

THE AMERICAN VETERAN
FEBRUARY 2007 EDITION

SEGMENT TITLE: THE AMERICAN LEGION

KANE FARABAUGH, HOST: IF YOU ARE A VETERAN OR SOON TO BECOME A VETERAN, YOU SHOULD BE AWARE OF THE MANY SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS THAT EXIST JUST TO SERVE YOU. TODAY THE AMERICAN LEGION IS THE LARGEST VETERANS ORGANIZATION WITH POSTS LOCATED WORLDWIDE. LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT ONE POST IS DOING IN THEIR HOMETOWN TO HELP ONE RETURNING VETERAN.

COKE ARIAIL, REPORTER: IN WICHITA, KANSAS, POST 136 IS HELPING MASTER SERGEANT JUANITA MILLIGAN WITH SOME NEEDED HOME RENOVATION.

GREG HANSEN, AMERICAN LEGION POST 136: IT KIND OF REMINDS YOU OF IN THE OLD FARM DAYS, WHEN SOMEBODY DID A BARN RAISING THE WHOLE COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD WOULD SHOW UP.

ARIAIL: FOR JUANITA, THE AMERICAN LEGION HAS BEEN A BLESSING, SHE CAN STILL REMEMBER HER FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH THEM.

JUANITA MILLIGAN, US ARMY, OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM: I HAVE 30 PEOPLE IN MY LIVING ROOM AND THEY OFFER ME GRATITUDE FOR MY SERVICE. IT'S JUST AN UNBELIEVABLE FEELING.

ARIAIL: IT WAS ON HER SECOND TOUR OF DUTY IN IRAQ THAT MASTER SERGEANT MILLIGAN WAS INJURED.

MILLIGAN: I WAS WOUNDED BY A ROADSIDE BOMB.

ARIAIL: NOW SHE'S BACK HOME TRYING TO PUT THE PIECES OF HER FUTURE TOGETHER.

JUANITA MILLIGAN: I JUST HAVE TO FIGURE OUT HOW I CAN DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY.

ARIAIL: BUT BEFORE JUANITA COULD EVEN THINK ABOUT HER NEW LIFE, SHE NEEDED HELP WITH HER HOME.

HANSEN: SO WE ARE GOING TO PUT A CONCRETE PAD THERE FOR HER.

MILLIGAN: GREG SAID TO ME IS THERE ANYTHING THAT WE COULD DO AROUND THE HOUSE, YOU KNOW, TO HELP OUT A LITTLE BIT?

HANSEN: SHE HAD LET ME KNOW ABOUT SOME WATER PROBLEMS WITH WATER GETTING IN THE BASEMENT. LOOKS LIKE WE HAVE PLENTY OF DIRT OVER HERE WE NEED TO MAKE SURE THERE IS PLENTY OF SLOPE AWAY FROM THE HOUSE SO THE WATER WILL RUN ON OUT.

ARIAIL: NOT ONLY DID THE LEGION TACKLE THE WATER PROBLEMS THAT JUANITA WAS HAVING, THEY ALSO DECIDED TO DO THE MUCH NEEDED RE-LANDSCAPING OF THE ENTIRE YARD AND TO FINISH THE REST OF THE HOUSE.

HANSEN: WE'LL LET HER PICK OUT WHAT KIND OF LIGHT SHE WANTS UP HERE.

MILLIGAN: HE CHAMPIONED THIS WHOLE, FIXING MY YARD, RAISING THE LEVEL OF THE PAVER BOARDERS ON MY FLOWER BED SO I COULD SIT AT A LOWER LEVEL, GET OFF THE GROUND, TEND TO MY FLOWERS BECAUSE EVERY DAY AFTER WORK THAT'S THE FIRST THING I DID.

GREG HANSEN: THIS HOUSE WAS HER PRIDE AND JOY. IT'S ONE OF THE REASONS WHY SHE WENT AHEAD AND WENT OVER ON TWO DIFFERENT TOURS SO SHE COULD HELP KEEP THE HOUSE.

ARIAIL: BUT THIS IS ONLY ONE PROJECT AND ONE POST. FROM ITS FOUNDING IN 1919 THE AMERICAN LEGION HAS CREATED AND SUPPORTED A NUMBER OF PROGRAMS. AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE LEGION HAS ALWAYS BEEN ITS YOUTH PROGRAMS, SUCH AS BOY'S STATE AND BOY'S NATION.

JOHN MAX TAYLOR, PRESIDENT, AMERICAN LEGION BOYS NATION 2006: WHAT I'VE LEARNED FROM THE BOYS STATE AND BOYS NATION PROGRAMS, NOT ONLY A DEEP SENSE OF PATRIOTISM, BUT A SENSE OF DUTY IN REGARD TO PUBLIC SERVICE.

ANNOUNCER: PLEASE WELCOME THE 2006 ORATORICAL CONTEST CHAMPION.

ARIAIL: THEY SPONSOR A YEARLY ORATORICAL CONTEST WHERE STUDENTS WRITE AND PRESENT A SPEECH ON THE CONSTITUTION.

NICHOLAS ELLEDGE, NATIONAL ORATORICAL CHAMPION 2006: I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR WHAT IT DOES FOR THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS OF OTHER YOUTHS WHO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM.

ARIAIL: THIS YEAR'S WINNER RECEIVED AN EIGHTEEN THOUSAND DOLLAR SCHOLARSHIP. ANOTHER MAJOR PROGRAM IS AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL.

OVER 60 PERCENT OF OUR MAJOR LEAGUE PLAYERS PLAYED ON AN AMERICAN LEGION LITTLE LEAGUE TEAM.

THOUGH IT IS A NATIONAL VOICE FOR VETERANS, THE HEART OF THE LEGION IS ALWAYS ITS LOCAL EFFORTS. VOLUNTEERING LOCALLY AT VA MEDICAL CENTERS AND THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY HAS ALWAYS BEEN A MAJOR PART OF THE LEGION.

REGINA SCUFFHAM, AMERICAN LEGION POST 136: WE HELP OUT AT THE VA HOSPITAL, WE, HELP OUT THE NURSING HOMES.

ARIAIL: THROUGHOUT AMERICA, THE LEGION HAS BEEN MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF VETERANS AND THEIR COMMUNITIES SINCE ITS INCEPTION.

MILLIGAN: THEY WALKED INTO MY HOME AND JUST LIFTED MY SPIRITS AND I AM SO GLAD THEY ARE IN MY LIFE.

FARABAUGH: AMERICAN LEGION POST 136: ONE POST HELPING TAKE CARE OF ONE VETERAN. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE LEGION OR JUST LEARN MORE ABOUT THEM, VISIT THEIR WEB SITE AT: WWW.LEGION.ORG.

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THE AMERICAN VETERAN IS PRODUCED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS