

VFW's National Day of Service

VFW Post in Kansas helps clean local housing facility

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Members of VFW Post 56 in Leavenworth, Kansas, carried out this year's fourth annual VFW National Day of Service project on May 3 at a local housing facility for veterans and civilians with severe and/or permanent mental health disabilities.

Volunteers gathered at Marion Apartments, a 10-unit facility owned by the nonprofit regional branch of Mental Health of America, where they cleaned the property and added new plants to the garden in hopes of creating a peaceful, healing space for residents.

"The reaction from their people was so amazing," said VFW Post 56 Commander Jamie Cox. "They joined in with us and helped rebuild their gardens and plant vegetables for consumption."

Cox, a Navy veteran who became the first female commander at Post 56 in May, is familiar with the needs and concerns of Marion Apartment residents, having worked closely with them as a housing specialist and case manager.

"Most of the people who live there suffer from food insecurity," Cox said. "I am there weekly for my regular job, and the vegetables are definitely being eaten. They always ask when they see me if we can come cook for them again."

The Post's commitment to those living on the margins of society, according to Cox, exemplifies the VFW's core values of bringing veterans and their communities together to work and uplift one another.

"Those we serve love the social interaction and working with our members," Cox said. "More than one expressed their gratitude for not being forgotten about. They feel seen and valued. Our members get to perform acts of service, and we love doing that."

Cox added that continuing to participate in these annual VFW National Day of Service projects also amplifies the Post's visibility within the community, as it resonated with

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dozens of local volunteers who joined members in beautifying Marion Apartments this year.

“The event was widely talked about for weeks after,” Cox said. “We were humbled and grateful for our community’s support when we asked for volunteers. These projects in our community benefit everyone.”

This article is featured in the 2025 August issue of Checkpoint. If you're a VFW member and don't currently receive the VFW Checkpoint, please contact VFW magazine at magazine@vfw.org.