



Thank you for your service.

POST 90 GAZETTE July 2020



INDEPENDENCE EDITION

4th of July Book Signing

There will be a 4th of July Celebration that will include a Historical Flag Display and Patriotic Book Signing Fundraiser at Tonaquint Cemetery on July 4th at 9-11 am.

Local Author Jeff McKenna will be there to sign his book "**Saving Dr. Warren**".

See flyer on page 2.

Message to America

Hello remember me?
Some people call me Ol' Glory.....
Others call me The Star-Spangled
Banner.
But whatever you call me I am your Flag.

See full article on page 12.



Generations apart, 2 Female veterans speak on military service

ST. GEORGE — Being female in the military comes with a lot of firsts, and respect often has to be doubly earned, but the time in service can also be peppered with incredible world travel, education and experiences that cannot be traded.

See full article by St. George News on page 4



AMERICAN LEGION

Lester Keate Post 90

4th OF JULY CELEBRATION

Come Join Us For A Historical Flag Display
& Patriotic Book Signing Fundraiser



Date: July 4th, 2020

Time: 9am - 11am

Location: Tonaquint
Cemetery

Patriotic Book Signing

Support America in 2 Easy Ways

1. For every book purchased 50% of the proceeds will go directly to the American Legion - Lester Keate Post 90

2. Use the novel, Saving Dr. Warren, to teach young Americans in an exciting and fun way what it means to be patriotic, & help them remember America's forgotten heroes

Featuring
SAVING DR. WARREN



By Jeff McKenna

**BOOKS WILL BE SOLD AT LOCATION*

COMMANDER'S COLUMN

Marti Bigbie

Shout out to all Post 90 members (those that renewed their membership, became a Paid up for Life (PUFL), transferred their membership and for all those that just joined Post 90, St George.

Now, as of July 1st, 2020 the membership dues of \$40.00 for the membership year 2021 are due. First milestone is Early Bird where we would like/need to have 50% paid membership by September 10th, 2020. You can go online with your member number to mylegion.org and make your dues payment with a credit card. Or, when you receive your renewal notice (within the next couple weeks if you have not received it already) and mail to PO Box 9100931, St George, Utah 84791. Upon receiving your due's a 2021 membership card will be mailed to you.

If you can make it please come out to the 3th of July Celebration for a Historical Flag Display & Patriotic Book Signing Fundraiser. Poppies (donations collected), Constitution books (donation \$2.00) wall metal flag (donations 1 ticket for \$1.00 6 tickets \$5.00) and water (donation \$1.00). This is a family affair so bring the family. The author, Jeff McKenna who wrote the book "Saving Dr. Warren" - related to our own flag man -Lee Warren - will be present from 9:00 - 11:00 am to sign books that can be purchased there or bring your copy if you already purchased one. The Historical Flag Display will begin at 9:00 am with flags being escorted by American Legion ritual team/honor guard members.

UTAH DEPARTMENT COMMANDER

Marti Bigbie

Due to Covid 19 Commanders and above in the American Legion were asked to stay on for another year. So, I will continue as the Department Commander for the membership year 2021. Membership renewals will be mailed to you shortly and your Post Adjutant/Commander will be contacting you soon asking your help to make our first goal of 50% paid memberships by Early Bird or September 10th. Thank you in advance to everyone who will help Utah make this goal.

Upcoming events are being decided by each POST depending on your area but please remember if out and about use masks where required and social distance. WE will get through this.

Generations apart, 2 female veterans speak on military service

Written by [Hollie Reina](#)

July 2, 2020



'We lost so much, but we gained so much more': Iraq War veteran reflects on July Fourth, cost of freedom

ST. GEORGE — Being female in the military comes with a lot of firsts, and respect often has to be doubly earned, but the time in service can also be peppered with incredible world travel, education and experiences that cannot be traded. At least that is what two Southern Utah female veterans said of their time serving the United States — though their service was generations apart.

Unfavorable information files

Sgt. Martha "Marti" Bigbie is the current commander of the American Legion Lester Keate Post 90 in St. George. In August 1967 Bigbie joined the Air Force, a woman of just 18 with blonde hair and a car. In her time in the Air Force, she held assignments that no woman had before her.

Bigbie told St. George News she went through basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas and followed that with personnel training in Amarillo. When she arrived at Westover Air Force base in Springfield, Massachusetts, she was assigned to work in the Unfavorable Information File Program.

Though Bigbie didn't know exactly what it was, she was eager to have a job. That was in 1968, she said, adding that the Massachusetts base is now closed.



Sgt. Martha "Marti" (Young) Bigbie is pictured in these photos from the late 1960s during her time in the United States Air Force, Lackland, Texas, dates not specified | Photos courtesy of Martha Bigbie, St. George News

The job mostly entailed processing the "kids," as she called them, who got in trouble off base. Following her time in the Unfavorable Information File Program, Bigbie moved on to Assignments, where she was the first woman to hold a position there.

In her biography, Bigbie described the position and the work she did for the Air Force.

As a personnel specialist she was in charge of assigning personnel to positions that correlated with their job qualifications, advise them on their career development, delegate work duties and recommend for promotions and awards.



Bigbie was eventually assigned to work in Security Service at Wheeler Air Force Base in Honolulu, Hawaii, another first for a woman.

"There were a lot of firsts," Bigbie said of her service. It was in Hawaii where Bigbie met her husband, a Marine who served several tours in Vietnam, and she also attended school.

Bigbie finished her military career in the nation's capitol at the Officer Command School where she said she worked herself out of a job working in conjunction with United States Air Force

Headquarters Reserve Section while Officer Command School was not in session to develop a computer program where personnel records could be stored.

Sgt. Martha (Young) Bigbie arrives in Hawaii and practices at a rifle range during her career in the United States Air Force, location and date not specified | Photo courtesy of Martha Bigbie, St. George News

Both she and her husband retired from military service in 1973.

Speaking of her military service, Bigbie said that even though she entered when she was very young, she never regretted the decision she made.

“I got to travel. I got almost my full degree,” she said, adding that she was eventually able to finish her education and now holds multiple degrees.

Bigbie spoke of the camaraderie of military service and how she continues to highly encourage the youth to serve.

“Everyone around you is family,” she said of those with whom she served.

Today, Bigbie is the Commander of American Legion Post 90 as well as Commander of the Department of Utah for the American Legion.

She actively helps the veterans' service organization with their mission to encourage patriotism, mentor the youth and honor fellow service members and veterans.

Cryptologic technician technical

Southern Utah resident Jessica Staples decided in her senior year of high school in 2005 that she was going to join the military. Her original plan was to join the Army and be a cook because they offered her a \$4,000 signing bonus, but the Navy offered her a better job.

So even without the extra money, Staples decided to “go Navy.”

Though she knew she wanted to join the military, Staples said she almost didn't make it through boot camp.

“I almost quit,” Staples said, adding that in the first week of her training, she went to the petty officers in charge to tell them she was thinking of dropping out.



Jessica Staples (right) works on the U.S.S. O’Kane, location and date not specified | Photo courtesy of Jessica Staples, St. George News

“I said, ‘You know, I’m trying my hardest, and I’m not used to trying my hardest and getting yelled at,’” she said.

At that point she was certain she had made a big mistake, but the officers in charge were able to refocus her and help her get through and come out stronger.

Staples said they told her to treat boot camp like a game and to understand that its purpose was to level the playing field and build everyone up as one team.

After boot camp, Staples trained for her job as a cryptologic technician technical in Pensacola, Florida, a position that performs a variety of specialized duties associated with the collection and processing of airborne, shipborne and land-based radar signals.



Following that, she was assigned to the U.S.S. O’kane in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The U.S.S. O’Kane is an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, Staples said. While stationed on the ship, she said they had many deployments. In one year they were only in port a total of 81 days.

Though Staples said that she didn’t like being away from family and friends on a ship for such a long period of time, it was the opportunity to travel that she also loved about her military service.

Jessica Staples, Navy photo, location and date not specified | Photo courtesy of Jessica Staples, St. George News

Staples was able to visit Japan, Hong Kong, the United Arab Emirates and other places she said she would never have had the opportunity to see otherwise.

For Staples, being female in the military meant that she had to work extra hard to earn respect and know her own self-worth. If she were to give advice to women considering

service, she said she would tell them not to be afraid to stand up for themselves and to say no when it is necessary.

“Don’t let people push you around or take advantage of you because you are a woman,” she said.

Staples said she felt like her service was worth it.

“The military is important, and there are good people in the military who really do want to make sure our freedoms are secured,” she said. “It makes all the difference in the world when they feel support from their community.”

Staples served from 2005-2009 and then she used her G.I. Bill to go to college. Today she is a tireless advocate for rescue animals and is pursuing a career in acting.



Jessica Staples (right) works on the U.S.S. O'Kane, location and date not specified | Photo courtesy of Jessica Staples, St. George News



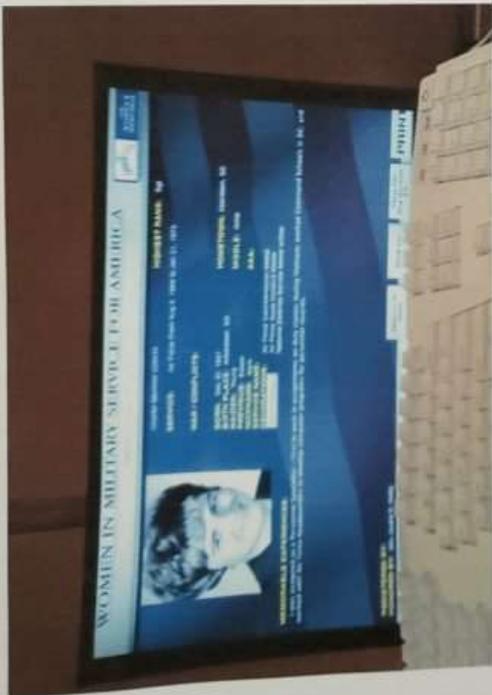
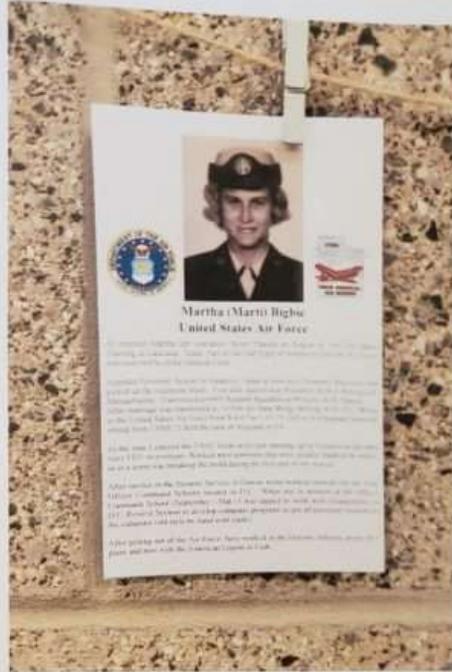
Jessica Staples (front row, center) works on the U.S.S. O'Kane, location and date not specified | Photo courtesy of Jessica Staples, St. George News



Sgt. Martha "Marti" (Young) Bigbie is pictured in these photos from the late 1960s during her time in the United States Air Force, Lackland, Texas, dates not specified | Photos courtesy of Martha Bigbie, St. George News



Sgt. Martha (Young) Bigbie arrives in Hawaii and practices at a rifle range during her career in the United States Air Force, location and date not specified | Photo courtesy of Martha Bigbie, St. George News



Photos of Martha Bigbie taken and displayed for American Legion and Utah Honor Flight, locations and dates not specified | Photo courtesy of Martha Bigbie, St. George News

Message to America

Hello remember me?

Some people call me Ol` Glory

Others call me The Star-Spangled Banner

But whatever you call me I am your Flag

The Flag of The United States of America!

Something has been bothering me

so, I thought I`d talk it over with you. because it`s about you and me.

Not long ago people would line up on both sides of the street to see a parade go byand naturally I was leading that parade.

Proudly waving in the breeze.

And when your daddy saw me coming, he would immediately remove his hat and place it over his left shoulder....

....so his right hand was over his heart.

And you, you were standing, right next to your Dad

You didn`t have a hat, and your little sister, not to be outdone, was standing right next to you.

Both of you had your right hands over your hearts.

What has happened now?

I don`t feel as proud as I used to...

I`m still the same old flag.....

I see people around and children playing, and shouting.

They don`t seem to know or care who I am or what I stand for.

I saw an elderly gentleman who stood and removed his hat....

...but when he saw others with their hats on, he turned around and slowly walked away.

Hey I`m still the same ol`e flag.

A few stars have been added since those parades of long ago...

A lot of blood has been shed!

Is it a sin to be patriotic anymore?

Have you forgotten who I am?

What I stand for?

And where I`ve been?

Anzio, Guadalcanal, Korea, and Vietnam.

Take a good look one of these days...at the memorial honor roll, of all the names of all those that never came back.

They gave their lives for this great nation to be free under God.

When you salute me, you salute each and every one of them.

Well it won`t be long now and I`ll be coming down that street leading that that parade, and proudly waving in the breeze.

So, when you see me coming.... Stand up straight and salute.

And I`ll salute you....by waving back.

And then I`ll know that you remember!!

Some people have been asked what the flag means to them. There have been some amazing answers to this question and we wanted to share one of our favorites. This one is from an amazing teacher, Melisa Beckler.

What the flag means to Melissa

As a young child, I was schooled in flag etiquette. I was taught how to hang the flag correctly, fold and store it correctly, and never, ever let it touch the ground.



If the flag was out at night, it must be lighted. If the flag was damaged beyond repair, it must be burned. Not burned with anger and disdain as some have done; but burned in a dignified manner.

On the Fourth of July, Veterans Day, and Memorial Day, one of my brothers or I had to get up early and go with our dad to the little village cemetery. He held the map of veterans' graves, while I carried the little flags and placed them by the headstones.



Dad knew many of the veterans and shared stories. He shared a last name with some vets; those stories were more difficult for him to tell. Before we left, we stopped to look at the tiny flags blowing in the breeze. It was both beautiful and heartrending.

The flag that hung on our porch had just 48 stars. It had no stains or tears and it was cherished by my father. He also had a flag on his casket because he was a veteran of World War II. I held that flag for days and nights after his death.

That beautiful flag that could bring tears to my dad's eyes holds a great deal of meaning to me. We are blessed to live in this country; however, it seems to me that many, many people are forgetting the sacrifice of those who fought in order for that flag to fly in the breeze.

For instance, Goshen College in Indiana has decided not to play the national anthem at school events. "The Star-Spangled Banner" is considered too violent. I wonder if

they'd prefer to fly the Union Jack? Because without the Revolutionary War, the Stars and Stripes wouldn't exist.



In addition, many neighborhood associations across the country have banned the flying of the American flag. Our flag stands for liberty, but some citizens don't have the freedom to fly that flag?

There have been lawsuits brought against people who just want to express their love and respect for this country. That, to me, is incredulous.

I feel like the lesson my dad wanted me to learn from my "flag tutelage" is to always be grateful for the gift of liberty for which so many fought. I didn't do anything to earn that gift; it was given to me by men and women who knew its worth.



Those stars and stripes have covered many caskets of men and women who felt compelled to ensure our rights and freedoms. When we love and respect that flag, we are respecting those who died for our liberty. May it ever wave in our yards, schools, government buildings and hearts.