

Aide de Camp to VFW National Commander Named 'Man of the Year'

Jan 26, 2009

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Robert M. Craig, Commander of VFW Post 5180 in Seale, Alabama, has been named the Men's Progressive Club of Georgia's "2008 Man of the Year."

The Men's Progressive Club of Georgia was chartered in 1949, for the purpose of ensuring equal rights for all citizens. Holding true to its purpose, each year, the organization nominates men who have made a difference in the community as well as served his fellow man. Of those nominees, only one is awarded "Man of the Year."

Awards have been given to public servants, preachers, state officials, and county officials that give back to the community and are a positive influence in making their community a better place for all who reside there.

What makes this year's award unusual however, is historically, the award has always been given to a resident of the state of Georgia, where the organization is based. The reason for this year's out-of-state winner is due in large part to the chartering of VFW Post 5180's "Help for Heroes" program.

The "Help for Heroes" program's volunteer force (affectionately called Mule Team One) has completed over \$20,000 worth of work at veterans homes in the past seven months at no cost to the veterans. Material is donated by volunteers and local merchants, while Mule Team One provides the labor at no cost.

Commander Craig implemented the program to encourage volunteers from the local community to join in on projects that aid and assist needy veterans in improving their quality of life through free home repairs, construction of handicap ramps, porches, roof repairs and any other item that the veteran may need to make his life a little easier.

In 2008, Craig's post also sponsored free Christmas parties for needy children, complete with gifts and pictures of Santa. He also planned a visit to the Ft. Benning hospital during Christmas to pass out gifts, cards, fruit baskets and books to every patient and staff member.

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Furthermore, Craig's secret santa program gave away approximately \$4,000 worth of gifts to families that were experiencing financial hardships, due to no fault of their own.

Craig has accepted the "Man of the Year" award stating, "This award goes to the volunteers, Mule Team One, at Post 5180. We're a small Post doing big things."

He now is working with the Men's Progressive Club of Georgia and the Urban League to assist the needy Columbus' needy in improving their quality of life.

Stories and pictures of Post 5180's work can be viewed at www.vfwpost5180.com.