



Veterans' events for national convention

Since the November issue of *The Postal Record*, we have signed up more than 850 new members. With about 13,000 members total, our Veterans Group could do wonders in the community alongside local veteran programs. “Veterans helping veterans is something I truly believe in,” Assistant to the President for Community Services Christina Vela Davidson said.

Veterans and members of branches can get together and come up with a project to help local homeless veterans. They can clean gravesites or go visit veterans in assisted living homes who have no family. Other possibilities: volunteer at a VA hospital or form their own local Veterans Group to talk about their service days.

Our Veterans Group will be hosting a booth all week long at the 2020 National Convention. The veterans' project will be rededicating a memorial and collecting toiletries from the attending members to donate to the U.S. VETS for the homeless veterans' centers. We are “Veterans Helping Veterans.” Thank you for your service today, tomorrow and forever!

Tuesday, Aug. 18—We will fill 1,500 homeless care kit bags for displaced Honolulu veterans.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has collected data showing a substantial decrease in homelessness among veterans. While this reduction is encouraging, the needs of veterans struggling with homelessness, unemployment and other barriers to reintegration still exist. Of the veterans living in the U.S. today, 63,000 are chronically homeless. Veterans make up a disproportionate amount of the homeless population. This is why we help.

Hawaii has an estimated homeless population of 6,530 people, of which more than 500 are veterans. Some of the major Hawaiian charities that assist veterans are listed below:

- U.S. VETS is the nation's largest nonprofit provider of comprehensive services to homeless and at-risk veterans. U.S. VETS has helped veterans and their families transition by providing housing, counseling, career development and comprehensive support.
- Barber's Point at Kalaeloa serves nearly 1,000 homeless and at-risk veterans throughout the state of Hawaii each year. Barber's Point provides affordable, long-term, supportive housing and is home to the U.S. VETS's signature work re-entry program,

Veterans in Progress.

- Waianae Civic Center is the only U.S. VETS location that provides services to veterans, civilians and their families. WCC began serving the Hawaii homeless population in March 2007 and currently serves 300 men, women and children each day.
- Catholic Charities Hawaii is designed to assist veterans in search of temporary or permanent housing, our Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program is here to help. The program helps homeless veterans or those at risk of homelessness and their families achieve housing stability by providing them with resources for transitional or long-term housing.

Wednesday, Aug. 19—Second, we will be rededicating the war memorial that honors Hawaiians who died in World War II. This will also be during the evening workshops. Transportation will be provided for any veterans who would like to be present at the rededication (the memorial is a little over a mile from the convention center).

This memorial was first dedicated on Dec. 7, 1944. It has a concrete base and a wooden shaft about 18 feet high. The shaft is decorated near the top with four carvings out of monkey pod wood. Facing the mountains is a huge American eagle clutching 13 arrows and an olive branch. The opposite side, looking toward the ocean, has a carving of the Hawaiian coat-of-arms. The side toward Waikiki has a carving of the olive branch of peace. The remaining side has a carving of the shield of the United States. Olive branches decorate both ends of the memorial's front base, and the 880 names are carved into both sides of the monument (see photo below).

Ron Han, Director, State Office of Veterans Services, stated, “This structure was intended as a temporary memorial that has

withstood the test of time and the elements for over 70 years. The State Office of Veterans Services in Hawaii is very appreciative to the NALC for helping to sponsor the rededication of the WWII Memorial on the corner of Punchbowl St. and King St.” Han continued, “When the NALC has their National Convention in Hawaii this August, the memorial will be rededicated honoring the distinguished service of military members of the “Greatest Generation” along with their families. We're are very grateful to NALC for their generosity and for supporting this special project!”

