3 STEVE BRINING, vocalist

"GOD BLESS THE USA"  
CW3 STEVE BRINING, vocalist  
108<sup>th</sup> Army Band

FLY OVER

MASTER OF CEREMONIES  
BRUCE KOSAVEACH  
Navy – Vietnam Veteran

GUEST SPEAKER  
DEBBIE MELTON  
Air Force – Desert Storm

DIRECTOR'S GREETING  
RANDY HEARD, Director  
National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona

REMEMBRANCE  
BRUCE KOSAVEACH  
BILL WOOSTER

POSTING OF THE COLORS  
Luke Air Force Base Honor Guard

ARMED FORCES MEDLEY  
108<sup>th</sup> Army Band  
Flags presented by The Patriot Guard

"THE NATIONAL ANTHEM"  
108<sup>th</sup> Army Band  
Commanded by CW3 STEVEN BRINING

PRESENTATION OF THE PROCLAMATION  
GOVERNOR KATIE HOBBS  
to  
CEMETERY DIRECTOR RANDY HEARD

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE  
Imprints of Honor

BENEDICTION  
Chaplain JOHN LAW  
Scottish American Military Society

INVOCATION  
Chaplain DANIAL BUTLER  
Phoenix VA Health Care System

RIFLE VOLLEY  
Luke Air Force Base Honor Guard

INTRODUCTION OF DISTINGUISHED GUESTS  
MASTER OF CEREMONIES  
BRUCE KOSAVEACH

TAPS  
108<sup>th</sup> Army Band

PARADE OF COLORS  
Veteran Service Organizations  
Community Groups

DISMISSAL  
" Stars & Stripes"  
108<sup>th</sup> Army Band

## **RANDY HEARD, DIRECTOR NATIONAL MEMORIAL CEMETERY OF ARIZONA, PHOENIX**



Randy Heard was named Director of the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona (NMCA), located in Phoenix, Arizona, effective February 28, 2021. As Director, he is responsible for the oversight of all burial, maintenance, and administrative operations at the cemetery. Additionally, Mr. Heard is also the Director overseeing operations for Prescott National Cemetery, located in Prescott, Arizona.

From May, 2019, Mr. Heard was the Director of Bakersfield National Cemetery in Arvin, California. He began his career with the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) in February 2009 at Riverside National Cemetery Cemetery. In addition, he joined the Organizational, Assessment and Improvement (OAI) Program in 2018 and is an active member. Prior to joining NCA, Mr. Heard retired after serving more than 20 years in the United States Navy. He is an OEF/OIF Veteran who served in Desert Shield and Desert Storm. His primary job was as an Aircraft Director/Aircraft Handler. He also performed as an Aircraft Rescue, Firefighting and Salvage Specialist, and Law Enforcement Specialist. He served during multiple deployments and launched and recovered aircraft on board USS Okinawa (LPH3), USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN71), USS John C. Stennis (CVN74), and USS Nimitz (CVN68). He is qualified as an Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist and Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist. He was selected multiple times as the Senior Sailor of the Quarter on the Aircraft Carrier USS Nimitz (CVN68) and won the Air Department Senior Sailor of the Year during the same tour of duty. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Business with a concentration in Management from the University of Phoenix.

## **GOVERNOR KATIE HOBBS**



Governor Katie Hobbs was elected on November 15, 2022, as Arizona's 24th governor.

As a social worker and manager of a domestic violence shelter, Governor Hobbs saw firsthand the price Arizonans pay when their elected leaders fail to address the problems people face daily. She used her experience as a social worker to take on Arizona's toughest challenges. She worked with both parties in the legislature to expand health care to over 500,000 Arizonans. She worked across the aisle to find new ways to tackle the growing opioid epidemic here in Arizona

When Governor Hobbs became Secretary of State in 2018, she modernized the office, fixed broken systems, battled misinformation, and navigated the pandemic.

She attended Northern Arizona University and graduated from Arizona State University with a master's degree in Social Work. She is a mother to Sam and Hanna and is native Arizonan, having been born in Tempe



### **Master Sergeant DEBBIE MELTON, Retired**

Debbie began her military career in 1979 with Basic Training at Lackland AFB, TX followed by Technical School at Sheppard AFB, TX as a Computer Operator trainee, with eventual assignment to Eglin AFB, FL. In November 1981, she joined the 161<sup>st</sup> Air Refueling Group at Phoenix Sky Harbor, holding a variety of positions. She attended technical training and achieved the title of Chief Host Aviation Resource Manager. MSG Melton deployed many times including Desert Shield, Phoenix Jackel, Operation Deny Flight, Operation Southern Watch, Operation Allied Force and Operation Enduring Freedom to name a few. Debbie retired on July 31, 2005 with the Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, and Air Force Achievement Medal all three with one device, Kosovo Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Kuwait Liberation Medal Kuwait, NATO Medal, Air Force Oversea Shot Tour Ribbon, and many others. In civilian life she continued to serve as a JROTC instructor for seven years and involvement with the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, currently holding the position of Past Exalted Ruler and Lodge Secretary. Debbie lives in the valley with her husband and has 4 children, 11 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.



### **Captain BRUCE E. KOSAVEACH**

Bruce Kosaveach served 28 years in active and reserve service in the United State Navy retiring in October 1999. His Vietnam tour was aboard the USS Buchanan (DDG-14) out of San Diego. Bruce was employed by two pharmaceutical companies, reiting again after working 20 years with GE Capital. He came out of retirement in 2016 to work as a Philanthropy Manager at Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff. He is currently President of the Arizona Chapter, Military Officers Association of America, and President of the Mountain View Presbyterian Church Foundation. CAPT Kosaveach is active in the national MOAA's program "Advocacy in Action", and has visited with Arizona Senators and Representatives in Washington, DC to advocate for earned veteran's benefits. He was inducted in the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame in 2025.



### **The Memorial Day Committee wishes to recognize: MEDAL of HONOR RECIPIENTS from the State of Arizona**

William Alchesay, Indian Wars\*  
William Barnes, Indian Wars\*  
Chiquito, Indian Wars\*  
Kern Dunagan, Vietnam War\*  
Joe Foss, WWII\*  
Bernard John Dowling Irwin\*  
Indian Wars  
Billy Lauffer, Vietnam War\*  
Isaiah Mays, Indian Wars\*  
Nannasaddie, Indian Wars\*  
Rowdy, Indian Wars\*  
Simon Suhler, Indian Wars\*  
Jay Vargas, Vietnam War

Oscar Austin, Vietnam War\*  
Blanquet, Indian Wars\*  
Trustrim Connell, Civil War\*  
Elsatsoosh, Indian Wars\*  
Raymond Harvey, Korean War\*  
Jim, Indian Wars\*  
Kelsa, Indian Wars\*  
Frank Luke, Jr, WWII\*  
William McBryer, Indian Wars\*  
Nantaje (Nantahe), Indian Wars\*  
Robert S Scott, Indian Wars\*  
Max Thompson, WWII\*  
Leonard Wood, Indian Wars\*

Nicky Bacon, Vietnam War\*  
Benjamin Brown, Buffalo Soldier\*  
Bruce Crandall, Vietnam War\*  
Fred Ferguson, Vietnam War\*  
Silvestre Herrera, WWII\*  
Jose Jimenez, Vietnam War\*  
Kosoha, Indian Wars\*  
Machol, Indian Wars\*  
Manuel V. Mendoza\*  
John Pruitt, WWI\*  
Cornelius Smith, Indian Wars\*  
Leo Thorsness, Vietnam War\*

\* Indicates deceased

**Special acknowledgment to the staff of the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona  
Randy Heard - Director**

Christopher Anderson	Paul Blomkvist	Mark Bogges	Jaime Carvajal
Lee Castaneda	Michael Castillo	Tyler Colly	Andre Duplessis
William Duplessis	Adrian Garcia	Ruben Gomez	Charles Hayes
Charles Holden	Daniel Humbles	Joceelyn Jimenez	Danyale Kerstetter
Valyrie Murray	Matthew Nelson	Craig Neth	Jerald Nowdomski
Amy Puepke	Clay Redfield	Eric Russell	Jeremy Spradling
Zachary Stansbury	Ceciio Suguitan	Edward Tsosie	Rochelle Urquhart
Scott Worden	Gregory A. Yazzie		

Sincere appreciation to the following Honor Guards and Ritual Teams that ensure our veterans receive those honors so richly earned : Luke AFB Honor Guard, Marine Corps Honor Guard, American Legion Ritual Team, Arizona Army National Guard Honor Guard, Naval Reserve Honor Guard, and the National Memorial Cemetery Ladies.

The committee wishes to thank the following named individuals for volunteering their time in support of today's program.

**Miscellaneous**

Ward Triplett color guards  
Tammy Pulaski correspondence  
Douglas Godfrey treasurer  
Karen Seamon, water  
Elks Riders, parking

**Wreaths**

Nicky Colletti  
Pat Kelly  
Kyla Lout  
Cy/Jacqueline Bassett  
Kathy Upchurch

**Stage Assistance**

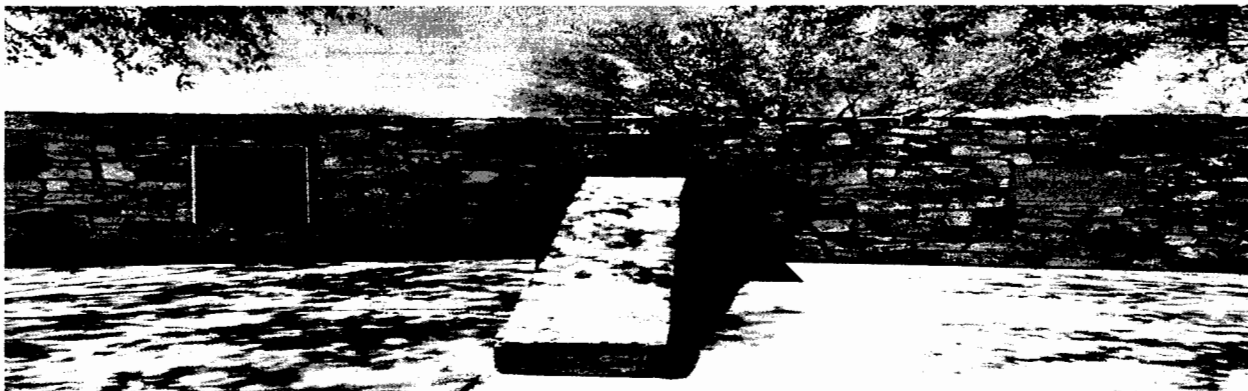
Teresa Koontz  
Ernest Martinez  
Mary Roberts  
Sharry Kosaveach

***CORPORATE SPONSORS***



Special acknowledgement to the following for their support

**Arizona Patriot Guard**  
**Disabled American Veteran's Auxiliary, Unit 20**  
**Elks Lodge 335**  
**Maricopa County Sheriff's Posse**  
**Wells Fargo+ Bank - Volunteer Committee**



The following groups are participating in the parade of colors and/or presentation of wreaths

82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division Association, Joseph P Schwan Chapter  
 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Airborne Assoc Chapter XXV, Arizona Sky Soldiers  
 187 Airborne Regimental Team Grand Canyon Chapter  
 American Legion Department of Arizona  
 American Legion Auxiliary, Dept. of Arizona  
 American Legion Honor Society of Women Legionnaires  
 20-4 Echelon #35  
 American Legion Earl Mitchell Post 29  
 American Legion Auxiliary Unit 29  
 American Legion Post 64  
 American Legion Dwight Eisenhower Post 72  
 American Legion Christopher J. Lapka Post 105  
 American Legion Christopher J. Lapka Auxiliary, Unit 105  
 American Legion Irving B. Selmer Post 107  
 American Legion Irving B. Selmer Auxiliary, Unit 107  
 American Legion Post 115  
 American Legion Pat Tillman Post 117  
 (Sons of the) American Legion, Department of Arizona  
 Arizona's Veterans Hall of Fame Society  
 AZ Society of the Sons of the American Revolution.  
 Barry Goldwater Chapter  
 Association of the United States Army  
 Association of the United States Navy  
 Benevolent Protective Order of the Elks Lodge 335  
 Benevolent Protective Order of the Elks Lodge 2251  
 Benevolent Protective Order of the Elks Lodge 2429  
 Blue Star Mothers of the Southwest  
 Civil Air Patrol Sky Harbor Composite Squadron 301  
 (AZ Society) Daughters of the American Revolution  
 State Vice Regent  
 Daughters of the American Revolution, Anasazi Chapter  
 Daughters of the American Revolution  
 Gov. George WP Hunt Chapter  
 (Margaret Warner Wood AZ Tent #1) Daughter's of Union Veterans  
 Disabled American Veterans, Dept. of AZ  
 Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary, State of AZ  
 Disabled American Veterans Chapter 20  
 Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary, Unit 20  
 Support of the Guard and Reserve  
 Fleet Reserve Branch 163  
 Fleet Reserve Ladies Auxiliary Unit 163, Valley of the Sun  
 (American) Gold Star Mothers, West Phoenix  
 Gold Star Spouses of America  
 Gold Star Wives of America, Phoenix Chapter  
 Honoring America's Veterans  
 Imprints of Honor  
 Jewish War Veterans, Department of Southwest  
 Jewish War Veterans, Post 210  
 Jewish War Veterans, Copper State Post 619  
 (Arizona) Korean Association  
 (Arizona) Korean Veterans Association  
 (Patriots and Vietnam Veterans) Korean Association  
 Marine Corps League Old Breed Detachment 767  
 Merchant Marines - Desert Mariners  
 Military Officers Association of America, Arizona Chapter  
 Military Officers Assoc. of America, Superstition Mountain Chapter  
 Military Order of the Purple Heart, Dept of AZ  
 Military Order of the World Wars, Phoenix Chapter  
 (Salt River Unit 155 of) Military Women Across the Nation  
 National Cemetery Support Committee  
 (Arizona Chapter) Paralyzed Veterans of America  
 Philippine Nurses Assn of AZ, East Valley Subchapter

Phoenix Military & Veteran's Commission Foundation  
 Phoenix Veterans Administration Health Care System  
 Scottish American Military Society, Post 48  
 Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem  
 Submarine Veterans of WWII  
 (United States) Submarine Veterans Perch Base  
 Unified Arizona Veterans Association  
 United Daughters of the Confederacy, Dixie Ch. 1679  
 Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Arizona  
 Veterans of Foreign Wars, State of Arizona Auxiliary  
 Veterans of Foreign Wars Bobby Diaz Lopez Post 6310  
 Veterans of Foreign Wars, Joseph F Monfort Post 9400  
 Vietnamese Community of Arizona  
 (Vietnamese) 92<sup>nd</sup> BCT  
 Vietnam Veterans Volunteer Team/AZ  
 Women's Army Corps Veterans Association, Chapter 68  
 Women's Overseas Service League, Phoenix-Cholla Unit  
 Woodmen Life, Phoenix Chapter

