



CATHOLIC WAR VETERANS

OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SUMMER 2025



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ON PARADE**

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2025 NATIONAL CONVENTION ANNOUNCEMENT

It is time to gather for the 90th Catholic War Veterans National Convention on
August 4th - August 8th 2025.

Location is the **Hampton Inn New York - LaGuardia Airport**
102-40 Ditmars Blvd., East Elmhurst, NY 11369

**Finalize your plans now by using this form to
reserve your rooms and the Convention Banquet**



PROGRAM JOURNAL & ADVERTISEMENT INFORMATION

Submission Deadline is July 18th 2025

Booklet size is 8.5" X 5.5" (landscape 8.5" x 11" paper folded in half). Please provide high quality images and please make sure images are not reduced when sending. If you are having trouble sending large files, we recommend sending via wetransfer.com; you can send up to 2GB through this free service.

Size	Color
Outside Back Cover*	\$300
Inside Back Cover*	\$250
Inside Front Cover*	\$250
Full Page	\$150
Half Page	\$100
Quarter Page	\$75
Business Card	\$50
Sponsor(Max. 75 Characters)	\$50
Supporter (Max. 50 Characters)	\$40
Booster (Max. 30 Characters)	\$30

*Equivalent Full-Page ad will be substituted if cover position is not available

Please CIRCLE the type and price of the ad you are placing.
Art work and symbols can be sent electronically to:
admin@cwv.org

Advertiser's Name _____

Seller's Name _____

Post# _____ Phone# _____

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BANQUET INFORMATION

Submission Deadline is July 18th 2025

Qty	Total
	Buffet x \$125 each person
	\$

4 HR Dinner Cruise Includes:

Open Bar (Beer, Wine, Soda) from boarding until 1/2 hour before docking
Cocktail Hour
Buffet Dinner

Qty	Optional Lunch Lunch x \$15 each person per day	Total
	Tuesday	\$
	Wednesday	
	Thursday	

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Reservation Deadline is July 18th 2025

Post #	
Check In Date	
Check Out Date	
Total Room Nights	
Total # of Guests	

List Guests Below

**\$239 Per Night (Including Taxes), Cash or Check made payable to the
CWV Convention Corp**
<https://cwvstore.org/90th-national-convention-hotel-reservations-August-4th-7th-2025-see-description-below-for-more-info/>

PAYMENT AND SUBMISSION OPTIONS

All Deadlines are as stated on this flyer. Mail this form and a check or money order to:

CWV Convention Corporation
237-20 92nd Rd., Bellerose, NY 11426

Or if paying by credit card thru the CWV Store, mail this form to the above address AND Go to: cwvstore.org
An additional 2% will be added to the total order for processing costs.

POPE FRANCIS NAMES NEW AUXILIARY BISHOP FOR THE ARCHDIOCESE FOR THE MILITARY SERVICES

Father Gregg M. Caggianelli, Ch Col USAF, to be ordained bishop by Archbishop Timothy Broglio

The announcement was welcomed by the Archbishop for the Military Services and current President of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, Archbishop Timothy Broglio. *"I am very grateful to Pope Francis for this sign of concern and care for the faithful of this global archdiocese. Bishop-elect Caggianelli will be a tremendous asset to ministry in the military archdiocese."*

Fr. Caggianelli was commissioned in 1990 as a USAF line officer, serving with the Air Force Research Laboratory, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. After leaving active duty in 1996, he entered the Air Force Reserves while completing priestly formational studies at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary at Boynton Beach, Florida.

He was ordained a priest in 2002 and reappointed as a USAF Chaplain in 2003. He served as associate pastor, vocation director, and parish administrator in the Diocese of Venice, Florida. He also served as Vice Rector, Dean of Human Formation, and Assistant Professor at the Seminary in Boynton Beach. Currently, he is the Mobilization Assistant to the USAF Academy Chaplain in Colorado Springs, CO. As a member of the Superintendent's staff, he establishes guidance and advises on all matters of religion, ethical concerns, morale and quality of life impacting assigned personnel. He is the senior team leader of the Academy's Reserve Chaplains and religious affairs airmen.

Fr. Gregg noted: *"Since I have been a little boy, there have been only two things I wanted to do in life. At age 11, I started thinking about being a priest, and I had a desire to serve in the military. Since 1986, I have had the honor of wearing the uniform,, and as a priest, serving as a Chaplain. That has been a life-giving experience filled with joy."*



Bishop-elect Father Gregg M. Caggianelli



Laying a wreath on Veterans Day at Arlington National Cemetery, 2019

Lengthy Illness Claims Past National President Anna McMaster of Pennsylvania

Anna McMaster, a Life Member of Father Krichten Post 1342 in Gettysburg, PA, served as National Auxiliary President from 2019-2021. She remained active with the Auxiliary even during her illness.



MICHAEL WULF

CWV MEMBER AND BROTHER OF NATIONAL COMMANDER LARRY WULF, PASSES AT 75

Life Member Mike Wulf passed away in Center, Texas. He proudly served his country in the U.S. Army from 1968-1970, with a tour in Vietnam. He was awarded a bronze star among other medals and achieved the rank of Staff Sergeant. In addition to the Catholic War Veterans, he was a Gold Legacy member and Post Commander of VFW Post 8904. Mike worked as a plant manager for General Shelters and Regional Sales Manager for Port-a-Cool. In retirement, he served on the board of the Shelby County Outreach Ministries. Mike was described as a "people" person with a heart of gold. Mike was an avid sports fan of college football and Notre Dame. He doted over his granddaughters and great-grandson.



Reghan holds her audience captive!



STUDENT MAKES WORLD WAR I PRESENTATION TO POST 1562

DERBY CT-- Reghan Anne Winslow, a 10 year old student at Beecher Road School of Woodbridge, CT, created a World War One diorama. She chose this topic because many of her relatives are veterans. Her Great Grandfather served in WWI, her Grandfather served in WWII, and her Uncle is currently serving in the Army. Her father, Jeff Winslow, served during Operation Iraqi Freedom and is a member of Post 1562.

Reghan Anne presented her project to a group gathered at St. Michael Post 1562. Speaking for about twenty minutes without notes, she explained how the war started, daily life conditions, the role of women, soldiers' recovery and other interesting facts of that time period such as comparing the war time loss of life to the 1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic.

Reghan Anne wanted to donate her project to the Catholic War Veterans because its founder, MSGR. Edward Higgins served in World War One. The presentation took a month to research and the diorama took about two weeks to create. At the conclusion of her talk, Reghan Anne received a Catholic War Veterans Challenge Coin from Post Commander Tom Voytek. It is planned that before her project's poster board and diorama become a permanent display at Post 1562, it will travel and be displayed at local libraries and other educational outlets. Story and photos contributed by Markanthony Izzo, Post 1562 Auxiliary

POST 1562 ENCOURAGES THE YOUTH OF AMERICA!

St. Michael's Post has been supporting the U.S. Naval Sea Cadets Barque Eagle Division for over a decade. The cadets march with Post and Auxiliary members in Memorial Day parades and conduct an annual U.S. Flag Retirement Ceremony open to the public on the post grounds. Post 1562 also awards a financial scholarship to a graduating senior from five local high schools and a Sea Cadet who is joining the military or pursuing a religious vocation.



Cadets prepare for a dignified U.S. Flag Retirement Ceremony on Memorial Day.



Post Commander Tom Voytek presents Cadet Chief Petty Officer Layer a scholarship.



AOR

MILITARY TERM: AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY IN COMBAT VETERAN TERM: ADVOCACY, OUTREACH, RESOURCES

Bravo Foxtrot is a non-profit charitable organization assisting homeless veterans living in encampments in the woods near the railroad tracks on Long Island. “No soldier is left behind.” It provides “forgotten” vets with clothing, food, homes, jobs—and hope!

Founded in 2021 by Matthew Simoni, a homeless combat veteran, and his wife Jade Pinto, owner of a tattoo parlor, which he visited frequently as a method to deal with his pain. She had previous extensive experience with mental health and trauma, as well as holistic and natural ways to cope. Their destinies would soon intertwine. Matthew served with the Naval Special Forces and participated in three combat deployments and classified missions in North Africa. Needless to say, joining the military increases your odds of mental health disorders,

substance abuse, incarceration, homelessness and suicide. Their commitment to service to others enabled Jade to bring her lifelong passion to reality, while becoming Matthew’s therapy, providing him a purpose in life and a reason to wake up in the morning.

Each day, they support veterans battling severe mental health challenges who have fallen through the cracks. The work is not without challenges, as they face resistance and setbacks. Yet the couple continues to help them reintegrate into society and rebuild their lives with dignity and hope. Many who have defended our country in combat have returned home with post-traumatic stress and serious physical disabilities that hamper their ability to successfully return to society and get the help they need, and who then become lost and invisible. With parts of their soul still back in combat, they suffer from internal fights between their morals and what they had to do to survive. The shame and guilt caused by the injuries to their moral code potentially keep them in a state of judgment, detaching from society and resulting in an inability to re-enter this culture they once enjoyed but feel they can no longer fit into.

Bravo Foxtrot prides itself on its unique ability to perform outreach and build relationships. It starts with establishing a mutually beneficial relationship, gaining that person’s respect, demanding equal respect in return, and providing food, clothing, shelter and sanitary items. This is followed by referrals to other mental health and veteran support facilities, financial literacy and job training, and reconnecting with family and friends as part of the recovery process.

Their approach extends outreach into secluded areas where veterans struggling with mental health issues find solace in nature and solitude, and fostering community connection. It provides access to critical resources such as VA benefits, legal aid, housing, and employment opportunities.

Its strength lies in trust—bridging the gap between veterans and the resources they need by leveraging the military life experiences of Matthew, and the holistic approach of Jade, to include meditation, mindfulness and spirituality, which are usually not part of a combat veteran’s vocabulary!





HONORING A CENTURY OF SERVICE: Bill Kelleher—A Living Link to History!

Bill Kelleher, a cherished Life Member of St. Casimir Post 766 in Baltimore, Maryland will celebrate his 103rd Birthday this year. Bill was just 20 years old when he joined the Army in 1943 (brothers Joe and John were already serving, with younger brother Tom joining them in 1944.) His military journey began with basic training at Fort Halloran, near New Orleans and then to Fort Slocum in New Rochelle, NY. He boarded the British ship Aquitania and arrived in England in 1944. His Transportation Port Company was stationed in Swansea, Wales. By late May 1944, the troops were alerted to the D-Day invasion by the drone of aircraft crossing the Channel. Two weeks later, Bill and his unit were standing on Utah Beach.



He worked as a stevedore unloading supplies, 12 hours on, 12 hours off, seven days a week, for six continuous months living on Normandy beach. He lived in tents, survived on field rations, and worked long, cold wet periods unloading supply ships. Following the capture of French ports he contributed to pipeline patrols safeguarding the gasoline and oil pipelines vital for the advancing Allied forces. In 1945, Bill was retrained for assault infantry and shipped to the Philippines. He arrived shortly after the surrender of Japan and was assigned to grave reclamation duties, recovering the remains of fallen soldiers in the aftermath of the war. His service concluded with the end of World War II. His memories are poignant reminders of the bravery, hardships and unyielding spirit of his "Greatest Generation." The St. Casimir Catholic War Veteran community extends our deepest gratitude and best wishes for a joyous 103rd Birthday! Submitted by Clara Pakula

WE SALUTE OUR "SENIOR" CITIZENS OF THE CWV AND AUXILIARY!

Rita Joyce: Oldest Living Auxiliary Member Turns 102

Rita (nee Bauer) was born in May 1924 in Belleville, Illinois, the 3rd youngest of seven siblings. She attended Cathedral Grade School in Belleville and graduated 8th grade. Rita never attended high school. The Bauer Family were members of St. Peter's Cathedral. She met Clem (Hugh) Joyce, her future husband, on a blind date while he was stationed in the Army Air Corps at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois. They married and had five children. The children all married and Rita has 11 grandchildren and 20 great grandchildren. There are 99 years between Rita and her youngest great granddaughter Avery. Her husband Clem died in 2011, just prior to his 92nd birthday.

Rita has been active in Butz-Jobe Post 370 Auxiliary for many years. She held numerous officer positions. She was involved in the Tuesday Bingo that was instrumental in funding the addition to the Post hall. Her passion was planning post events and parties. She would shop and plan all year for prizes for the family picnic and annual Christmas party. After her children went out on their own, Rita and Clem were regular attendees at state and national conventions. She reveled in spending time with her CWV friends. Only age and health problems in the early 2000's caused them to stop actively participating in post activities. She received over 100 cards on her 100th birthday. She attributes her longevity to genetics. Her parents, siblings and some cousins all have lived into their 80's and 90's.

Happy Birthday, Rita!

By John Mueller, Commander, Post 370



Thanks for Asking...the Assistant National Executive Director

Uniform Regulations & National Headquarters

- **Kenneth, a member from New York inquired about Section 2, Subsection A and Section 4 which are both referenced in the National Uniform Regulations document found on the www.TheCWV.org website, but stated these sections are not included the document.**

I appreciate Kenneth's question as to whether the references were a mistake or an oversight to not include them. After my review, these references do exist, but the pages were accidentally omitted when the 2009 version of the uniform regulations were updated and converted for the website.

National HQ will take action to review the missing sections for accuracy, and then republish an updated version of the Uniform Regulations to the website.

- **What happened to all of the individuals on my post's Delinquent List of members?**

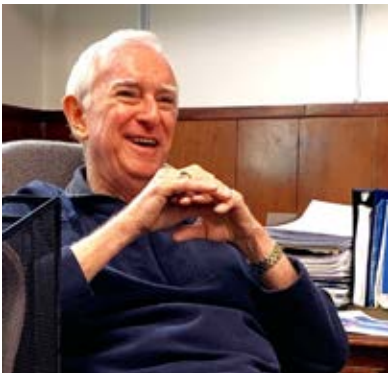
Earlier this year, National HQ mailed a postcard to all the individuals who have been on the Delinquent List over two years, and then removed them from the list. This was done for two reasons:

- 1) The Delinquent List has not been purged for over five years and becoming outdated in terms of current addresses and status; so the postcard mailing was the last attempt to reaffiliate them.
- 2) ***Per our Bylaws Article I - Membership Section 7: A member in arrears who has been suspended [delinquent] for a period of two years will be required to apply as a new member .***

The postcard mailing resulted with some reaffiliations as well as notifications from family that the Veteran has deceased. Hence, the only individuals now listed in the post Delinquent List are those who have not renewed during the 2024 and 2025 membership years.

Just a reminder that the National Database has been refreshed to prepare the credentials for delegates to the 2025 National Convention . New members and renewals should be marked for the 2026 membership year.

- **Several people ask: What does Rick Kenney do and what does he look like?**

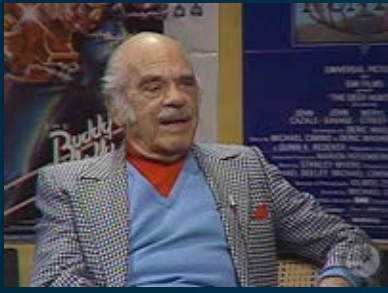


There is not enough room on this page to detail the various tasks Rick Kenney does at National HQ. He is a humble U.S. Marine Corps veteran and the key man-behind-the-scenes. His "daily" but "never routine" work at headquarters includes answering the phone , fulfilling C.W.V. Store orders, drafting documents, certificates, articles for the magazine, sorting the mail, and much more. All with a smile! Rick's talents and skills are a definite asset in support of Executive Director Crum, National Commander Wulf, and the C.W.V. organization.

Rick avoids posing for a photo but was unknowing captured in this photo when National Commander Wulf was visiting in March.

As always, if you have a question for the National Assistant Executive Director, please forward it to admin@cwv.org.

Michael J. Kasinskas
Assistant National Executive Director



Naturalized Soldier Frank Capra Gave Us Classic Motion Pictures

After the United States entered WWI, Congress passed the Naturalization Act of May 9, 1918 to expedite naturalization for alien members of the U.S. armed forces. Congress wanted to reward foreign-born service members and encourage immigrant enlistments. Eventually, hundreds of thousands of soldiers, sailors and marines took advantage of this opportunity to become U.S. citizens under this act and subsequent legislation that extended military naturalization benefits to veterans of the war.

Among them was Francesco Capra, a young Sicilian immigrant who had arrived in the U.S. at the age of 6. Capra's family settled in Los Angeles where he would go on to study chemical engineering at the Throop Polytechnic Institute, the precursor to the California Institute of Technology. Capra graduated in 1918 and immediately enlisted in the Army. After serving just five months, Capra contracted influenza during the global pandemic and received a medical discharge from the army. It would be two years later that he filed a military petition for naturalization at the U.S. District Court in Los Angeles and became a citizen the same day, officially hanging his name from Francesco to Frank.

Unable to find work in chemical engineering, he eventually found his way into L.A.'s growing motion picture industry. He would rise rapidly in the movie business in the 1930's, becoming one of the nation's preeminent movie directors. During that decade he earned the Academy Award for Best Director three times for such classics as "It Happened One Night," "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town," and "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington."

His films were idealistic, sentimental, and patriotic. They often featured everyday characters whose common decency allowed them to overcome the turmoil of life during the Great Depression. In many ways, Capra, a naturalized Italian immigrant, made some of the most quintessentially "American" movies of the era. In 1941, with WWII on the horizon, he appeared on the Immigration and Naturalization Service sponsored radio show "I'm an American." The show promoted naturalization, patriotism and immigrant contributions to the U.S. The show praised the "American Spirit" of Capra's films and held him up as an immigrant success story. Once the U.S. entered the war, he rejoined the Army, producing films in support of the war effort. He rose to rank of Colonel and received the Legion of Merit and Distinguished Service Medal for his service.

After the war, he returned to directing feature films, though his work never regained the level of popularity he had achieved between the World Wars. One of his box office disappointments, however, grew much more popular over time. "It's A Wonderful Life" eventually became an iconic film that defines the holiday season for many Americans and may be Capra's most enduring contribution to American popular culture.

Some Frank Capra Classics!



It Happened One Night: Gable & Colbert



Idealistic Mr. Smith Goes To Washington



It's A Wonderful Life's Memorable Scene

Ohio State Convention *Is a Home Run!*



The National Pastime of Baseball was the theme for the 2025 Convention of the Department of Ohio held in Wooster, Ohio in April



A convention always runs on food!



Toledo, Ohio native National Commander Larry Wulf admires yard ornament wife Rita won. Sue Illencik (l) and Darlene Rybka look on.



The well-attended event was enjoyable, respectful and productive with strategic planning for the coming year.



Past Department Commanders Joe Illencik and Mike Blau compare notes.

then it was *Down to Business!*



Auxiliary National President Regina Bilodeau reports.



The convention stops for a solemn POW/MIA Memorial Service.



Dept of Ohio's Tommy Anderson Award is presented to Richard Movens of Post 1812 by CDR Matteo, assisted by MC, and PDC, Mike Blau.



Steve Vargo of Jude Thaddeus Post Color Guard accepts 75-year plaque.



George Otto, Post 1292 accepts 60-year member plaque on behalf of Charles Schaeffer.



National CDR Wulf hands gavel to new Dept CDR Carmen Matteo.



An impressive 11th Hour Ceremony was conducted in memory of Past Department Commanders. Officer of the Day Joe Klosowski of the Jude Thaddeus Post 1675 Color Guard sets a candle on the table.



He's Puttin' On His Top Hat!

KEVIN STOMMER, a member of Joseph Farina Post #386 in New Windsor, NY, started St. Paddy's Day with breakfast at the Pig n' Whistle public house in Manhattan prior to attending Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral. He then stepped off on 5th Avenue in the 264th annual parade for the first time.

Kevin is a Navy Veteran and retired from the New York State Police. He raises funds for intellectually disabled children and participates in the "Polar Plunge" to support the Special Olympics. He is the current Orange County AOH Vice President and President of the Mid-Hudson St. Patrick's Parade Committee in Goshen, NY. He was accompanied to New York City by his Wife Maryanne and kids Kathareann, Gerard, Kevin and Davan.

Thanks to James Formato, Post 386, New Windsor

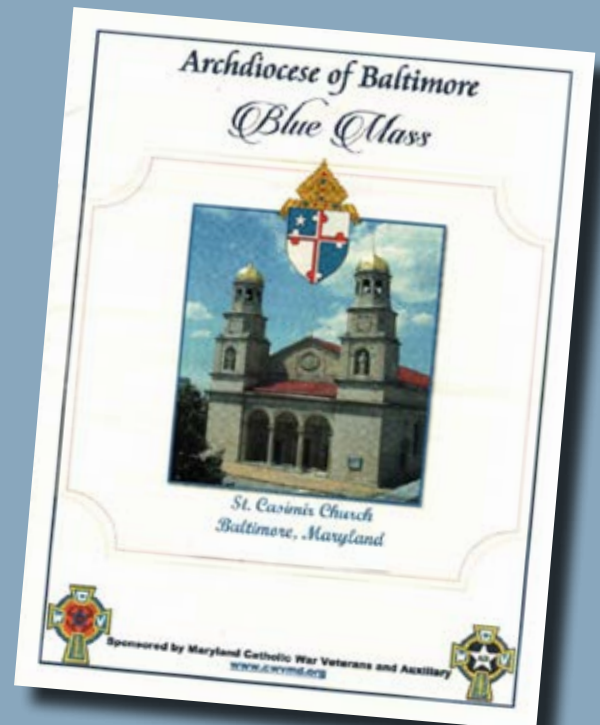


All In A Day's Work! A Meeting of the Minds!

On a recent day at the National Office, during a visit by National Commander Larry Wulf, coincidentally some of his staff stopped in to conduct the business of the CWV. (From left) National Director Bob Gluscak, Commander Wulf, National Welfare Officer and VSO Rick Gales, PNC and National Executive Director Dave Crum, Assistant Executive Director Mike Kasinskas, who commuted from Connecticut, and National Treasurer Andy Veiga.

Food for Thought

There's time to plan a Blue Mass in your community during September!



“God Bless America”

FINDS ITS ORIGINS IN WORLD WAR I



Songwriter Irving Berlin in his WWI Army uniform.

Irving Berlin described how he wrote “God Bless America” in a letter to the editor of *Variety* in 1954. “I wrote the song at Camp Upton in 1918 to be the finale of the show “Yip, Yip, Yaphank.” In the finale the boys were alerted in the scene before that they were going overseas. In overseas outfits, including helmets, they marched through the theater, went out to the street and backstage where they boarded a transport. As the lights lowered, the transport was wheeled slowly off stage. It was a very touching and emotional scene. As I remember, the song they sang was “In the YMCA.”

Having that finale in mind, it seemed gilding the lily to have the soldiers sing “God Bless America” in that situation, so I didn’t use it. I always had it in the back of my mind to use it someday on the right occasion. That occasion came after I returned from London in 1938 where I had gone to see the opening of “Alexander’s Ragtime Band.” I was there during Chamberlain’s visit to Hitler and the beginning of the Munich pact.

On my way back I tried to write a song that I felt at that time. I remember finishing a chorus of a song called “Thanks America” which I tore up because it was very bad. Then I recalled “God Bless America” and I rewrote it, which is an important part of the story. The words in the original version were “and guide her to the right from abovemake her victorious on land and foam.” In 1938, there was a right and a left and it had a different significance. “Through the night with a light from above” was an improvement. In 1918 it was written as a “victorious” war song. In 1938, I didn’t want it to be a war song, but a song of peace. On Armistice Day 1938, I spoke to Ted Collins (Smith’s manager) and he

wanted a song for Kate Smith to sing on that night’s program where she introduced it.

Introduced by Kate Smith on her CBS radio show, *The Kate Smith Hour*, Smith premiered the song late in the show and prefaced it with the following words:

“And now it’s going to be my very great privilege to sing for you a song that’s never been sung by anybody. One that was written especially for me by one of the greatest composers in the field of music today. It’s something more than a song—I feel it’s one of the most beautiful compositions ever written, a song that will never die. THE AUTHOR—MR. IRVING BERLIN. THE TITLE—’GOD BLESS AMERICA.’”

“If Ted Collins hadn’t come to me for a patriotic song to be sung by her on Armistice Day, I’m afraid “God Bless America” would still be a war song, unpublished and unsung.”

From the Irving Berlin Music Company Website



Kate Smith and chorus introduced “God Bless America” to radio audiences on her program on November 11, 1938.



Irving Berlin made several appearances on the Ed Sullivan Show where he was honored on his 100th Birthday.

CWV NEW HAMPSHIRE MEMBERS MEET IN CONVENTION

Photos courtesy of Denise DeBlois



During a visit to the NH State Veterans Cemetery in Boscawen, National Cmdr. Wulf and State Dir. Ray Bellemore reflect at the U.S. Army Monument. Cmdr. Wulf is joined by Natl Historian Denise DeBlois and Natl. Aux. Pres. Bilodeau at the CWV Memorial.



Veterans and Auxiliary members gather for the 78th New Hampshire State Convention meeting.



The Convention Mass was celebrated at St. Martin Church in Somersworth, New Hampshire.



Cmdr. Wulf presents the Blue Cap Award to Thomas Clough.



Department Cmdr. Scott Demers opens convention.



The floor is open for a discussion of problems and new ideas.



Commander Wulf presides over the formal installation of New Hampshire state officers.



Hall of Fame Cmte. Chair Edouard Leclerc presents NH's highest CWV award to William Biser, Post 1341.



Regina Bilodeau presents the National Auxiliary President's Award to New Hampshire's Laurene Wengers, Unit 1755.

Cmdr. Demers presented the Lifetime Achievement Award to Edouard and Irene (posthumously) Leclerc of Post 1755. Daughter Jeanne accepted for Irene.



Commander Wulf and President Bilodeau try their luck at the slot machines. Larry Wulf went home \$90.00 richer!



Downtime after a hard day's work at the convention. Department Cmdr. Demers hosts National Cmdr. Wulf and National Auxiliary President Bilodeau at Revo Casino In Manchester.



HELLO TO ALL FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF NEW HAMPSHIRE!

Did You Know?

Walt Disney Drove a Red Cross Ambulance in World War I



The beloved Walt Disney drove an ambulance with cartoon images on the side to cheer up WWI wounded soldiers.

The man who later in life would make so many children and adults happy with cartoons, movies, TV shows and Disneyland was born in Chicago in 1901. His family moved often, from city to farm life to city again. Walt developed an interest in drawing. When not working for his dad on the farm, he enrolled in

Saturday morning classes at the Kansas City Art Institute, where he acquired a smattering of formal art training. This whetted his taste for theatrical art expression.

Walt was close to older brother Roy, who enlisted in the Navy at the start of World War I. He would have joined him but he was underage. He discovered that one only had to be 17 to become a Red Cross ambulance driver. Assigned to a military unit in Neufchateau, France, he soon established himself as the unit's unofficial artist, painting fake medals onto leather jackets and camouflaging captured German helmets so they could be passed off as sniper's helmets. He decorated his ambulance with cartoon drawings. He returned to the United States in 1919, settling once again in Kansas City.

Disney saw a newspaper advertisement for a job with the Kansas City Slide Company, later Film Company, which made what we would now call commercials shown in local movie theaters. They were, in fact, producing crude animated films. Meanwhile, simultaneously, there were seismic developments in film manufacture and motion picture equipment. Disney's static cartoons showed no life or character, relying on exaggerated physical characteristics (a big nose or flat feet.) Soon, Disney would borrow a camera and try some animation on his own. He would hit on the idea of reversing the basic principle of the cartoon and adding live action to the animation. After several failed business ventures in animation in Kansas City, Walt made the decision to relocate to Hollywood, California where his brother Roy was recuperating in a Veteran's hospital from a bout with tuberculosis. With Roy as his partner, Walt would start another business. But by now he completely abandoned his career as an animator to concentrate all his energies on the production side.

It seems appropriate that the birth of Mickey Mouse should be shrouded in legend. Disney had managed to tame a mouse in his old Kansas City studio, whom he affectionately named Mortimer. That name was his first choice for his new character, but he decided that name was a little too pompous for a cartoon animal.

Mickey Mouse made his debut in 1928. Mickey's identity had a dimension quite new in cartoons. Mickey would have a real personality. The audience could identify with him almost as a human performer. Walt would always maintain a special affection for Mickey!



Walt and Mickey—The rest is history!



Generations of children around the world would grow up with many iconic Disney cartoon characters, both in movies and on television.

CWV ROUND UP!



Congressional Liaison Dennis Burke of Virginia and Maryland Department Commander Bill Boulay represented the CWV/A on Memorial Day, laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.



Bishop McNicholas Post 1916 in Springfield, Illinois presented awards for the Valentine Coloring Contest at St. Mary's School in Brussels. Emme Rose (center) won a \$100.00 check.



Speaking of the Board Meeting, CWV/A officers bulk up at breakfast before a long day of meetings.



This young lady, a Veteran of the U.S. Army, expresses her appreciation to the CWV Foundation for its assistance in paying one month's rent while in between apartments.



At the June Board of Directors Meeting, Commander Wulf and Auxiliary President Regina Bilodeau pick the winning ticket for the Spring Cruise Raffle, as National Treasurer Andy Veiga looks on. Roberto Saavedra of McAllen, Texas is now packing for his selected cruise.



Friends and staff of the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport, MS await passing of the visiting Healing Wall.

St. Casimir CWV Post 1764 9/11 Essay Contest Awards

Members of St. Casimir Post 1764 participated in the student Mass on the last day of St. Casimir Catholic School. The Mass marked a meaningful end to the school year and a special moment of recognition for students who participated in the Post's 9/11 Essay contest.

13 seventh and eighth grade students submitted thoughtful and heartfelt essays reflecting on the significance of September 11th and the sacrifices made by those first responders and our military to protect the freedoms we enjoy today.

Each student received a certificate accompanied by a monetary award from the Post along with a Maryland State Citation presented by delegate Ric Metzger, a strong supporter of both veterans and youth education. Post Commander and Judge Advocate Irving C.J. Porter presented the awards, with the assistance of 3rd Vice Commander Nick Acord. Principal Mrs. Noreen Heffner offered her generous support in facilitating the presentation. Many of the award winners were 8th graders who graduated a week earlier. The essays demonstrated maturity, patriotism and a strong sense of community. The CWV hopes to inspire even greater participation in next year's contest. It serves not only as an academic challenge, but also as a reminder of the real sacrifices made by service members to safeguard our nation.

Thanks to Clara Pakula





FROM A MOTHER'S LOVE CAME THE FOUNDING OF THE GOLD STAR MOTHERS

Lieutenant George Seibold, 23, volunteered for combat duty with the U.S. Army in France in 1917. Soon, his mother Grace Darling Seibold began to perform community service by visiting veteran hospitals in Washington, DC. George wrote to his mother religiously. When his letters stopped coming to his family, Grace continued to visit hospitalized veterans, clinging to the hope that her son may have just only been injured or returned home without identification.

On Christmas Eve 1918, all hope was lost when a package arrived marked: "Effects of Deceased Officer, LT George Vaughn Seibold." After many inquiries, the family learned George had died valiantly. Grace would then commit herself to devoting her time and efforts not only to veteran hospitals but to comforting other mothers whose sons had lost their lives in military service.

Ironically, in 1918 a newspaper editorial in the Union Progress published in Union, South Carolina proposed an outward expression of a parent's ultimate loss, a symbol of mourning—a gold star on a black arm band. *"What could be more appropriate or expressive than a gold star, representing the earth's most precious treasure, the symbol of fame and immortality as the stars that shine forever? The wearing of a small gold star would be a far more beautiful reminder of the life that has been given as a sacrifice, in the struggle to maintain liberty, justice and truth throughout the world."*

On June 4, 1928 Grace Seibold organized a group consisting solely of 35 special mothers with the purpose of not just comforting each other but giving loving care to hospitalized veterans confined in hospitals far from home and thus, founding the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. The Great War included 116,000 deaths and over 200,000 wounded. At that time, and even to today, military mothers are the sole morale and spiritual managers of the family. From sending letters to caring for the wounded in hospitals, mothers found their strength through their mission to support their sons as they protect and serve their country.

During the 1920's the Gold Star Mothers Association lobbied for a federally sponsored pilgrimage to Europe for mothers with sons buried there, who could not afford the trip. Congress enacted legislation, later extending eligibility for mothers and widows of men who died and were buried at sea or who died at sea or overseas and whose places of burial were unknown, with service between April 5, 1917 and July 1, 1921. It was determined that 17,389 women were eligible. By October 31, 1933, when the project ended, 6,693 women had made the pilgrimage.



LT George Seibold



Grace Seibold



The organization today whose children served in the Vietnam War and in Iraq and Afghanistan.



African American Gold Star mothers on ship enroute to Europe.



Gold Star pilgrimage arrives at cemetery in France.



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Illinois Department Commander Tim Kennedy and Rose Connolly represented the Catholic War Veterans in presenting a wreath at the Lincoln Tomb as part of the annual “Death Day” Remembrance for our 16th President. The members of Bishop Joseph McNicholas Post 1916 in Springfield, Illinois joined host organization Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War and others. President Lincoln, his wife Mary and four sons are interred at the tomb. An imposing 117-foot obelisk rising above the monument honors the four military groups of the Civil War: Cavalry, Infantry, Navy and Artillery.