

# ‘Start By Including Others’

## When deciding their 2025 VFW Day of Service event, Post 9644 worked with city officials to find out how they could make a positive difference in their city

May 06, 2025

To establish their 2025 VFW Day of Service event, leadership from Post 9644 in Sheridan, Colorado, worked with the mayor and other officials to find out how they could make a positive difference in their city. They identified Bear Creek Trail, a high-traffic area that needed attention, as their objective for a trail cleanup.

Frequently used by pedestrians, runners and bicyclists, Bear Creek Trail is an asset to the city. Post 9644 plans to spend a day cleaning up the trash and debris to make it an even more desirable location for locals to enjoy.

“By working together with the city, we ensured that our event wasn’t just symbolic — it met a real need and reinforced our Post’s deep commitment to Sheridan and its residents,” said Rachel Rodgers, treasurer, Post 9644.

Post Commander Todd Van Sant has a strong, genuine bond with the City of Sheridan Mayor and other community leaders. This helps ensure Post 9644 is involved in the conversations that shape the community, and their efforts are aligned with real needs.

“That mutual respect and cooperation turn one-day events into ongoing partnerships that strengthen both the Post and the city,” Rodgers said.

Post 9644 found that connecting with community members is an important aspect of planning a successful Day of Service. The Post shared its suggestions to help other Posts.

“Start by including others. We have long-standing relationships with our Scouts BSA troop, Venturing Scouts, Cub Scouts, and the Young Marines — all of whom bring a powerful presence to the day. Their involvement not only helps get the work done but also builds intergenerational connections and fosters leadership.”

### NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

406 W. 34th Street  
Kansas City, MO 64111

Office 816.756.3390  
Fax 816.968.1157

### WASHINGTON OFFICE

200 Maryland Ave., N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002

Office 202.543.2239  
Fax 202.543.6719

info@vfw.org  
www.vfw.org

In addition to youth groups, the Post is also grateful to their VFW Auxiliary for helping with the Day of Service. “Equally important is the support of our VFW Auxiliary, whose efforts in planning, logistics, hospitality and outreach help turn a simple service event into a full community celebration.”

Post 9644 values the lasting benefits of what might seem like a simple trail cleanup event.

“When you bring everyone to the table — veterans, youth, city leaders, families — you’re not just giving back. You’re building something bigger than a day. You’re building community.”

“It also helps reshape the narrative around veterans,” Rodgers added. “It highlights us not only as individuals who may need support, but as leaders, mentors, and contributors who are invested in the success and well-being of our communities.”