

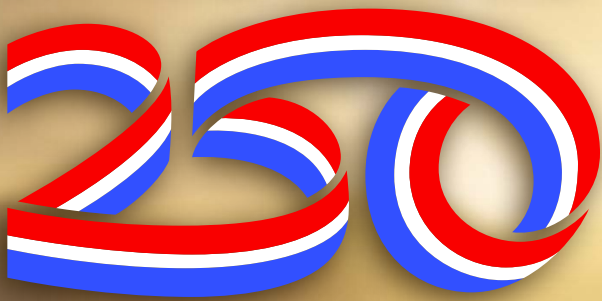


# CATHOLIC WAR VETERANS

OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SUMMER 2026

AMERICA



GOD BLESS AMERICA ★ HONORING 250 YEARS OF FREEDOM



# **Additional Convention Information**

## **Saturday Evening – Ice Breaker**

- Chicken fingers, mini beef meatballs, salsa bar, cheese and fruit
- Entertainment: The Zolkas (Band)
- Cost: \$20 per person (coffee & iced tea included) / Cash bar available

## **Sunday Morning – Communion Breakfast (After Mass)**

- Scrambled eggs, French toast, pastries, bread & muffins, breakfast potatoes, bacon and sausage
- Cost: \$5 per person (gratuity only) / Sponsored by Posts 1222 and 1292, Youngstown, Ohio

## **Monday – August 3 – Commander/President Luncheon (Everyone Invited)**

- Salad, bourbon-glazed London broil (GF); baked white fish with Parmesan lemon crust, Herb risotto, vegetables, rolls & butter, dessert
- Cost: \$40 per person
- Guest speaker: Dr. Chrisanne Gordon, MD – Founder, Resurrecting Lives Foundation
  - Focuses on traumatic brain injury over the past decade plus she has dedicated her life to military veterans with a movie, Operation Resurrection, and a book, Turn on the Lights

## **Tuesday – MEATO Dinner provided by Convention Corp.**

- Provided at no cost
- MEATO games to follow, \$5 per card, minimum 5 games, proceeds to benefit the Auxiliary

## **Wednesday Evening – Banquet (Prime Rib Buffet)**

- Caesar and tossed salad with bacon bits, shredded cheese, croutons, tomatoes with two dressings
- Entrées: Chef-carved prime rib (GF), Tuscan chicken, bourbon-glazed salmon (GF)
- Sides: Penne pasta primavera, garlic mashed potatoes, fresh green beans
- Dessert display, coffee & tea included
- Cost: \$70 per person / cash bar available

## **Hospitality & Daily Amenities**

- Room 545: Open daily with light snacks and beverages (no cost)
- Broadview / Hospitality Room: Dinner and drinks nightly (no cost, no dinner on banquet night)

## **Monday Evenings - Free Bus Shuttle**

- Service to Cleveland entertainment areas, Casino, flats entertainment area, 4th ave

## **Tourism & Local Attractions**

- Rock & Roll Hall of Fame (veterans discount; timed entry)
- A Christmas Story House
- The Lion King at Playhouse Square
- Cleveland Guardians games and River and Lake Erie cruises
- Short drive to Pro Football Hall of Fame and Cedar Point Amusement Park

**Latest check out date is Thursday, August 6th by 11 am.**

**There is a ONETIME Registration fee of \$25.00 per person for those attending the convention without staying at the Convention Hotel.**

# Friar Becomes A “Wounded Healer”

Special to the Catholic War Veterans Magazine

Story courtesy of Marc Phillip Yablonka, Hmong Daily News

Photos courtesy of Jen Jauregui



When Franciscan Priest Father Ed McKenzie recalls his tour in Vietnam, he connects it to his religious duties. As a hoist operator with the US Air Force 38th Air Rescue and Recovery Squadron, then Sgt. McKenzie lowered paramedics down onto the battlefield and pulled the wounded and deceased aboard helicopters. That was 42 years before he became a friar.

“It’s with me whenever I celebrate the Mass,” he says. “I consecrate the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ on a lily-white cloth on the altar. And when I do that, I quite often look down and see the deck of the helicopter. It’s bloodied with sacred blood.”

“It’s something I carry with me in my prayer life. I try to recognize the sacredness of the blood that was spilled in Vietnam and the sacredness of the altar. I try to make a connection there. It’s a daily thing for me, Fr. Ed said. He rotated out of Vietnam in 1970. He would be the first to tell you that he was not in good shape. “When I came back, I didn’t particularly have great faith. Vietnam made me question a lot of what I grew up with. I pursued the American dream and it crumbled around me. My marriage fell apart, I lost the house, my job, the kids. They went away and I found myself alone and meaningless,” he said. Then, things began to turn around.

“I needed some meaning in my life. I needed to repurpose myself. I was just too busy raising my family, working hard. I thought maybe I should surround myself with good people. And so I did. I ended up in a church. One thing led to another and I started volunteering,” Father said. McKenzie began doing things like serving on the altar. It soon occurred to him he could do more than that to gain some meaning in his life. He told his Provincial that living in a learning community with other people was calling him. Not particularly to the priesthood yet, but being a brother and entering into prayer life. He enrolled in a program at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

“I began taking philosophy and theology college courses and did pretty well. I really surprised myself. I was only ever just a C student. I got B’s every now and then but wasn’t that smart. Now I’m getting A’s in philosophy and theology, and it was rather remarkable. I graduated with a high GPA,” he remembered. The next step on the ladder was Deacon, and eventually Deacon Ed became Father Ed McKenzie, OFM, having entered the seminary in 2003 and

**Mission San Luis Rey - Host of the  
Coming Home Retreats!**

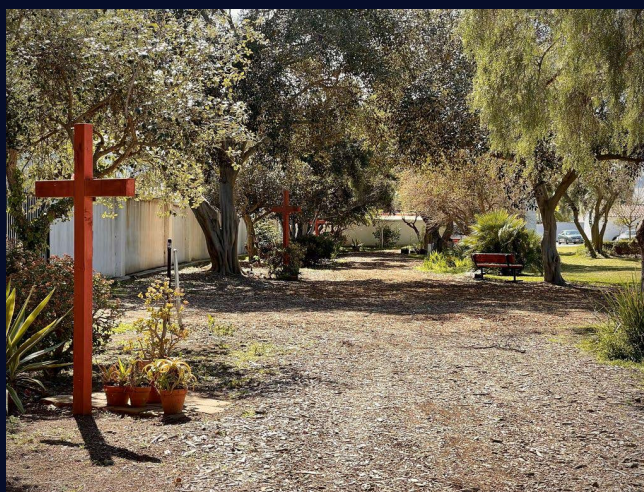


being ordained a priest in 2011. Still rattled by the PTSD he brought home from Vietnam, Fr. Ed was introduced to Jesuit Father Michael Sparough and the Coming Home Retreat for veterans. He was in Chicago when he read about the Retreat. He thought it might be something good for him. “It was the first time I was able to open up and talk about some of this stuff that’d been on my mind for a long time, but I kept a lot locked up. Kept it secret. It was a safe place and a non-judgmental place. It was a good opportunity to open up these wounds to the sun so they could heal,” he recalled. “It was life changing for me. I kept it quiet from my kids. I kept it quiet from my wife, and that was a big mistake. But I did it because I loved them. I didn’t want them to have the nightmares I had.”

“Because of those experiences, that stereotype has the power to damage us even more than the war we experienced. We are all changed and different. I am different because of it all, and I realize that my son (a Marine who served in Afghanistan) is different as well. That fact grieves this dad.” At the same time, there is a burden on veterans to change themselves in some way to fit back into society,” according to McKenzie. “Soldiers need to unlearn many of the warrior survival skills that kept them alive in the war zone. We need to make that happen for them,” he said. “They’re physically and mentally depleted and exhausted. They have to deal with lots of stuff.” When he says those words, Father thinks again of his own son. “He went off to Afghanistan and came back a changed person. He was not the same young man that went off to war. Now he’s getting the help that he needs. I’m so grateful for that, but it grieves me that he had to go through all of that like his dad.”

As McKenzie plans the retreats, he is mindful of the life of the Founder of the Franciscan Order, St. Francis of Assisi. “Few people know that St. Francis was a soldier, he was wounded in battle, was held as a POW in a dungeon underground for a year, and suffered from PTSD. Because of that, Father strongly believes, “Soldiers can become Saints.” “That’s my thesis. That boils everything down. You’re worth it. I don’t care what you did in the past. Neither does God. We can move forward and you can become a seed. St. Francis of Assisi showed us how to do that,” he said. The retreats at Mission San Luis Rey help veterans of all faiths through such tools as meditation, group discussions where veterans step up to the pulpit and share whatever is on their minds, small group breakouts, music and song, and allowing veterans and their spouses to walk in peace and serenity at the Mission. Even to write letters with prayers to themselves or to God, which Father mails to them six months later! Attendees tell him they are astonished at what they wrote. Father Ed McKenzie continues to teach veterans of any conflict that they can become saints. And he does so that others may live!

***ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Marc Yablonka is a Burbank, CA military journalist and author whose articles have run in the Stars and Stripes, Army Times, and Vietnam Magazine, among others. He is currently the Senior Reporter of the Sacramento-based Hmong Daily News and writer for the Sentinel, magazine of the California Chapter of the Special Forces Association. He has written four books on the Vietnam War.***



The mission offers peace and serenity to veterans and spouses



A veteran shares his experiences during the retreat

**Any veterans and their families interested in attending one of Fr. Ed's Veterans Retreats should visit: MISSION SAN LUIS REY, 4050 MISSION AVENUE, OCEANSIDE, CALIFORNIA 92057, call (760) 757-3651 or visit: <https://sanluisrey.org/veterans-retreats-in-california>**

# Ohio Church Recruiting Drive



**HOLY TOLEDO!** Catholic War Veterans members recently manned a recruiting table at all the Masses at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Toledo. Pictured from left to right: Rita Wulf, National Commander Larry Wulf, Steve Vargo and Wife Fran Vargo of Jude Thaddeus Post 1675.

# Meanwhile, Charity in Arkansas



CWV Auxiliary Unit 1836 in Little Rock, Arkansas donates T-shirts, underwear, belts, shampoo and shaving cream and other health and comfort items to the local VA Hospital on a monthly basis.

Photo courtesy of Unit President Janet Malloy

# Derby Historical Society Honors Derby, CT Post 1562

The Derby Historical Society, a regional historical society dedicated to preserving, maintaining and celebrating the rich and varied history of the lower Naugatuck Valley, used the occasion of its 2026 Annual Meeting Program and Awards Presentation to recognize CWV Post 1562 with its Dr. John L. Howe Award. The Society recognized the post for its support of Veterans and the local community through fellowship, charitable activities and veteran services.



Accepting the award on behalf of Derby Post 1562 from the Society's Executive Director Kellie Santiago, are Post Commander Tom Voytek and Auxiliary Unit President Loretta Budd.

The Post was represented by (from left to right) : Gus Williams, Paul Varsanik, Joan McCabe, Maureen McDonnell, Ellen Amadio, Joseph Delgrande, Veronica Kudej, Tom Voytek, Susan Stankye, Tom Owen, Loretta Budd, Rick Gales (CWV National VSO) and Mike Kasainskas.

Photos courtesy of Mike Kasinskas

# Post 1 Astoria Celebrates



The prominently displayed cake said it all!



CWV's favorite disk jockey and entertainer John Hughes got the party going with Irish tunes.



CWV National Commander Larry Wulf, who was in New York that weekend, assisted PNC Dave Crum at the registration table



And the star of the show! The buffet table featured corned beef and cabbage and the traditional Irish soda bread. Erin Go Bragh!



Past National President Marylyn Crum holds up the winning Meato game card!



Sharing of the Green! Julie Frank displays the winnings of the 50/50 raffle.



What's a party without singing? Marylyn and Jimmy sing a duet on a grand Irish tune.



CWV's favorite Irishman - National Judge Advocate General Jimmy Kiernan!



Pastor of CWV's founding parish, Msgr. Fernando Ferrarese, stops by to greet the members at the party.



National Treasurer Andy Veiga cuts a rug with Darlene Finkel.

# How Chicago's Meatpacking Industry Became The "Hidden Frontline" Of World War I

By Charlie Maxwell

When our country entered the hostilities of World War I, a quieter war was happening on the "hidden frontline" in factories and stockyards far from the trenches. One of the least noticed yet most vital contributions came from Chicago's meatpacking industry, which became a "frontline" supplying food, fats and by-products essential to the war effort, equally as important as munition factories and shipyards.

By the late 19th century, Chicago had already become America's meat capital. The Union Stockyards, opened in 1865, centralized livestock handling and slaughter in one network. Railroads brought cattle and hogs from western ranges, and refrigerated railcars, pioneered by Gustavus Swift, distributed processed meat nationwide. By 1910, the machinery, cold-storage networks and industrial-scale operations gave Chicago a capacity few rivals could match. Chicago was the beating heart of the American meat supply.

The war would require preserved meats that could endure months of transit. Chicago packers supplied canned beef, salted meats and cured pork products. They also supplied tallow, glycerin and animal fats used in making soap, explosives and lubricants. In 1917, the Food Administration assumed control over meat distribution, quotas and exports. The federal government monitored meat supplies to the point of "knowing almost to a pound" what stores remained in each stockyard.

Chicago's meatpacking industry became more than a food factory. It was part of national defense. The wartime boom stretched capacity. Plants ran longer shifts. Workers endured faster rhythms, less rest, and greater exposure to injury. Some slaughterhouses introduced more mechanization—faster conveyors, more automated knives—to boost throughput. But rail congestion slowed capacity. Labor pressures mounted, too. Unions pushed for wage increases and eight-hour days. Tensions with labor arose. As cost pressures grew, packers sometimes cut hours or demanded extra quotas. The federal government often intervened, treating the meat supply as a national priority.

Most narratives of WWI focus on steel, weapons, trenches and navies. Yet food and materials are war's foundations. An army marches on its stomach—and gunners need glycerin, lubricants, felt and chemicals. Chicago's meat industry delivered that foundation. But meat firms also had to navigate export permits, shipping priority and government oversight. Reports of spoilage, adulteration and sanitation risked undermining trust. Yet the industry rallied behind the war.

When the armistice arrived in 1918, meatpacking firms rebalanced toward civilian markets. But the war left permanent change. The shift toward government regulation, inspection systems and centralized distribution survived. Labor gains made under wartime arbitration persisted in some cases. Plants spread outward from Chicago, responding to highway trucking and decentralized sourcing. The old concentration in the Union Stock Yards declined. But the city's response remains a case study. It showed how an industrial city leftover from 19th-century expansion could modernize for modern war, and how a civilian industry can pivot to national defense.

"Chicago is ... The Union Stockyards" - Frank Sinatra



The old saying: "An army travels on its stomach!"



# ..... No One Left Behind!

Remains of Staff Sgt Nicholas J. Governale,  
U.S. Army Air Forces

Recovered off Guadalcanal after 80 Years  
Funeral took place in his native Brooklyn Parish



Aerial view of Carney Field, Guadalcanal, 1943

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced that U.S. Army Air Forces Staff Sgt Nicholas J. Governale was accounted for on May 15, 2025. Governale's family recently received their full briefing on his identification. In the summer of 1943, Governale was a member of the 69th Bombardment Squadron, 42nd Bombardment Group (Medium). He was killed on July 10, when his North American B-25C-1 Mitchell medium bomber crashed on takeoff from Carney Field, Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands. His remains were not recovered after the war and he was declared nonrecoverable on May 11, 1949.

In 2017, Project Recover, a DPAA partner, conducted an investigation in the Solomon Islands and located aircraft wreckage in close proximity to Governale's reported crash location. In 2022, after receiving the data from Project Recover, historians and archeologists at DPAA began excavating the site. The team recovered possible human remains and material evidence, including life support equipment. Excavations continued until 2024 and all evidence recovered was accessioned into the DPAA Laboratory for analysis.

To identify Governale's remains, scientists from DPAA used dental and anthropological analysis as well as material evidence. Additionally, scientists from the Armed Forces Medical Examiner System used mitochondrial, Y-chromosome, and autosomal DNA analysis. Governale's name is recorded on the Walls of the Missing at the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial in the Philippines, along with others who are still missing from World War II. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he is now accounted for. A Funeral Mass was arranged in April at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church in Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

## Staten Island Remembers Its "Grunt Padre"

Members of St. Paul the Apostle CWV Post 1934 on Staten Island, New York recently attended the unveiling of a new statue in a public access "Military Garden" honoring hometown hero Fr. Vincent Capodanno, MM. The eight-foot statue was placed on the re-named Fr. Capodanno Boulevard.

It was designed by the late artist Gregory Perillo and was finished over an 11-year span by Anthony Leto, a Vietnam Veteran who took this project to heart and made it a reality. He raised money for the completion from a grant and from the many residents of Staten Island who passed through several community events where he sold poppies, as well as beads and keychains he handcrafted.

Their Chaplain was alongside the men of 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines on Sept. 4, 1967, when he lost his life. Despite being unarmed, he was shot 27 times on the battlefield in Que Son Valley while running to the aid of a wounded corpsman. He spent the last minutes of his life administering medical and spiritual care. The bronze effigy features the Medal of honor recipient dressed in fatigues. In one hand he holds a rosary. With the other, he is comforting a small child.



Photo courtesy of Post 1934 Commander Jimmy Haynes



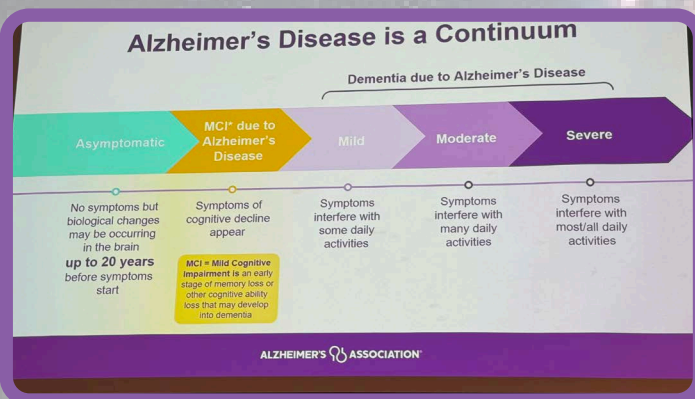
# A Mind Is A Terrible Thing To Waste

Members of the new Fr . Joseph M. Peek Post 1984 in Atlanta, Georgia recently participated in a much-needed Veteran Brain Health Summit held at the nearby Dunwoody United Methodist Church. This was the culmination of a year-long planning effort on the part of Post Commander Jerry Tiarsmith and members of the post.

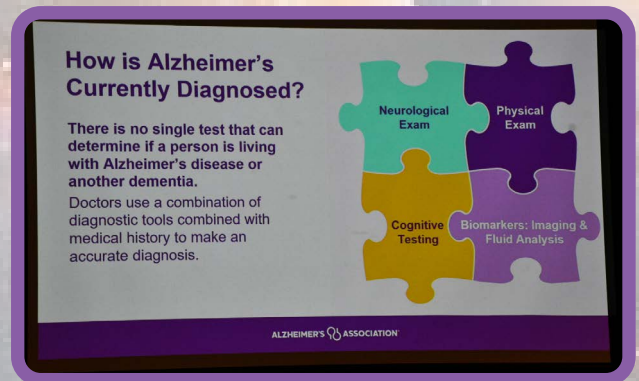
This first-of-a-kind effort brought together several Veterans organizations, including participation by the Georgia Department of Veterans Affairs Commissioner COL Patricia Ross, USAF (R), as well as a number of mental health practitioners and clinicians. These included Emory Veteran Health Program's Director of the PTSD Program, Anastacia Nichols, Psy.D., in addition to several Veteran-owned businesses who provided sponsorship of the event. Over 120 Veterans, family members and guests were in attendance. Members of the post came in uniform, and manned an information/recruitment table to make participants aware of the new post.

Of interest, the post recently took on a mission tasking to support troops in Kuwait impacted by retaliatory strikes by Iran during current hostilities. The post is in the process of raising funds and creating needed care packages in a joint effort with the local Daughters of the American Revolution and several Veterans organizations.

Text by CMDR Tiarsmith, photos courtesy 1st V/C Jim Clifford



Actual Alzheimer's is a degenerative, progressive disease.



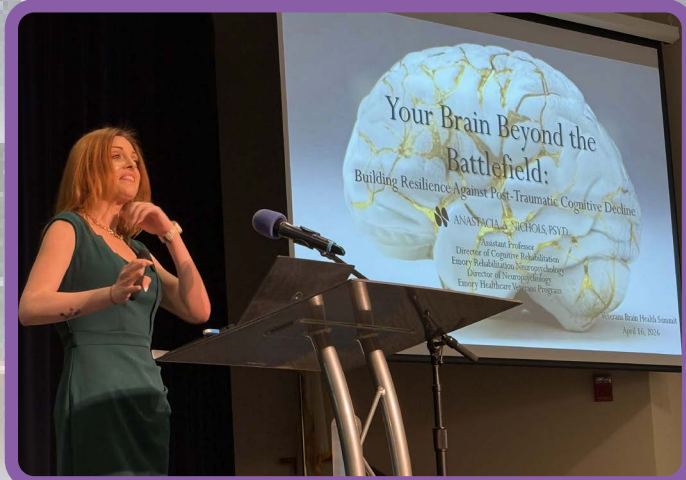
Unfortunately, dementia is exhibited in various symptoms.



The speakers held the rapt attention of some 100 attendees.



The Johns Creek Veterans Association Color Guard assisted in the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Commander Tiarsmith.



PTSD was the topic of Emory Health's Anastacia Nichols, Psy.D.



Georgia Dept of Veteran Services Commissioner COL Patricia Ross, USAF gave an update on programs to assist Veterans with psychiatric problems.



Good advice for everyone to consider to maintain their health.



CMDR Tiarsmith and VetBuds President Jason Robbins discuss matters of mutual interest.



Various garrison caps in the crowd reflected the number of Veterans organizations in attendance.



Post 1984 Adjutant Karen Clifford and John Cain join forces to interest s prospective member in the Catholic War Veterans.

# Why Can't Every Day Be Like Christmas?

Thanks to Post 1938 Commander Alex Klimowich!

Christmas 2025 saw Post 1938 in Bethpage, New York, host our first Toys for Tots event. The post partnered with Desirae's Darlings, a charity run by Joe Gallart, a long-time friend of Post 1938 member Sean Kuhn, in running the event.

Desirae's Darlings were instrumental in the success of the event, as it occurred during the government shut-down, and the USMC Reserves in our area were unable to pick up toys. Post 1938 invited multiple parishes in the area for an afternoon of food, drinks and family fun! We collected 256 toys in one afternoon! The event was a blast, and we are planning on making this an annual event. The next one is already on the calendar for November 28, 2026. If you plan on attending, the price of entry is one toy.

Special thanks to Post Adjutant and Judge Advocate Andres Camacho for his invaluable assistance. Thanks to his connections with the Marine Corps League, Santa Claus and his lovely bride were able to make a surprise appearance. The word on the street is that after retiring for a few centuries in the North Pole, St. Nick decided to join the Marines and become an NCO! Once he heard the Catholic War Vets were helping disadvantaged children, he just had to stop by!



A Winter Wonderland for every boy and girl! Toys donated to the Post 1938 event will brighten the lives of underprivileged children distributed by Desirae's Darlings charity.

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(Left to right) Sean Kuhn, 2nd V/C Greg Kimber, Joe Romuno, CMDR Alex Klimowich, 1st V/C Hank Hobbs, John McCarthy, Adjutant/JAG Andres Camacho.

## Meanwhile, Across the Country in New Mexico

Belated Christmas Greetings from New Mexico Post 1941 in sunny Albuquerque. Members of the Post used the occasion of Christmas festivities to receive their respective Christmas Quilts of Valor for their service throughout 2025.

With Appreciation to Carla Gonzales-Schwarz



***"For if every day could be just like Christmas, what a wonderful world this would be."***

**Sung by ELVIS PRESLEY**



# “Take Me Out to the Ball Game!”



Delta Dental Stadium, New Hampshire

On a Saturday in April, the department of New Hampshire attended a minor league baseball game in Manchester, NH. They watched the New Hampshire Fisher Cats (Toronto Blue Jays affiliate) play the Chesapeake Baysox (Baltimore Orioles affiliate) in an AA level ballgame.

Over 290 members and relatives were in attendance representing all 4 Posts and 3 Units in the state. This was the first time the Department of NH hosted a purely social event of this kind. The attendees were treated to a day filled with fun, companionship, hotdogs, beverages, and ice cream in a suite.

The event was to honor Priscilla Gauthier. Priscilla was selected for the prestigious CWV Auxiliary’s St. Agnes Award in 2022. She was a 70+ year Auxiliary member who passed away recently in January of this year. She was still the current President of Unit 1749. Priscilla was an avid Fisher Cat fan who attended many games, joined by her daughter Rose (also a long-time member of Unit 1749) and Past Department Commander Scott Demers. Current NH State Commander Denise Deblois would often join them for military themed nights.

The event had originally been planed as a “thank you” for her long-term contributions to the organization but turned into a memorial due to her unfortunate passing. The Catholic War Veterans and Auxiliary received a warm welcome on the scoreboard, along with a tribute to Priscilla, and a visit from “Fungo the Fisher Cat” Mascot in their suite. Despite windy and cool weather, the event was such a success that most likely another social event at the stadium will be held next year when the weather is a bit warmer!



## We Remember Priscilla Gauthier, Order of St. Agnes As published in the Fall 2020 edition of the Catholic War Veterans Magazine

Priscilla Gauthier has been announced as the recipient of this year’s Honor Legion of the Order of St. Agnes. She has been a member of the Catholic War Veterans Auxiliary since 1959, when she joined Saint Marie’s Unit 1749 in Manchester, New Hampshire.

Throughout her 61 years with her unit she has held numerous positions, most recently as President of her unit. She has sought to rejuvenate her Auxiliary by arranging membership drives, placing advertising in Church bulletins describing the Auxiliary’s mission, and supporting various fundraisers to help support Veterans. She wears her uniform proudly to all civic events to promote the organization, especially parades.

For over 30 years, Priscilla has washed and ironed the linens, corporals and vestments for her parish Church. She has sung in the choir, served as a Eucharistic Minister, attended Bible studies and served on the parish advisory committee, among others within her parish. Priscilla has been described as a “shining example of the best of members of the Catholic War Veterans.”

# CWV Member is Hosted on an Honor Flight



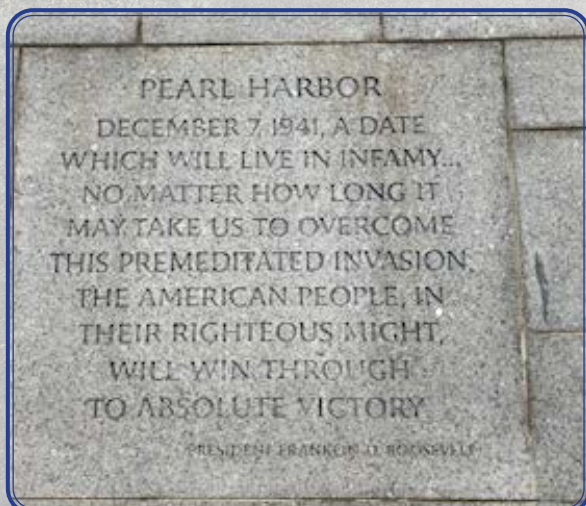
George greets another George (Washington, that is,) in front of the Washington Monument, one of several national landmarks he visited in a whirlwind day's visit to the nation's capital.



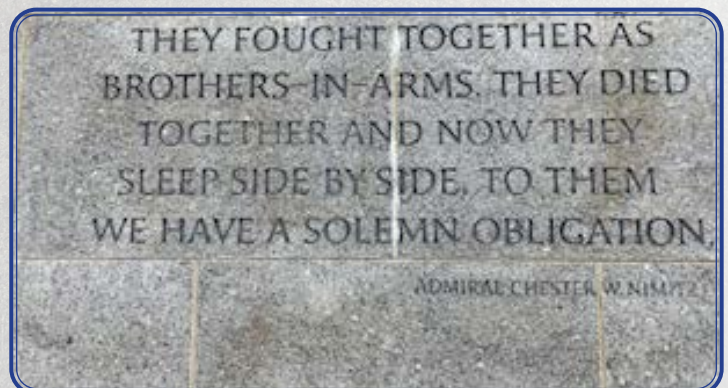
Bud pays his respects to the Veterans of a later era during a visit to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall on the National Mall, near the Lincoln Memorial in Washington.



Former CWV Post Commander George "Bud" Erler settles into his seat on the plane with companion Dustan Secaise for the flight from Mississippi to Washington, DC.



Words from President Franklin D. Roosevelt's speech on December 8th 1941, the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor, declaring war on Japan and America's resolve to win.



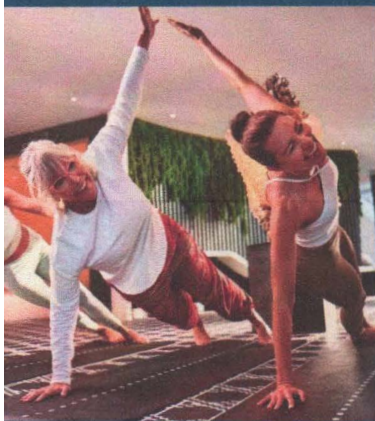
At the World War II Memorial, Admiral Chester Nimitz reminds us of the "solemn obligation" America owes those who fought and died.

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# U.S. TROOPS LOST IN IRAN RETURN HOME TO A SOLEMN “DIGNIFIED TRANSFER” ATTENDED BY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF!

