

# VFW Ritual Team services veteran families 'because it is in all of our hearts'

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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The VFW Post 1308 Ritual Team seems to be everywhere servicing veteran families.

This past Saturday, the team performed one of its more emotional colors, 21-gun salute and taps presentations for the family of fallen World War II hero Paul Bensman at Marquette High School.

This past year, the group participated in 129 funerals and has 38 appearances at funerals so far this year and will hit 100, Dave Stout, of the VFW Post, said.

“We were honored to be invited to the Paul Bensman event,” he said. “It is not often you get to do something for someone who died in 1944 in 2015. That was special. The family put a lot of work in and you could tell and it was special just to be able to be part of it. We always try to come across as professional as possible.”

Harry Kortkamp, the post commander, joined Stout in the special presentations during the Bensman program. Others who were part of the VFW team in the program were Alfred Valdes, Arthur Moore, Dave Eckhouse, Lou Carter and Bill Perkins.

Stout said the presentation at Marquette was also special to him because his father graduated from the same 1939 class at the high school.

“That generation was special,” he said of the World War II veterans. “There were 400,000 of them who never came home alive. I think our presence there was a positive addition.”

Stout made a comment that probably sums up how all those who participate in the VFW Ritual Team feel: “We don’t do it for headlines, but we do it because it is in our hearts,” he said.