



Post 90 Gazette



February 2021 Edited by Amy Ostler



National Salute to Veteran Patients

The purpose of the National Salute to Veteran Patients Program is to:

- pay tribute and express appreciation to Veterans;
- increase community awareness of the role of the VA medical center;
- encourage citizens to visit hospitalized Veterans and to become involved as volunteers.

The week of **February 14** each year is your opportunity to say thank you to a special group of men and women, the more than 9 million Veterans of the U.S. armed services who are cared for in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers, outpatient clinics, domiciliaries, and nursing homes.

See full story on page 3

It is time to volunteer for Post 90 Officers/Executive Board and positions for the 2021/2022 membership year starting 7-1-2021 to 06-30-2022.

Please see the full ballot on **page 6** for a complete list of positions. We would love to hear from you and nominate or volunteer for any of the positions.

Be a part of the future of Post 90! We have an incredible team of dedicated and active members and if you have ever thought of serving in any of the board positions, please complete and return to Marti Bigbie.



Celebrating the service of Black Americans

As we enter February, designated Black History Month, I urge everyone to rethink this month. I think of it as celebrating the contributions of Black Americans to American history. I want us all to think of this month as a way to celebrate the service of Black Americans who have fought and died on foreign soil and on American soil to make sure the America we love, lives up to the ideals of our founding fathers.

As a Black American veteran, I know that I stand on the shoulders of giants who have paved the way for me. I am both grateful for the path they have laid and aware that it is my responsibility to pave the way for others who come after me.

See full story on page 4



Commander's Column

Marti Bigbie

If you are planning on getting the COVID shot, keep trying to get scheduled. I understand there is a waiting time/period but keep trying.

Post 90 still have several members that have not renewed membership or let us know of their intention. If you are willing to contact these members about their membership please let me know so I can give you their information and you can call them as part of the American Legion Buddy Call program. If you know of any Veteran that you come in contact with/neighbor invite them to join the American Legion. Please let me know the number of contacts, hours that you spent as this all counts for the POST Consolidated Post Report. All this information is sent to National during the month of June which then in turn helps support the American Legion strength for Veteran Affairs with Congress.



All American Legion members are/have been asked to write letters or send cards to our 108 Veterans at Southern Utah Veterans Home as we are unable to do face to face contact. Due to the shut-down they are getting antsy for human contact. The Post is planning on getting Valentine cards and candy for each of the Veterans at SUVH. You can also include the staff and workers as they need a Thank You also.

Don't forget the Veterans in the Assisted living homes and you can always be a secret pen pal. We all need contact of some nature and need the reassurance that they/you matter.

The Ritual Team/Color Guard has and will continue to attend each and every Veteran funeral that we are asked to be at. Unfortunately, we have lost several of our Post 90 members to honor them Post Everlasting Certificates were presented to the family.

Still in need of Christmas Card fronts for Christmas 2021. Also need old phone chargers for the homeless Veterans.

Continue to be safe, wear masks and remember social distancing when in or at gatherings.

Commander Department of Utah

Marti Bigbie

Great Job to the Post members/District Commanders/Area Commanders/Department Office for making the 85% goal. BUT we still have a ways to go towards 100%. To those Posts that have met the 2021 Year End Goal for their Post, we need to continue to work the 2019 and 2020 unpaid membership list AS we do not want to leave any Veteran behind.

Continue to keep track of the time spent, miles driven, Post money spent on programs/activities for the CPR (Consolidated Post Report) that we need by June 1st, 2021.

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The week of February 14 each year is your opportunity to say thank you to a special group of men and women, the more than 9 million Veterans of the U.S. armed services who are cared for in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers, outpatient clinics, domiciliaries, and nursing homes. During the National Salute, VA invites individuals, Veterans groups, military personnel, civic organizations, businesses, schools, local media, celebrities and sports stars to participate in a variety of activities at the VA medical centers. The activities and events include special ward visits and valentine distributions; photo opportunities; school essay contests; special recreation activities and Veteran recognition programs.



The week also provides an opportunity for the community to become acquainted with the volunteer opportunities within the medical center.

Contact your nearest VA Medical Center and ask for Voluntary Service to discover the wonderful things you, your group or organization can do to salute America's Heroes. [Locate the facility nearest you.](#)

In memory of Ann Landers and a special thanks to Annie's Mailbox

For the 33rd consecutive year, the nationally syndicated column started by Ann Landers, now called "Ask Annie," has devoted a column to the National Salute, asking readers to send Valentine cards and letters to hospitalized Veterans at VA medical facilities. More than a million cards and letters are sent to VA patients each year during National Salute. Several VA medical facilities will host "Valentines for Veterans" concerts featuring acclaimed musicians.

The letter to the Annie's Mailbox column, along with Annie's reply, will be published in the week leading up to Valentine's Day. The column appears in more than 500 newspapers and is seen by more than 50 million readers.



Raymond Williams was one of the first Black Americans to integrate the U.S. Marine Corps. (Photo provided)

Celebrating the service of Black Americans

By Autrey James

FEB 01, 2021

As we enter February, designated Black History Month, I urge everyone to rethink this month. I think of it as celebrating the contributions of Black Americans to American history. I want us all to think of this month as a way to celebrate the service of Black Americans who have fought and died on foreign soil and on American soil to make sure the America we love, lives up to the ideals of our founding fathers.

As a Black American veteran, I know that I stand on the shoulders of giants who have paved the way for me. I am both grateful for the path they have laid and aware that it is my responsibility to pave the way for others who come after me.

As a Black American and a veteran, I know that deeply ingrained in us are both the horrors we have endured in America and the pride in which we have continuously and faithfully served her. The history of my own family is but one example. My grandfather answered the call to arms when our nation needed him. James Waiters Sr. of New Orleans was enlisted into the U.S. Army and went overseas for his country during World War I. He never got the opportunity to fight for his country because at the time our country denied him that opportunity. At that time our young country still had much to learn about living up to the ideals upon which it was founded. My grandfather served honorably, came home after the war, found work, took a wife and raised a family.

My grandmother's youngest brother, Raymond Williams, also served our country when he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps and trained at Montford Point making him one of the first Black Americans to integrate the Marine Corps. He also served honorably, returned home and raised a family.

Both of these men raised families that contributed to this nation in the armed services, then continued to serve as police officers, teachers, Peace Corps volunteers and many other ways. My family is no different than many other American families in its commitment to service to this nation.

The difference may be that my grandfather and great uncle proudly and willingly served our nation in spite of the treatment towards Black Americans, particularly, but not exclusively, in the southern United States. These men instilled in my family the love of country, people and service to this nation. They believed that their service would pave the way toward making equality a reality as opposed to an idea.

Black Americans like my grandfather and great uncle have long believed that service to this nation in time of need would force America to live up to the ideals that its founding fathers wrote of but did not implement in their time. The men of my family believed that war and service would be transformative for America. After all, how could any nation expect its citizens to go abroad and fight for democracy and then continue to deny democracy to those very citizens who risked their lives for the “American” way of life. My grandfather and great uncle were right. Their service was transformative for America but what they did not realize was though the fight over there was over it was just beginning at home.

The great fight for civil rights in America, one of America’s greatest fights, began as a result of Black Americans who after serving abroad in the most elite fighting force the world has ever known, came home after both WWI and WWII and were denied the democracy in their own country. After both world wars, for Black Americans, merely wearing their uniform could get them killed or maimed for life, not by an enemy but by other Americans. Those acts and the understanding that America could not go back to what it was but must move forward was the catalyst for men like Charles Houston, Medgar Evers, Ralph Abernathy, and many other icons of the civil rights movement who served in uniform to organize and fight not just for themselves but for the soul of America itself.

The men and women who fought for civil rights for all Americans, believed in and loved America in spite of her faults. These men and women fought, for the democracy that America believes in and cherishes. Those who fought for civil rights felt called to action to defend their country. When those whose minds they sought to change took up arms against them, they did not run from the fight. They forged ahead. The battles these veterans fought, eventually won over the hearts and minds of their adversaries and in 1964 the Civil Rights act was signed into law, followed in 1965 by the Voting Rights Act.

This is but one example of how Black Americans have continuously fought for America. The truth is Black Americans like my grandfather and great uncle have always fought for our country. In the Revolutionary War, 8,000 men of African descent fought alongside the patriots. During the Civil War, some 200,000 Black Americans fought on the side of the Union. Black Americans fought alongside Roosevelt in the Spanish-American War. They fought in the Indian wars, in Vietnam, and in every other conflict this young nation has been engaged in.

My grandfather never saw the results of his struggle as he died in 1950. My great uncle however lived until February 2020. My great uncle lived long enough to see the fruits of their labor. He lived long enough to be recognized by a grateful nation with a Congressional Gold Medal for his service to the fight for democracy and equality within this country. He lived long enough to see his sons, nephews, great nieces, and great nephews serve this country with honor, distinction and love of this country and all of its people.

I am grateful to both of these Black Americans for their contributions not to Black History but to the history of our nation. I am proud to be Black and proud to be an American and I am grateful to my grandfather, great uncle and others who lifted us all up to make this a better America. God bless America and all its people.

ELECTION/VOTE FOR POST 90 OFFICERS-EXECUTIVE BOARD

It is time to volunteer for Post 90 Officers/Executive Board and positions for the 2021/2022 membership year starting 7-1-2021 to 06-30-2022.

Elected Positions (some of listed but can have seconds or more)

Position	Currently Serving	Volunteer or nominee
Post Commander	Marti Bigbie or someone to volunteer to take this position:	_____
Vice Commander	Terry Dunne	_____
2 nd Vice Commander	(membership) James Webb	_____
3 rd Vice Commander	(Boys State) Floyd Smith	_____
Adjutant	Available position	_____

Appointed Positions Like volunteers but willing to work in these positions

Service Officer	Terry Dunne	_____
Finance Officer	Brooks Reece	_____
Chaplain	Don Oborn, Terry Dunne, Floyd Smith, Paul Cramer, Thomas Lystrup	_____
Sgt. At Arms	Paul Cramer, Mike Dinges	_____
Historian & PR	Mike Dinges	_____
Judge Advocate	Thomas Lystrup	_____
Ritual Team	Calvin Jensen, Terry Dunne, Foster Johnson	_____
Event Coordinator	Brooks Reece	_____
Membership	Terry Dunne, James Webb	_____
Post Newsletter	Amy Ostler	_____
Post Newsletter Contributor of news/articles	Mike Dinges	_____
Women's Auxiliary	Judy Oar	_____
Baseball Team Liaison	Terry Dunne – will call for volunteers when needed	_____
Post 90 Website caretaker	Amy Ostler	_____