

The Robert H. Baker  
American Legion Post 95  
P.O. Box 417  
Liberty, MO 64068-0417  
roberthbakerpost95.com



The Liberty  
Legionnaire  
4th Quarter 2016  
Volume 1, Issue 30

We served our  
Country  
Still serving our  
Community

### Christmas Dinner

*Post 95 is having their Christmas dinner for members and their spouses or significant other on December 20, 2016 at 6:30 PM. This is our regular meeting night and there may be a very short meeting after.*

*It is requested you bring a covered dish; the Post is providing the meat and rolls.*

*Join us for a fine dinner and some friendly conversations.*

### Dates to Remember

January 17 – Legion Mtg. – 7:00PM

January 25 – 40&8 6:00 PM

January 26 – Bingo @ Cedars 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM

February 21 – Legion Mtg. – 7:00PM

February 22 – 40&8 - 6:00 PM

February 23 – Bingo @ Cedars 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM

March 21 – Legion Mtg. – 7:00PM

March 22 – 40&8 - 6:00 PM

March 23 – Bingo @ Cedars 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM

### Birthdays

November 28, 1923 Ira Hunter

December 11, 1922 Ray Merrell

### Prayer Request

We are asking everyone to say a prayer for "Darkhorse" 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion 5th Marines and their families. They are fighting it out in Afghanistan & they have lost 9 marines in 4 days. IT WOULD BE NICE TO SEE the message spread if more could pass it on. Nothing in the media about these guys because no one seems to care:

Justin Allen, 23, Brett Linley, 29,  
Matthew Weikert, 29, Justus Bartett, 27,  
Dave Santos, 21, Chase Stanley, 21 Jesse  
Reed, 26, Matthew Johnson, 21, Zachary  
Fisher, 24, Brandon King, 23, Christopher  
Goeke, 23, Sheldon Tate, 27.

All are Marines that gave their lives for YOU.

### Chaplin's Corner

Robert Beatty, Chaplin

Be at peace with TheLord however you conceive him to be. The Lord gave his son for our sins.

But a American soldiers died for my Freedom

“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14

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**Commander's Corner**

**Judi Samborski, Commander**

The Christmas season has just begun. The lights, music, trees, presents and the cooler temperatures with the possibility of snow for Christmas! As long as I don't have to drive in it. It's my favorite time of the year. I drive my husband and our kid's crazy with all of the Christmas stuff, especially when I sing Christmas songs slightly off key. But I don't care.

Speaking of the Christmas, our Annual Post Christmas Dinner will be December 20, at Our Lady of Mercy Country Home. It is for our members and their families. We will begin at 6:30 PM (that's 1830 for you military types). Please bring a small side dish to share. The Post will provide the meat and the rolls. It is always a great time to see everyone and just sit and enjoy everyone's company.

November had been a very busy month for the Post, six Flag Etiquette classes organized and lead by Mike Edwards throughout November. The Honor Guard presented the 21 Gun Salute and TAPS at Wicklund's Carstar again this year for their annual Veterans Appreciation Event. The Color Guard did a presentation of colors at William Jewell's Gano Chapel on Sunday, November 6<sup>th</sup>.

Then there was Veteran's Day. We were invited to Discovery Middle School in Liberty for a Veterans Appreciation Breakfast and program. Then it was on to the Liberty Performing Arts

Center at noon for the annual Veterans Memorial Program. This year's honorees were LeRoy Coe and Les Van Bibber. Both men served during the Vietnam War. This year Post 95 provided the Color Guard and did an excellent job at the program. Then it was off to various restaurants for a free meal at the numerous restaurants in the area. It was a long day but satisfying as well. It humbles me to hear children and adults thanking us for our service. It was an honor to serve our great country. So from me to all of our Veterans, "Thank you for your service."

During November we helped the widow of a member of Post 95. After all of her bills were paid, she only had a few dollars in the bank each month for food. Like Post 95 always does, we chipped in and collected some non-perishable foods to give her. Don Happy coordinated it all. We voted to give some money so she could get some meat for her freezer and additional funds for her propane tank. Don Happy arranged all of that and took her shopping. A special thanks to Don for all he did for her, and also a thanks to the Post for helping out.

Give thoughts and prayers for those Veterans who are feeling the effects of age, illness, or mental illness. Also remember the POW/MIAs.

During this season, please keep our men and women protecting our country in your thoughts and prayers. Also for our brothers and sisters in blue as they put their lives on the line for us as well.

Merry Christmas. God Bless you. God Bless America.

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**Bad Angel**

In Hanger #4, Pima Air and Space Museum in Arizona there is a P-51 Mustang near the big bomber. It's name ? "Bad Angel".

Before the Mustangs came into service, the skies over the Pacific Ocean were dominated by Japanese Zeros.

Proudly displayed on the fuselage of 'Bad Angel' are the markings of the pilot's kills: seven Nazis; one Italian; one Japanese AND ONE AMERICAN.

Huh? "Bad Angel" shot down an American airplane?

Was it a terrible mistake? Couldn't be. If it had been an unfortunate misjudgment, certainly the pilot would not have displayed the American flag. What is the story here? One of the Museum's many fine docents tells it like this.

In 1942, the United States needed pilots for its war planes lots of war planes; lots of pilots. Lt. Louis Curdes was one. When he was 22 years old, he graduated flight training school and was shipped off to the Mediterranean to fight Nazis in the air over Southern Europe.

He arrived at his 82nd Fighter Group, 95th Fighter Squadron in April 1943 and was assigned a P-38 Lightning. Ten days later he shot down three German Messerschmitt Bf-109 fighters. A few weeks later, he downed two more German Bf-109's. In less than a

month of combat, Louis was an Ace.

During the next three months, Louis shot down an Italian Mc.202 fighter and two more Messerschmitts before his luck ran out. A German fighter shot down his plane on August 27, 1943 over Salerno, Italy. Captured by the Italians, he was sent to a POW camp near Rome. No doubt this is where he thought he would spend the remaining years of the war. It wasn't to be. A few days later, the Italians surrendered. Louis and a few other pilots escaped before the Nazis could take control of the camp.

One might think that such harrowing experiences would have taken the fight out of Louis, yet he volunteered for another combat tour. This time, Uncle Sam sent him to the Philippines where he flew P-51 Mustangs.

Soon after arriving in the Pacific Theater, Louis downed a Mitsubishi reconnaissance plane near Formosa. Now he was one of only three Americans to have kills against all three Axis Powers: Germany, Italy, and Japan.

Up until this point, young Lt. Curdes combat career had been stellar. His story was about to take a twist so bizarre that it seems like the fictional creation of a Hollywood screenwriter.

While attacking the Japanese-held island of Bataan, one of Louis wingmen was shot

**(Continued on Page 6)**

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**Graves Recall Executed German  
POWs**

CARL MANNING ASSOCIATED  
PRESS

World War II: 14 soldiers were put to death for killing fellow POWs whom they considered traitors. Their bodies are buried outside a U.S. military prison, where a woman tends the plots.

FT. LEAVENWORTH, Kan. — On a chilly hillside near a military prison, Wally Chilcoat places red silk flowers on 14 graves, those of the only German prisoners of war executed on American soil.

Now 69, Chilcoat has performed her ritual a few times each year since 1991, remembering POWs convicted of murdering fellow Germans considered traitors to the Nazi cause.

Chilcoat lived in Germany during World War II. Her father died in a prison camp in Russia, having been drafted into the German army after speaking out against the Nazi government. She doesn't excuse the Nazi horrors, but she does believe the German POWs deserve to be remembered. "These boys were just doing their job. I know we were enemies, but they were soldiers," said

Chilcoat, of Bean Lake, Mo. "They killed one of their own, a traitor."

Apart from her visits, the POWs are largely forgotten, buried in the back of the cemetery for American soldiers who were executed, or who disgraced their uniform and died behind bars, and had no one to claim their remains.

All 14 German POWs had been court-martialed and found guilty of murder. On July 10, 1945, after Germany's surrender, five were hanged in an old warehouse elevator shaft at the U.S. Disciplinary Barracks. They were convicted in Oklahoma for a murder at a POW camp there. Within a week, two others were hanged in the same shaft. Seven others were executed on Aug. 25, after World War II had ended with Japan's surrender.

Why were they executed? Perhaps due to the times as much as to their deeds. "It was a bad time in 1945," said Col. Karlheinz Ammann, the German Federal Armed Forces liaison at Ft. Leavenworth. "The Allies had found the concentration camps, and there was no desire to show mercy for the Nazis at that time. And that is understandable."

The POWs "were educated in the Third

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Reich. They were convinced the guys they killed were traitors. They had no chance to learn differently," said Ammann, one of several foreign military men working with U.S. officers at the Army's Command and General Staff College here.

One executed soldier echoed that, across the decades. "What I did was done as a German soldier under orders," Rudolf Straub said just before his execution. "If I had not done so, I would have been punished when I returned to Germany."

In 1944, Straub and another German soldier had beaten Horst Guenther to death at a POW camp in Aiken, S.C. In another case, seven captured submariners beat, choked and hanged Werner Dreschler, an inmate who had given the Americans information about German U-boat tactics. They believed Dreschler's action had caused the deaths of their comrades at sea.

The executions were delayed until Germany surrendered because the Nazis had threatened to execute American POWs in retaliation, said John Reichley, a historian at Ft. Leavenworth.

In 1944, President Roosevelt refused to commute the death sentences of the first

five executed. President Truman followed suit after he took office in 1945--with one exception. Truman spared Edgar Menschner, commuting his sentence to 20 years behind bars for the beating death of a fellow POW at Camp Chaffee, Ark. "It gave hope to the other 14," Reichley said, "but not for long." The historian also noted some speculation that Truman saw rough times ahead with Soviet leader Josef Stalin. "I think he wanted to prove the point to Stalin that you don't want to mess with the United States."

Ammann cited several reasons to keep the graves at Leavenworth. "It's not a bad place to stay, this little cemetery," he said, noting a lack of burial space in Germany.

And Nazis remain outcasts in Germany, the party officially banned. But, he said, a right-wing minority still supports Nazi concepts, and any effort to repatriate POWs buried in the United States could make the situation worse.

"There are German graves all over Europe and no place to bring them back," Ammann said. "Why would you bring them to Germany?"

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**(Continued From Page 3)**

down. The pilot ditched in the ocean. Circling overhead, Louis could see that his wingman had survived, so he stayed in the area to guide a rescue plane and protect the downed pilot.

It wasn't long before he noticed another, larger airplane, wheels down, preparing to land at the Japanese-held airfield on Bataan. He moved in to investigate. Much to his surprise the approaching plane was a Douglas C-47 transport with American markings.

He tried to make radio contact, but without success. He maneuvered his Mustang in front of the big transport several times trying to wave it off. The C-47 kept head to its landing target. Apparently the C-47 crew didn't realize they were about to land on a Japanese held island, and soon would be captured.

Lt. Curdes read the daily newspaper accounts of the war, including the viciousness of the Japanese soldiers toward their captives. He knew that whoever was in that American C-47 would be, upon landing, either dead or wish they were. But what could he do?

Audaciously, he lined up his P-51 directly behind the transport, carefully sighted one of his .50 caliber machine guns and knocked out one of its two engines. Still the C-47 continued on toward the Bataan airfield.

Curdes shifted his aim slightly and knocked out the remaining engine, leaving the baffled pilot no choice but to ditch in the ocean.

The big plane came down in one piece about 50 yards from his bobbing wingman. At this point, nightfall and low fuel forced Louis to return to base. The next morning, Louis flew cover for a rescuing PBY that picked up the downed Mustang pilot and 12 passengers and crew, including two female nurses, from the C-47. All survived, and later, Lt. Curdes would end up marrying one of these nurses.

For shooting down an unarmed American transport plane, Lt. Louis Curdes was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. Thereafter, on the fuselage of his P-51 "Bad Angel", he proudly displayed the symbols of his kills: seven German, one Italian, one Japanese and one American flag.

**Wreaths Across America**

Post 95 donated \$200 to Wreaths Across America. They were not going to be able to Place wreaths on every veteran's grave at Arlington National Cemetery but enough contributions were received to complete the project.

**Darwin Award Winner**

A man who shoveled snow for an hour to clear a space for his car during a blizzard in Chicago returned with his vehicle to find a woman had taken the space. Understandably, he shot her.

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**Boots**

He asked for help and she could see why.

Even with her pulling, and him pushing, the little boots still didn't want to go on.

By the time they got the second boot on, she had worked up a sweat.

She almost cried when the little boy said, 'Teacher, they're on the wrong feet.'

She looked, and sure enough, they were.

Unfortunately, it wasn't any easier pulling the boots off, than it was putting them on.

She managed to keep her cool as, together; they worked to get the boots back on, this time on the correct feet.

He then announced, 'These aren't my boots.'

She bit her tongue, rather than get right in his face and scream, 'Why didn't you say so?' like she wanted to.

Once again, she struggled to help him pull the ill-fitting boots off his little feet.

No sooner had they got the boots off when he said, 'They're my brother's boots. But my Mom made me wear 'em today'.

Now she didn't know if she should laugh or cry but she mustered up what grace and courage she had left to wrestle the boots BACK onto his feet again.

Helping him into his coat, she asked, 'Now, where are your mittens?'

He said, 'I stuffed 'em in the toes of my boots...'

She'll be eligible for parole in three years.

**SMART Donkey**

One day a farmer's donkey fell down into a well. The animal cried piteously for hours as the farmer tried to figure out what to do.

Finally, he decided the animal was old, and the well needed to be covered up anyway; it just wasn't worth it

to retrieve the donkey.

He invited all his neighbors to come over and help him. They all grabbed a shovel and began to shovel dirt into the well. At first, the donkey realized what was happening and cried horribly. Then, to everyone's amazement he quieted down.

A few shovel loads later, the farmer finally looked down the well. He was astonished at what he saw. With each shovel of dirt that hit his back, the donkey was doing something amazing. he would shake it off and take a step up.

As the farmer's neighbors continued to shovel dirt on top of the animal, he would shake it off and take a step up.

Pretty soon, everyone was amazed as the donkey stepped up over the edge of the well and happily trotted off!

Life is going to shovel dirt on you, all kinds of dirt. The trick to getting out of the well is to shake it off and take a step up. Each of our troubles is a steppingstone. We can get out of the deepest wells just by not stopping, never giving up! Shake it off and take a step up.

Remember the five simple rules to be happy:

Free your heart from hatred - Forgive.

Free your mind from worries - Most never happen.

Live simply and appreciate what you have.

Give more.

Expect less.

NOW... Enough of that crap. . . The donkey later came back and bit the farmer who had tried to bury him. The gash from the bite got infected and the farmer eventually died in agony from septic shock..

**MORAL FROM TODAY'S LESSON:**

When you do something wrong, and try to cover your behind, it always comes back to bite you.

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### Letter to NFL Commissioners

Ret. Marine Col. Jeffery Powers wrote to the NFL commissioners the following:  
Commissioners,

I've been a season pass holder at Yankee Stadium, Yale Bowl and the Giants Stadium.

I missed the '90-'91 season because I was with a battalion of Marines in Desert Storm. 14 of my wonderful Marines returned home with the American Flag draped across their lifeless bodies. My last conversation with one of them, Sgt. Garrett Mongrella, was about how our Giants were going to the Super Bowl. He never got to see it.

Many friends, Marines, and Special Forces Soldiers who worked with or for me through the years returned home with the American Flag draped over their coffins.

Now I watch multi-millionaire athletes who never did anything in their lives but play a game, disrespect what brave Americans fought and died for. They are essentially spitting in the faces and on the graves of real men, men who have actually done something for this country beside playing with a ball and believing they're something special! They're not! My Marines and Soldiers were!

You are complicit in this! You'll fine players for large and small infractions but you lack the moral courage and respect for our nation and the fallen to put an immediate stop to this. Yes, I know, it's their 1st Amendment right to behave in such a despicable manner.

What would happen if they came out and disrespected you or the refs publicly?

I observed a player getting a personal foul for twerking in the end zone after scoring. I guess that's much worse than disrespecting the flag and our National Anthem. Hmmmmm, isn't it his 1st Amendment right to express himself like an idiot in end zone?

Why is taunting not allowed yet taunting America is OK? You fine players for wearing 9-11 commemorative shoes yet you allow scum on the sidelines to sit, kneel or pump their pathetic fist in the air. They are so deprived with their multi-million dollar contracts for playing a freaking game!

You condone it all by your refusal to act. You're just as bad and disgusting as they are. I hope Americans boycott any sponsor who supports that rabble you call the NFL. I hope they turn off the TV when any team that allowed this disrespect to occur, without consequence, on the sidelines. I applaud those who have not.

Legends and heroes do NOT wear shoulder pads. They wear body armor and carry rifles. They make minimum wage and spend months and years away from their families. They don't do it for an hour on Sunday. They do it 24/7 often with lead, not footballs, coming in their direction. They watch their brothers carted off in pieces not on a gurney to get their knee iced. They don't even have ice! Many don't have legs or arms.

Some wear blue and risk their lives daily on the streets of America. They wear fire helmets and go upstairs into the fire rather than down to safety. On 9-11, hundreds vanished. They are the heroes.

I hope that your high paid protesting pretty boys and you look in that mirror when you shave tomorrow and see what you really are, legends in your own minds. You need to hit the road and take those worms with you!

Time to change the channel.

Powers originally sent his letter to former Florida congressman Allen West. West then posted the letter to his news website.

As of last week, at least 18 NFL players had protested the anthem by either kneeling during the anthem or raising their fists, according to USA Today Sports.

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