



THE AMERICAN LEGION

"The Friendly Word" from "The Friendly Post"

1655 Simms Street

Post 178

Lakewood, CO



The History of Volunteerism in America

People have been practicing the simple act of selflessly helping since the beginning of time. Officially, the origin of volunteering can be traced back to 12th century Britain where more than 500 hospitals were operated by volunteers. In the beginning, volunteering was strongly connected to religion and religious institutions. The word "volunteer," taken from the French language, is traceable to the 17th century, but became common in the 18th century in reference to willingly joining military service. Today, the word is commonly used in reference to community service, as well.

America has relied on volunteers from its start.

Colonists banded together to survive the harsh New World, forming support groups to help each other plant crops, build houses, and fight disease.

The Revolutionary War was the first major volunteer recruitment effort in our nation's history. As the country recruited soldiers to join the army, everyday civilians also banded together to raise funds and boycott British goods. Volunteerism expanded beyond faith and the church into patriotism, offering a way for ordinary people to demonstrate love for their country.

In the 1800s, volunteerism expanded beyond religious causes into philanthropic causes and the social reform movement. Large groups of American citizens became inspired to get involved with social issues that mattered to them. Organizations aimed at addressing the wealth disparity were founded, including the YMCA, the Salvation Army, the American Red Cross, and the United Way.

The Abolitionist Movement to end slavery was a major social movement. Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, and Harriet Beecher Stowe, along with countless others, enlightened the public and shifted opinion against slavery.

The Civil War sparked major spikes in volunteerism. Ladies Aid Societies sprang up to produce and repair

bandages, uniforms, and tents. Women volunteered as nurses. One of them, Clara Barton, later founded the American Red Cross.

After the war, the Temperance and Women's Suffrage Movements empowered women to take part in public discourse.

During the 1900s, volunteer organizations like Rotary Club and Kiwanis International were founded to foster stronger connections between businesses and communities. The formation of labor unions raised awareness of working conditions and gave citizens more opportunities to volunteer. The Great Depression led

to a nationwide coordination of volunteers to operate soup kitchens and homeless shelters. During the World Wars, volunteers were encouraged to

collect materials, preserve supplies, and purchase war bonds.

Corporate philanthropy became a large part of the volunteer landscape in the 1950s. General Electric created the first matching gift program in 1954, and today companies of all sizes offer volunteering programs and volunteer grants to their employees. Beginning in the 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement attracted large numbers of Americans hoping for social change.

Federal government projects such as the Peace Corps and the War on Poverty were initiated, connecting volunteerism to federal and international priorities. Into the 21st century, this mix of community-based, faith-based, corporate, and political forces kept Americans engaged with volunteerism in an extremely wide range of ways.

Since the formation of the United States, countless Americans have given their time to volunteering for different causes. Volunteering has essentially become a national pastime. More than 75.7 million people, or 28.3 percent of Americans, volunteered through an organization in 2023, giving more than 4.99 billion hours of service totalling \$167.2 billion of economic value.

Volunteerism Facts

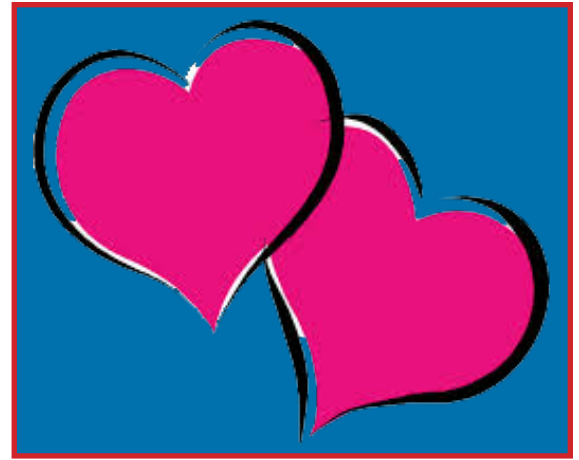
- *Women volunteer at a higher rate (30.9 %) than men (25.6%).*
- *Parents with children under 18 volunteer at a higher rate (37%) than those without children in their household (25%).*
- *Volunteers experience 38% fewer nights in the hospital.*
- *People who volunteer live longer than those who don't.*

LEGION CHAPLAIN

Mary Johnson

February is the month most closely associated with love. February 14th is St. Valentine's Day and, in case you didn't know, St. Valentine is the patron saint of lovers, epileptics, and beekeepers. He is associated with love because the Roman Emperor Claudius believed that Roman soldiers should be completely devoted to Rome and therefore passed a law preventing them from marrying. St. Valentine began to marry these soldiers in secret Christian ceremonies, thus establishing his reputation for believing in the importance of love. In honor of St. Valentine, I leave you with this Bible verse:

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." — John 15:12



COMMANDER'S REPORT

Russ Scott

In order for the Post to continue to prepare and serve **Saturday Breakfasts**, we MUST have more volunteers. After all, we are a volunteer organization serving Veterans. A sign-up sheet is located on the Volunteer Board just around the corner from the Pickle Cage.

A HUGE "thank you" to everyone who already volunteers. I'm not naming them as I know I will miss someone. But you know who they are. The Saturday Breakfast crew begins preparation at 7:00 a.m., and is served from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

PLEASE be very careful parking in the north lot of the Post due to the ice. **Wayne McClimans** does a really good job of clearing the snow and ice, but the sunshine is limited on the north side and there are still areas that can be very slick.

Mark your calendar now for the **Rider's Chili Cook-Off** on Saturday February 22nd starting at 11:00 a.m. Their fundraiser is the best tasting one around. You can just bring your appetite and choose your favorite chili, or bring a crock pot of your own red or green chili and perhaps win \$50.

AUXILIARY REPORT

Kay Scott

Our February meeting will be Tuesday the 4th at 6:00 p.m. in the Auxiliary room. **Valentine's Day** is an important time for us to spread love and care to our Veterans and Troops. Unit 178 has a unique opportunity to send Valentine's Day cards to patients at the VA Hospital in Aurora (deadline is February 7th). We're also accepting your Thank You cards to send to Troops around the world along with the Beef Jerky made right here at Post 178 "Hearts of Love" program.

During the first week of February, I will have card-making supplies on the Auxiliary room tables so you can all come and make cards! There will be construction paper, foam hearts, crayons, markers, colored pencils, and glue. NO glitter. You are most welcome to make cards at home. Bring them to the Post and leave them in the Auxiliary room.

February is also Black History Month and I have a movie recommendation for you. The Commander and I watched the movie **"Six Triple Eight"** on Netflix recently, which is about WWII's only Women's Army Corps of color. It is a fascinating true story and well worth your time to learn about these amazing women.

Due to the cold weather, snow, and slick roads, it is easy to stay hunkered down at home to stay warm and safe. Being by ourselves though is not the best for our mental health. I am encouraging you to make a phone call to those you haven't seen in a while and check in with them. Communicating with others may be a great way to not only lift their spirits, and yours as well.

RIDERS REPORT

Steve Petersen

The Riders are gearing up for another great year of service to our Veterans both enlisted and discharged, as well as other worthy causes. It's going to be a busy and fulfilling year. We will be teaming up with **"Veterans 4 Veterans"** for a Dice Run on June 28th, and another charity run for **Ranya Kelly's RCI** on June 7th. Flyers for both events are in the lounge to remind you to sign up.

In retrospect, let us return to the very reason we joined The American Legion. I, for one, signed up to serve some of the greatest among us. That would be all who signed on the proverbial dotted line that they would willingly give their lives for the protection of our freedoms, liberty, country and the Constitution. This also applies to those who were or are not in combat. I'm sure we all know who the "Greatest Generation" is. Let us rededicate ourselves to accomplishing the very thing we, as Americans, stand for—honesty, integrity, and compassion. May God bless you and our country for all the right reasons.

BUSINESS REPORT

Bob Heer

For those members who are bringing guests to our bingo events, please inform them that they may not bring in food or drinks into the Post. Going forward, members and guests carrying bags into the building will be challenged as to what is in them.

Just a reminder to all Post veterans, if you haven't picked up a gift card to **Red Robin** I still have some left. Gift cards can be picked up at the bar.

We are hosting **Life Line Screening** on April 4. Information is posted on the bulletin boards as to how to make your appointment.

I want to thank **Russ Scott, Bill Black, Steve Peterson, and Rick Korona** for picking up bakery products from Costco for our bread store. These individuals are doing this as volunteers and at their own expense. I do, probably too infrequently, reimburse them for their gas from the donations you all place in the receptacle. Please keep your donations coming in so I can give them more consistent reimbursements.

SAL REPORT

Brad Hall

Not a lot going on in this post-Holiday time of year. Please remember to get your memberships taken care of so we can be certain to keep your records up to date. Dues are supposed to be paid by January and the grace period runs out in February.

The SAL will be doing a **Prime Rib Dinner** on February 14th from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m., or until the food runs out. The Roxborough Blues Band will be performing until 9:00 p.m. The price per plate is \$17 and includes prime rib, baked potato, bacon wrapped asparagus, and a salad. Come join us and help support the Post!

We are also tossing around the idea of having **Taco Tuesdays** starting in March, so stay tuned.

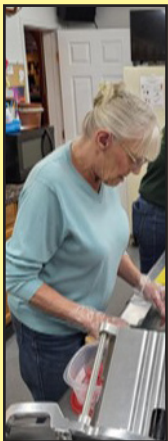
Thank a Veteran when you see one!



January was a stellar month thanks to patrons of the American Legion Post 178 for the awesome support of this mission outreach. We've had the blessing of a few more volunteers who jumped in to lend a hand: **Brad Hall, Kathy Schwab, and Kailyn Fanning**, a family member visiting from Texas.

In January we were able to send out beef jerky and "Hearts of Love" care packages to three units:

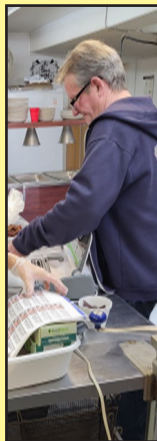
1. SOWW (Special Operations Wounded Warriors) in Myrtle Beach, SC for their "Takin' Bacon" Event, the biggest of the year for the troops.
2. Russ and Kay Scott's troop, Charles Campbell.
3. 449th Air Expeditionary Rescue Group, U. S. Air Force, Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, Africa.



Kathy



Kailyn



Brad

Dear Post 178,

I work in the same unit as your son did, and we were lucky enough to get the beef jerky from you all while we are deployed during the holidays. The transportation to bring care packages to our base was delayed for a while, but it worked out because your beef jerky got here on December 23rd and made it just in time for everyone to have while we hung out on Christmas Eve and watched (at least a few) of the classic Christmas movies!! All 25 of the unit members who are here really really appreciated you guys making it and sending it out to us.

Not much of the beef jerky survived Christmas Eve, but there's still a bit left and my guess is that by the end of the next few bowl games it will all be gone. People like you doing things like that means a lot to the guys out here, especially during the holidays. I really really appreciate your kindness, and the effort you went through to get that out to us. Also, please know that you have about 25 new fans of your beef jerky!

Once again, thank you very much for your kindness and thoughtfulness. I have old family friends in Denver and Windsor, and I will reach out to Jon to try and meet you all next time I come out that way if you are available. Thank you, and Happy New Year!!

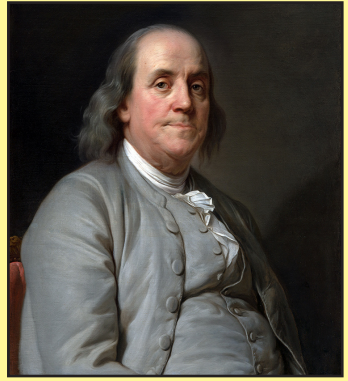
Regards,
Mark

Thank you from the troops that received beef jerky and care packages just before Christmas.

Five Famous Advocates

Founding father **Benjamin Franklin** was also a volunteer leader. On December 7, 1736 he co-founded the Union Fire Company in Philadelphia, the first formally organized all-volunteer fire company in the colonies. His inspiration came after a ship caught fire in the local harbor in 1730, and quickly spread to the surrounding wharf where all the warehouses and neighboring houses were destroyed.

It took six years from the original inspiration to the fulfillment of the goal, but Franklin did not give up. Today almost 70% of all U.S. firefighters are volunteers and continue their founding purpose to protect life, health, and property.



Clara Barton, a self-taught nurse during the American Civil War, founded the American Red Cross. She was inspired to action while providing care for injured soldiers after the Baltimore Riot on April 19, 1861. She, along with other area women, donated her own family's clothing, food, and medical supplies for those wounded, and offered practical services like reading to soldiers and helping them to write letters.

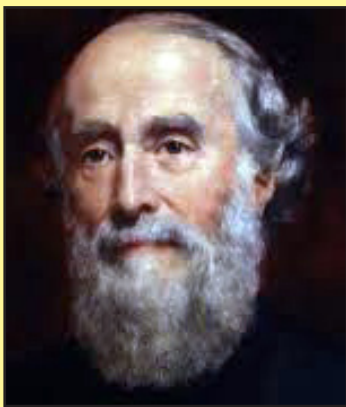
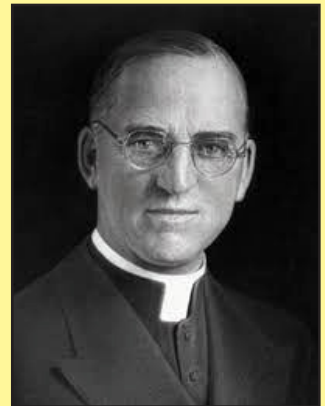
Barton stockpiled needed supplies for injured soldiers and used her own home as a storeroom. She placed an ad in the local paper to solicit donations and traveled to field hospitals to deliver aid and medical care.

Notably, Barton provided care and supplies to both Union and Confederate soldiers without discrimination. On May 21, 1881, twenty years after she first began volunteering her time and talent, Barton officially founded the American Red Cross with the approval of President Chester A. Arthur.

Father Edward Flanagan, inspired by the plight of poor and homeless youth in his Nebraska parish, founded what is now known as Boys Town in 1917. An Irish immigrant to the U.S. and priest in the Catholic Church, many boys turn to crime in order to simply survive. He felt strongly that sending these children to reform school as a punishment only perpetuated the problem, and believed that with right resources and opportunity these young men could become successful contributing members of society.

Flanagan designed Boys Town to function as a real-world training ground with a "mayor," post office, chapel, and gym. Boys between the ages of 10 and 16 could complete their education and learn a trade to aid in future employment.

Today, Boys Town includes juvenile justice reform as a core part of its mission, believing "in rehabilitation and redemption for kids, rather than punishment and incarceration.



George Williams was born into a large farming family in Somerset, England in 1821. At an early age, he was sent by his family to London to learn a trade and apprentice as a draper. Williams was shocked by the working conditions, as well as the lack of healthy physical activity for young men living in the squalid urban back alleys of London at that time.

He was inspired to create a safe place for these young men to gather, to encourage each other in faith and good works, and to address the social issues he saw around him. Along with eleven friends, Williams founded the Young Men's Christian Association, or the YMCA, on June 6, 1844. The concept of athletic pursuits and community-building to aid in overall fitness and mental health was revolutionary at the time.

Today, the YMCA is one of the largest nonprofits in the world, and it continues to share William's mission of empowering people to reach their full potential.

Famed author and naturalist **John Muir** was born in Scotland in 1838 and immigrated with his family to the United States in 1849. He discovered his lifelong passion for nature during a botany class at the University of Wisconsin in his early 20's. Muir left school to begin a traveling exploration of the United States, collecting and cataloging plant specimens and doing odd jobs to cover living expenses.

Muir awed by the overwhelming beauty of Yosemite during his first visit and deeply troubled by the damage that encroaching farms and ranches were beginning to cause. He devoted the remainder of his life to studying the unique geological and botanical features of Yosemite, the giant Sequoias, and the Sierra Nevada. He published academic papers, wrote articles for magazines, and worked tirelessly to draw others to his cause.

He successfully advocated for a Congressional bill to protect Yosemite as a national treasure and created what is known today as the National Park Service. Muir also founded and became the first president of the Sierra Club, an environmental organization focused on political advocacy to promote environmental policies.

