



THE LEGION POST

OTIS SAMPSON POST 59 STOUGHTON, WI
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Volume 16 Issue 9

December/January 2014

Commander's Report

2014-2015 OFFICERS

Commander

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1st Vice Commander

Vik Mallong

2nd Vice Commander

Mary Lloyd

3rd Vice Commander

Larry Johnson

Service Officer

Bob Lloyd

Sgt. at Arms

Dale Seffens

Finance Officer

Jim Oler

Historian

Lenny Swingen

Adjutant

DuWayne Stellmacher

Judge Advocate

Terry McCardle

Chaplain

Rich Fries



Greetings,

I would like to wish everyone a great holiday season. It looks like we are going to have to put up with a snowy and cold winter again this year.

Our Veteran's Memorial Park project is underway. Oscar and Shirley Linnerud have donated a very nice piece of land at the corner of Hwy. B and Country Club Rd. We have a lot of work to do, but what a great start for this project. We can't thank the

Linneruds enough. More reports later as we move along.

I haven't heard any complaints about our bi-monthly news letter one way or another. I think we need more input from the membership. We don't get enough members at the Post meetings to really get a feel what you folks think. I am thinking we should have a survey to get more people's opinions. We have approx 350 members and I would like to hear from many of you with just a phone call. My number is 873-9428, so leave a message to what you want as far as each month or bi-monthly.

I am looking for a replacement

for my wife, Linda, with regard to the scheduling for waitresses and kitchen help for our Friday night fish fry. She has taken on this responsibility ever since we started the fish fry. She is having health issues that require less stress and needs to take life easier. If anyone would like to step up, please let me know and thank you. It will be greatly appreciated.

Until next year,
Commander Sonny

Auxiliary

President

Marlene Bierman

873-7397

1st Vice President

Elvera Phelps

873-5154

2nd Vice President

Linda Swangstu

873-9428

Secretary

Linda Schmidt

205-2517

Treasurer

Alice Moen

444-7320

Chaplain

Sharon Silbaugh

873-3927

Sgt. at Arms

Pat Christensen

873-7479

Historian

Sherry Leick

873-6687

Auxiliary News



Hello American Legion Family,

Hope everyone enjoyed the pretty fall weather that came and went in a hurry. Now we can enjoy the cold and the snow. Yeh right!

October was sort of busy. The Auxiliary put on its first Chicken N Biscuit dinner October 25 and had a nice turn out—served 124. Thanks to everyone that attended. I also want to thank Elvera Phelps for chairing the event. She spent a lot time calling people and getting things organized. Also, thanks to everyone who helped in the kitchen preparing the food, making cakes for dessert,

serving, and waitressing. Everything was delicious. Thanks again, Elvera.

Lisa Olson, Elvera Phelps, Mary Curran, and Bonnie Kennedy attended a leader workshop in Waunakee. They said it was a very interesting workshop. We had our raffle drawing for a Quilt, which was donated by Sharon Jones, at the November dinner on Veterans Day. The winner was a new member of the Auxiliary, Nancy Onder. Thanks to everyone who purchased tickets. The Auxiliary made about \$600.00. The money goes toward veteran's projects and programs.

I would like all Auxiliary members to think about being an Officer for 2015-2016. If every member took two years we would not have a problem keeping the Auxiliary going. Our existing officers are getting burned out. Cathy Rigdon will be secretary and we still need a membership chair—Lisa Olson will stay on as co-chair to help the chairman. Lisa has held the membership chair for many years. We are very much in need of someone to take the presidency.

President continued on page 2

CALENDER OF EVENTS

December 6 - Blue Moon Karaoke – 8:00 - midnight
 December 9 - Legion Dinner – 6:30 pm
 December 13 - Ugly Christmas sweater night –
 Universal Sound – 8:00 - midnight
 December 21 - Legion Breakfast
 7:00 – 11:00 am
 December 25 - *Merry Christmas!*
 December 26 - Blue Moon Karaoke – 8:00 – midnight
 December 28 - Mikey Fuss Country Jam
 2:00 – 6:00 pm
 December 31 - New Years Eve Party – Northern Lights
 Band – 8:30 pm – 1:00 am
 January 1 - New Year's Day
 January 3 - Blue Moon Karaoke – 8:00 - midnight
 January 18 - Legion Breakfast
 7:00 – 11:00 am
 January 23 - Blue Moon Karaoke – 8:00 – midnight
 January 25 - Mikey Fuss Country Jam
 2:00 – 6:00 pm
 January 27 - Legion Dinner – 6:30 pm

Event Pricing

Post Dinner: 6:30 pm \$11.00

Breakfast: 7:00-11:00 am
 \$8.00 adults, \$4.00 children

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

"And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."

Luke 2: 9-11

May you and your families enjoy the peace of Christ this season—a blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year to all.

If you know of anyone who is hospitalized, or in need, please contact Rich Fries at 608.273.8758.

President continued from page 1

With my help as past president and Elvera Phelps as vice president, we will be able to help the new president. We have a lot of members and we don't want the Auxiliary to fold.

The Legion and Auxiliary will collect 'Snickers for Soldiers'. When you come down to the Legion bring some candy bars.

I want to thank all the Veterans that are serving and have served our country. You are all respected for what you did and are doing for our country.

HELP! HELP! HELP! The Legion needs someone to organize the Friday night fish fries. Linda Swangstu is stepping down, do to her health. The job entails getting kitchen help, waitresses and cashiers. This is not a Legionnaire or Auxiliary function—it is a community fish fry. If you know anyone who would like to do this and keep on top of everything, please let Linda know. She has a list of all the people that are helping now, so it wouldn't be too hard. Linda, everyone wants to thank you so much for doing a great job all these years. This is a big money-maker for the Legion, so let's please keep the Legion fish fry going. As I mentioned, you don't have to be a member.

The VFW is asking people to donate turkey, salads, and /or desserts for the dinner that is held at the VFW on Christmas day. If you can donate please call Linda Schmidt, 205-2517.

Thanks to Alice Moen for donating batches of lefse to sell at our Christmas breakfast/dinner.

I want to thank Lisa and Doug Olson for getting the coffee to the Stand Down on November 1. We also donated \$100 to the cause. Also, we donated \$200 to "Adopt a Family" at our last meeting.

Remember there will be no Auxiliary meeting in January.

Everyone have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year with family and friends.

Marlene Bierman
 President



CHRISTMAS DINNER

All Are Welcome!

VFW Hall
Veteran's Rd (Cty N)
Stoughton, WI
December 25th
Serving from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

If you need a ride or if you want a meal delivered,
please call

The Stoughton Senior Center
873-8585 By 12 - 23

- Leave your name, address and phone number
- How many dinners you need
- How many passengers need a ride
- *Rides and home delivery limited to Stoughton School District area
(Please call by December 23rd)

Donations Appreciated!

*Hosted by the American Legion, VFW Post 328 and their
Auxiliaries and Volunteers*

Veterans Busy on Veterans Day

Veterans from both the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars fanned out across the community to participate in Veterans Day Activities.

To start things off, four Legion veterans went to Oregon at 2:15 on Monday, November 10, to participate in Veterans Day activities at the Oregon Manor Nursing Home. At 3:00, five members of the American Legion Funeral Honor Guard travelled to Highland Memory Cemetery in Cottage Grove to conduct funeral services for a deceased veteran. At 7:30 am on Tuesday, November 11, 12 Legion members were at the Stoughton High School to greet more than 1100 students as they arrived for classes. Later in the day, they presented flag-folding demonstrations to the students.

At 11:00, five Legionnaires participated in ceremonies at the Sandhill School, while several Legion members, joined by members of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 328, helped conduct the traditional Veterans Day ceremony at Fox Prairie Elementary School.

To conclude the activities that day, five Legion members participated in the ceremony for veterans at the Skaalen Nursing Home.

Throughout the week, Legion members also spoke about their personal military experiences to classes at the Stoughton High School.

In addition, 12 members of the Yahara River Quilting Group traveled to the Veterans Hospital in Madison on November 11 to present hand-made quilts to 82 hospitalized veterans. These women had worked all year making these quilts and were really appreciated by the veterans.

As veterans, we served our country; now we are serving our community.

Submitted by Bud Erickson

Happy New Year!

For upcoming Legion entertainment, call the Post at 205.9090 for a recorded message.

Hall Rentals

Call Julie Nygaard at 608.333.9577

Monthly Post Meeting Schedule

Legion – 2nd Monday – 7:00 pm

Auxiliary – 2nd Monday – 7:00 pm

SAL – 2nd Wednesday – 7:00 pm

Meetings are held at the Post.

All members are encouraged to attend.



AMERICAN LEGION BAR 803 N. Page St. Stoughton, WI

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Bar open to serve you Wednesday - Sunday

Wednesday & Thursday: 3:00 pm or later

Friday: 3 – 10 pm or later

Saturday: Noon – 10 pm or later

Sunday: 11:30 am – 6 pm or later

Wednesday Ladies Night

\$.50 off any Ladies drinks



Body of Stoughton World War II Veteran Found in Italy

The body of Howard Hanson, a Stoughton native and a World War II pilot, has been discovered in Italy. 1st Lieutenant Hanson, who was the uncle of

Stoughton native, John Christopherson, disappeared when his bomber was shot down while on a mission over the North Adriatic Sea on February 28, 1945. Hanson was 24 years old at the time.

The bodies of four of his crewmates floated to the surface about a week later, but Hanson and one other member of the crew were never found and were deemed "unrecoverable", in 1948 by the U.S. government.

In 2013, a local farmer discovered the hull of the plane buried in seven feet of mud and water. Retrieving the hull will be difficult, but forensic evidence taken from Hanson's remains, matched the DNA of Hanson's niece now living in California.

Plans to retrieve the hull and Hanson's remains are on hold pending approval by the U.S. government.

Submitted by Bud Erickson

We Thank You on
this day for our freedom
to do what we want
where we want
And say what we
think. So take a day
of letting us serve
you and know that
what you helped this
country do will always
be remembered.

Sincerely,
Jared

*The letter at left
was written by a
River Bluff
Middle School
student to honor
Stoughton
veterans.*

ROBERT GABRIEL BECKSTRAND

"Bob", as he is known to many in the Stoughton area, was born in Rockford, IL on January 12, 1925. He grew up in Rockford and attended the Rockford Public Schools, graduating from high school in June 1943 at the age 18. A few weeks after graduation, he was drafted into the service of his country. He was given the choice of Army or Navy and chose the U.S. Navy.

Bob's father was a Lutheran pastor, as was his older brother, his sister's husband, and it was assumed he would too, but he wasn't interested yet. He preferred to be drafted into the service. He received his basic training for eight weeks at Farragut Naval Station in northern Idaho. He was then scheduled to go to radio school there, but was interrupted by two months of rheumatic fever. Radio school was training in the basic features of the radio, learning to receive Morse code messages at 30 words a minute or more and some transmitter technology.



Bob was then sent with other radiomen to Pearl Harbor where they were assigned to various ships. He, with a few others, was assigned to the battleship U.S.S. *Maryland* (an older ship assigned to the "slow

fleet" under Admiral Kincaid) in contrast to the newer fast ships under Admiral Halsey.

His ship was among those who carried-out pre-invasion bombardments and covered all needs of big guns. While deployed almost two years on the ship, he was part of the invasions of Palau, Leyte (Philippines) and later at Okinawa. The *Maryland* was hit by kamikaze aircraft (Japanese suicide bombers) during its time at Leyte and again at Okinawa. Some crew members were lost, as many as 30 at Leyte in Nov. 29 1944. The *Maryland* was involved in the greatest historic naval battle named for one of its sites, "Surigao Strait". This battle took place in the black darkness of night and early morning hours of October 15, 1944. In the naval battle much damage was done to defeat the Japanese fleet.

Bob served as radioman most of his time on duty—coded long messages coming by Morse code incessantly, many with the priority clue "urgent". When at his battle station, he was a voice radioman in the main battery room, receiving and sending messages to the ship's spotter airplane pilot or to the Admiral ship of the fleet.

After the war he continued in service until his discharge was given in April 1946. He earned the following special bars:

1. Asiatic Pacific – 3 bronze stars
2. Philippine liberation – 2 bronze stars
3. American Theater Ribbon
4. Good conduct

Returning home, he applied to colleges and worked as a stock boy in the A&P grocery. He was admitted into Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH. There he and Dorothy Wade became engaged. The following year he began studying for the ministry at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg, PA. He and Dorothy were married during that first year. He transferred for the final two years of study to Luther Theological Seminary in St. Paul, MN, graduating there in 1953.

His first congregation to serve was in north central Iowa, a rural church. He has served other congregations in Iowa, northern MN and WI among them First Lutheran Church in Stoughton (1972-84). After retiring in 1990, he served 15 years as part-time visitation pastor to churches nearby. He never joined military service agencies due to the long hours each week as pastor, unable to give the kind of service expected. He is proud to have served his country as a Navy radioman for almost three years.

Submitted by Evelyn Kahl

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DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES THE 8TH OF EACH MONTH

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