

Post Commander Helps Coordinate Pandemic Response

Post 1018 gets veterans vaccinated – including VFW National Commander Hal Roesch

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“I am **#StillServing** by remaining active with the VFW as a Post Commander and coordinating with other organizations to be responsive to the current situation in our city and state,” said Craig DeOld, a VFW Bronze Legacy Life member and Post Commander of Boston Police VFW Post 1018 in the Dorchester neighborhood of Boston.

DeOld served in the U.S. Army Reserve for nearly 20 years, including deployments to Bosnia for Operation Joint Forge and Qatar for Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. His experience taking on missions in the military prepared him well to lead his Post in helping the Boston community during the COVID-19 crisis.

“Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Police Post has been willing and responsive to assist the veterans in our community, as well as the greater community at large,” DeOld stated.

Early in the pandemic, the VFW Department of Massachusetts collaborated with the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency in the collection of personal protective equipment (PPE). This helped get PPE donated by citizens and businesses to first responders and medical personnel throughout the state who needed supplies.

“The Boston Police Post 1018 was one of many Posts in the state that immediately responded and opened their doors as collection points for the donated PPE to be collected by the Massachusetts National Guard,” said DeOld.

The Post also has conducted food distribution events sponsored by the Massachusetts Military Support Foundation and blood drives for the American Red Cross. They offered their hall for coronavirus testing since it was closed for much of 2020, but the space was not an ideal location due to size. As COVID-19 vaccines became available, the Post was

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contacted by the VA Boston Healthcare System about hosting vaccination clinics.

In February, the Post held a vaccination clinic for eligible veterans to receive the first dose of the Moderna vaccine. A follow-up clinic was coordinated for mid-March for the second dose of the vaccine. The VA also lined up additional Moderna vaccines and the Johnson & Johnson vaccine to distribute at the Post.

It turned out that the Post was able to welcome a special guest who got vaccinated at their March event: VFW Commander-in-Chief Hal Roesch.

“I had notified the VFW Department of Massachusetts leadership of the clinics to keep them in the loop of our current events,” DeOld recalled.

“The date of the second clinic coincided with the Commander-in-Chief’s visit to our state. Fortunately, the times of the clinic fit in his busy schedule, so he was able to visit our Post and receive his vaccine.”

DeOld is extremely proud that his Post had the opportunity to help Commander Roesch and all the other veterans who wanted to get vaccinated. He feels the efforts of Post 1018 members to support fellow veterans and the community through vaccine distribution and other service initiatives over the past year are simply a reflection of who they are – veterans still answering the call of duty.

“Throughout the pandemic, we have stood ready to assist our community in any way possible,” said DeOld.

He knows that will continue as long as needed.

To find out more about the VFW's #StillServing campaign or to share your story, visit vfw.org/StillServing.