

Women's History Month

Introduction

Written by Vanessa Fischer

In 1987, Congress declared March as National Women's History Month. This month, in conjunction with International Women's Day on March 8, is set aside as a time to highlight the contributions of women in regards to historical and contemporary events. A Presidential Proclamation is issued every year which honors the extraordinary achievements of American women.

In honor of Women's History month the Lebanon County Commission for Women (LCCW) will be contributing a series of articles each Sunday throughout the month of March. This series will showcase the courageous trailblazers who paved the way for women to serve in the United States military. As the roles of women have changed over the decades, so has the service they have provided to our country. During World War I, most American women assumed the role of a nurse, caring for the wounded soldiers returning home from the front lines. Today, women are now being considered to join the front lines, actively engaging in combat alongside their male counterparts. As we celebrate the achievements of women throughout history we not only look to what has been accomplished in the past, but are honored to be a part of the history that is being written through the lives of women throughout Lebanon County every day.

In its most elementary form, history is story. Therefore, the LCCW is delighted to share with you the stories of the following women from Lebanon County who have served not only our community, but our country. The journey will begin with the Folmer Family, whose matriarch was the first woman from Lebanon County to serve in the military. In the weeks that follow, the stories of Marion Grace Colvin and Marian Light Hess, the two known women from Lebanon County who served in World War II still living, will be shared. The series will conclude with the stories of Wanda Bechtold (Vietnam) and Jessica Wright (Army, current), who will provide their perspectives on how the treatment and inclusion of women in the military has shifted over the years. These women represent a small sample of those from Lebanon County who have given of their lives to help secure the freedom of our country. A list of all registered women from Lebanon County who have served in the United States Armed Forces will be published on <<insert date>>.

As we take a closer look at the individuals who have contributed to the excellent legacy of women from Lebanon County, we invite you to join us during the month of March to honor the women in your lives and this community for their contributions in making our world a better place for all humanity through their presence and the sacrificial generosity of their gifts and talents.

For more information on Women's History Month, visit the National Women's History Project at www.nwhp.org.

For more information on the Lebanon County Commission for Women, visit www.lebcounty.com/womens_commission.