



CATHOLIC WAR VETERANS

OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

WINTER 2020

A Christmas Miracle!



Across the Trenches in World War I

A MARVELOUS CHRISTMAS STORY



Amidst the horrors of World War I, a remarkable event took place on the battlefields of Flanders during the first Christmas of the war—for a few brief hours, men from both sides laid down their arms, emerged from their trenches, and shared food, carols, games and comradeship. Their spontaneous truce was unofficial and contrary to all military regulations.

At 8:30 P.M. on Christmas Eve, an officer of the Royal Irish Rifles reported to headquarters: “Germans have illuminated their trenches, are singing songs and wishing us a Merry Christmas. Compliments are being exchanged but am nevertheless taking all military precautions.” Suddenly, along the line, the two sides began serenading each other with carols, the Germans singing “Silent Night,” and the British singing “The First Noel.” Scouts ventured cautiously into no man’s land, and the war diary of the Scots Guards records that a certain Private Murker *“met a German patrol and was given a glass of whiskey and some cigars, and a message was sent back saying that if we didn’t fire at them, they would not fire at us.”*

Soon, both sides were fraternizing along the front, with soldiers exchanging cigarettes, schnapps and chocolate. Literally hundreds on each side were out in no man’s land shaking hands. Communication could be difficult. German-speaking British troops were scarce, but many Germans had been employed in Britain before the war, frequently in restaurants. One German was heard to say: “I expect I know you—I used to be the head waiter at the Great Central Hotel!”

Of course, there was a common interest in soccer. Perhaps it was inevitable that someone would produce a ball and put together a pickup game. Eventually, this “developed into a regulation football match with caps casually laid out as goals. Then each side organized into teams.” As the legend of the event developed, someone was quoted as reporting: “The Reverend Jolly, our Padre, acted as referee.” There seems to be agreement that the Germans won the match, 3-2!

Another British soldier, Private Edward Heath, recalled: *“there came to our ears a greeting unique in war, ‘English soldier, English soldier, a Merry Christmas, a Merry Christmas.’”* How could we resist wishing each other a Merry Christmas, even though we might be at each other’s throats immediately afterwards? Blood and peace, enmity and fraternity—war’s most amazing paradox. The night wore on to dawn with the pipings of piccolos and from our broad lines, laughter and carols. Not a shot was fired.”





CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM THE NATIONAL COMMANDER DAVID CRUM

As we enter into this Christmas Season, the Season of HOPE, we pray for an end of COVID-19 and the pain and suffering and disruption it has caused. This has been a learning experience for all of us. We have learned new ways of communicating with one another.

May the coming of Our Lord at Christmas and the hope he brings to all of us lead to a more peaceful and joyful holiday season. And may His blessings give each of you a healthy and prosperous New Year.

Marylyn and I extend our thanks for your support and best wishes for a successful New Year for our great organization and the vital Veterans services it provides.

AND ALL GOOD WISHES FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT ANNA MCMASTER



The McMaster Family would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a safe, healthy and Blessed Christmas, and a Happy New Year in spite of the ongoing COVID pandemic.

We join our prayers to yours for a better year in 2021, where we can return to being of service to our Church, our Veterans and our communities.

Thanks to each of you for all you do for the CWV and CWVA all year long. God Bless you all!



COVID-19 INFORMATION

Make It A Point To Check Out VA Vaccine Trials!

The Veterans Administration is seeking volunteers to consider participating in COVID-19 clinical trials for vaccines and treatments. Currently, there are trials at over 50 VA facilities, with more to come. The VA is looking for a diverse group (age, gender, race) and are NOT limiting participation to Veterans. Black, Hispanic and Native Americans are particularly invited to join. Anyone can volunteer to sign up at: <https://www.va.gov/coronavirus-research>

COVID Causes Delays In Obtaining Military Documents For Eligibility Determinations

The federal government's primary repository for military personnel records, the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC), has been closed to the public since March due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to numerous and increasing exposures at the facility, it has informed the VA that it has shut down most remaining operations for the foreseeable future. NPRC continues to provide military records to determine eligibility for burial in national cemeteries, minimal staffing has resulted in delays. The VA has asked funeral home directors to inform family members of this issue and ask them to search for any additional military documents which may be in their possession.



LET'S MAKE A DATE!

YOU TOO CAN WIN EVERY DAY!

SEND BACK YOUR ENTRIES!

The cash calendar is the Catholic War Veterans one and only fundraiser for the year. You have a chance to win everyday, for \$25.00—a bargain! Don't miss out on even one day of the new year—send back your returns right away. And, Good Luck to All!

Auxiliary National Treasurer Elaine Diaczun

draws a lucky winning ticket from the 2020 calendar, assisted by Auxiliary Past National President Sue Ranno. National Executive Director Mike Kasinskas supervises and records the drawings! Checks will soon be in the mail!



St. Casimir Auxiliary Post 766 in Maryland Gets in on the Action!

The CWV Calendar sales force in Baltimore consists, among others, of (from left) Pam Brown, Irving C.J. Porter, Judge Advocate, Father Dennis Grumsey, OFMConv, Pastor of St. Casimir and Maryland State CWV Chaplain, Jerri Graziano, President CWVA Post 766 and Clara Pakula, Post Historian



HAPPY 245TH U.S. MARINE CORPS BIRTHDAY!



Commemoration of the "Empty Soldier Chair" at St. Sebastian Post 870 in NY.

Ken Keegan and new member Pat Shevlin perform traditional cake-cutting ceremony with a saber. They were assisted by Rob Estevez (not shown.) Thanks and Semper Fi! to Helen Olt!



WWI SOLDIER HELPED DESEGREGATE BASEBALL!

Branch Rickey served in the U.S. Army in World War I, one of many major league players who did. In October 1945, as general manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers, Rickey signed African American infielder Jackie Robinson for the Dodgers' minor league organization. Robinson served in the Army in World War II. Robinson would be enshrined in the Hall of Fame in 1962.

Branch Rickey was an officer in the Chemical Warfare Service during World War I. In his unit, coincidentally, were future greats Ty Cobb and Christy Mathewson. Rickey would also take a place in baseball history, thanks to his decision to do the right thing.

In October 1945, as general manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers, Rickey signed infielder Jackie Robinson, an African American, for the Dodgers minor league organization. Robinson's later success with the Dodgers from 1947 to 1956 led other owners to seek Black talent.

This was before the U.S. military integrated, which happened July 26, 1948, after President Harry S. Truman signed an executive order establishing the President's Committee on Equality and Opportunity in the Armed Services, committing the government to integrating the then-segregated military. At the time, no statute barred Blacks from playing professional baseball. However, it was an unwritten rule among club owners that they were not welcome.

Rickey was said to have appreciated the service and sacrifices African Americans made during World War I and II, and he was eager to enlist their services in baseball. He also remembered a Black player from the baseball team he coached at Ohio Wesleyan University in 1903 who was denied hotel accommodations. The incident was said to have made him furious, and he personally intervened to let the player spend the night there. Rickey later said: "I may not be able to do something about racism in every field, but I can sure do something about it in baseball."



Simply Outstanding!

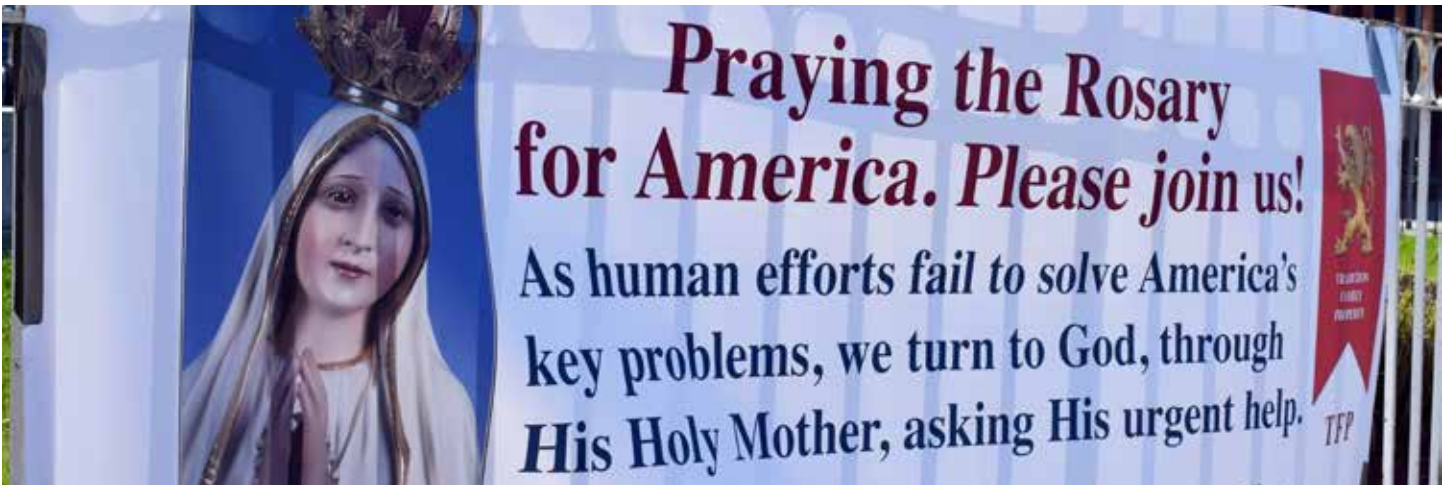
PNP Susan Ranno presents the Outstanding Service Award to National Auxiliary Treasurer Elaine Diaczun during a visit to National Headquarters.

VETERAN'S DAY NOV 11th 2020



National Legislative Affairs Officer Dennis Burke represented the Catholic War Veterans at Ceremonies at Arlington Cemetery.

JOSEPH FARINA POST 386 JOINS NATIONWIDE ROSARY EFFORT



As it has over the past several years, Farina Post 386 sponsored an America Needs Fatima Rosary Rally in front of Sacred Heart Church, Newburgh, New York in unison with over 20,000 Rosary Rallies held across the United States.

The intention of the Rosary Rally is for a peaceful, non-violent election in our country of candidates “of the people, by the people and for the people.”

The intentions also seek divine intervention against corruption or fraudulent voting, as there have been instances in the past. Rally Captain James Formato said afterward: “I felt the presence of the Holy Spirit among the group, as we prayed in spite of the noisy traffic passing by on busy Route 9W.

Photos by Bob McCormick



Participants included (left to right) Jim McGuinness, Charles Alexander, Mike Lutz, John Wenz, Jim Formato (seated), and Jim Peloso (standing by tree). Under tree is Bart Sicca, Mary Ann Rohan (co-coordinators), and Frieda Formato who will turn 98 years young in November!

ASSUMPTION BVM POST 1897 • CENTEREACH, NY ADDS ITS PRAYERS, TOO!



Commander Zecca also used the same occasion to make a memorial presentation to the family of Ralph Cironi, who passed away during the month of July.



Post 1897 Commander Vincent Zecca rallied his members to join in honoring Our Lady of Fatima. In the photo are Craig Cornelius, Vincent Stile, Herbert Wolf, Timothy Doran, Thomas Donnelly and Richard Gallagher.



“In Some Places, the Only Requirement Is a Smile!”

By Elaine A. Diaczun
National VAVS Representative

Here in New York, due to the Corona Virus, all our volunteers has been “furloughed” from March 1, 2020 until the end of the year at least. Although the VA Outpatient Clinics continue to serve their clients with ‘social distancing” appointments, you’ve got to wonder

how many hospitals, CBOCs and CLCs are open to visitors and volunteers?

Whenever they do open, let us CWV’ers jump in to remember and serve our Veteran brother and sister patients with parties, games, entertainment, etc. Volunteers will always be needed in the offices, the clinics, at Telehealth, as greeting ambassadors at the entrances, as contacts in the Community Living Centers (Nursing Homes), in the Chapels and other places to fill in gaps of service where the VA can’t provide help because of less employees.

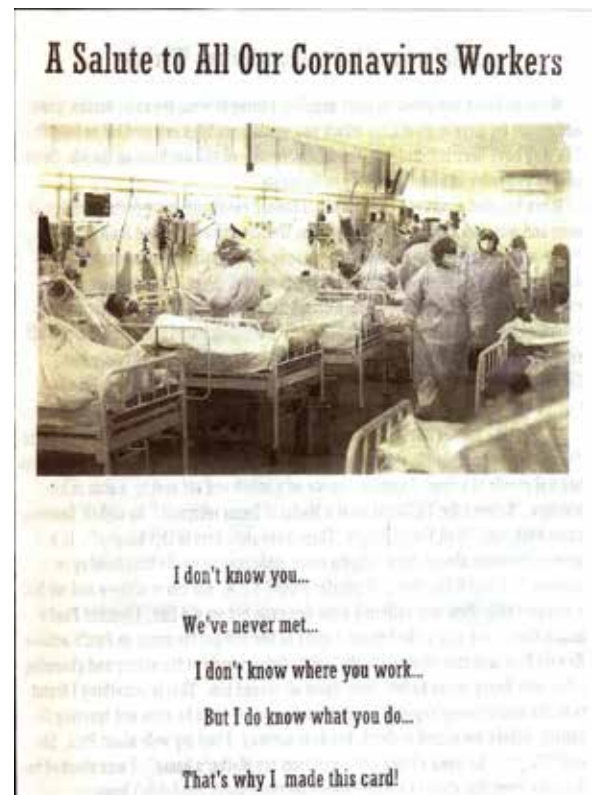
In many places, the only requirement is a smile, a happy attitude and a willingness to give up some time, maybe for only a couple of hours a week. If you haven’t thought of it before, try thinking of volunteering at your local VA facility. If you take the time, you will get back a good feeling one hundredfold!

Maryland Hospital Volunteer Brought Cheer, Inspiration With Cards!

Department of Maryland Catholic War Veterans Welfare Officer Bernard Milosavik, a Veteran of the Korean War, is being mourned by St. Patrick’s Post 766 and St. Casimir’s Post 1764 in Baltimore, as well as so many Veterans to whom he brought humor and inspiration with his self-designed cards which he enjoyed presenting to VA hospital patients. Bernie is yet another example of selfless giving on the part of so many Catholic War Veterans members. He will be missed by the community and our organization.



Long-time member Bernard Milosavik was honored at a September CWV Mass by members of his post. He would pass away soon after this photo.



Bernie’s last card design before his call to heaven in September was a tribute to front-line medical workers battling Covid.

VETERANS AND GOLD STAR FAMILIES

GRANTED FREE ACCESS TO NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE REFUGES



“With the utmost respect and gratitude, we are granting Veterans and Gold Star Families free access to the iconic and treasured lands they fought to protect starting this Veterans Day and every single day thereafter,” announced Secretary of the Interior David L. Bernhardt. Entrance fees for the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and standard amenity recreation fees for the Bureau of Land Management and Bureau of Reclamation sites will be waived for Veterans and Gold Star Families.

They will have free access to approximately 2,000 public locations spread out across more than 400 million acres of public lands which host activities to fit any lifestyle, including hiking, fishing, paddling, biking, hunting, stargazing and climbing. Many department managed lands have direct connections to the American military, such as frontier forts, Cold War sites, battlefields, national cemeteries and memorials, from Minuteman National Historic Park where colonists stood in defense of their rights, to Yellowstone National Park and Mount Rushmore.

For purposes of this program, a Veteran is identified as an individual who has served in the U.S. Armed Forces, including the National Guard and the Reserves, and is able to present one of the following forms of identification: a Department of Defense Identification Card, a Veteran Health Identification Card, a Veteran ID Card or a Veterans designation on a state-issued U.S. driver’s license or identification card. Gold Star Families are next of kin to: a member of the U.S. Armed Forces who lost his or her life in a war, international terrorist attack or military operation outside the United States while serving with the U.S. Armed Forces.

Congratulations Are In Order!



MSGR. KARL CHIMIAK 40th Jubilee!

On the occasion of his 40th Anniversary in the Holy Priesthood

*Rev. Msgr. Karol Anthony Chimiak MDiv
Chaplain Colonel USAF*

Ordained for the Archdiocese of Washington, DC at SL Matthews Cathedral, Washington DC, May 24, 1980

Served the Archdiocese of the Military Services USA as a “Reserve Chaplain” 26 years.

Elevated to Chaplain to the Holy Father, St. Pope John Paul II, March 28, 2005

*40th anniversary celebrated Our Lady of the Skies Catholic Parish, Shaw Air Force Base Chapel, SC, 2020
AD MAJOREM DEI*



MIKE & MARI COLLINS
Mike prints this magazine!

NEW CWV STORE ITEMS SUPPORT POST RECRUITMENT EFFORTS

Order Today at cwgstore.org

THESE ITEMS ARE BEING SOLD AT COST TO ASSIST RECRUITMENT!



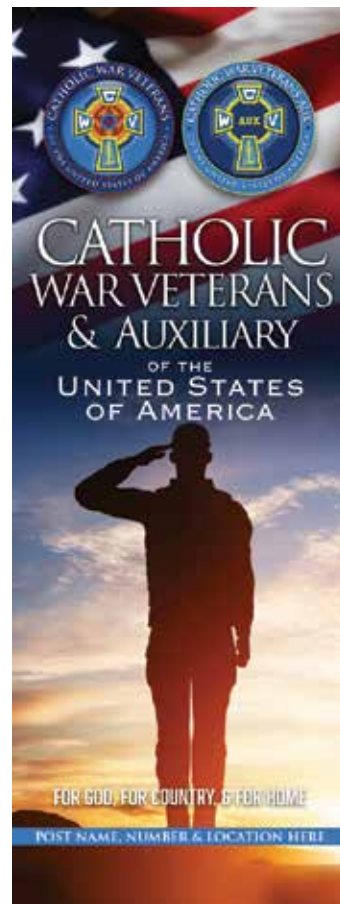
4' x 4' Post / Auxiliary Banner - \$142.00

Emblems are 4 feet x 4 feet in diameter. They are UV-coated for outdoor display to prevent fading. Suitable for indoor & outdoor use. Item No. AD-29 (CWV) or AD-30 (CWVA). Price includes shipping.



2' x 8' Display Banner - \$158.00

Durable, weather-proof vinyl construction, UV coating to prevent fading, with grommets for secure mounting. Suitable for indoor & outdoor use. Price includes shipping. Order item AD-31.



3' x 6' Retractable Banner- \$219.00

Standing, retractable display banner for recruiting table or Church activities. Metal base with vinyl banner. Price includes stand, poles and rugged carrying case. Order item AD-32. Price includes shipping.

CWV MOURNS PASSING OF PNC PATRICK MANCINO

Past National Commander (1993-1994) Pat Mancino of New Jersey passed away on October 24th at his retirement home in Florida from a stroke. He is survived by his wife MaryFran, four children, seven grandchildren and four great grandchildren.





INDIANA POST ENTHRALLED

BY TALES OF FRENCH RESISTANCE AND ROMANCE

Bishop Simon Brute Catholic War Veterans Post 1976 in Martin County, Indiana commemorated the 75th Anniversary of the WWII allied victory in Europe at their November meeting. The featured guest speaker was Martin County Shoals resident, Marie Hawkins, recalling the saga of her parents' experiences in stirring, yet fascinating, image and detail. Members were captivated listening to her depiction of the graphic horrors, life-threatening situations and incredible sacrifice and courage experienced by ordinary human beings during the war. These stories came from first-hand testimony handed down to her by civilian victim-survivors who bore the brunt in the fight against cultural extinction.

Marie's mother was born Simone Angel Seguin in the village of Enghin Les Bains just outside Paris. Simone was a "rich person" in Marie's words, and was a secretary to French General Charles De Gaulle, later President of France. Her father, Bert Denny, met Simone when she was walking down the street where he was working on army equipment. Marie recounts that he walked out into the middle of the street, took off his hat, bowed to her with his arm holding his hat across his chest. She adds: "the rest was history."

Members were enchanted and totally embraced this magnificent, picturesque "love at first sight" treasure which Marie maintains in her mind to this day. Marie's parents, the Denny's, relocated from Terre Haute to Shoals, where Marie grew up at the Denny's Truck Stop along Highway 50, still her home and which houses Marie's clothing alterations business and shop. She described that her mother was a person of city life in France and that coming to rural Indiana must have been a shock. Bert passed away in 2005 and Simone passed away in 2008.

In appreciation, at the conclusion of her vivid and illustrious delivery, Post Commander Bud Erler presented to Marie a print-painting of the famous French Impressionist Artist, Pierre-Auguste Renoir's 1876 masterpiece, entitled "Bal du Moulin de la Galette" (above). The work displays Parisian inhabitants with Gaiety and Human mannerisms. It is symbolic that good is stronger than evil and hope must abide.



Commander Mehl addresses students at St Cecilia's Church.



CONNECTICUT POST OBSERVES VETERANS DAY



City of Stamford's WWI Doughboy Statue



Cortland Mehl, Commander of Kulka Bros Post 1957, joins the local American Legion Commander in presenting a wreath at the Stamford WWI memorial.

"The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their nation."
- George Washington



REFLECTIONS OF A YOUNG WARRIOR!

We left home as teenagers for an unknown adventure. We loved our country enough to defend it and protect it with our own life. We said goodbye to friends and family and everything we knew. We learned the basics and then we scattered in the wind to the far corners of the Earth. We found new friends and a new family. We became brothers and sisters. We had plenty of good times, and plenty of bad times. We didn't get enough sleep. We smoked and drank too much. We picked up both good and bad habits. We worked hard, and played harder. We didn't earn a great wage. We experienced the happiness of mail call and the sadness of missing important events.

We didn't know when or even if we were ever going to see home again. We grew up fast, and yet somehow, we never grew up at all. We fought for our freedom as well as the freedom of others. Some of us saw actual combat, and some of us didn't. Some of us saw the world, and some of us didn't. Some of us dealt with physical warfare, most of us dealt with psychological warfare. We have seen, experienced and dealt with things that we can't fully describe or explain.

Not all of our sacrifices were physical. We participated in time-honored ceremonies and rituals with each other, strengthening our bonds and camaraderie. We counted on each other to get our job done and sometimes to survive it at all. We have dealt with victory and tragedy. We have celebrated and mourned. We lost a few along the way.

When our adventure was over, some of us went back home, some of us started somewhere new. Some of us never came home at all. We have told amazing and hilarious stories of our exploits and adventures. We share an unspoken bond with each other that most people don't have and few will understand.

We speak highly of our own branch of service and poke fun at the other branches. But we know that if needed, we will be there for our brothers and sisters and stand together as one in a heartbeat. Being a veteran is something that had to be earned, and it can never be taken away. It has no monetary value, yet it is a priceless gift.

People see a Veteran and they thank them for their service. When we see each other, we give that little upward head nod, or a slight smile knowing that we have shared and experienced things that most people have not. So, from myself to the rest of the Veterans out there, I commend and thank you for all that you have done and sacrificed for your country. Try to remember the good times, and forget the bad times. Share your stories. But most importantly, stand tall and proud, for you have earned the right to be called a Veteran. Thank you to all my brothers and sisters for your sacrifices while serving.

By WALT RITTER (Thanks to James Formato, Post 386, for Passing Along!)



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U.S. ARMY AT FORT HAMILTON, NEW YORK HONORS ONE OF THEIR OWN



2020 Veterans Day ceremonies at Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn, New York honored a member of the Catholic War Veterans Our Lady of Perpetual Help Post 5 and War II Veteran, Corporal Dino J. Lamia. The 98-year-old Army Veteran was embarrassed, but enjoying the attention, including coverage on the local television newscasts. Dino served from 1942-1945.

Like most modest WWII Vets, Dino recalled: "I worked as hard as I could to support what was necessary." Today's active-duty soldiers thanked him for sharing his experiences and for his continued contributions to his community following the war.

