

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution

Proudly Honors

Patriot of the Month

March 2024



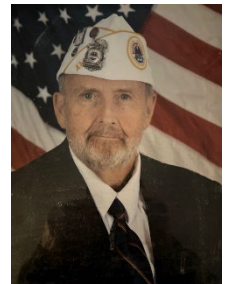
Joseph E. Grohs, Jr.

United States Army

Sponsored by:

Louisiana Purchase Chapter, NSDAR

Joseph E Grohs Jr. enlisted in the United States Army in September 1973. He tried to convince his dad to give him permission to join after his Junior year at Festus High as he had the necessary credits. However, his dad remembered his military duties in WWII and objected claiming Joe was too young as he was only seventeen. After graduating from Festus High and attending Jefferson College, he still had the desire to be a Medic in the military and he then enlisted.



Following basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, MO, he was assigned to Fort Sam Houston, TX for Advanced Individual Training for Combat Medics. Some of the skills he was taught were patient care techniques and emergency medical techniques.

Completing the AIT, he was then assigned to the 130th Station Evac Hospital in Heidelberg, Germany. Working in the Burn Unit Trauma Center was very disturbing. “An accident that I clearly remember involved 198 injured combat engineers on a bridge accident and 19 didn’t survive.” Joe said that the young soldiers would beg for their mom and plead to him not to leave them alone. The most interesting part of my military career was being able to help injured soldiers, both medically and emotionally.

There was a hate group in Heidelberg in the 70’s called the Red Army. They did car bombings on military and civilian cars. They tried to bomb the Veterans Hospital, but the second bomb malfunctioned. Joe made a promise to God at that time. He said, “God, please get me home safe. I have learned a lot through this. I will make this promise to work for the benefit of others as long as I live.” And Joseph Grohs has kept that promise.

Honorably discharged in October 1976, he received the following medals: National Defense, Good Conduct, European Good Conduct, Overseas European Theater and Marksman. His best advice he received in the service was to take the military skills and lessons he learned and apply them to civilian life.

Following his military service, Joe returned to civilian life and continued his education at St Louis University with a degree in Mass Communication and Research and Washington University for

graduate school in School of Engineering Telecommunications. He retired from Southwestern Bell Company as a Senior Systems Engineer after 20 years.

His hobbies are now limited because of his health, but they include reading historical military books, computer research, helping other vets and he is an avid sports fan. He served as Festus Mayor from 1986-1991 He is a member of the VFW; Amvets, Past Dept Commander; and American Legion 40+8.

He is proud to say that his father, uncles, and cousins were in the military. Joe met his wife, Dorthy in Heidelberg Germany. She was recruited as a Department of Army Civilian and worked in the 130th Station Hospital for 2 ½ years. She retired from John Cochran Veterans Hospital in St Louis after working there for 40 years.

In keeping his promise, Joe has made 3 outstanding services to our community after he served his country in the United States Army.

1. Started an Outreach Center for Veterans along with Amvets Post 42 providing Family counseling, helping the Veterans obtain their health benefits and transporting Veterans to Jefferson Barracks and John Cochran Hospital. Because of Covid and Joe's health, they had to close after two years, but plans are made to get it started again. They helped 180 Veterans do paperwork needed to apply for compensation.
2. Started 1st Human rights commission based on his experience of Race relations in US Army. With the encouragement of a friend, he helped to resurrect the Zion Cemetery along with Amvets Post 171. They built a platform, monument, steps, and railing. Local clergy and youth helped to clean the overgrown 8 or 9 acres and clear the road. They have discovered 20 Veterans graves so far. There are many unidentified graves and soldiers buried from the 11th Missouri Calvary of the 1st whole Black Unit in Civil War. They now have an active Cemetery Board and pay for maintenance of the cemetery.
3. POW-MIA Museum at Jefferson Barracks Historic District. With the initiative of Joe Grohs and US Congressman Russ Carnahan, the Museum is open to reverently honor all who served our country in any branch of the United States Military who were captured by enemies of the United States or who are missing in action from any year and from any conflict. The Mission is to raise awareness of the American public to the numbers of captured Americans who returned to us alive and to the numbers of those who perished in captivity and those who have not returned to us for the homage they deserve.

The Daughters of the Louisiana Purchase Chapter NSDAR are proud to nominate Joseph E. Grohs Jr. as Patriot of the Month and extend their gratitude for his patriotic service and commitment to our great nation.