

Cornhole at Convention

VFW National Headquarters to host 1st annual VFW cornhole tournament series

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This year's VFW National Convention in Phoenix will bring one of the oldest and most popular games into the fold to help fundraise for VFW's National Veterans Service.

Spearheaded by VFW Director of Programs Lynn Rolf, the 124th VFW National Convention in July will introduce the first-ever VFW cornhole tournament for attendees wanting to embark on a competitive activity while in Phoenix.

"Our Commander-in-Chief, Tim Borland, had challenged our headquarters staff to do something fun outside of what we've always done by bringing something different to the National Convention," Rolf said. "We as VFW members love to beat our friends. Cornhole brings that passion together for a great cause."

Like the world's oldest and largest veterans' organization in VFW, the game of cornhole has a long history dating as far back as 1325. Created by a German cabinetmaker named Matthias Kuepermann, the grain-filled bags and box made of cabinet materials replaced what had been stones into a dug hole on the ground to prevent injury.

Since then, the game migrated to the U.S. and became a staple in 1800s Cincinnati, Ohio, among German immigrants, who propelled the game forward into the cultural phenomenon it is today.

Rolf sought out and partnered with the largest adult sports league in Kansas City, Mo., the veteran-owned KC Crew, to make the vision a reality.

"The founder-owner is a VFW member, so who better to help us put on a world-class tournament at convention than them," said Rolf of Luke Wade, a member of VFW Post 7397 in Lenexa, Kan., about 15 miles south of Kansas City.

Dubbed the 1st Annual Cornhole Tournament Series, the tournament will run from July 22-24, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day within the convention hall and in the food court area. Each

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day presents a different tournament that guarantees four games followed by a single-elimination playoff, as well as different themes to include each military faction.

“This is first and foremost to help continue to educate our VFW members, Auxiliary and our general public on the success of our efforts on the PACT Act legislation,” Rolf said of the PACT Act, a new law that expands VA health care and benefits for veterans exposed to burn pits and other toxic substances. “But it is also to show our gratitude to our VFW service officers and give them some more funding to do more outreach.”

Though it is open to the public at the National Convention, teams on the first two days must include at least one veteran, whereas the final day will only be open to veterans and Auxiliary members. Registration is \$100 per team.

In continuing to help celebrate veterans and raise awareness and funds to support VFW service officers across the world, Rolf hopes this 1st Annual Cornhole Tournament Series will be the first of many new additions to the National Convention.

“This is just the start to our plan,” Rolf said. “We know VFW Posts and Departments do their own cornhole events, so we envision in the coming years to host a championship, where Posts and Departments could send their best teams.”