

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution Proudly Honors



Patriot of the Month

October 2020



Betty Gonzales

United States Marine Corps

Sponsored by:
Caroline Close Stuart
Chapter

Betty enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in August 1968 in Cincinnati, Ohio. During Basic Training at Parris Island, SC, Betty was selected to participate in the Marine Corp's Accounting School at Camp Lejuene in North Carolina. After an intensive three-month course, Betty was assigned to the Marine Corps Duty Station at San Diego, California, as a Dispersing Clerk.

At this time in US History, women in the military were not given the opportunity to serve in combat positions but were asked to serve in a variety of essential, non-combat roles, that would "free a man to fight." Betty served for three years, achieved the rank of Corporal E-4, and received the National Defense Medal. She was honorably discharged from active duty in 1971.

After separating from the Marine Corps and transitioning to civilian life, Betty and her husband John started a family and eventually moved to St. Louis, Missouri. Betty used the skills she learned while in the military to become a banking/customer service professional, spending more than 35 years at Regions Bank. In 1999, Betty joined the American Legion, Post 404, Missouri's first all women veterans' post, and rose through the ranks of the American Legion, holding officer positions including Commander of Post 404, District Commander of the 11th & 12th District, and ultimately, she was the first woman to serve as the Missouri State Commander, a position she held from 2016 to 2017. The American Legion, first chartered in 1919 in St Louis, Missouri, was created to serve veterans returning from war and now is the largest veterans' organization in the United States, with over two million members. Betty embodies the American Legion's commitment to service for veterans, patriotism, and camaraderie.

Betty has also served the veterans' community through her involvement in the FOCUS Marine Corps Foundation as a team leader and as a rifleman in the Military Funerals Detail at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery. She also acts as advisor to State and National leaders on Veterans Issues and is the Ambassador for Missouri for the Women in Military Service of America, the only military women's museum in the United States, located next to Arlington National Cemetery in Washington DC.

Caroline Close Stuart Daughters are proud to honor and recognize Betty Gonzales as Patriot of the Month for her patriotism and invaluable service to our great nation and its veterans.

