



Greater Cincinnati Women's American Legion Post 644

Check out our Website at <http://www.womenspost644.org> or Email us at post644@gmail.com

Quarterly Newsletter

Message From Our Commander, Kelly Knox:

It is my pleasure to introduce our first quarterly newsletter! I hope this will be a great source of information for and about women veterans and that it will inspire more veterans to get involved in our historic Post 644.

This has truly been a whirlwind year. At this time last year, we were dangerously close to losing the Charter we have held since 1946, which would have meant the demise of the ONLY remaining women's Post in Ohio.

But because of your efforts, we rose from the brink of extinction in a grand fashion. We became the first Post in Ohio to reach our membership quota for 2010 – and we reached an “all-time high” in membership for Post 644 while doing so! In the meantime, we have had a lot of fun planning and developing programs and activities that focus on the unique needs and issues of women veterans.

I will soon be sending out a new survey to get a fresh look at what our members want and need from their Post. My first priority is to keep Post 644 and all of our activities relevant to the needs and desires of our members. Last year's survey resulted in numerous fun and meaningful activities, including a women veterans exhibit at the Museum Center, a Post marksmanship program, several activities serving hospitalized veterans, participation in a parade, and several fun social events such as our well-attended Christmas party.

With the weather turning nicer, I encourage everyone to turn out and support your Post at our meetings and events, such as the upcoming Fun Run/Walk on March 27. As an added incentive, I will soon be giving a unique award to every member who participates in at least one Post activity – I'm not saying what it is just yet, but I'm positive you will be proud to own one!

Thank you for a banner year for Post 644! As always, do not hesitate to contact me at post644@gmail.com or at 513-284-8994 to let me know how the Post can assist you or to discuss your ideas for the Post.



All



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Welcome



Here!



A Piece of Our History...

Women in the U.S. military have always had a tough road to travel. We owe so much to the women who literally broke ground, opened doors, and made the choice of a military career easier for those of us who followed. These early pioneers were almost never recognized. Here are some of the first to enlist:

Philadelphian **Loretta Walsh** enlisted in March of 1917 and became the first Yeoman (F) in the Navy.

In August of 1918 **Opha M. Johnson** enlisted as the first woman in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve.



Twin sisters
**Genevieve and
Lucille Baker**
joined the Coast
Guard and became
the first
Yeomanettes.



Sgt Esther M. Blake is considered the "first woman in the Air Force" having enlisted in the first minute of the first hour of the first day the regular Air Force was authorized. This took place on the 8th of July 1948 at Ft McPhearson, Georgia, where Sgt Blake was stationed as a member of the WAC. By enlisting in the Air Force she became the first WAF.

A Message from Amy...

As I sit down to write this article for the new Women's Post 644 newsletter, I can't help but think about how far we have come in our efforts to revitalize Post 644. Wow! In just a few short months we have gone from just a handful of members and nearly losing our Charter to a post with over 50 members.

Membership and retention are key to keeping a post strong and vital, so I want to let our members know in detail where we stand. Post 644 has 51 members. We have one Paid Up For Life (PUFL) member, 1 Life Member, and 5 Honorary Life Members. A PUFL is a member who has decided to pay their dues in advance to the post for the duration of their life. This means they never have to pay dues again, and the dues they pay are at today's rates. The total amount paid is based on the Veteran's age at application and the current dues rate. The total can be paid in one lump sum or over a 12-month period with 10% down. Members who wish to take advantage of this payment option must be a "Member in Good Standing," which simply means they must be up to date on the current year's dues. I am happy to review this option with anyone who is interested.

As the 1st Vice Commander, my primary function is overseeing all aspects of membership. Hundreds of emails and dozens of fliers have gone out to women veterans in the area, but the biggest recruitment tool the Post has is YOU! Talk to your friends, family and neighbors and tell them about the Post, what you are doing and why you like it. Word of mouth is our most powerful asset -- let's not waste it by keeping the Post a secret.

At this time I would like to recognize two Post 644 members for their efforts in recruitment -- Sharon Hook and Kelly Knox. Way to go, ladies! Keep it up! You're awesome.

For questions about membership, eligibility, becoming a PUFL, or if you have recruitment/retention ideas, please feel free to contact me at aldkle@cinci.rr.com.

Amy Carter
1st Vice Commander

*Post 644 meets on the third Thursday of every month at 7:00 p.m.
Check our website for location and details.*

What we've been doing lately...

The Holidays Brought Out The Best In Us!



We had a great time at our Christmas Party. A white elephant gift exchange was a lot of fun; but getting together with other women veterans to share information and experiences was priceless! And, we even had a little showdown/smackdown with a few of our "energetic" ladies who competed in a push-ups contest!!

Attendees ranged in age from young to old and traveled from as far away as Findlay, Ohio!



Some of our members helped prepare and distribute 92 fruit baskets and gifts to veterans who were hospitalized at the Cincinnati VA over the holidays!

What a great experience...so rewarding to know we were giving something back to those veterans who had given so much of themselves!

Thanks, Ladies!!

2010 Rolled In Like a Lioness!

John Guinn and The Thank You Foundation invited Post 644 to their Annual Evening of Appreciation Dinner. Members who attended were presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for answering the call to serve our country. One of the guest speakers was Connie Pillich, a State Representative and fellow veteran, who spoke about some of the great initiatives she has been working on for all Ohio veterans:

- Create a veterans preference for state government jobs
- Penalize employers who don't hold a job for the deployed guard or reserve member
- Automatically terminate a rental agreement upon receipt of military orders
- Permit a secondary insurance program to assist those who don't qualify for VA health benefits
- Educate all returning veterans about their VA benefits immediately
- Enhance drug and alcohol interdiction programs for returning guard and reserve members
- Help with child support and other family law red tape



Where we're going...



Riley's Restaurant in Greenhills Presents
Women Celebrating Women

Monday, March 1, 2010

*Use the Coupon Below to Dine at Riley's in Greenhills
And 10% of your bill will benefit the*

Greater Cincinnati American Legion Women's Post 644

Greater Cincinnati American Legion Women's Post 644

Monday, March 1, 2010

Please present this coupon along with your guest check to cashier and 10% of the sales will be donated.

Proceed donation does not include gift certificate redemptions or sales. We are unable to honor any coupons, Great Meals Rewards, Discounts or gift certificates when using this flyer/coupon



1st Annual Women Veterans 5k Run/Walk



Date: March 27, 2010

Time: 07:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Location: Winton Woods Park

*Registration: \$20.00**

**Includes Free Event T-Shirt and Continental
Breakfast After the Event*

Other Upcoming Events...

Feb 15, Presidents Day

Feb 18, Post 644 General Membership Meeting

Mar 1, Dine at Riley's, Greenhills Shopping Center, 10% of sales goes to Post

Mar 3, County Council Meeting, 29 E. State Rd., Cleves, 941-1643

Mar 18, Post 644 General Membership Meeting

Mar 27, Fun Run/Walk, Winton Woods Park

Apr 4, Easter

Apr 7, County Council Meeting, 4618 River Rd., 941-7869

Apr 15, Post 644 General Membership Meeting

Apr 30, OHIO LEGION NEWS DEADLINE

Apr 30, VA Voluntary Services Night, VA Medical Center, Auditorium, 1800-2000

A Place for Our Supporters/Advertisers...

The Thank You Foundation is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to show appreciation and express gratitude to members of the U.S. Military. For more information, contact John Guinn at 1-877-280-8893 or Email: info@thethankyoufoundation.org

Residents of Ohio can show their appreciation for all members of the U.S. Military - past and present by purchasing this handsome specialty license plate.



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Newsletter for Only
\$25.00...*

*For details, contact
Patricia Johnson at
oneohiolady@gmail.com*

Funds raised from the plate will benefit The Thank You Foundation and our efforts to support Veterans, Military Personnel, and their Families. The cost of the plate is \$20.00 with the Foundation receiving \$10.00 from each plate sold. For more information, go to: http://www.bmv.ohio.gov/sp_thankyou_military.stm

A Spotlight on one of our own...



Our Member Spotlight this quarter is on Joyce Leneave, who is a Persian Gulf War Era Veteran and who serves as our Post Chaplain. Because of her small stature, Joyce received little encouragement from family and friends regarding her ability to serve as an active duty member of the US Army. So, Joyce began her military career in the Army Reserves, enlisting on July 11, 1989. However, Joyce soon learned that she was a strong, competent young woman and that she made an excellent soldier; so, she quickly changed her mind and switched over to active duty.

Once she completed basic training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, Joyce did her AIT training at Fort Gordon, Georgia in the Signal Corps. She was soon transferred to an artillery unit in Stuttgart, Germany and was assigned to Patch Barracks. Being the only female soldier among 400 male soldiers presented its share of challenges. However; Joyce was up to those challenges as she soon earned the rank of E-4 and was eventually assigned to Signal Satellite Communications for the European Command Center.



While serving in Germany, Joyce became a single mom. Her daughter was born near the small town of Trochtelfingen, Germany where Joyce lived in civilian housing. As a single mom, Joyce found it very difficult to find reliable day care and being told of a possible transfer to Somalia was forced to make the hard decision to leave the military and received her honorable discharge on March 9, 1993.

Joyce returned to her hometown of Cincinnati and we are proud to have her as a member of American Legion Post 644! Although she would encourage other young women to serve in the military, she cautions that she, like many other women, experienced sexual harassment by male counterparts. Joyce hopes that future legislation will discourage this type of harassment from continuing. Joyce says that she would suggest that women attend college prior to joining the military and enlist as an officer cadet. As Joyce puts it...there is no longer a government draft; however, there is an economic draft and the military offers tremendous opportunities for young women today.

Thank you, Joyce, for your service and for being a valued member of American Legion Post 644!!