

**The Robert H. Baker
American Legion Post 95
P.O. Box 417
Liberty, MO 64069-0417
roberthbakerpost95.com**



**THE LIBERTY
LEGIONAIRE
4th Quarter 2008**

**Printed by Veterans
for Veterans like:**

**We served our Country,...
Still serving our
Community**

Family Dinner Planned

Again this year, Post 95 is holding a family Christmas Dinner. The event will be held on **Tuesday, December 16 at 6:30 P.M.** followed by a short monthly post meeting. John Brown from the V. A. center will be at our December meeting for a 15 minute presentation. The Post will provide the meat dish; while members are ask to bring a covered dish. This is a chance for the ladies to show off their favorite Holiday dish.

Legionnaires are asked to bring pictures of their time in the service and wear your old service cap (we doubt anything else would still fit). This event is always a lot of fun.

If you know of anyone that is home and still on active duty or

reserve status, bring them along. We want to say "Thank You" to them for helping keep our Great Country Strong.

To get an accurate count on how much meat to order, we would like for you to **R.S.V.P. to Commander Ray Nichols at 781-0701 or Larry Allen at 628-1278.** Come on out and spend a little time with your Post 95 Legionnaire Family.

Bring a Christmas tree ornament for donation to a charity and bring a can of food to be donated to In As Much Ministry.

Cedars Bingo Date Change

Due to holidays Bingo at Cedars has been changed for December. We will have changed the date to December 19 at 6:30 PM.

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Donation

The Sertoma Club has donated \$1000 for the 2009 Boy's/Girl's

Correction

Apologies to Leroy Coe and Gale Coe, it was reported that Gale had passed away. Leroy's other brother Leon is the one who passed away. He was from Reeds Springs. Sorry for the error.

Funerals

As of Nov. 30, 2008 the honor team has done 58 funerals.

Marine Corps Birthday

November 10, 2008 marked the 233rd birthday of the United States Marine Corps. Every one join me in wishing our Marines a Happy Birthday

Birthday

Ray Merrell is 86 on Dec. 11.
Betty Shannon December 11.

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Commander's Corner
Ray Nichols, Commander
The year 2008 is almost gone and our American Legion Post has had another great year. Robert Emory has put most of our awards for the year on our web site,
<http://www.roberthbakerpost95.com/>
We want everyone to have access to look at the Post's accomplishments. Veterans Day was a busy day putting out 52 flags at Liberty Memorial, and all of the other events of the day. Don Happy, John Kopp and I finished up at 7 p. m. presenting the colors for a Veterans Day event at Lakewood elementary school. Everyone should remember to thank Hy-Vee for the great Veterans free breakfast and Golden Corral for their free dinner.
Flag etiquette is continuing to educate our 4th graders thanks to Mike Edwards, and a number of other very faithful helpers. For the remainder of the year and next year - keep up the good work. We are attracting Legion members from other posts due to the numerous activities we have. Participate wherever you can;

everyone at our post has a good time at all of our events. Make sure we keep on enjoying ourselves at every event the American Legion has.

FORGIVENESS
REV Donna Warren, Chaplain
We human beings are not naturally good at forgiveness. So far as I know, there is no "forgiveness gene" in our DNA. Forgiveness is just not something we are born with. Our natural reaction is to be more inclined toward getting even. We're more inclined toward, "an eye for an eye" than we are to "turning the other cheek."

One of the most natural things about this natural world is that people strive for dominance. We don't call it that, of course. We call it self-promotion, or we call it public relations, or sometimes we're a notch more honest and we just call it what it is, "power." But what it boils down to is the desire to take a step up the ladder, the desire to move ahead of the pack, the desire to become bigger, the desire to have more. We will do this anyway we can.

This is the natural world, and it's natural that we would do this.

Our genes are even wired this way. We're "wired" to try to be dominant.

But this is not what was in mind for God's people or of the world. Forgiveness is God's way. The New World of God's is built on a foundation of forgiveness.

That is what we see over and over in the life of Jesus. How many times did Jesus say, "Your sins are forgiven. Rise and walk." Or, "I forgive you. Rise and go on your way." Time after time, Jesus forgave sins, including the sins of those who killed him. This is what God has done for us, too. God has looked at every single sin we've ever done or ever will do, and God has said, "I forgive it. I will not let that stand between us. I toss all the sins out the window."

God would, of course, like it if we took this ball and ran with it. God would like to see an outbreak of forgiveness strike the whole world, which is what God has Christians for. Christians in the world shows the world what forgiveness of sins looks like.

From The Editor
On behalf of Post 95, Merry Christmas & Happy New Year.

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**The Importance of the National
Education Week And
Then American Legion**

By John F. Kopp

During World War I, "one out of four doughboys drafted for the A.E.F could not read the English language." Our own government statistics showed that the U.S. ranked eleventh in the world in literacy behind ten European countries.

From the very beginnings of the American Legion, Legionnaires began considering ways to foster good citizenship and the problem of illiteracy during the war was not forgotten. The Legion's national officers began discussions with their counterparts in the National Education Association in 1919 to formulate a plan to focus attention on public education. The idea agreed upon between these two great organizations was the proclaiming of one week each year during which the public would be reminded of both the accomplishments and needs of the school in their communities.

At their annual meeting in 1921, the N.E.A. board of directors welcomed "most heartily" and accepted "with great appreciation" the offer of the American Legion to "cooperate with the

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N.E.A. in securing for America a program of education adequate to meet the needs of the 20th century...and which will make all, whether native or foreign born, good American citizens."

The first National Education Week was scheduled for the week of December 4- 10, 1921. The American Legion, the newly formed American Legion Auxiliary, and the National Education Association went all out in promoting this very special week with radio announcements, church sermons, newspaper ads, special film clips in movie theaters, and word of mouth in all the school.

After this first year, the American Legion and N.E.A. were joined by the National Education Bureau. By 1923 the bandwagon had begun to roll and, by this time 150 other national organizations had joined in helping coordinate activities in communities across the land. The joint efforts of the Legion and the N.E.A. to promote National Education Week would continue for several decades.

*These and other facts in the above article were taken from "THE AMERICAN LEGION AN OFFICIAL HISTORY 1919-1989" by Thomas A. Rumer.

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Our American Press at Its Best

A lion at the zoo grabs a little girl from outside of its cage and pulls the little girl into the cage with him.

A man runs to the cage, hits the lion square on the nose with a powerful punch. Whimpering from the pain the lion jumps back letting go of the girl, and the man brings her to her terrified parents, who thank him endlessly.

A reporter has seen the whole scene, and addressing the man, says: "Sir, this was the most gallant and brave thing I saw a man do in my whole life."

"Why, it was nothing," said the man, "really, the lion was behind bars and I knew God would protect me just as He did Daniel in the lions den long, long ago. I just saw this little kid in danger, and acted as I felt was right."

"I noticed a bible in your pocket." said the journalist.

"Yes, I'm a Christian and was on my way to a bible study" the man replies.

"Well, I'll make sure this won't go unnoticed. I'm a journalist, you know, and tomorrow papers will have this on the first page."

The journalist leaves. The following morning the man buys the paper to see if it indeed brings news of his actions, and reads, on first page:

'Right Wing Christian Fundamentalist Assaults African Immigrant and Steals His lunch.

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The Lessons of Freedom

By Ed Eberle

On a recent trip to Honolulu, my main objective was realized when I visited the battleship Missouri, permanently anchored as a museum in Pearl Harbor just off Ford Island.

I first took the guided tour of this great and historic ship. Our guide gave us a brief history, allowed us to put on a helmet and slip into one of the turrets from which the 16-inch guns had been fired.

After the tour, I browsed the decks on my own for a couple of hours. I walked several sets of steps high up into the superstructure. Paused several times to look over the ship that at one time had a crew of more than 2,200 men.

There was one view that especially caught my attention, and put my memory into recollection of the days of World War II. That being the view out over the bow of this great ship, and in the not-so-distant view, the memorial that hovers over the battleship Arizona.

The two memorials were like giant bookends, or covers that were bringing back memories of that war. Beneath the memorial

that hovers over the sunken Arizona are the remains of hundreds of young sailors. Aboard the Missouri is a marker that states, "Over this spot on 2 September 1945, the instrument of formal surrender of Japan to the Allied Powers was signed".

Back to the day Japan delivered that sneak attack on Pearl Harbor: Our Navy was dealt a terrible blow. Yet they came back to be the finest and most powerful the world has ever seen.

My appreciation of the Navy grew, as it did when I was a young Marine sailing west out of Pearl Harbor in 1944 to a place we didn't know. On deck, and in the distance, ships could be seen in all directions. We were headed to the Mariana Islands. From there, our land-based planes would be able to bomb the homeland of the enemy.

Upon reaching our targeted island of Saipan, our Navy escorts joined a larger group of ships. A chain of protection was formed around the islands, and they continued shelling the beaches.

As our beach landings were occurring, the enemy was forming a task force of their own.

They were headed full speed to squash our whole operation.

According to the U.S. Navy Office of Naval Records and Library, in my words, the following took place:

Just three to four days after the beach landings began, advance Japanese planes from their task force had attacked part of our fleet. Two major air battles were fought near Guam, just a hundred miles to the south. A reported 500 or more Japanese planes took part. Our Navy pilots reportedly shot down 402.

The great loss of planes by the enemy, and two air craft carriers that were sunk by our submarines, caused them to pull back. Adm. Raymond Spruance (head of our task force) sailed his fleet west to seek out their main force. This turned out to be the beginning of what became known as the battle of the Philippine Sea.

Our advance search planes caught up with the enemy far to the west of our fleet. Our carriers sent out 216 planes. They used up a considerable amount of fuel by the time they reached and attacked their group near sunset. They were met with heavy anti-aircraft fire and a few fighter

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planes. After engaging the enemy for about 40 minutes, they were forced to break off the fight because of the shortage of fuel and darkness. They had sunk one carrier and two tankers. Four carriers, a battleship and a large cruiser were badly damaged. The remainders of enemy ships were last seen retreating at full speed toward Okinawa. Their carrier force was never much of a hindrance after that for the rest of the war.

After the battle, our pilots had the task of returning to their carriers in the dark. I had been envious of the Navy, having a place to sleep and hot food. But I would just as soon be back in my foxhole as have a fuel gauge nearing zero and scanning for a carrier that was only a speck in the large dark ocean.

Of those 216 planes that had taken off that afternoon, only 116 landed safely. Twenty were lost in battle and 80 lost at sea because of fuel shortages or deck crashes.

For those lost at sea, they had joined their comrades who were entombed in the Arizona.

All of this because of what the enemy had done to Pearl Harbor.

It is said by many that the real heroes of the war didn't come home. They had no chance to share their stories. To many who did return, it may have seemed braggadocio, or they did not choose to reveal their stories until later in life, and then found little interest. Many untold and interesting stories are being lost at an alarming rate each day as our veterans are passing from us.

As I walked down out of the superstructure of the Missouri, my eyes became moist, and my body trembled just a bit. I believe my heart may have been sending a message: That here is one Marine who is very proud of the men and women of our great Navy.

Together as a country we were a great team. Today we, our children and grandchildren are still living and enjoying the freedom preserved by that team.

May God continue to bless us all.

Army Humor

HAVE YOU HEARD: The Company Commander and the First Sergeant were in the field. As they hit the sack for the night, the First Sergeant said, "Sir, look up into the sky and tell me what you see?"

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The CO said, "I see millions of stars."

1st Sgt.: "And what does that tell you, sir?"

CO: "Astronomically, it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets. Theologically, it tells me that God is great and that we are small and insignificant. Meteorologically, it tells me that we will have a beautiful day tomorrow. What does it tell you, Top?"

1st Sgt.: "Well sir, it tells me that somebody stole our tent."

Pearl Harbor Day

December 7th is Pearl Harbor Day; flags should be flown at half mast in honor of all the brave soldiers who gave their lives to defend this great country. These young soldiers (many just "kids") made the supreme sacrifice.

The whole country made sacrifices for the war and we became a stronger country as a result.

Fly your flag proudly and on Pearl Harbor Day fly it at half mast. If ask why it is half mast give a short history lesson.

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Come Visit My Grave

By James Rolfes
Le Mars, Iowa

I am a Veteran under the sod.
I'm in good company; I'm up
here with God.

Come to My grave and visit me.
I gave my life so you could be
free.

Today is Memorial Day
throughout this great land.
There's Avenues of Flags, Pa-
rades and Bands.

I can hear music; the firing
squad and taps. Here come my
comrades, the Legion-aire, the
Blue Caps.

One of them just put a flag on
my stone. Some day he'll have
one of his own.

Some think of this day as just a
day free of toil, while others are
busy working the soil.

They say they have plans, other
things to do. Don't put us aside
as you would an old shoe.

Come visit my grave in the
cemetery so clean. This is what
Memorial Day means.

There are many of us lying in
wake less sleep, in cemeteries of
green and oceans of deep.

It's sad that for many who
fought so brave. No one comes to
visit their grave.

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They died so you could have
one whole year free. Now can't
you save this one day for me?

There are soldiers, sailors, air-
men up here. Who went into bat-
tle despite their fear.

I've been talking up here to all
of those men. If they had to do it
over, they'd do it again.

Look someone is coming to visit
my grave. It's my family, for
them, my life I gave.

My wife, I remember our last
embrace, as I left the tears
streamed down her face.

I think you knew the day I was
shipped out. I wouldn't return,
your life would be turned about.

There's my daughter that I used
to hold. Can it be that you're
nearly twenty years old?

Next month is to be your wed-
ding day. I wish I could be there
to give you away.

My son's here too, Dad's little
man. Always love your Country,
do for it what you can.

There is one thing that really
did bother. Is seeing you grow up
without the aid of your Father.

I wish you could all hear me
from up above. That's a fathers
best gift to his children is love.

And what better way to prove
my love to the end. Is that a man
lay down his live for his friends.

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I see it's time for you to go
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to remain here alone.

Don't cry honey, you look too
sad. Our children are free, you
should be so glad.

Daughter, thanks for the bou-
quet so cute, Thank you son, for
that sharp salute.

Come again, I forgot, you can't
hear me from up here. But I
know you'll come visit me again
next year.

I hope all veterans are treated
this way, on this day to remem-
ber, Memorial Day.

Bingo At Cedars

Since our regularly scheduled
date for bingo is the 4th Thursday
of each month falls on Christmas
this year we will have bingo on
December 19. It was suggested
that maybe we should just cancel
for the month but the activity
director said the residents would
not stand for that. They look for-
ward to our bingo night.

If you have not gone with us to
do bingo take a couple of hours
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they do play with enthusiasm.

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Soldier's Christmas

Anonymous

'Twas the night before Christmas,
he lived all alone,
in a one bedroom house made of
plaster and stone.
I had come down the chimney
with presents to give, and to see
just who in this home did live."
I looked all about, a strange sight
I did see,
no tinsel, no presents, not even a
tree.
No stocking by mantle, just boots
filled with sand,
on the wall hung pictures of far
distant lands.
With medals and badges, awards
of all kinds,
A sober thought came through
my mind.
For this house was different, it
was dark and dreary,
I found the home of a soldier,
once I could see clearly.
The soldier lay sleeping, silent,
alone,
curled up on the floor in this one
bedroom home.
The face was so gentle, the room
in such disorder,
not how I pictured a United
States soldier.

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Was this the hero of whom I'd
just read?
Curled up on a poncho, the floor
for a bed?
I realized the families that I saw
this night,
owed their lives to these soldiers
who were willing to fight.
Soon round the world, the
children would play,
And grownups would celebrate a
bright Christmas day.
They all enjoyed freedom each
month of the year,
because of the soldiers, like the
one lying here.
I couldn't help wonder how many
lay alone,
on a cold Christmas Eve in a land
far from home.
The very thought brought a tear
to my eye,
I dropped to my knees and
started to cry.
The soldier awakened and I heard
a rough voice,
"Santa don't cry, this life is my
choice;
I fight for freedom. I don't ask for
more,
my life is my God, my Country,
my Corps."
The soldier rolled over and
drifted to sleep,

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I couldn't control it, I continued
to weep.
I kept watch for hours, so silent
and still
and we both shivered from the
cold night's chill.
I didn't want to leave on that
cold, dark, night,
this guardian of honor so willing
to fight.
Then the soldier rolled over, with
a voice soft and pure,
whispered, "Carry on Santa, it's
Christmas day, all is secure."
One look at my watch, and I
knew he was right.
"Merry Christmas my friend, and
to all a good night.

Post Meeting Times

Robert H. Baker American
Legion Post 95 meets the 3rd
Tuesday of each month at 7:00
PM. The Memorial Hall is the
home of the American Legion
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Best Christmas Ever

By Betty Shannon

At eight years old I didn't understand the shock December 7, 1941 brought to our home. My birthday four days later and then Christmas came and went with subdued celebration.

Soon after, the young men, our friends, were leaving, "Going off to war" Father told us solemnly, for he was a Navy veteran of another war. Almost as soon my two older sisters were writing letters while I played paper dolls in the fantasyland of my room.

Our father became an air raid warden, walking the night roads to make sure all neighborhood houses were kept dark. Heavy blankets draped our own windows. It was an exciting time. I didn't know enemy submarines lurked just off our New York shore.

The following Christmas found us packing holiday boxes for our young friends who had gone to service. My parents were fiercely patriotic and this was a time of cohesion. They embraced these young men as their own. They were "our boys" who now numbered eight; five sailors, one marine, one soldier and one paratrooper. Censored letters

from fleet post offices were precious, every news broadcast eagerly awaited.

Another year, another Christmas, 1943. Our boxes had been mailed, all but one. This would be a special holiday. One of our sailors was coming home! Carl; a gunner's mate on a ship, was somewhere between the Pacific and home.

We decorated our tree on Christmas Eve, as always. Mother vowed to leave it up until Carl arrived. That was fine with me, even if it meant tracing down burned-out bulbs on a daily basis. I loved sitting beside that tree watching the play of colored lights on the tinsel and fragile glass ornaments.

December, January and half of February slipped by as we waited. The tree also waited. Now and then an ornament slid from a drooping branch, with a soft sound, to the carpet, only to be carefully re-hung. We no longer searched for blown bulbs for to touch the strands at all meant a rapid shattering of needles. We filled spaces with extra "icicles" that shimmered with tenacious beauty in the late winter sunlight.

Thanks to Betty Shannon

February turned to March. The war news was fearful. Names like Bataan, Guadalcanal and recently, Tarawa, sounded ominous, I hoped our tree held magic powers. Then, at last, Carl was really at our door. In contrast to our winter pallor, his face was very tan, blonde hair bleached bright from months on the warm Pacific Ocean. By now I was a budding artist who noticed everything.

There were joyous hugs all around and when we took him to the living room and he saw his very own Christmas tree, however sad it must have looked, I noticed too the tears sparkling in his blue eyes. The months of pampering that fragile tree had all been worth it.

I know I'll always remember that special Christmas that lasted almost to Easter, and yes, eventually, all of "our boys" came home safely to enjoy other memorable holidays.

Quotes

"Did you ever notice that when you put the words 'the' and 'IRS' together, it spells 'THEIRS'?"-- Unknown

"The greater the power, the more dangerous the abuse." -- Edmund Burke

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