

# FAWMA FOCUS

*Friends of the U. S. Army Women's Museum ASSOCIATION*

## A Quarterly Newsletter

4th Quarter of 2022

### From the Co-Presidents...

Hello Friends!

Happy 2023! We always like to start the new year by recognizing you, our friends and donors. We can never thank you enough for your support of our beloved Army Women's Museum! And speaking of support, we were literally blown away by your generosity during our Giving Tuesday Campaign 2022. Our goal was to raise \$12,000 and thanks to you, we raised over \$20,000! And we want to reassure you that we are dedicated to being good stewards of your donations. We invite you to check out Charity Navigator, where FAWMA is rated a Four-Star Charity (the highest level) and also rated Platinum (highest level) on GuideStar.

FAWMA plans to continue expanding our outreach efforts this year, both on social media and through good old fashioned "personal connections." We enjoyed supporting our cherished WAC organizations this past year, which included a WAC Convention in Killeen, TX, as well as the WAC Band's Reunion and final performance at Ft. McClellan, AL—the home of the WAC Museum, which became what we now know as the Army Women's Museum at Fort Lee.

Our outreach also included participation in the National Social Studies Conference in December. Our digital educator, Micaela, connected with many schools and museums to highlight the AWM and our award-winning free educational programs.

Continued on Page 2

### Board of Directors

Co-President	COL (R) Aimee Kominiak
Co-President	Ms. Cydnee C. Gentry
Vice President	Vacant
Secretary	COL (R) Mary Beth Taylor
Treasurer	Ms. Luanne Kolleda
Past President/At Large	LTC (R) Delinda Creal
At Large	Ms. Secille Siverio
	SFC (R) Gail Taylor-Black
	MAJ (R) Flo Dunn
	Ms. Vicki Archileti



**FRIENDS OF THE ARMY WOMEN'S MUSEUM ASSOCIATION**

P.O. BOX 1027, PRINCE GEORGE, VA 23875

PHONE: 804.734.5742

E-MAIL: [ltfawma@gmail.com](mailto:ltfawma@gmail.com)

## Co-President's Message continued...

Finally, FAWMA is supporting outreach to the families and friends of the 6888<sup>th</sup> Central Postal Directory Battalion for special artifacts to build an exhibit to showcase the extraordinary achievements of the women and the unit during WWII.

In the spirit of "connecting," we invite you to connect with us, either through social media, email, a letter or a phone call. We look forward to expanding the community of those who are passionate about the AWM!

As we always say, "Teamwork makes the dream work!" Join our team!

Aimee and Cydnee  
FAWMA, Co-Presidents



Co-Presidents Cydnee Gentry and Aimee Kominiak



## Curator's Corner

Happy New Year!

As we head into 2023, we have many exciting projects on the horizon. First, though, I want to tell you about some of our accomplishments during the last quarter of 2022. Much to our delight, the commemorative brick area at the museum received a renovation and expansion. These personalized bricks are an important way for FAWMA and the AWM to build a community of stakeholders who feel they have a "place" at the museum. With the upgrade, the brick area is even more beautiful than before. Last quarter we were also able to complete two major marketing products through the support of a FAWMA Cameron Grant. Designer Travis Wolfrey did a wonderful job creating both an AWM Media Kit as well as an Educational Brochure. These products are part of a larger marketing strategy to help build awareness about the AWM and the programs we provide. The 16-page Media Kit provides an overview of the museum, mission, gallery highlights, facility features, and educational products. The new Educational Program Flyer for the AWM Live Broadcast Studio contains detailed information about seven education programs offered to K-12 and adult learners. Both publications can be found on our website at <https://awm.lee.army.mil/>. Finally, the plans for our 6888<sup>th</sup> Central Postal Directory Battalion Exhibit are in full swing. This exhibit is a true partnership between the AWM, FAWMA, and the Center of Military History. We have met with several families who are donating archives and artifacts to the museum and our exhibit designer, Steve Feldman, is finishing up the concept plan. Our goal is to open the exhibit early in 2024.

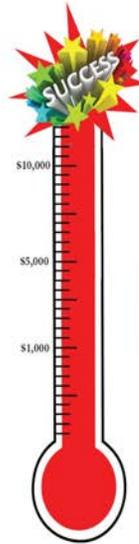
I want to wish you all a Happy New Year and say thank you for your very generous and continued support of the U.S. Army Women's Museum.

Sincerely,  
Tracy

Aim your smart phone camera at this QR code and discover a new way to continue supporting your legacy!

## Spotlight...

WE DID IT  
#GIVING  
TUESDAY  
THANK YOU



RAISED: \$20,474

GOAL: \$12,000

Thank You!



#GIVINGTUESDAY



We are so thankful to our donors! Giving Tuesday netting more than \$20,000 in support to telling the story of our Army Women's Museum!

We are proud of our Charity Navigator Four-Star status and Platinum Seal of Transparency for 2023 with Candid!

Platinum  
Transparency  
2023

Candid.

## FAWMA Admin Assistant jumps into research!

Recently, the AWM was asked to identify the first WAAC OCS graduate on 29 AUG 1942. This question was generated from a comment in Charity Adams' book, [One Woman's Army: A Black Officer Remembers the WAC](#), in which she noted, "Traditionally, at Army graduation exercises the candidates are presented according to the company roster, which is the way we were listed in the program. For our graduation the class was presented by platoon." As a result, Adams, who was listed first in the Graduation Program, was not the first woman commissioned in the WAAC. Danna, FAWMA's Administrative Assistant and AWM's budding archivist/researcher, sunk her teeth into this question and was able to identify the first WAAC graduate was Mary Bell Armstrong of Cleveland, Ohio, who was listed fourth in the program after Charity Adams, Frances Alexander (both in Third Platoon), and Ruth Allen, who was in the Second Platoon.

Danna said, "One of my favorite aspects of the work that I do at the museum is the ability to search the archives to discover important moments in U.S. Army women's history. What I love about helping with research requests is the search for clues from our archives here at the Army Women's Museum. For this inquiry, I started with the date of the first WAAC OCS graduation. Armed with that important piece of the puzzle, along with the alphabetical list of the Officers First Class from the graduation program, I began searching through the museum's archives for anything that would provide a further breakdown of the platoons in the First Company – First Regiment. My search led to newspaper clippings about WAACs in service at Fort Des Moines in 1942, in which I found the answer: Mary B. Armstrong was the first WAAC to graduate and be officially commissioned as an officer in the United States Women's Army Auxiliary Corps! Because we only had the last page of the two-page article, I supplemented this find with a quick search on Newspapers.com, where I then found the beginning of the article on the front page of that edition of the Des Moines Tribune, and a photo of Mary Armstrong receiving her diploma. What an exciting find!



Maj. Gen. Frederick E. Uhl, commanding officer of the seventh service command, handed diploma to Mary Bell Armstrong of Cleveland, Ohio, the first WAAC graduate to mount the platform and receive her commission as a third officer.

**"FAWMA Focus"** is published four times a year to inform donors about what the Association is doing to support the U.S. Army Women's Museum. No part of the newsletter may be quoted, reproduced, or used in any form, or by any means, electronic or mechanical, or by any information storage and/or retrieval system, without our specific permission.

**DONATIONS**  
**OCTOBER 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2022**

**SUSTAINING PARTNERS**  
**\$1,000.00 TO \$200,000.00**

CW3 (R) DIANA O. RUSSELL  
MAJ (R) FLORENCE I. DUNN  
MRS. CYDNEE C. GENTRY  
COL (R) PATRICIA JERNIGAN  
COL (R) AIMEE L. KOMINIAK  
MAJ (R) BETTY G. LINNEY  
COL (R) MARY BETH TAYLOR  
THE CAMERON FOUNDATION  
WAC BAND

**PARTNERS**  
**\$250.00 TO \$999.99**

AMERICAN LEGION POST 284  
MS. VICKI ARCHILETTI  
HOLLY BUNDOCK  
HELEN GILLESPIE  
CW5 (R) CANDY MARTIN  
LTC (R) MARY E. O'BRIEN  
JOHN TAYLOR

**THANK YOU to our  
Donors!**

**FRIENDS INDEED**  
**\$100.00 TO \$249.99**

BUNNY AMBROSE  
MRS. DEBRA K. BISSETT  
PAMELA COLLUM  
MRS. MARGARET DONALDSON  
FLORELLA C. ESAFE  
SARAH JOY FITE  
MRS. "JANIE" ROWENA FOGG  
ETHAN GENTRY  
SGM (R) ANGELA HUTH  
AMY JONES  
TIMOTHY KENDRICK  
LORI MARCHAND  
NETWORK FOR GOOD  
MSG SUSANA PETERSON  
KARI ANNE SHULMAN  
GAIL TAYLOR-BLACK  
MS. DIANE M. THEISS

**FRIENDS**  
**\$35.00 TO \$99.99**

MJ BOWERS  
DEBORAH KIEWRA DAVIS  
RANDEEN ESPINOZA  
TAYLOR GENTRY  
ELIZABETH HELM-FRAZIER  
MRS. LUANNE KOLLEDA  
LTC (R) JUDITH C. PRUITT  
DEBBY SCHALLER  
MS. MELISSA SQUIZZERO-LEE

**DONOR**  
**\$1.00 TO \$34.99**

JENNIFER EASLEY FITCH  
TERRI GAITHER  
CHESTER GAYLE  
PAM HARTMANN  
JAYME JONES SUTTON  
RACHEL KIM  
MILO PYNE

**We can now accept electronic donations!**



If you are interested in donating to the AWM or the new 6888th exhibit, click on our Donate Button <https://armywomensmuseum.org/donate/> on our website or aim your smart phone camera at this QR code.

# Happening at the Museum...

MG Mark Simerly, Commander of the Combined Arms Support Command, filmed his 2022 Veterans Day NBC 12 news segment at Army Women's Museum. He made sure to mention how important the museum is in capturing and interpreting Army women's history for the nation.



It has been such an honor to work with 6888<sup>th</sup> Central Postal Directory Battalion families as we prepare for our upcoming exhibit! In October, we met Carmen and Karen, daughters of PFC Annie Knight Jordan, and this month we met Janice, daughter of PFC Indiana Hunt-Martin. Luckily for us, both 6888<sup>th</sup> WACs did a wonderful job of documenting their Army experiences. In the top photo, Carmen and Karen are sharing their mother's wealth of archives and below Janice is standing next to a photo of her mother and holding a jewelry box made for Indiana by a German POW in Rouen, France. Also in the photo is 6888<sup>th</sup> advocate, historian, and great friend of the museum, Edna Cummings. Thanks to all these women for helping us research and prepare for our new 6888<sup>th</sup> exhibit!

The AWM was featured in the December 2022 issue of AUSA's Army magazine. The article featured the AWM curator, Tracy Bradford who talked about the uniform changes for women in the Army and how the history of women in uniform has been intimately shaped by their contributions during several major conflicts.



## BRICK CAMPAIGN

Do you want to be a part of history? Order a customized brick that will be placed in the landscape areas around the outside of the US Army Women's Museum. Donate a brick as a lasting tribute to honor a service member, a civilian, a spouse, a friend, a family member, a retiree or yourself in support of our country, our service and our museum. For more information go to our website at: <https://thatsmybrick.com/armywmnsva>

IN MEMORY/ HONOR OF DONATIONS ARE WONDERFUL WAYS TO RECOGNIZE A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER AND SUPPORT THE U.S. ARMY WOMEN'S MUSEUM!  
 WHEN YOU MAKE AN IN MEMORY/ HONOR OF DONATION, PLEASE LET US KNOW THE NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE PERSON YOU WISH TO HAVE NOTIFIED ABOUT YOUR DONATION.

# Outreach and Community Events...

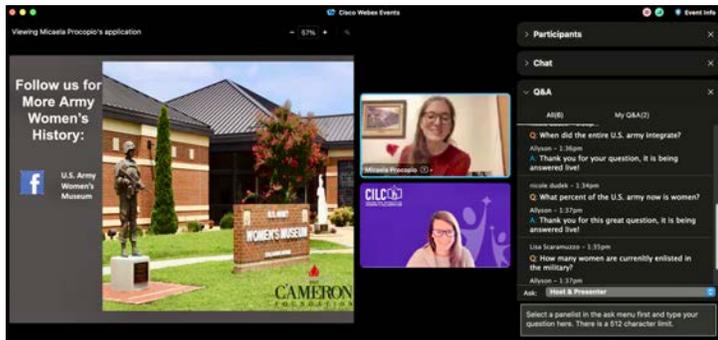


Staff members from the National Museum of the United States Army (NMUSA) Programs and Education Division visited the AWM in October. They toured the museum and met with the curator and AME Education Specialist to discuss K-12, Soldier, and adult education programs.

We had a wonderful visit from Floridians Pam and Nancy. They came to the AWM to celebrate the service of their aunt, WAC Rosanna P. Williams. Before she passed away last year at the age of 95, Rosanna requested a commemorative brick be placed at the museum. Rosanna served in the Women's Army Corps as a driver from 1951-1954 and was part of the All-Japan WAC Championship Softball team in 1953.



We enjoyed a wonderful visit from former WAC Pamela Lau Collum! Pam attended Fort Jackson BCT in 1976. She was featured in a magazine article that noted qualifying with the M16 Rifle had become one of the goals of WAC basic training. Pam served as an Army Medic from 1976-1995 and it was a real pleasure to meet her!



FAWMA Digital Education is alive and well. The "Island of Integration" program featuring the 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion was given on October 18th on the Center for Interactive Learning Platform.



Attending the National Council of Social Studies Conference in Philadelphia the first weekend in December.

# More Outreach and Community Events...

## Volunteer Recruitment and Retiree Day



The AWM had a successful fall volunteer recruiting season! We onboarded several new volunteers and have hosted a few team building/orientation opportunities. Our new crew members have selected to work in the archives, at the front desk, and as a supplemental deep cleaning crew. Thanks to all these wonderful new helpers!

Mary Beth Taylor, Aimee Kominiak, Cydnee Gentry, and Pat Jernigan attended Fort Belvoir Retirement and Appreciation Day on October 28<sup>th</sup>. The day brought together veterans, active-duty service members, community leaders, employers, and government agencies from the federal, state, and local levels to raise awareness about the services and benefits offered to veterans and active-duty military members. Over 300 participants attended and FAWMA was able to share our mission of supporting the Army Women's Museum.



## Veterans Day at Blackstone Primary School



FAWMA Board Member, Gail Black, was the guest speaker for 368 students at Blackstone Primary School. Students learned of the important roles of women in the US military during her program. She spoke about the AWM, her experiences as a Soldier, and she gave out some goodies. Mrs. Ott's classroom was happy to send their regards and excited to receive AWM lunch bags. Gail's presentation was a great example of the power of FAWMA in helping with our outreach efforts.

**Yes, I will support the U.S. Army Women's Museum with my tax-deductible donation!**

\$35  \$50  \$100  \$250  \$500  \$1000  \$1200  \$1500  \$2000  \$3000 Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter/Post/Unit \_\_\_\_\_

Civilian  Military  Rank/Grade  Active Duty  Former  Retired  Reserve

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Expires \_\_\_\_\_ Card Security Code \_\_\_\_\_ Billing Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

VISA  MasterCard  Discover  Signature \_\_\_\_\_

My donation is \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of the 688<sup>th</sup> Central Postal Directory Battalion \_\_\_\_\_

My donation is **In Memory of** \_\_\_\_\_

My donation is **In Honor of** \_\_\_\_\_

My check is enclosed and made out to: FAWMA

*The Friends Association is an all-volunteer, 501(c)(3) nonprofit, educational organization. Financial documents are available from:  
State Division of Consumer Affairs, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, P.O. Box 1163, Richmond, VA 23218*

**FRIENDS OF THE ARMY WOMEN'S MUSEUM ASSOCIATION**, P.O. Box 1027, Prince George, VA 23875  
804-734-5742 or email us at [Itfawma@gmail.com](mailto:Itfawma@gmail.com)

**FRIENDS OF THE ARMY WOMEN'S MUSEUM ASSOCIATION  
P.O. BOX 1027, PRINCE GEORGE, VA 23875**