

The Founder

The Monthly Newsletter For VFW Post 1 Members

JOHN S. STEWART POST 1



"THE FIRST POST"



Post 1 Members Represent at the United Veterans Committee of Colorado Banquet

April 2014

Issue No. 11

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Meeting Update

Wednesday, April 10, 2014 at 7:00 pm

**Brooklyn's at the Pepsi Center
401 Auraria Parkway**

In Memoriam

Our thoughts and prayers go to the families of the recently deceased members of Post 1.

**Baumhover, Cletus
Blanton, Alexander
Dorak, Daniel
Kaffer, Kenneth
Miller, Don
Morriss, Francis
Schaffer, Daniel
Winsett, Nolan**

Inside Post 1 - News and Events

Commander's Corner

By Michael Mitchel

Springtime is upon us all and we are kicking it off with some great events!

April 27th at Paint and Sip (in the Highlands) will be **the first Women of Post 1 Social**. The event takes place between 5 pm and 7 pm at 2563 15th Street #102 in Denver. I strongly encourage all the women members of Post 1 to come (and bring a Woman Vet!) and meet/talk with your comrades. We strongly feel that this is a great opportunity to talk and relate to others. Watch for email flyers about this

event.

May 5th Post 1 at Cinco de Mayo

Post 1 will have a table at this year's Cinco De Mayo. Pete Aragon will be leading a Buddy Poppy drive. This will be a fun opportunity to help tell the Post 1 story to our community and meet Vets that we have not contacted before. Stop by the booth and say hello!

May 26th Memorial Day BBQ at the Post 1 site at Fairmount Cemetery

This has become a great annual event! We'll hold a short ceremony honoring the Founders of the VFW who are buried at the Post 1 section, followed by a big spread thanks to the generous donation of Moes BBQ. It starts at 10 am and ends sometime after noon. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone there!

June 7th Weekend, Peoples Fair

AVER has generously invited Post 1 to help volunteer in staffing the beer garden. The Peoples Fair allows nonprofits to staff the beer garden - in return, the organization keeps the tip money! AVER did this last year with great success and has offered to share the tips with Post 1. Thanks AVER!

July 13th and 27th, Post 1 Color Guard at Rockies Games

The Post 1 Color Guard will be presenting the colors at two Rockies games this summer - congrats Color Guard! Perhaps we could pool together for tickets and show our support of the Color Guard....

We are trying something new this month for our Monthly Membership Meeting. It will still be the **2nd Thursday (April 10th)** but we are meeting at Brooklyn's Sports Pub next to the Pepsi Center. They have a second floor that we can use and it will be a great environment for socializing, and it sports a full menu. I encourage everyone to come for two big reasons: officer elections and socializing.

I've been out of pocket for a couple of weeks. Mid-month I basically had the Peyton Manning neck surgery. I'm starting to get back into the swing of things. While I was out, The Post was at the Buckley AFB Job Fair and at the annual USMC Reserve IRR muster. Thanks to the Post members that represented us at these events.

On **May 17th, District 1 is holding elections**. Please join me in supporting our own Isreal Bills who is running for District 1 Commander. Let me know if you are interested in being a delegate. We are working out the details now. Isreal supported us as a great QM for over 7 years; now it's our turn to support Isreal.

Thank you to Sean McGrane who has the Post 1 online storefront up and

running. We are still working on a couple of design ideas for hats and such, but if you want a shirt, mug, canteen etc, visit www.vfwpost1.org and follow the link. A portion of all sales goes directly to Post 1.

I'd like to give a shout out to Dana Niemela. She was named one of ten Women Veterans who are Champions of Change. For her efforts in fighting Veteran homelessness, Dana was invited to the White House to participate in a panel discussion regarding issues facing Veterans. Bravo Zulu Dana!

Serve the Post as a Public Affairs Officer

Do you have experience in the military or civilian sectors working in communications or with the media? Post 1 is looking for a new Public Affairs Officer to be the face of our Post, representing our members and agenda to the media and at public events.

Interested candidates should contact Michael Mitchel at michael@vfwpost1.org.

Upcoming Buddy Poppy Drive

By Pete Aragon
Buddy Poppy Chairman and Relief Fund Coordinator

We are into the new calendar year, and will soon be conducting the largest Buddy Poppy Fund Raiser drive of the year. I have chosen the yearly Cinco de Mayo Festival event for this event.

As many of you are aware, this event is to commemorate the victory of a heroic people and their struggle for freedom.

On May 5th, 1862 in the town of Puebla, the outnumbered Mexican army defeated the French forces. Cinco de Mayo is a celebration of freedom and to acknowledge the beauty of the Latin culture. Denver presents one of the largest celebrations in the nation.

Post 1 has a large Latino membership and we would like to take this opportunity to showcase Post 1 and to conduct Buddy Poppy drives at this two-day event to fund raise to replenish our Relief Fund so we are able to assist our veterans, their families and our communities as necessary.

Our fund is almost at a zero balance, and we need your assistance to build the fund back up.

This event will occur on May 3rd and 4th at the City and County buildings area, near the the Greek amphitheater. We have secured a 10'x10' booth site (at a cost of \$300 from the Relief Fund) to work from. We will man the booth from 10 am to 8 pm on both days. I will have a timeline sheet at the April meeting that you can enter your support hours.

We need involvement. I ask that you wear something military; VFW hat; Lou Bernier in his Civil War re-enactment uniform. I will be wearing US military Vietnam-era field gear. Let's give a good visual.

The BP team will have our patriotic BP resource table that will feature the American/Post 1 flags, Post 1 table top, BP Drive display poster, poppies, Post 1 pens, *Founder* issues, VFW hand-outs and membership recruitment packets. This is also a great time to visit the other booths, listen to the traditional music and local talents, and satisfy your hunger pangs.

One of the main issues for this event is parking. Parking meters will not be hooded. I recommend finding free parking as close to the site as possible or park at the [Rooster and Moon \(955 Bannock\)](#) and walk the four blocks to the site.

Post Commander Mitchel is always receiving calls from people that are in distress and we will continue to send care packages throughout the year to our loved ones that are in the war zone.

For additional information, please call or email me - Pete Aragon at:
cell 303-523-1909
email peteanddyanna@yahoo.com



Member Profile

Kathryn Wirkus - Service in the USAF and Beyond

Kathryn Wirkus joined the Air Force in 1978 after she completed her college degree. She had been teaching kindergarten, but she was inspired by her father's service in the Army Air Corps in World War II. Women made up a very small percentage of the Air Force when she joined.

As an education and training officer, Kathryn developed curriculum and training programs for the USAF office of special investigation. Her work also included developing training and evaluations for USAF special operations and combat search and rescue training.

After attaining the rank of lieutenant colonel, Kathryn deployed to Bogota, Columbia as the Air Force US Southern Command liaison. She then worked in the US embassy in Bogotá as the deputy director for the training mission of the US military group in-country. Her role was to train the local law enforcement and

Colombian military on anti-drug enforcement procedures and tactics.

After retiring in 2006, she served as a veteran service officer for five years with the Colorado Division of Veteran Affairs. Now, Kathryn is a military veteran liaison with Congressman Perlmutter. She is also the founder and president of the Women Veterans of Colorado.

Like so many other Post 1 members, Kathryn has proven that service doesn't stop when we take off our combat boots.



In the Community

Post 1 Nominated for Nonprofit of the Year

We are proud to announce that, once again, Post 1 has been nominated for Small Nonprofit Organization of the Year as part of the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce Business Awards Program!

Our Post was selected above many competing small nonprofit organizations for the shot at the top award. We will be honored to send a delegation to the Awards Luncheon in May. We will have further details about the event as it approaches.

Credit for this nomination once again goes to the dedicated and active service of members like you. You've proven that our Post proudly carries on the legacy established by the founders.



The First Post Represented at UVC Banquet

by Izzy Abbass

The annual United Veterans Committee (UVC) of Colorado Banquet took place on Sunday March 31 here in Denver, and a few members of Post 1 attended.

The keynote speaker was USAF General William Shelton, Commander of Air Force Space Command in Colorado Springs. Several hundred people attended the event, including Post 1 Member and Medal of Honor recipient Joe Sakato.

VFW Post 1 member Michael Stack accepted an award for Outstanding Veterans Service on behalf of the student Veterans at the University of Colorado Denver. Post 1 is a member of the UVC, with several post members in leadership roles at this statewide coalition of Veteran organizations.

You can find more information on the [United Veterans Committee of Colorado here.](#)

Ladies Auxiliary Update

Hello Auxiliary Sisters!

As I write this article, I think back to what has happened since the last *Founder*. We have seen our State Voice of Democracy winner Sarah Haynes make her trip to Washington D.C. for the National Parade of Winners event. I was lucky to be present for this event and to join Sarah's family to cheer her on. She placed somewhere in the middle of the pack and came home with a \$1,500 scholarship. It was quite an honor to be present for this event.

The new scholarship program themes are out so it is not too early to start looking for next year's winners! The Voice of Democracy theme for 2014-2015 is "Why Veterans are Important to our Nation's History and Future" and is open to grades

9-12. The Patriot's Pen theme for 2014-2015 is " Why I appreciate America's Veterans" and is open to grades 6-8. The success of this year's programs can be attributed to our Chairpersons, Jean Jaffe and Pete Aragon - BRAVO and THANK YOU for a job well done!

Our annual Cancer Aid & Research and National Military Services fundraising programs have ended with donations of \$101.11 being made for cancer research and \$201.40 for National Military Services. I thank you for these generous amounts.

The District 1 Potato Bake was a HUGE success again this year. Each Auxiliary in the District received a check for \$228.00. I thank all of you that participated - it could not have happened without you! I also want to thank those Post 1 members that participated and came to support the event. You know who you are and we look forward to seeing you again next year!

Our Auxiliary is 100 years old as of April 1, 2014. It is my understanding that we will receive the recognition from the national organization at the Council of Administration meeting the first weekend in April. This milestone certainly is one that we all can be proud of as we know what it takes to have a successful Auxiliary.

The annual Salute to Service banquet will be held at the Security VFW Post #3917 on April 26, 2014. It was my honor to submit the name of Dyanna Aragon as our nominee for this award. If you are unable to attend the banquet, just say "thank you" to Dyanna the next time you see her, she is a busy lady!

The 2013 -2014 year is quickly coming to a close, and we can all hold our heads up high and say we are proud to be members of John S. Stewart VFW Auxiliary #1.

All I can say is thank you, job well done.

Our next meeting will be Saturday, April 26th at 11:00 AM.

Loyally,

Marsha A. Harrison, President

Visit our website [here](#), or:

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Post 1 Officers

Commander - Michael Mitchel Sr. Vice Commander - John Keene

Jr. Vice Commander & PAO - Brenda Smull

Quartermaster - Mort Anderson Chaplain - Ray Starkey Surgeon - Norm Frickey

Service Officer - Mort Anderson Judge Advocate - John Holland Adjutant - Philipp Theune

Committee Chairs

Women Veterans - Kathryn Wirkus Current Conflict - Patrick Browne

Suicide Prevention - Rebecca Nordin Military Liaison - Eryth Zecher

Homeless Veterans - Dana Niemela Camaraderie Committee- Justin Cook, Brittany Bartges

Buddy Poppy and Deployed Members Committee - Pete Aragon

Youth Activities - David Perez Volunteer Coordinator - Ashley Metcalf Managing Editor - Jonathan Raab

Trustees

Izzy Abbass (1 year),
Kristen Luevanos (2 year), George Caulkins (3 year)

