



American Legion Auxiliary

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation Newsletter

April 2022

www.ALAFORVeterans.org/member/committees/var

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41st National Veterans Creative Arts Festival Art & Writing Exhibition & Stage Show Performance

Stage Show Available for Public View via Livestream

The 41st NVCAF Art & Writing Exhibition and Stage Show Performance in St. Petersburg, Fla. are closed to the public.

To ensure social distancing guidelines are met and to mitigate risks of COVID-19 exposure, attendance at the exhibition and show performance is capped with a limited number of invited guests. There is no available wait list for either the exhibition or performance. We are pleased to provide alternatives for the public to support Veterans at this year's Festival.

- Sunday, April 24 – Enjoy viewing the Veteran artwork, writing pieces and performances and watch the live stage show at 11 a.m. EST via at www.creativeartsfestival.org. [this URL is not yet active]
- Check our @Sports4Vets social media pages on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter for additional coverage and highlights of the Festival.

VA remains committed to honoring our nation's Veterans by ensuring a safe environment to deliver exceptional health care. Thank you for supporting Veterans and their creative accomplishments.

What is the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival?

The National Veterans Creative Arts Festival is a weeklong annual event that celebrates veterans, showcases their talents, and promotes the benefits of arts therapy for individuals recovering from or coping with physical and emotional disabilities.

Co-presented by the American Legion Auxiliary and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the NVCAF is held in a different city and state each year. This year, the NVCAF in St. Petersburg, Florida during April 20-25, 2022.

NVCAF is the culmination of talent competitions in art, creative writing, dance, drama and music for Veterans treated in the Department of Veterans Affairs national health care system. Veterans exhibit their artwork and original writings or perform musical, dance or dramatic selections in a live stage show performance. All Veterans invited to participate are selected winners of year-long, national fine arts talent competitions in which thousands of Veterans enter, from VA medical facilities across the nation.



ELIGIBILITY TO COMPETE

This competition is open to Veterans who are eligible to receive care through the Department of Veterans Affairs AND are enrolled at a VA Medical Center, Outpatient Clinic, or Vets Center BEFORE entering the local competition. An eligible Veteran can enter the local competition at only one VA facility per year. He/she can submit an entry in creative writing, dance, drama or music categories with a Veteran or group from another VA facility, but still represents and must work through his/her originating facility to enter the competition. This facility should be the site where he/she receives their primary treatment.

Helping our veterans by creating a local Veterans Creative Arts

Does your local VA hospital or veterans home have a Creative Arts Festival? If not, now is a great opportunity for your members to work with your VA hospital or home to get one started.

The first step is to work with your VA hospital representative to see how you can get this project started. The VA staff member that instructs creative arts and recreational therapy, the Voluntary Services Coordinator or your Department's own VAVS Representative or Deputy can point you in the right direction.

The "How to Facilitate a Local Veterans Creative Arts Festival" information sheet can be found in the Members Only Area on the VA&R program page of the National website at:

<https://www.legion-aux.org/Member/Committees/VAR/How-to-Facilitate-a-Local-Veterans-Creative-Arts-F>

It can help you with logistics, promotion, funding ideas and deadline dates you must keep in mind to allow a veteran to be eligible to be selected to attend the National event. Remember, each veteran that participates will need to have a designated VA staff member contact.

If you have more questions regarding how to start a local Veterans Creative Arts Festival in your community, please visit www.creativeartsfestival.va.gov.



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY FOUNDATION

The purpose of the **Veterans Creative Arts Festival Grants** is to aid in the well-being of veterans by introducing them to art therapy. If your Unit or Department hosts a local Veterans Creative Arts Festival or offers art therapy courses that feed into the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, grant funds may be awarded for needs that contribute to these efforts.

Qualifications

- The applicant must be an American Legion Auxiliary entity – unit, district/county, or department.
- Grants are awarded up to \$2,500.
- One grant per grantee in a 12-month period will be awarded.
- Funds may not be used to reimburse expenses paid prior to grant approval.

Apply for an ALA Foundation grant to support your event at ALAFoundation.org/vcaf-grants/

FUNDRAISING FOR NVCAF

Check with your Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation chairman to see what your goal is, and develop a plan to meet that goal.

Once you have your goal, share it with your members and keep them informed about your fundraising progress.

A great and simple way to raise funds for NVCAF is to incorporate it into your poppy program. Check with your VA&R chairman or Poppy chairman for dates to distribute poppies (i.e., Memorial Day, Veterans Day, etc.). Select a small group of volunteers who are willing to distribute poppies one day just for the NVCAF. Select a good spot—Target, Wal-Mart, local market or anywhere in your community that has lots of traffic. Bring materials with you that reference NVCAF and what it does for participants.

Don't forget to include your Legion Family. The American Legion and Sons of The American Legion, as well as our Junior members, are a great help, and getting them involved helps build a strong Family relationship.

Did you know that awards are presented NVCAF fundraising? Awards are presented for Bronze (\$1,000 to \$2,499), Silver (\$2,500 to \$4,999), and Gold (\$5,000 to \$14,999) each year.

Information on raising funds and increasing donations for NVCAF can be found in the Members Only section of the National website at:

<https://member.legion-aux.org/member/committees/var/how-to-support-the-national-veterans-creative-ar>