

E-NEWS – SEPTEMBER 2026

Chapter 68 Saguaro – Army Women United (Women's Army Corps Veterans' Association since 1941)

WACVA-AWU is a national non-profit, non-partisan organization for all Army women.

2026: 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ATTACKS OF 9/11

How will you honor our fellow citizens?

A few of many options in Arizona...

"A quarter century after the September 11, 2001 attacks, 100 million Americans are too young to remember the day that changed our city and nation forever. It is our shared promise — made 25 years ago — to never forget so those born after 9/11 learn its significance and enduring legacy."

More information:

<https://www.911memorial.org/markings-25th-anniversary>



SEPTEMBER 10–13, 2026: HEALING FIELD® AT TEMPE BEACH PARK

The Healing Field® pays tribute to all of the lives lost that day. The flags WILL be back at Tempe Beach Park this year! The flags will stand from 9/10/26–9/13/26. More information: <https://tempehealingfield.org/>

SEPTEMBER 12, 2026: A NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE AND REMEMBRANCE

Patriot Day is not just a day of remembrance. It's a day of service—honoring their sacrifice through action. National Cemetery of Arizona, 2929 Pinnacle Peak Rd, Phoenix AZ
Register here: carrytheload.org/patriot-day/registration/

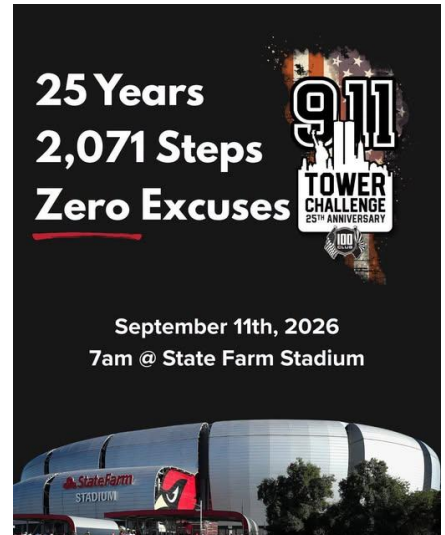
SEPTEMBER 11, 2026: 9/11 TOWER CHALLENGE 25TH ANNIVERSARY

Hosted by the 100 Club In honor of those who lost their lives on 9/11/2001,

and in continued honor of our first responders and military who protect us from

foreign and domestic threats, we gather to pay our respects at the annual 9/11 Tower Challenge.

Must register: Climber \$45, Walker \$40.



The World Trade Center's Twin Towers each consisted of 110 floors and a total of 2071 steps. Each year **thousands of people across Arizona** walk, climb and run the stairs to remember. Firefighters in full gear, Police, Military and Bomb Squad personnel march alongside civilians.

State Farm Stadium - Glendale, AZ

September 11th, 2026, 7 AM

<https://100club.org/assistance-programs/outreach/911-tower-challenge/>

SEPTEMBER 19, 2026: PHOENIX 9/11 HEROES RUN

Join your community at 7AM at Mountain America Stadium-ASU. Sign up by August 31 to guarantee your shirt and swag arrives by 9/11. Register, Sponsor, Donate, Volunteer: <https://www.travismanion.org/events/911-heroes-run/2026-phoenix-911-heroes-run>



Phoenix, Arizona

SEPTEMBER 19, 2026: CHAPTER 68 SOCIAL, OLD SPAGHETTI FACTORY



HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

Member dues must be received **by 30 Sep 2026** or you will be removed from the Chapter 68 active membership rolls. Dues cover the period of 1 July 2026–30 June 2027. Pay via Zelle to Karen Craig (480-213-5769) OR mail check to Karen (Chapter 68, PO Box 26152, Tempe, AZ 85285).

Annual Member dues: \$45

(Army, ARNG, USAR)

Affiliate dues (non-Army branches): \$30

All members receive a digital membership card.

*If you've submitted your dues,
THANK YOU!*

HELP US WITH BINGO AT PHOENIX VA

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Chapter 68 needs volunteers & VA-badged members to help with the Community Living Center (CLC) Bingo for these dates (Sundays):

- **September 13 - Lead Gabe Forsberg**
- **October 4**
- **November 1**

Request Volunteers show up at the Community Living Center, at Phoenix VA by 1 PM. Bingo will be conducted from 1:30 – 3 PM. An increasing number of CLC residents have been participating and it's an activity they and our volunteers really enjoy. Contact Karen Craig if questions.

OCTOBER 7, 2026: CHAPTER 68 SOCIAL, HAUS MURPHY

A flyer for the October Social event. It features illustrations of a red and white accordion, a plate of food with a glass of beer, a brown hat with a feather, a beer mug, and a decorative mug. The text reads: "Saguaro Chapter 68 Phoenix WACVA - Army Women United", "October Social", "Enjoy a fun evening of great company, raffle prizes, and a 50/50 drawing. Food and beverages will be available for purchase, and each guest is responsible for their own tab. RSVP by October 5th.", "Register by scanning the QR code or type the link in Google: links.asu.edu/October2026Social", "October 7, 2026 5-7 p.m.", "Haus Murphy", "5739 W Glendale Ave, Glendale, AZ 85301", "Scan to register:" followed by a QR code. At the bottom, there is a logo for Saguaro Chapter 68, a German flag, and a QR code for the Army Women United Women's Army Corps Veterans' Association.

Phoenix, Arizona

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – SHEREE BIGGE



Welcome back after the summer hiatus. Chapter 68, along with many veteran service organizations take a break during July & August. Some continue to work on veteran and chapter-related things at a slower pace. Hope you had a busy but relaxing

summer and have stayed connected and cool. Our new fiscal year promises to be eventful.

2026 WACVA National Convention: I and Gabe Forsberg attended the convention in Chester, VA. We visited the Army Women Museum at Ft Lee. Check out Gabe's Convention Musings on page 8. I'll add that the members of our chapter do so much for the betterment of others. **Chapter 68 was #1 in Community Service hours with a total of 15,155 hours reported.** Kudos to each of you for your contributions. The next two WACVA-AWU Conventions will be in Jacksonville, FL (2027) and French Lick, IN (2028).

Chapter 68 Brick: While at the Army Women Museum, we saw personalized bricks available for sponsorship. The BOD decided to design / purchase a large brick to honor members of Saguaro Chapter 68. More info once finalized.

Socials: We have some exciting Socials planned. The September 19th social will be our first ever Bridal Shower for member Ashley Jackson, hosted by Gabe at the Old Spaghetti Factory. Please note *gifts are optional*. Please join us for a fun afternoon. See flyer on page 2. The October 7th Social, hosted by Stacey Eastwood, is at Haus Murphy in Glendale. See flyer on page 2. Shirley Vega will host the February 2027 Social and will feature a speaker from Honor Flight. We will again host the Baby Shower in April 2027, which benefits the Maternity Outreach program through Veterans First and the Women's Clinic at VA Hospital.

Hosts Needed: The months of November & December 2026 (traditionally the Holiday Party), January, and March through June 2027 are available. If interested in hosting, please contact me by phone, text or email. As the host, you can select the venue/day/time and make all of the arrangements. If at a restaurant, separate checks are preferred. Could also do an activity-themed event.

Chapter 68 Ocean Cruise in 2027: Save-The-Date for a Chapter Social cruise, from August 30–September 3, 2027, on the Carnival Radiance, departing from Long Beach, CA, with ports in Catalina Island & Ensenada. Reasonable rates based on double occupancy. If interested, please contact me. The Chapter BOD is attending and hope many more will as well. The cruise is open to women veterans and guests outside the chapter.

501 (c) 3 Status: The Chapter is progressing towards becoming a 501c3. The very lengthy procedure is closer to completion. The final step towards submitting the application is in process.

Next virtual Business meeting on Zoom, Tues, September 8, 1:00 PM AZ.



THE WOMEN'S ARMY CORPS: FEMALE SOLDIERS IN WWII



From the National Women's History Museum (Aug 26, 2020). Learn about:

- Foundations of the Auxiliary Corps
- 1st Director Oveta Culp Hobby
- 1943 WAC Recruiting Film
- Slander Campaign, 1943

Click here for complete presentation:

<https://www.womenshistory.org/exhibits/womens-army-corps-female-soldiers-wwii>



UPCOMING CHAPTER 68 SOCIALS

If you are available to host, contact Sheree.

Date	Host (s) / Theme
Sept 19, 2026 Old Spaghetti Factory See Flyer pg 2	1st Ever Bridal Shower for Member Host: Gabe Forsberg Phoenix, AZ
Oct 7, 2026 Haus Murphy See Flyer pg 2	Host: Stacy Eastwood Glendale, AZ
Nov 2026 ??	Host: ?
Dec 2026 ??	Host: ?
Jan 2027 ??	Host: ?
Feb 2027 Date/time location TBD	Guest speaker: AZ Honor Flight Host: Shirley Vega

JOIN US – CHAPTER 68 BUSINESS MEETING

EVERYONE WELCOME!



2nd Tues of month / 1:00 PM (AZ time)

Find out more about Chapter 68.

<https://zoom.us/j/98671062738?pwd=NnUwbysvdlZ2YkhGemJ4bWFtT0h0UT09>

Meeting ID: 986 7106 2738

Password: Chap68

Upcoming Chapter 68 Business Mtgs:

- Sept 8, 2026
- Oct 13, 2026
- Nov 10, 2026
- Dec no mtg
- Jan 12, 2027

YOUR MEMORIAL

<https://womensmemorial.org/>



**MILITARY
WOMEN'S
MEMORIAL**



Phoenix, Arizona

AUG 31–3 SEPT 2027: CHAPTER 68 CRUISE & SOCIAL

SAVE THE DATE

CRUISE AND SOCIAL

AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 3, 2027

**BIGGEST PARTY OF THE
SUMMER WITH YOUR
VETERAN SISTERS**

MORE INFO : WILL BE FORTHCOMING

Sheree Bigge
623-680-3016, sheree.bigge@gmail.com

**Phoenix VA Community Care
Important Phone Numbers**

PHOENIX VA IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

For ALL Emergency Department visits, call the VA 72-Hour Notification Hotline within 72 hours of presenting to a Non-VA Community ER.

VA 72-Hour Notification Hotline: Call 844-724-7842

Emergency Room Bill or Pharmacy Reimbursement: Call the VA Community Care Contact Center (C4) 877-881-7618

Urgent Care bill: Call 800-698-2411

Community Care bill: Call 877-226-8749

Ambulance bill: Call Bene-Travel 602-277-5551 ext. 7903

VA Co-pay/bill: Call WCPAC 888-827-4817

Unable to travel to the PVAHCS Veteran Resource Center (VRC) or unsure who to call: Call C4 877-881-7618

\$1000 DONATION TO CHAPTER 68



L to R: VFW members Stanley Trinidad, Service Officer; Ralph Arvisu, Commander; Chapter 68 members Gabe Forsberg & Ashley Jackson.

On July 22, 2026, VFW Post #6310 and Veterans Assisting Veterans donated \$1000 to Chapter 68 to assist veterans. We are grateful for this amazing donation, which started by a personal request from dearly departed Chapter 68 member Nancy Ruiz.

VA CLAIMS?

Have a question or concern about a VA claim?

Contact Chapter 68 Member

Desiree Sanchez, M.Ed

Army Combat Veteran-SGT

DAV Certified Service Officer

VFW Post 1760 - Post Benefits Advisor

Claims by Appointment Only



Desiree Sanchez, M.Ed
Service Officer - Dode Morris Post 1760

65 S MacDonald Office: 480.964.9937
Mesa, AZ 85210 so.mesavfw@gmail.com

*Claims by Appointment Only www.MesaVFW.org

SEPT 29, 2026: WOMEN VETERANS ALLIANCE VIRTUAL SESSION

Discover Women Veterans Alliance, a one-hour virtual information session & guided tour designed to help you explore all that Women Veterans Alliance and our website have to offer. Register here:

<https://womenveteransalliance.wildapricot.org/event-6809475>

DISCOVER

Women Veterans Alliance™



Empowering Women Veterans. Building Stronger Communities.

Connection. Support. Opportunity.

Find Resources: Access tools and report feedback to your needs.

Find Directories: Connect with trusted organizations and service providers.

Upcoming Events: Discover events, webinars, and opportunities.

Entrepreneurship: Grow your business with resources and mentorship.

Stronger Together: A community of women veterans supporting and uplifting one another.

RESOURCES | DIRECTORIES | EVENTS | ENTREPRENEURSHIP | MEMBERSHIP | COMMUNITY

★ A Virtual Website Tour & Information Session ★

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29TH

1 PM PACIFIC | 2 PM MOUNTAIN
3 PM CENTRAL | 4 PM EASTERN

bit.ly/discoverwomenveteransalliance

OCT 10, 2026: VETERANS & FIRST RESPONDERS "MORNING AT THE RANCH"

Relax, connect, and enjoy time at EmpowerRanch
Sat October 10,
9:00–11:00 AM
308 West Siesta Way,
Phoenix, AZ.

Free event with advance registration. Meet our horses and animals.

- Connect with others in service
- Learn about supportive programs
- Refresh with nature and community

Register here:

<https://empoweranch.org/calendar/2026/10/10morningattheranch>



EmpowerRanch
ADVENTURE DISCOVER THRIVE



Phoenix, Arizona

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER



Life Experiences: Some life experiences impact our souls deeply and cause our hearts to soften and draw nearer to our Creator. Some of those very hard trials have occurred for our Chapter 68 members in my first month as your Chaplain. There have also been reasons to rejoice, as major milestones and second chances advance within our reach.

Take Care of Each Other: We are bound together, by our common service, in an organization with demonstrated potential to care so well for others. More importantly, we share an innate compassion reflective of the God who loves us as His daughters. Our warrior instincts feed our desires to turn out the evil and uplift those who are suffering.

Engage with Community: Scripture tells us that our lives are meant to be lived out in community and we are, obviously, in a unique moment of our Chapter's history where opportunities abound. I invite each of you to engage with your fellow members in an *unprecedented* way this year.

- Make that phone call to or send that card to someone who needs to feel that they are loved.
- Show up when someone expresses a need for companionship.
- Agree to host or support one of our socials with your unique style of hospitality.
- Share some of the governing burden through acts of service for our leaders and planners.

Spiritual Connection: Should your desire be for greater spiritual connection, I invite you to join our Prayer Team and engage with us in a shared devotion/study time in Scripture. We can equip ourselves and help others through their times of trial. I stand ready to connect with you and connect you to others, pray for and with you, counsel and encourage you in your race.

“May The Lord Bless You and Keep You “
- Numbers 6:24

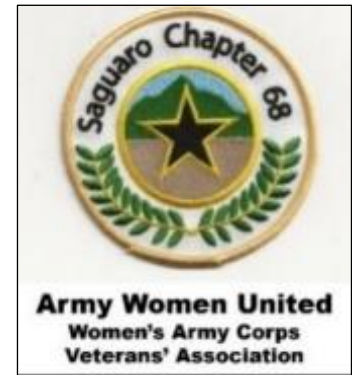
Prayer:

Sept Prayer Focus—How Can We Use Our Gifts/Talents to Serve

2026 Prayer Focus—Protection and Endurance for Our Service Members Engaged in Worldwide Military Operations
—Julie Augeri, Chapter 68 Chaplain

INTERESTED IN JOINING CHAPTER 68, ARMY WOMEN UNITED?

Membership is open to ALL currently serving and honorably discharged women veterans of ANY branch of service.



Regular \$45: Army, ARNG, ANC, USAR,
Affiliate \$30: USMC, USN, USAF, USSF, USCG

Benefits:

- Fellowship and camaraderie with other women veterans and military members from ALL services.
- Volunteer opportunities within the community.
- Access to general education and programs of civic interest.
- Receipt of the Chapter 68 eNEWS and THE CHANNEL (WACVA-AWU National news publication).
- <https://www.armywomen.org/>



CHAPTER 68 ARMY WOMEN UNITED 2026/27 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT	Sheree Bigge
1st VP	OPEN
2nd VP MEMBERSHIP	Shirley Vega
SECRETARY	Jacqueline Jackson
TREASURER	Karen Craig
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS	OPEN
PUBLICITY & COMMS	Gabe Forsberg
eNEWS Editor	beth Johnson

To contact a board member

CALL: 602-551-7368

EMAIL: AZSaguaro.Chapter68@gmail.com

WACS RECONNECT AFTER 59 YEARS

By Chapter 68 member Shirley Vega



LtoR: 2026 – Army Buddies Cheryl, Shirley, Sally

When the notification for the 2026 WACVA-AWU convention showed up in *THE CHANNEL* to be held at Chester, VA, and a tour of the Army Women Museum at Fort Lee, I wanted to go. Not to be a delegate but to relax and enjoy the vacation.

When I told my friend and fellow US Army veteran Cheryl Lanning about it, she wanted to go too.

Cheryl and I served together at Fort Bragg in 1967 (59 years ago) and have kept in touch all these years. We tried to find Sally, who also served with us at Fort Bragg, however, over the years, she pretty much fell off the face of the earth.

Cheryl, the sleuth, found Sally Wilson by chance when checking Sally's hometown Facebook page in Minnesota and saw a 2018 high school reunion and there was Sally's information. Cheryl and Sally are both from Minnesota.

It was a miracle to find her.



LtoR: 1967 at Cheryl's wedding – June Chastik (deceased), Shirley McCoy, Cheryl Brenke, Sally Lewis

Thanks to Cheryl we have met on Zoom several times over the years. We talked to Sally about the convention in Virginia and she was all in. Cheryl lives in North Carolina close to the Blue Ridge Parkway and Sally lives in Jacksonville, Florida. When we saw each other in Chester, VA, we had a great time getting reacquainted, catching up on sixty years of our lives and talking about our time at Fort Bragg.

My granddaughter, Gabriella, who is in a nursing program at the University of NC, Chapel Hill, NC, drove up to surprise Cheryl who has known her since she was 10 years old. Even though she was with a bunch of "older" ladies, she had a good time too. Sally is now a new member of our Chapter 68 and will be at the convention in Jacksonville.

For pictures & videos of Convention, go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/87481036666>



CHAPTER 68 EXEC BOARD 2026–27



LtoR: Sheree Bigge, Karen Craig, Jacqueline Jackson, Gabe Forsberg, Julie Augeri, Shirley Vega

Many thanks to these leaders in Chapter 68 who are planning chapter activities for 2026–27.

NATIONAL CONVENTION MUSINGS

By Chapter 68 Member Gabe Forsberg

Chapter 68 has done some heavy lifting in the convention arena over the years. This year, our contribution was to assemble the welcome bags (what I have historically called our "goody bags"). We found items for the bags (and we even procured the bags). Another big contribution was by our member beth Johnson who edited a wonderful convention book. Amy Parker, 1st Vice President, specifically thanked beth for her support pulling together such a professional publication.

The 79th Annual WACVA National Convention was held in Chester, VA (near Ft. Lee so we visited the US Army Women's Museum) and hosted by the WACVA-AWU executive board. Following are my thoughts about attending my first out-of-town convention since 2016 when I stepped down from the National Honor Guard.

Our Chapter 68 was specifically noted in the VA CDCE (formerly Volunteer Services) as leading the way with total volunteer hours. This is in great part due to Penny Craft hounding us to document the number of hours we invest. Speaking of volunteering, the Community Service chair for the entire organization is our own Sheree Bigge.

She reported the largest amount of donated funds came from Chapters 95 (Sierra Vista), 33 (Ohio) and our own Chapter 68 that donated \$154,265.

The Convention Book included the convention locations and I was reminded that our little chapter 68 (established in 1984) has hosted or co-hosted 10 conventions in 4 decades. This was my 15th convention starting in 1998 in Tucson. The business meeting was the best I've ever attended. While the bylaws issues were boring, there is no cure for that... but the meetings went smoothly and ended long before I expected them to. That allowed plenty of time for socializing.

Our chapter was home to 3 national presidents - Eldora Engebretson (2000-02), Audrey Sewel (1986-88), and Betty Bulger (1982-84). Audrey transferred to our chapter when she moved to Eloy several years ago. I am not able to count the number of national officers that have come out of our chapter, but I know for certain that there were at least 2 National Corresponding Secretary positions and 1 Chaplain (Lea Seago who was also 2nd Vice President). Next year's convention will be held in Jacksonville, Florida. I hope that some of our members might want to attend.

NATIONAL CONVENTION 2026

From 31 Jul to 1 August, Chapter 68 board members attended the WACVA National Convention in Virginia.



Above LtoR: Gabe Forsberg, Cheryl Lanning (guest), Shirley Vega, Sally Wilson (NEW Chapter 68 member), Sheree Bigge.

