



American Legion  
Donald C Thompson  
Post and Auxiliary Unit 135

## United for Veterans Newsletter

May-June 2022

Volume 37

### Post Commander Ken Johnson

Hello Comrades!

Things are happening on the Post property! If you have been by there recently you may have noticed a travel trailer sitting there. The Post purchased this gutted trailer to be used as an office and *small* meeting place. The need for an office was brought to our attention while searching for grants. Some of these grants require that the organization have an office with regular business hours.



A list of materials was emailed earlier this month to give you an opportunity to contribute toward the renovation of the Office. The editor of the newsletter has assured me that the list will be included in this newsletter in case you would like to see what is needed. The office will open opportunities for having a Service Officer available on a regular basis and a place to get information that will assist Veterans, their families, and members of the community. It's a start toward a permanent Post Home and we appreciate your support in this endeavor.

Please plan to attend our next meeting on May 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 at the Cornville Fire Station. Election of Officers for 2022-2023 will be on the agenda.

Any questions give me a call 805-714-9369 or send me an email at [kennyj52@aol.com](mailto:kennyj52@aol.com).

*Ken*  
Commander

### Auxiliary President Jonnie Maddox



Elections are on the slate for our meeting on May 4<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm. I encourage you to be at the meeting to participate in selecting the officers for the 2022-2023 year.

Nominations will be re-opened at the meeting for you to nominate members for the various elected positions. Current nominees are:

President: Phyllis Kennedy  
Vice-President: Jeri Strande  
Treasurer: Jonnie Maddox  
E-Committee: Gabriel Howard  
Alicia Kunstmann

The positions of Secretary, Sgt-at-Arms, Chaplain, and Historian are appointed positions and are vital to the operations of the Unit. Please be thinking about serving in one of these positions to complete the leadership team. Your support of the Veterans and their families as well as the members of our communities is greatly appreciated.

On another note, you may have read or heard that we have tried setting up Zoom for those of you who cannot physically attend our meetings. I apologize that this has not come to fruition, but the hope is that we will be able to accomplish this in the near future. We have a couple of Zoom 'Masters' in the Unit and with their help and coordination for reliable internet service, it will become a reality. Stay tuned!

*For God and Country*  
*Jonnie*

## Membership

As I “pen” the last newsletter of the membership year, it gives me one more opportunity look to our membership to renew their dues for the 2022 membership year.

At this point, the post is at a (sad) renewal rate of 82.42% - that is 75 renewed or new members for a goal of 91 – if you haven’t renewed, there’s still time – the quickest and easiest is on-line at [legion.org](http://legion.org), but I’ll happily pick up your \$40 check from the post office at:

PO Box 172  
Cornville, 86325.

The auxiliary also needs an infusion of membership, at 52 members paid with a goal of 68, we’re sitting at 76.47%. They too have time to renew – on-line at [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org) (click on renew), pay a \$30 check or even by calling @ 317-569-4570 (Monday-Friday 8am-4:30pm EDT).

Membership in the American Legion Family is a privilege that not everyone is eligible to share. Participation is not a requirement, but with so many avenues of participate, I KNOW that there is a program or a project that would interest you – but **you** gotta reach out to those of us who are working to keep our organizations moving forward.

Don’t like what the current officers (for both organizations) are doing? **Now** is the time to get involved – officer nominations/elections are this month. All positions (in both organizations are available) please step forward and offer to fill one!

**Commander/President; Finance Officer/Treasurer Chaplains; Executive Committeemen/women plus, an array of appointed positions.**

**Auxiliary elections are May 4, at 6pm, while the post will elect on May 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.**

**“Why should I belong – what’s in it for me???”**

Some of the benefits you currently receive for your membership is your monthly magazine which helps to keep you abreast of what other posts/units are

doing, travel opportunities, *discounts, free accident insurance, some one-of-a-kind memorabilia items, and of course, this bi-monthly newsletter.* Sadly, without renewing NOW, all your benefits will cease.

In closing, If you are experiencing temporary financial issues that are preventing you from renewing, please, please, please drop me a note – The American Legion is an organization here to help you, but you gotta ask!

Jeri Strande,  
Post Adjutant and Unit 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President



## May is Month of the Military Caregiver

Each May, we take a little extra time to recognize our military caregivers. Although not a federal holiday,

observing May as the Month of the Military Caregiver raises awareness of both our military and those who care for them. Support the military caregivers in your life — give them much needed respite, go on a grocery run, drive their veteran to medical appointments, meal prep, bring over a meal, etc. There are numerous ways you can help caregivers!

### Caregiver Resources

- **Department of Defense** caregiver resource directory: <https://warriorcare.dodlive.mil/Caregiver-Resources>.
- **Elizabeth Dole Foundation:** Provides caregiving support, peer networking, and training for caregivers of military servicemembers and veterans: [www.elizabethdolefoundation.org](http://www.elizabethdolefoundation.org).
- **Caregivers Advocate Program:** The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs provides tools for military caregivers: [www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov).
- **Military and Veteran Caregiver Network:** offers an online support network and other services for military caregivers: [www.milvetcaregivernetwork.org](http://www.milvetcaregivernetwork.org).

## Service Officer Notes

### VA to award millions in suicide prevention grants to community groups

Veterans Affairs officials plan to award nearly \$52 million in grants for suicide prevention programs in coming months to community groups in an effort to provide more targeted help for individuals in distress and better outreach to veterans outside the VA health care system.



The program has been in the works for the last 18 months, since Congress authorized the move as part of comprehensive mental health legislation. Individual groups can receive up to \$750,000 through the effort and can have that money renewed for two additional years if they show progress in preventing suicide.

### Senate advances bill giving subpoena power to VA inspector general

A watchdog for the Department of Veterans Affairs would be granted the power to subpoena witnesses under a measure approved by the Senate last week.

The Strengthening Oversight for Veterans Act would authorize the VA's Office of Inspector General to compel witnesses to participate in its investigations. The office conducts hundreds of investigations each year, and while it can force VA employees and contractors to testify, it has no authority over former employees or other individuals. In some cases, VA employees resign before they can be interviewed.

The Senate passed the bill April 7 in a voice vote. A companion bill in the House was also advanced last week by the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, but it hasn't yet been scheduled for a floor vote.

Spike in veteran calls expected with launch of new three-digit suicide prevention line this summer

Veterans Affairs officials expect calls to the as 150% after a new three-digit dialing code for suicide prevention services starts operating this July.

That would mean hundreds of thousands more veterans getting emergency help during mental health crises, provided department officials can keep up with the demand.

VA Secretary Denis McDonough said department leaders have been increasing staff and prepping for increased caseloads in anticipation of the new 988 dialing code. Individuals in some areas can already use the service, but it is set to go into effect nationwide by July 16.



**Manzanita  
Outreach**

### Service Opportunity

### *Meal Packing for Ukraine*

Manzanita Outreach and Kids Against Hunger are coordinating efforts to bring food to families in Ukraine displaced by the war. On **June 25th**, volunteers will gather to assemble food boxes to be sent to Ukraine and communities of displaced Ukrainians.

***Registration deadline is May 31st.***

If you would like to be a part of this event, you will need to register at [manzanitaoutreach.org](http://manzanitaoutreach.org). There is a cost involved but don't let that stop you. The Post or Auxiliary may be able to help cover that cost, just let us know.

Legionnaire's contact: Jeri Strande, Post Adjutant  
928-649-3374

Auxiliary contact: Jonnie Maddox, President.  
760-413-5912



## Chaplain's Corner

Spring leaves are long gone and summer is in the air. The "Colors" of summer are upon us, brown and brown(er?) and now we look forward to Summer, along with the Monsoon Season.

I hope you have all gotten your "spring cleaning" taken care of and now, get the tools out, it's time for Fixin stuff.

As we continue through the year, we look forward to Serving both Veterans and our Communities, through the many opportunities we have.

I encourage all of you, to reach out, to volunteer in 'serving others', playing an active role in someone else's life and in the process, fulfill the Core Values of the American Legion. The Best Medicine for helping yourself, is by helping others. It brings a level of fulfillment, that encourages, and it 'Heals the Heart'.

### **Matthew 20:26**

*"...whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant".*

Chaplain John



## The Honor/Color Guard is looking for additional members...

Post and Auxiliary members are welcome to join the Honor / Color Guard and make a

difference in the lives of our community members.

The Color Guard performs flag ceremonies at the request of area organizations such as Opening Day of Little League or opening ceremonies for Special Olympics. They also participate in teaching flag etiquette, folding of the flag and flag disposal.

The Honor Guard, at the request of families of veterans who have gone on to Post Everlasting, performs a military service as part of the memorial services.

**Contact Honor Guard Commander, Keith Tucker at 928-301-2618 for more information.**

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## Oratorical

Mitchell Gordon, our Post 135 Oratorical candidate competed in the Department of Arizona competition on March 5<sup>th</sup> and placed 6<sup>th</sup> in the competition and added to his scholarship fund.



He did an amazing job and will have the opportunity to compete again next year. The competition is opened to High School students that have not reached the age of 18 prior to the National Competition. We look forward to him returning.

## Office Project



The Post recently purchased a gutted travel trailer to be renovated into an office. The trailer is on the Post property and ready for renovations to begin. A list of supplies need for the renovation was emailed to Post and Auxiliary members last month is an opportunity for members to support and invest in a project that begins the process toward a permanent building (Post Home) on the property.

A donation receipt will be made available to donors to this project. What does not get donated, will be purchased by the Post using Building Funds so the more that is donated, the less we will need to use Building Fund dollars.

**Contact Project Manager, Keith Tucker (928-301-2618) or his assistant, John Maddox (760-964-2651) to let them know what items you have to donate. You can also email John at [mojavesonrise@gmail.com](mailto:mojavesonrise@gmail.com) OR reply to original email.**

### Renovation Supplies Needed:

- 18 ea 4 x 8 sheets of light color paneling or drywall
- 160 sq ft Vinyl peel & stick or snap vinyl floor planks; linoleum
- 1 Kitchen counter w/ sink & faucet
- 1 36-inch Exterior entry door w/ locking doorknob
- 1 36-inch Interior door w/ doorknob (restroom)
- Lumber
  - Restroom walls
  - Front 'decking'/stairs/ramp
- 3-4 RV windows
- 1 Awning or materials to build a cover over the front door
- 1 Small cabinet like one that is over a refrigerator
- 1 Small bookcase
- 1 4 drawer locking filing cabinet
- 1 RV sized water heater (electric preferred)
- 1 10-12,000 btu Window air conditioner OR a roof mounted RV air conditioner

### Donated thus far

- Carpet
- 1 Toilet
- All Small Kitchen appliances
- 1 Flat screen TV
- All Office furniture
- 1 Home Depot Card

## National Poppy Day – May 27, 2022



### Calling All Poppy Helpers

Poppy distribution is just around the corner. The American Legion family has had a connection to the poppy flower since the early 1920s when it was adopted as our official memorial flower to pay homage to battlefields of WWI. The red poppy is a nationally recognized symbol of sacrifice worn by Americans to honor those who served and died for our Country in all wars. It reminds Americans of the sacrifices made by our veterans while protecting our freedoms. By wearing a poppy, it honors those who have worn our nation's uniform.

All donations received used by The American Legion Family for their programs that support veterans, the military community, and their families. Traditionally considered an auxiliary program, it takes a Legion Family to do the job! So, here's how it works – commit to one (or two) of the designated time and locations – wear something patriotic, plus Legionnaires' wear your cover - put a smile on your face and offer a red crepe paper poppy (made by the hands of veterans) to everyone that comes to you.

The most important aspect to handing poppies out is to remember is – “we are not **selling** them; we are distributing them”. In many cases, you'll find that most folks are happy to support veterans through their generous donation. We have plenty of poppies, so don't let a child walk away without one (or two) regardless of the amount of the donation!

Along with lots of poppies to distribute, I'll supply you with information cards that you may give to the donor/s that contain specific Poppy Facts information as the inspirational poem “In Flanders Fields”.

The Legion Family will distribute poppies on **May 26<sup>th</sup> and National Poppy Day, May 27<sup>th</sup>**. We have two locations this year, Crazy Tony's Country Market and Clark's Market Sedona (located in the Village of Oak Creek) the schedule is set up with two 2-hour distribution times at each location beginning at 9am and ending at 1pm. Feel free to sign up for two or four hours by calling Jeri Strande at 928-649-3374 to get on the calendar.



1632 E. Cottonwood St.  
Cottonwood, AZ 86326



**928-646-7288**

# Calendar of Events

## May

- 4 Building Committee 4:30pm
- 4 **Auxiliary Meeting** 6:00pm
- 4 **Cornville Fire Station**
- 11 **Post Meeting** 6:30pm
- 11 **Cornville Fire Station**
- 14 District 8 Meeting
- 14 Post 78 - Humboldt
- 14 Memorial Day Observance
- 28 11 am - Post Property
- 28 11350 Cornville Rd, Cornville AZ
- 30 Memorial Day

## June

- 1 Building Committee 4:30pm
- 1 **Auxiliary Meeting** 6:00pm
- 1 **Cornville Fire Station**
- 8 **Post Meeting** 6:30pm
- 8 **Cornville Fire Station**
- 24- Department Convention
- 27 El Conquistadore Hotel, Oro Valley AZ

## Post Officers

Position	Name	Phone
Commander	Ken Johnson	805-714-9369
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Cmdr.	Jan Allbright	300-2386
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Cmdr.		
Finance Officer	Tom Rounds	202-9992
Adjutant	Jeri Strande	649-3374
Chaplain	John Maddox	760-964-2651
Sgt at Arms	James Golden	300-4617
E-Committee	John Maddox	760-964-2651
	Tom Royer	649-9673
Service Officer	Jan Allbright	300-2386
Honor Guard		
Commander	Keith Tucker	301-2618

## Auxiliary Officers

Position	Name	Phone
President	Jonnie Maddox	760-413-5912
Vice President	Jeri Strande	649-3374
Treasurer	Phyllis Kennedy	300-7411
Secretary	Barbara Spude	301-8874
Chaplain	Jeanette Volk	639-4292
Sgt at Arms	<i>Position Open</i>	
E-Committee	Eleanor Mooney	606-4930
	Stephanie Marquez	626-255-0024
Historian	<i>Position Open</i>	

NOTE: Unlisted area codes are 928

Newsletter Editor Jonnie Maddox 760-413-5912 Email: mimi2twins@gmail.com





# *Memorial Day Observance*

**11350 E. Cornville Rd. Cornville**

**May 28, 2022**

**11am**

**American Legion Donald C. Thompson Post 135 and Auxiliary  
invite you, family, and friends  
to the annual Memorial Day program.**

*Due to anticipated warm temperatures, participants are encouraged to bring a lawn chair and umbrella.  
Following the program, refreshments and cool water will be offered; both items were donated by the  
Cottonwood Wal-Mart.*

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American Legion  
Donald C Thompson Post 135  
P O Box 172  
Cornville, AZ 86325