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*Cover: Photo is of the inside of the
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Curley named U.S. Coast Guard Reserve Person of the Year

MediaNews Group

On March 27, Newtown Square resident and Coast Guard Reservist Joseph M. Curley received the surprise call of a lifetime. Adm. Karl L. Schultz, Commandant of the United States Coast Guard, was on the phone to tell him that he had been selected as the Coast Guard Reserve Person of the Year (REPOY) for 2019.

“It took me some time to even grasp what was going on, and when it finally sank in, I just couldn’t have felt more honored,” said Curley.

The Coast Guard Enlisted Person of the Year program was established to recognize enlisted members of both active duty (EPOY) and reserve (REPOY) components whose accomplishments are the most outstanding and exemplify the Coast Guard’s core values of honor, respect and devotion to duty. The recipients of the EPOY and REPOY awards are announced each spring in recognition of that service member’s exceptional achievements during the previous year. The conferment of this prestigious award includes with it a meritorious advancement to the next higher enlisted pay grade. For Maritime Enforcement Specialist 1st Class Curley, that advancement is to Chief Petty Officer in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve.

Gee Williamson, Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard Reserve, said, “Petty Officer Curley was deserving for his dedication to the Coast Guard and for his excellent representation of our core values while serving in the Reserve Component. He has helped create great leaders, and ensured we continue down the path of excellence”.

On May 1, Curley was pinned with his Anchors at an advancement ceremony held at Sector Delaware Bay headquarters in Philadelphia. The event was attended virtually by family and friends. On Aug. 29, a socially distanced REPOY ceremony was held at the Coast Guard Training Center in Cape May, N.J.. At the event, Shultz also presented Curley with the Coast Guard Commendation Medal.



Joseph M. Curley

In the citation that accompanies the award, Curley is cited for his outstanding achievements while serving at Joint Task Force, Guantanamo Bay, Maritime Security Detachment and while serving at Sector Delaware Bay. On his second of back-to-back deployments, Curley conducted anti-terrorism force protection operations and served as Chief of the Guard, leading Coast Guard personnel from the front-line manning coastal battle and observation posts with Port Security Unit (PSU) 311 deployed to Joint Task Force (JTF), Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

“He’s always available and is consistently one to raise his hand and volunteer”, said Lt. j. g. Adam T. Deussing, Sector Delaware Bay Boarding Team Supervisor.

The year before Curley deployed to JTF Guantanamo Bay for the first time with Ohio’s PSU 309. Then, less than a month after his demobilization was called back again in order to fill an unforeseen critical gap in the shoreside security division. While with California’s PSU 311, he contributed to the success of over 700 hours of anti-terrorism force protection operations and the examination of over 100 potential maritime threats. Curley takes every opportunity afforded to him and does not steer away from a challenge. He also dedicates much of his time to volunteer work and in service to others.

Demonstrating exemplary initiative, Curley was a founding member of the Lighthouse Heritage Team, an inter-service volunteer group that collectively volunteered more than 2,200 hours to preserve the historic Guantanamo Bay Lighthouse. The team performed significant restoration and maintenance work on the lighthouse, the museum and surrounding grounds as well as constructing and organizing displays to showcase military artifacts and memorabilia. In addition, they guided 78 tours of the lighthouse and conducted over 48 flag details raising 176 flags which were then presented to personnel and their families.

Curley completed five facility improvement projects for the local school, greatly enhancing the educational environment for 150 students, and assisted teaching staff with over 90 hours of in classroom support. He participated in suicide prevention and counseling training, encouraged junior members to attend resume building classes focusing on potential federal employment opportunities and provided guidance and support to reserve and active duty personnel transitioning into civilian life and seeking positions in law enforcement.

Curley is a volunteer with the Soldiers Undertaking Disabled Scuba (SUDS) program. When a group of disabled veterans visited Guantanamo Bay, he provided ground transportation and logistical support for their dives, hosted social events to introduce the visiting veterans to other personnel and, as a certified diver, participated in the dives.

Curley also purchased a 10-person passenger van to assist with group transportation for PSU members and to provide a shuttle for visitors. Then, to enhance morale, he painted the van black with a pirate motif. The vehicle became known as the Pirate Van throughout the installation. The pirate design incorporated Coast Guard history and enhanced the Coast Guard's visibility at JTF Guantanamo Bay, especially at events such as the Coast Guard Ball, the Army Ball and the Lighted Holiday Parade.

Upon his return home to Sector Delaware Bay, he immediately recertified as a boarding officer and resumed a leadership role with the boarding team. Curley was vital in the completion of four deep-draft and 11 routine boardings, supported two Customs boarder protect operations and qualified three members as a boarding officer or boarding team member. He routinely assumes the duties and responsibilities of teammates and subordinates to aid in their pursuit of professional development opportunities and was instrumental in the certification of more than 60 reservists in small arms qualifications.

Curley's dedication, judgment, and devotion to duty are most highly commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the U.S. Coast Guard.

In recognition of his service to others during his first deployment to Guantanamo Bay with PSU 309, Curley was selected by his peers for the Good Shipmate Award. During his career, Curley has also been awarded two Coast Guard Achievement medals, both the Expeditionary and Service medals for the Global War on Terrorism, and the Army Achievement medal.

In July, Curley was called to active duty once again as part of the Coast Guard's COVID-19 response plan for recruit training. He is currently serving as a recruit instructor with the Training - Restriction of Movement (T-ROM) Program at Training Center Cape May.

When not wearing Coast Guard blue, Curley wears police officer blue. He is a 27-year veteran of the Philadelphia Police Department. After serving 14 years as a patrol officer, Curley was assigned to the Police Marine Unit. There he serves as a

tactical boat operator, holds his USCG captain's license and is a certified police diver.

As a decorated member of the police force, Curley has received commendations for both valor and bravery, two of the police department's highest awards. In addition, he has been awarded two commendations for merit, the Chapel of the Four Chaplains Award for Valor, the American Legion Leadership Award and over 40 police department letters of recognition.



Curley is a graduate of Valley Forge Military Academy (1985) and College (1987). At the academy, he participated in four years of Jr. ROTC, was in command of an 850 member Corps of Cadets, graduated second in his class, and received the Academy's highest award, the Order of Anthony Wayne.

While at the college, he completed two years of Advanced ROTC and received a commission in the U.S. Army Reserve before moving on to Penn State University, where he received a bachelor of arts degree in history in 1989. After college he served as an active duty infantry officer in various positions at Fort Benning and Fort Bragg.

Upon leaving active duty in 1993, he returned to reserve status and joined the Philadelphia Police Department. However, his growing interest in maritime law enforcement led him to enlist in the Coast Guard Reserve in 2003. In 2008, Curley earned a master's degree in history from La Salle University.

In 2009, Curley became an active supporter of the Delaware County Veterans Memorial project. Almost from the memorial's inception, he has been a part of its development and growth. During construction, he assisted with the researching and selecting of historical information that is engraved on the nine columns of the memorial. In addition to buying bricks and pavers, he also donated the funds to purchase the flagpole for the Coast Guard's flag at the memorial.

Curley has served as a military escort at groundbreaking ceremonies at the Memorial and always attends the DCV-MA annual awards dinner in uniform to represent the Coast Guard branch of the military. He continues to serve as a behind-the-scenes military protocol and history advisor. For his commitment and lasting contributions, Curley was nominated for DCVMA's Freedom Medal for Dedication to County and Community.



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Eugene Vickers to be honored at Navy Museum



Shannon Lynn Photography

For Veterans Day, longtime Cairn employee Eugene Vickers will celebrate his 104th birthday at the Navy Museum in Washington D.C. There, Vickers will receive a plaque honoring his service in World War II.

Vickers served as a lieutenant and chaplain in the U.S. Navy and was trained at Harvard as a communications officer. He served in this role aboard two warships in the Southwest Pacific. After his honorable service in World War II, Vickers went on to work at Cairn University for nearly 45 years. His extensive Cairn career included many positions, such as Cairn's first soccer coach, director of the evening school, director of alumni, and director of admissions. His influence on the university lasted long after his retirement as his four daughters and six of his grandchildren have attended Cairn.

The Veterans Day award ceremony will feature music from the Navy band and the presentation of the plaque by a retired Rear Admiral. Vickers' oldest grandson will also offer a prayer during the program. Afterward, friends and family will celebrate his birthday there together.

Cairn University would like to congratulate Vickers for this prestigious honor from the U.S. Navy. Additionally, happy 104th birthday, and thank you for diligent work with the university over your storied career.

Learn more about Eugene's life and military service in his feature story in the Newtown Square Friends and Neighbors magazine.



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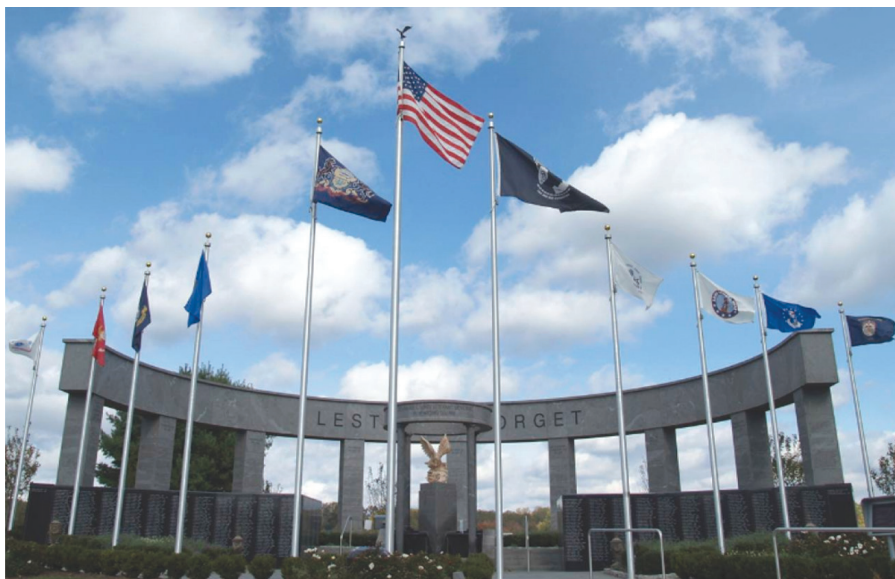


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About the Delaware County Veterans Memorial Education Program

MediaNews Group

The Delaware County Veterans Memorial, located at 4599 West Chester Pike in Newtown Square, serves as an interactive educational venue to honor the military service of all veterans for past, present and future sacrifices. It educates the public about veterans, United States military history and the founding of our nation. As a highly visible and dynamic destination point, the memorial serves as a place to honor our loved ones in a peaceful reflection, to pay tribute to the



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brave men and women who made, and those who continue to make, sacrifices that ensure our life, liberty and pursuit of happiness.

The mission of Delaware County Veterans Memorial Association's Education Program is "to educate, encourage, motivate and to inspire all students and citizens to acquire knowledge and skills in order to protect our history, liberty and freedoms, made affordable to us by those who served and/or gave the ultimate sacrifice for their country."

Working with local school district administrators, teachers, veterans, historians and civic leaders, the education committee developed a curriculum-based, age-appropriate program for students in grades K through 12 and beyond to bring the motto of the Veterans Memorial "Lest We Forget" to life. Students who participate in this unique educational program learn about the history of our great nation and its people, and come away with a better understanding of the foundation of our nation and those who fought to keep the United States strong.

Recently, the Delaware County Veterans Memorial has been working closely with high school and college students through internships and volunteer opportunities. These students, who are homeschooled, or attend Springfield High



Drone footage of the memorial.

School, West Chester East High School, Harrition High School, West Chester University, Valley Forge Military Academy, and Villanova University, have helped to create e-blasts, newsletters, researched soldiers on the memorial walls, inventoried donated military items and books, and participated in casket flag ceremonies and the Freedom Medal Gala, among other activities.

Throughout the summer of 2020 three very ambitious high school seniors have been actively working on volunteer projects. Michael Cichanowsky, who attends West Chester East High School, has been collecting, counting and cleaning monetary donations from our fountain. He also dedicated his time comparing official listings of Delaware County soldiers who were killed in action to those already engraved on the Wall of Heroes. This project will ensure that every soldier from Delaware County is accounted for at the Memorial. In addition, Michael has actively catalogued military awards, emblems and books from our expansive Gallagher collection. Gallagher is an avid collector of "all things military" and donated a very large portion of his collection to our education program. Previously, Josh Welsh, who attends Springfield High School catalogued all military medals in the Gallagher collection.

Two Harrition High School students, Danielle de Botton and Gabi Korin, are currently working on our newest endeavor. Dani and Gabi are conducting interviews with members of the Dela-

ware County Veterans Memorial community who have purchased bricks, are Veterans, or volunteer at the Memorial. The purpose of these interviews, which are being conducted via Zoom (later to be returned to in-person interviews following the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions currently in place), is to learn more about the "friends" of the Delaware County Veterans Memorial. Through these interviews, we will be able to bring the names on the bricks to life and learn more about the backgrounds of those who volunteer, serve, and honor. This project will enable DCVMA to share the stories of the people behind the memorial with the community and maintain this information in our archives/library so that these memories, stories and biographies are not lost to time.

Since the inception of the DCVMA education program in 2013, thousands of students annually have participated in both on-site and in-school curriculum-based programming. All programs are offered free of charge to participants and are financially supported through EITC and private donations. We are currently available to conduct virtual programming for students. Please contact us at info@delcoveteransmemorial.com or 610 400-8722 for information.

Battlefield crosses created to honor fallen troops

MediaNews Group

Battlefield crosses were created to honor troops who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. The rifle belonging to the deceased is planted, barrel-first, into their boots and their helmet is placed atop the rifle. The cross is part of a longstanding tradition that dates back to the Civil War, and even though it is called a cross, there is no religious ideology attached to this tradition.

During the Civil War, bodies of the fallen were removed from the battlefields, and a hand-carved wooden plaque was placed at a temporary grave site to honor those who lost their lives. Soldiers in World War I were each issued a rifle and helmet as standard equipment. It is at this time that the wooden battlefield markers were replaced with battlefield crosses composed of a rifle and helmet.

World War II saw the beginning of the issuance of dog tags for the purpose of identification. It is at this time that identification tags of the deceased were placed on the battlefield cross, and a pair of boots was placed at the bottom. This was the beginning of the modern-day battlefield cross consisting of a pair of boots, rifle, helmet and identification that is still used.



The Battlefield Cross statue at the sculptor's studio.

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Local Marine Corps League donates Battlefield Cross to Hall of Prayers at Delco Veterans Memorial

By Peg DeGrassa
pdegrassa@21st-centurymedia.com

NEWTOWN— Thanks to the members of the Gen. Smedley D. Butler Detachment Marine Corps League #741, in Newtown Square, a beautiful Battlefield Cross will stand outside of the Prayer Chapel at the Delaware County Veterans Memorial on West Chester Pike.

The “Battlefield Cross” consists of a pair of boots of a deceased soldier with a rifle, with bayonet attached, stuck in the ground, and the soldier’s helmet placed on the end of the rifle. The monument will serve as a stark reminder of the ultimate sacrifice paid by many service men and women.

A plaque at the sculpture reads, “A symbol of the fallen soldier, The Battlefield Cross serves as a solemn tribute to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.”

Detachment member Terry Jones, a professional sculptor at Sculpture, Inc. created the special monument. Jones also sculpted a major statue at the Marine Corps Museum in Virginia. The sculpture’s casting was completed at the Laran Bronze Inc., in Chester.

“The ‘Battlefield Cross’ at the Prayer Chapel will add to the dignity and solitude desired for the Hall of Prayers,” explained Bob Spano, member of Gen. S.D. Butler Detachment.

The Hall of Prayers, currently under construction is the second phase of development at the site of the Delaware County Veterans Memorial on West Chester Pike in Newtown Square. The

Hall of Prayers will provide a special place for guests to meditate and pray when they visit the Veterans Memorial.

As drivers approach the Veterans Memorial and the Hall of Prayers on West Chester Pike, from either direction, the sight is a heartfelt reminder of the service of local members of the military and the sacrifices and hardships that they endured for our country.

For more information on Gen. S. D. Butler Detachment Marine Corps League #741, visit www.genbutlerdet.org/.



For more information on the Delaware County Veterans Memorial, visit www.delcoveteransmemorial.org/.

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How Delaware County marked the end of World War II

By Colin Ainsworth, Special to the Times

As Japanese officials took to the airwaves on the morning of Aug. 15, 1945, to proclaim the nation would soon accept the surrender terms of the Potsdam Declaration, the American people, who had toiled for years to ensure that result, waited by their radios across the date line on the evening of Aug. 14.

When word came at 7 p.m. that President Harry S. Truman had confirmed Japan's capitulation and that a formal surrender was set for Sept. 2, "Delaware County ... exploded into the noisiest, merriest, wildest and most spontaneous celebration the county has ever known," the Chester Times reported the following day.

"Thoughts of gasoline rationing and tire shortages floated away with the war as almost every vehicle capable of operating was put into use" and car horns joined pots and pans, industrial whistles, church bells and other improvised noise-making. At 7:15, the planned eight blasts of the city fire siren at Fifth and Market streets officially marked the surrender.

“Impromptu parades, led by fire company apparatus in many communities, quickly organized,” while in Chester “carloads and busloads of yelling men and women and children converged on the local ‘Times Square’ – Seventh and Edgmont Avenue. A double line of cars extended half-way back in Deshong Drive as the traffic jammed up. And there was no let-up until some six hours later.”

The celebration started prematurely Sunday night, Aug. 12, as a false 9:43 p.m. report of surrender from the United Press made its way to radio broadcasts. Though the UP countermanded the news flash two minutes later, city residents had taken to the streets shouting, “The war is over.”

Across the county in Upper Darby, the Cardington-Stonehurt Fire Company gave five blasts from its siren, and West Chester Pike and 69th Street traffic came to a halt, “as confused motorists, many of them with radios in their cars, were caught up in the spontaneous celebra-

tion,” the Times reported.

The pent-up enthusiasm came at the end of the largest war the world had ever known, one in which Delaware County sent roughly 30,000 of its residents to fight. As of that evening, 869 were known to have given their lives in the conflict, according to Times records.

At home, residents had devoted five years of round-the-clock industrial efforts since the start of the Lend-Lease program in 1940, and adhered to increasingly strict wartime rationing.

The efforts of World War II veterans and sacrifices on the homefront continue to resonant with county leaders today.

“Think about your grandparents and great grandparents and what they did to save our country, what they did to save many countries around the world,” said Bob McMahon, mayor of Media Borough, in advice to younger generations.

A veteran of the Vietnam War, McMahon is a co-founder of the Pennsylvania Veterans Museum and the Veterans National Education Program.

“(The current global landscape) would not exist if we didn’t have people that not only went to war, but believed in it. They knew what they were getting into, and they were signing up left and right,” he said, believing an Axis takeover of the U.S. would have followed had Americans not gone to Europe and the Pacific.

“And we saved China at that point. You don’t see that in the news today,” he said, referring to the Japanese occupation of China and ensuing war crimes during the concurrent Sino-Japanese War.

Before tens of thousands of county residents embarked on that war effort in the wake of Pearl Harbor, the county’s industrial waterfront ramped up production in 1940 to support the British war effort. Chester and vicinity would form a key Mid-Atlantic center of what President Franklin D. Roosevelt deemed the “Arsenal of Democracy” as he launched the Lend-Lease program with Great Britain.

“Everything related to licking the Japanese and licking the Germans ...



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It is with great sadness that the Board of Directors and Delaware County Council announce the cancellation of the 2020 Freedom Medal Dinner due to safety concerns relative to the COVID-19 virus.

We are so grateful to all of you who attend and participate in our annual fundraiser. Our biggest wish for all of you is to stay healthy and come back next year on Thursday, November 18, 2021 to not only celebrate our honorees, but to enjoy an evening of patriotism, admiration, and thankfulness.

While it is disappointing to cancel the Freedom Medal Dinner for 2020, we look forward to seeing you at next year's event.

Please visit our website at www.delcoveteransmemorial.org or our Facebook page at Delaware County Veterans Memorial Association in Newtown Square for updates, events, information, or to support us.

Please stay healthy, take care of one another, and give thanks.

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you were all singing the same song. You were playing different musical instruments – the farmer was one, the refinery worker, the steel worker, the chemical worker were others – it was a great big symphony that was all composed to lick the Axis,” said R. Anderson “Andy” Pew, retired corporate officer and director for Sun Oil Co. and U.S. Air Force veteran, in a recent interview with the Times.

Pew’s father, Arthur E. Pew Jr., served as chief engineer at Sun Oil during the war years.

Sun Oil’s innovation in the years prior to the war would prove vital to supplying 100-octane aviation fuel to give Allied fighters and bombers an edge and maximizing gasoline output needed to supply the two-theater war.

“My father and his brother Walter Pew, figured out you can so-called crack the (crude oil) at high temperature and pressure and it comes out at 80 octane,” versus the less efficient distillation process previously used in refineries, Pew said.

The two pledged their inheritance against any damage to the Marcus Hook refinery by the process to ease the fears of uncle and Sun Oil President J. Howard Pew.

Arthur Pew Jr. would further the de-

velopment in the late 1930s by taking another risk, this time on eccentric, auto racing French World War I veteran Eugene Houdry, a mechanical engineer turned self-taught chemist.

The Houdry Process of catalytic cracking, using an aluminum oxide catalyst to raise octane levels, was a leap in oil refining and allowed the ability to ship 25,244,505 barrels of 100-octane aviation fuel during the war, according to a 1945 statistic from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

Finding initial limited support from Standard Oil of New York upon arriving in America, Pew jumped at the chance to recruit Houdry.

“My mother was fluent in French ... Eugene Houdry came and lived at our house in Bryn Mawr for six months or so,” said Andy Pew. “They sat at a card table in the living room and my mother translated. Out of that came the first Houdry catalytic process.”

The rapid technological changes across industries to meet wartime demand and limited workforce would prove difficult for production at home.

“The problem was, not just for Sun but all refineries... you had a lot of experienced personnel that had been drafted or volunteered. We had a fair number of in-



experienced people running the refinery out in the yard,” Pew said.

County industries would overcome the rapid retooling and short training time windows as over 100,000 workers at about 250 sites supplied all branches of the Armed Forces and the Merchant Marine.

Chester’s Ford Motor Co. plant became the largest of America’s three tank depots, Westinghouse’s Steam Division and Merchant Marine Division turned out \$140 million in propulsion equipment in 1944 alone, and Baldwin Locomotive in Eddystone retooled to produce over 1,000 M4 Sherman tanks. Sun Ship grew to be the largest privately owned shipyard in the world during the war, stretching from Chester’s East End through Eddystone Borough. Its four yards contributed two-thirds of all new U.S. tankers in 1942 and one-half in 1943, averaging 40% by the war’s end.

Chester’s role in the “Arsenal of Democracy” brought to the attention and airwaves of its namesake in England in June 1941. The mayor and citizens of Chester, England, sent trans-Atlantic greetings to Chester, Pa., over a special broadcast of the BBC’s “London Calling” program on June 18, 1941.

The radio program coincided with city Mayor Clifford H. Peoples proposing a local committee be formed to aid the English city.

“Through this plan, this city would figuratively adopt its British namesake and provide money and clothing,” which are urgently needed overseas,” the Times reported on June 17, as the industrial North West and West Midlands of England endured the German Blitz air raids.

“The committee would also encourage the change of correspondence between the cities, school children, service clubs, etc.,” according to the Times.

One city resident, Margaret Dykes of 1416 Williston St. wrote the Times that she lived in Chester, England, in 1898, and recalled “pleasant memories of a very beautiful city,” which she hoped to hear was spared by the Blitz during the broadcast as “such quaintness and beauty can never be replaced.”

While no further evidence of a sister city program can be found in the Times and local historical archives, city residents would find themselves planning for their own Blitz contingency plans by the end of the year.

“If bombers come roaring up the Delaware River to hit at the vital defense industries clustered along its banks, Chester will be ready,” the Times wrote ten days after the Pearl Harbor attack.

With presumed knowledge of the German’s planned Amerikabomber, capable of a roundtrip attack on the Mid-Atlantic region, and Graf Zeppelin aircraft carrier – neither of which came to operation – the Chester City Council of Defense took a cue from English cities.

The council began a registry on Dec. 17 to designate homes in the city’s outlying neighborhoods and surrounding municipalities which could house up a planned 7,000 children evacuated from industrial waterfront neighborhoods.

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They were there:

Delaware County veterans recall Pacific action during World War II

By Colin Ainsworth, Special to the Times

Two Delaware County veterans of the Pacific Theater were on hand for events surrounding Japan’s surrender in August and September of 1945. The unconditional surrender by Japan was the culmination of years spent overseas for both men – Woodruff “Woodie” Benson of Middletown and Ed Buffman of Upper Providence – in the hard-fought effort to defeat the imperial power.

“I remember at the beginning of August that the war was still a long way to go,” Benson said. “Then on Aug. 6, they dropped the first (atomic) bomb, and about three days later they dropped the second.”

The 1938 Glen-Nor High School graduate was in Okinawa, shuttling troops and equipment from Clark Field in the Philippines.

“I left home in January ’42, got home in November 1945; I never got home in the meantime,” said Benson, an Army Air Corps captain who flew 1,400 hours, with slightly over half in combat, as head navigator in a troop carrier outfit.

About Aug. 29, Benson was among the crews called to Atsugi air base ahead of Gen. Douglas MacArthur’s arrival.

“One of our engines was having trouble,” said Benson, who had spent extensive time stationed in the jungles of

New Guinea. “By rights we should have turned around and gone back, but after being overseas that length of time we didn’t want to miss this final bit.”

Held over awaiting engine parts, “I was there when MacArthur came in with the 11th Airborne in a C54. I had kind of a ringside seat, if you will, before they even signed the peace on the Missouri. That was one of my really thrilling times.”

However, apprehension remained ahead of the formal Sept. 2 surrender.

“There were 250 of us in Japan for two days, and we really did not know at that particular point how true this peace would hold,” said Benson, who was in-



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structed to “get out of there fast” and “not have any kind of incident.”

While sleeping under a plane in a roofless hangar, a Japanese squad arrived and decided to drill outside alongside Benson’s.

“We all had our .45’s there, but it wouldn’t have done much good,” he said. “But all they were trying to do was make us feel uneasy, which they certainly did.”

Decades after the war, Benson became involved with the American Legion and worked with students after befriending the late Post Cmdr. Oliver C.P. Armitage, a longtime Chester banking and real estate figure and U.S. Navy corpsman during the war, at Lima Estates.

“I never got into the VFWs or American Legions until Ollie Armitage got here,” Benson said. “If I wouldn’t have joined if Ollie would not have been my good friend.”

Benson was among the Legionnaires who inaugurated a patriotic essay contest at Middletown’s Glenwood School, connecting elementary students of the 2010s with the Greatest Generation.

“The kids were always very positive,” he said. “Ollie would say, ‘How many would like to get in the service?’ and a lot of them would put their hands up.”

“The thing that was so good in World War II was that everybody was involved. They either had a kid that was in the services, some of them two or three – my two brothers were both in.”

Ed Buffman followed in his father’s footsteps in the U.S. Navy, enlisting out of Roxboro High School in 1943. Serving as a gunner’s mate, second class, from 1944-46 on the U.S.S. Missouri, he saw battle at Iwo Jima, Okinawa, Kyushu and Honsho.

“My father was in the Navy; he was in 30 years,” Buffman said. “I had all the ideas of being on a PT boat, being in a submarine. He said, ‘You’re not going to be on any of those little things.’”

Following the wishes of his father – a veteran of World War I and retired chief turret captain who was called back as a

commissioned officer for World War II – Buffman was gun captain to 25 sailors manning a battery of five 20-millimeter guns on the Missouri.

“Those guys were great,” he said. “I have five on each gun; not one of them ever ran from the gun or anything.”

When the Missouri was struck by a kamikaze on April 11, 1945, off the coast of Okinawa, “the ship was aflame, smoke all over. I cut through midship and looked down there and said ‘Don’t worry, everything’s under control.’ I had a great group of guys.”

Five days later, the Missouri shot down 11 ½ kamikazes during a daylong attack.

After the extensive effort to ensure Japan’s surrender, Buffman volunteered to join “Malone’s Marauders,” under Cmdr. L.T. Malone, as one of six gunner’s mates to land on Japan after the initial surrender. They were sent to mountains unprotected to rid Japanese ammunition. With Marines still guarding ships in the uneasy days following the initial surrender, groups of sailors had to make the initial landings.

“We were told ‘if you’re approached by Japanese soldiers, sailors or anyone – if they have an armband that’s white, don’t shoot them. If they don’t have an armband, shoot them,’” he said.

When the time came for the formal surrender aboard the Missouri, the monumental occasion seemed an uneventful 20-minute formality for its crew, Buffman said. The dignitaries were nearly left in the lurch when the table for the

signing sent from the HMS King George V was found to be two small.

“At the last minute, two sailors from my division were sent to the mess hall to pick up a table,” he said.

Buffman finished out his time on the Missouri with a tour of duty in Europe, which he characterized as a “pleasure cruise” after the combat of the Pacific.

“We were treated like kings,” he said.

In the 1990s, Buffman became active in veterans’ organizations and education programs. Serving as VFW Media Post 3460 commander from 1999-2001, he went on to be All State Post Commander. He helped launch the Media Theater Veterans Alliance in 2001, which has honored 75 veterans at the opening of productions.

In 2005, he co-founded the Media-based Pennsylvania Veterans Museum with borough Mayor Bob McMahon and fellow Pacific Theater veteran the late John “Bud” Hendrick Jr. The museum teaches 500 students per year and the general public the contributions of U.S. veterans from all wars.

Buffman was forthright in what he hopes younger generations can take away from his peers and the war effort.

“They called the World War II guys the Greatest Generation because they are the greatest generation,” he said. “The values of the World War II generation are far different than their thoughts now, such as respecting each other, respecting the flag, and respecting the National Anthem.”

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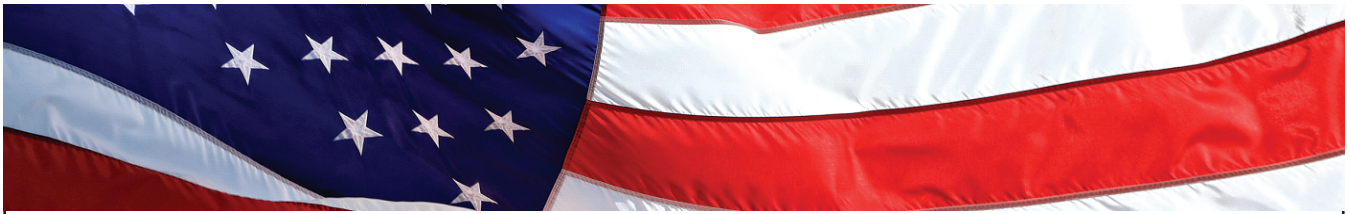
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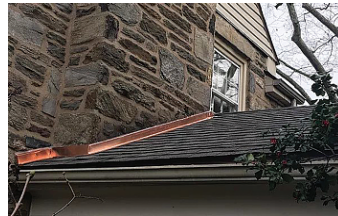
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Q&A with Bill Kinney

MediaNews Group

Q: What draws you to the memorial?

A: This is what I tell the kids, I tell them to look at the flags, all the various services. The highest is always the American flag. You can see that it is a circle, it represents unity. Also, just how beautiful the whole thing is. You know, the landscaping, it's just beautiful.

Just the honor and respect. I think I said it before, but it's just beautiful out here. It's something that's been needed. There are other memorials throughout, but they are not anything like this. They don't have a space where people can park, and there's a lot of nice events that have been held here. My wife loves it out here. She thinks it's beautiful. You come out and think about your old friends from high school. You think about the guys in WWII and how terrible that was. You left your home and couldn't come back for years.

Q: Do you recommend friends to visit?

A: Yes, absolutely, and I have done it gosh knows how many times. You can go out there 24/7.

Q: Do you believe it is essential to have memorials dedicated to those who serve?

A: Yes, it's a real sacrifice. People don't understand that a lot of the names on these blocks are no longer with us, and some of them had been through some horrible experiences. It is so important to have the memorial to honor those who served.

Q: Do you have a brick at the memorial?

A: Yes

Q: What years/conflicts did you serve?

A: 1966-1967 in the Vietnam War

Q: What attracted you to the branch of service that you chose?

A: I had gone to the Army, and I wanted to be in Special Forces, but they said after all the testing they were going to send you to language school in California, and right away I knew it

was not for me. I said, "Well thank you," and I went and talked to the Navy guys and then I ended up talking to the Marine Corps. And I talked to them and I wanted to do a two-year enlistment, and they said they had a two-year enlistment and I opted for it. He said there is no requirement for reserved training after your two years of active duty, and I thought that that was a little fib, but it was correct! I never had to do anything, and I was surprised.

Q: Did you enlist or were you drafted?

A: I enlisted in the Marines.

Q: Do you volunteer for the memorial?

A: I speak with younger children about the memorial and explain what each aspect of the memorial means and why it is important.

Q: Do you participate in casket flag ceremonies?

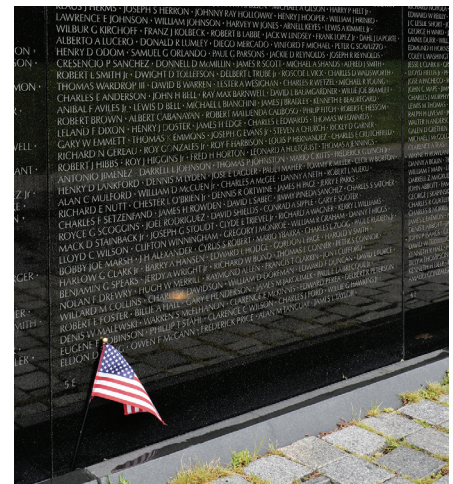
A: Yes. We haven't had any this year for obvious reasons. The next one scheduled is for September, I believe. We try to get the family members to participate, and show them how to raise it. Then they talk about their families, and when they are done, they play "Taps" so the flags come down slowly and at that time we get the flags, fold it properly and present it back to the family.

Q: Do you feel ceremonies like the casket flag ceremonies help with closure for family and friends?

A: I would say yes. The ceremonies are particularly nice. We had one ceremony that was awfully long, and it was a Civil War captain. And I guess it was the great-great-granddaughter, and she talked forever. But it came from the bottom of her heart. And obviously she had never met her great-great-grandfather, but she talked quite a bit about it. She was very proud of him. Normally the speeches are 5-10 minutes max.

Q: If there was one thing you could do, such as an event or fundraiser, for the memorial, what would it be?

A: I honestly don't know. The big fundraiser is the dinner. It's a big dinner event, we pretty much fill up the place. I don't know the exact amount we raise but it's a big one and they do a great job.



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Q&A with Guy Fizzano

MediaNews Group

Q: What draws you to the memorial?

A: I was asked to be the president of the memorial. My cousin who passed away from cancer was a lieutenant in the U.S. Army just like I was during the Vietnam era. My cousin Tony was the president of the memorial, so the memorial people came to me and asked me to take over and be president. So I accepted and figured one or two years I would be president of the memorial. Here I am going on nine years. I had a great time and met a bunch of great people, like the de Bottons and so it was very rewarding.

The memorial is a place to honor and remember veterans from Delaware County and the Philadelphia area, and I just wanted to donate my time to do something special. Many veterans from this area lost their lives serving our country. We actually have a Wall of Prayers at the memorial, which on certain walls engraved are the names of Delaware County veterans who lost their lives in battle. We want to honor and remember those people.

Q: Do you recommend friends to visit?

A: Oh yes. In fact the second Sunday of every month we have a flag-raising ceremony. Normally we will honor the casket flags of one or two veterans who have passed away. We will raise their flag and one of their family members will give a short speech of what the veteran did in his time in the military. I have had 10 or 11 veterans pass away in my family. We raise 10 or 11 flags that day. My whole family was there that day, so there were a lot of people there that day. Yes, I recommend not only my family but all friends also.

We also have a buy-a-brick program, and I've had friends and family members buy bricks and you can inscribe a name on there and it helps support the memorial.

Q: Why do you believe it is essential to have memorials dedicated to those who serve?

A: We don't want to forget those who have preserved our freedom. People have gone to battle for our welfare and have served time, they may not have been on the front lines, but they were serving our country and preserving our freedoms that we enjoy as a country. There is nothing like freedom, and to preserve freedom we need a solid military.

Q: Do you have a brick at the memorial?

A: Yes, and not only ones that I have bought for my company, for my family, for my father, for my relatives and also for my friends, numerous people have bought bricks for me knowing I was associated with the memorial.

Q: Do you participate in casket flag ceremonies?

A: Yes. In fact the casket flag ceremony was a thought of one of the men on our board. He is a Purple Heart recipient, and he saw down in Cape May, N.J., that they have these flag ceremonies at sunset so we decided we'll try that the second Sunday of every month. I don't anymore, but I used to be one of the speakers at the casket flag ceremonies.

Q: Do you feel ceremonies like the casket flag ceremonies help with closure for family and friends?

A: Yes, it's really touching. You'll see families get teary eyed raising their loved ones casket flag. When they talk about the veteran it is very touching, it brings the families to-

gether. When I had my family there, there were almost 100 of us and everybody was very touched and had very nice things to say.

Q: If there was one thing you could do, such as an event or fundraiser, for the memorial, what would it be?

A: It would be to raise a million dollars! How to do that I don't know. We do have two big fundraisers every year for the memorial. Our big one is the Freedom Medal Dinner right around Veterans Day, where we get together and award different veterans the Delaware County Freedom Medal. That normally brings in 600 or 700 people to the dinner, and they are buying tickets and advertising and such. In September we have another one called Blood, Sweat and Cheer. It's a fun time and people bring their children and we have games for the kids and races and food and drinks. It's a fun day. What I would like to do is keep those things going. If anyone has any other ideas my ears are open.

Q: What years/conflicts did you serve?

A: I went in late 1966 and came out early 1970 during the Vietnam era, but I was not stationed in Vietnam, I was stationed in Italy.

Q: Did you enlist or were you drafted?

A: I was drafted.

Q: What attracted you to the branch of service that you chose?

A: My dad was in the Army, so I decided to follow in his footsteps.

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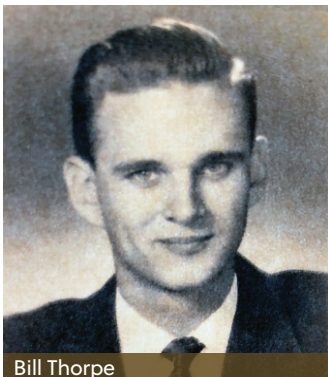
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Q&A with Mike Sammaciccia

MediaNews Group

Q: What draws you to the memorial?

A: I am an older guy, I'm 73. I was a veteran many years ago, in the Navy from 1970-1974, and my dad was a veteran of WWII and he fought in Germany, and I was always very proud of that. WWII was a very bad war and a very important one to win, so I always admired that generation who left the safety and comfort of their homes and went out to stop them. My dad was a part of that, and I was always very proud of that. My dad passed away six years ago, and I was aware of the Veterans Memorial and a friend of ours, their son died in Iraq, and I saw their stone and thought it was very nice and I wanted to buy my father one. I bought him one with his name and dates of service and everything on it.

Q: Do you recommend friends to visit?

A: Oh, definitely! It is so peaceful and well maintained, and when you take a step back and think about what it represents and the sacrifice that went into that it is just amazing.

Q: Do you believe it is essential to have memorials dedicated to those who serve?

A: Yes. These people left the comfort and security of their homes to fight for our country, so I believe these memorials are a great way to recognize their actions.

Q: Do you volunteer for the Memorial?

A: No.

Q: Do you participate in casket flag ceremonies?

A: No.

Q: What years/conflicts did you serve?

A: 1970-1974

Q: Did you enlist or were you drafted?

A: I enlisted in the Navy after college.

Q: What attracted you to the branch of service that you chose?

A: I joined the Navy because I wanted to see the world. I graduated from college, and I just wanted a change in my life. I went to Temple, so I never really went away to school. I was in Navy communications for four years, and I definitely don't regret that decision.



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Q&A with Joseph Daly

MediaNews Group

Q: What draws you to the memorial?

A: That's a good question. When I left Vietnam, I left a lot of good friends behind, and I just didn't know how to remember that. I try to dedicate my life to living for my family because they were all young men 19-20 years old when they died, and I want to live a life for them. So when I got married I thought of them. The memorial gave me a place where I just feel I feel comfortable there and working at the memorial helped me fulfill that obligation by me that was promised so many years ago that I wouldn't forget them and do everything.

Q: Do you recommend friends to visit?

A: Oh absolutely. Even if you weren't a veteran, it's just a solemn place. There's a reverence out there you can even feel it as you walk around

the property whether you're at the wall or the Hall of Prayers or the POW, you feel like there is something there. It's so much more, it's a living memorial, it's not just brick and stone. There are programs, the bricks that bring people back to life, the flag raising, all those things are important so that our veterans are never forgotten. And that memorial is a great contribution to making sure our veterans especially in Delaware County are never forgotten.

Q: Why do you believe it is essential to have memorials dedicated to those who serve?

A: It's like everything else. If you don't honor, things happen again. History repeats itself. You want these memorials out there so people can reflect on these wars, and they took many, many lives. The memorials make

sure that those who made sacrifices for our country are never forgotten.

Q: Do you have a brick at the memorial?

A: Yes, I do. I have one for my father, father-in-law, I'm getting one for my son, and I'm going to put one up for my brother who passed away.

Q: Do you volunteer for the memorial?

A: Yes, I'm currently board president. I go out there all of the time to look around to keep an eye on it but also I feel good when I'm there. It may sound silly, but I talk to my friends while I'm there, I say "Hey, this is all about you guys."

Q: Do you participate in casket flag ceremonies?

A: Yes, I do. I haven't missed one yet.

Q: Do you think that the casket flag ceremonies help with closure for family and friends?

A: Yes. You lost a loved one that passed, for ten minutes on a Sunday you get to bring them back to life and share them with other people

Q: What years or conflicts did you serve?

A: I joined the Marine Corps when I was a senior in high school. I graduated and then went to boot camp in September of '67; March of '68 I went to Vietnam. I stayed there and did two tours. I returned home late November of '69. I enlisted.

Q: What attracted you to the branch of service you chose?

A: Because I wanted to go into combat, I wanted to go with the best.

Q: What does having a brick for your family members mean to you?

A: To me it puts them out there to fellow veterans. To me it's hallowed ground where all the veterans hang out. Having their name attached to the memorial makes me feel good.

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**We honor all who served,
in times of war, and in times
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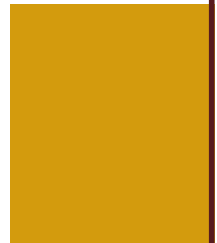
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WE ARE HERE FOR YOU



At Riddle Village, we understand that this is a time of change and adjustment for everyone. Having over 25 years of experience serving and caring for our residents at every level has helped us respond quickly and effectively to the Covid-19 crisis facing every individual in our global economy today.

We are not just a community; we are a safe place to call home. We are taking every precaution in this difficult time to ensure our residents, employees and caregivers are protected. At the same time, we are still working with those looking for the peace of mind that we can offer with our extensive Lifecare contract.

Riddle Village knows Lifecare and our team members are working diligently to provide our Residents with the best that life has to offer each and every day.



IN A TIME OF UNCERTAINTY, CHOOSE STABILITY, CHOOSE RELIABILITY, CHOOSE RIDDLE VILLAGE.



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