The Arc Fresno

Kiwanis AKTION CLUB



BELONGING IN OUR COMMUNITY

Service Project 2025-26

Service Need

The ARC Fresno Aktion Club wanted to take the opportunity to recognize the veterans in our community – those who served our country. Many of our veterans know what it is to experience disability – they have served our country and have come back injured. This is why the ARC Fresno Aktion Club wants to make sure they are honored for what

they have done to protect our country. Also, they need to be recognized with pride and respect.

This is why we chose to serve. We decided to go visit our veterans and work together on a project for their benefit. After discussion we decided to work with the veterans living at Veterans Home in South East Fresno. This is a home for veterans who need a variety of services including assisted living, skilled nursing care and memory care. The home resides on a beautiful 28-acre campus and has capacity for up to 300 vets.

After much discussion at our club meetings we decided that we wanted to help make tie-blankets with some of the vets at the home and then allow them to keep the blankets as lap blankets. Whitney Fisher-Doyle, Coordinator of Volunteer Services at the Veterans Home, helped identify some of vets who were willing and able to help.





Project Plan

- Several members of the Arc Fresno Aktion Club recognized that Michael O'Hare, a former East Fresno Kiwanis President and current member, lives at the Fresno Veterans Home. He is an advocate for our Aktion Club.
- After much discussion, we decided on making tie blankets with the vets. Our Aktion Club President, Wally Wallace took the lead.
- We contacted the facility and were directed to Whitney Fisher-Doyle who is their Coordinator of Volunteer Services.

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- After discussing the project with Whitney, it was identified that the project could take place in their activity room and would take up to 3 hours. Whitney suggested a 9 AM start (between breakfast and lunch)
- Together we arrived at Saturday, April 11, 2026. We also worked up a transportation plan to get all the members who signed up there.



Members Grant and Colin are busy tying



Members Kyle and Meghan hard at work

Project Implementation

- With the date of Saturday, April 11th set, we began taking member sign-ups in March. A total of 16 of our 20 members signed up.
- We searched the internet to find the supplies we would need to make the blankets and ordered them.
- Under the guidance of Agency Advisor, Jenn Barcus, the blanket materials were cut to create the “ties” necessary to join the two blanket sheets together.
- A transportation plan involving parent volunteers and ARC Fresno staff was developed to assure members could attend.
- All members were reminded that we needed to work with the veterans to complete the blankets.

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Former Vietnam vet Frank, former World War II pilot Phil and former Navy nurse Marie lead the way; Marie shows us how it is done.

Final Results

After the completing over 40 tie blankets:

- We presented them to Whitney Fisher-Doyle, Coordinator of Volunteer Services, for distribution to the veterans.
- We brought some snacks and drinks to share with the veterans who assisted us. We went outside to one of beautiful gardens to take photos and personally thank all of new made veteran friends for service to our country.
- Members expressed how much they enjoyed meeting the vets and hearing their stories.
- Members shared their experiences back at our next Aktion Club meeting.



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Public Awareness

- Photos and description of this Service Project were included on the ARC Fresno website.
    - Aktion Club | The Arc Fresno/Madera Counties
- Photos and description of the Service Project were also included on the East Fresno Kiwanis website
    - Photo Album — Kiwanis Club of East Fresno (eastfresnokiwanis.org)

Member Impact

- Club members learned about the services provided at the Fresno Veterans Home.
- Members learned about the importance of working with others.
- Members shared responsibility for planning and preparing for the project and working together to complete.
- Members were moved by the veterans' stories.



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Additional Information

This service project represents just one of ways that the Arc Fresno Aktion Club serves the community.

The Club also maintains a food pantry for individuals with disabilities who are struggling to make ends meet.

The Club is also active in East Fresno Kiwanis service projects including Kiwanis One Day at the Fresno Chaffee Zoo.

More information on the Arc Fresno Aktion Club can be found at:

https://www.facebook.com/arcaktionclub/info

More information on the Fresno Veterans Home can be found at:

Fresno Veterans Home