



American Legion Post 1758 Newsletter

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American Legion Post 1758,
Junction, NY 12533

PO Box 92,

Hopewell

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Our next meeting will be May 14, 2013 at 7:00 PM at the **Old East Fishkill Town Hall**, Rte. 52, next to Police Station. Elections will take place at this meeting for the 2013-14 Officers. Please try to attend.

Munning Celebrates 50 Years

Evert Munning is celebrating 50 years of continuous membership in the American Legion. Evert is home recuperating from knee replacement surgery so Commander Reynolds stopped by to present him with his award. Congratulations Evert!!! We look forward to your participation for many more years.

You may not realize it when it happens, but a kick in the teeth may be the best thing in the world for you.
Walt Disney

Boy's State

We have selected a young man to represent us at this year's Boys' State at Morrisville State College.

***Aaron Finch**, a sophomore at John Jay was interviewed and selected to attend June's class.*

We wish him well and are confident we will be well represented.



Marine General "Mad Dog" Mattis quotes

16 best quotes from the retiring Gen. James Mattis

BY: [Washington Free Beacon Staff](#)

March 18, 2013

Gen. James Mattis, known to his troops as Mad Dog Mattis, is retiring after 41 years of military service.

The *Marine Corps Times* is calling Mattis the most revered Marine in a generation.

Mattis has been commander of the United States Central Command since 2010 and led the 1st Marine Division into Iraq in 2003.

According to reports, President Barack Obama decided to force the Marine Corps legend out early because he rubbed civilian officials the wrong way, and forced them to answer tough questions regarding Iran.

Mattis was an inspirational leader of men and his powerful words will go down in history.

Here are some of the best words that the Mad Dog has had to offer:

1. I don't lose any sleep at night over the potential for failure. I cannot even spell the word.
2. The first time you blow someone away is not an insignificant event. That said, there are some assholes in the world that just need to be shot.
3. I come in peace. I didn't bring artillery. But I'm pleading with you, with tears in my eyes: If you fuck with me, I'll kill you all.
4. Find the enemy that wants to end this experiment (in American democracy) and kill every one of them until they're so sick of the killing that they leave us and our freedoms intact.
5. Marines don't know how to spell the word defeat.
6. Be polite, be professional, but have a plan to kill everybody you meet.
7. The most important six inches on the battlefield is between your ears.
8. You are part of the world's most feared and trusted force. Engage your brain before you engage your weapon.

9. There are hunters and there are victims. By your discipline, cunning, obedience and alertness, you will decide if you are a hunter or a victim.

10. No war is over until the enemy says its over. We may think it over, we may declare it over, but in fact, the enemy gets a vote.

11. There is nothing better than getting shot at and missed. Its really great.(AMEN!)

12. You cannot allow any of your people to avoid the brutal facts. If they start living in a dream world, its going to be bad.

13. You go into Afghanistan, you got guys who slap women around for five years because they didn't wear a veil. You know, guys like that ain't got no manhood left anyway. So it's a hell of a lot of fun to shoot them. Actually its quite fun to fight them, you know. It's a hell of a hoot. Its fun to shoot some people. I'll be right up there with you. I like brawling.

14. I'm going to plead with you, do not cross us. Because if you do, the survivors will write about what we do here for 10,000 years.

15. Demonstrate to the world there is No Better Friend, No Worse Enemy than a U.S. Marine.

16. Fight with a happy heart and strong spirit

Special Notice: If you are a veteran in emotional crisis and need help RIGHT NOW, call this toll-free number 1-800-273-8255, available 24/7, and tell them you are a veteran. All calls are confidential.



Good Of The Legion:
Ronald Tytlar's name was pulled for the Pot Of Gold Drawing. Unfortunately Ronald was not in attendance so the money is added to the Pot.

Sick Call

It was great to see both Evert Munning and Don Burns back at this month's meeting.

**Cemetery Flag Installation**

On **May 18th** we will be placing flags on local cemeteries. Many hands make light work, so please come out and participate.

We will meet for breakfast at the Hopewell Diner at **8:00 AM** and then travel to St. Denis to start ceremonies at 9:30 AM.

Two weeks later on **June 1st** we will retrieve the flags starting at **9:00 AM**.

Poppy Distribution

On Saturday **May 25th** we will be soliciting donations for Poppys at the Stewarts Shop on Lake Walton Road. Please set aside this date and come join us.

Besides being a great fund raiser for good causes we get to spend some time together.

Hours will be from 8:00 AM until 3:00 PM.

**Memorial Day Parade**

Make plans to attend our Memorial Day Parade and service on Monday, May 27th. Line up for the parade will be at 10:30 AM at the East Fishkill Community Center. Rides will be available to those who cannot march.

Uniform of the day is white shirt, Legion cap, dark trousers, dark shoes. Those participating in the Honor Guard will also wear the gold scarf and braid.

Wearing DD-214 authorized ribbons on your shirt is encouraged.

Medals/Citations from the State of New York

You may be eligible for medals from the New York State Division Of Military & Navel Affairs. You can go to this link to check on possible awards. Most, if not all, are dependent upon a military award you may have received. Like this example if you have the MOH, DSC, NC, Bronze Star etc you can get the Conspicuous Service Cross from the State.

<http://dmna.ny.gov/awards/awards.php>

CONSPICUOUS SERVICE CROSS

To whom awarded:

- Current New York State citizen or
- New York State citizen while serving on federal active duty, and
 - A current or former full-time military person serving in the Armed Forces of the United States for purposes other than training since 1917; Active Guard/Reserve-AGR (Title 32 USC) personnel excepted and
 - Who is currently serving under honorable conditions or who has been honorably discharged from active duty.

Criteria. The Conspicuous Service Cross may be awarded to any current New York State citizen or person who was a New York State citizen while serving on federal active duty; whose entire service was honorable subsequent to the time of receipt of the citation while serving in the U.S. Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard or in the Army female nurse corps, and who has received a personal decoration issued by a brigade or equivalent higher headquarters. The Conspicuous Service Cross may also be awarded to any citizen of New York State, who while serving with the allied forces, received a personal decoration published in order issued by a brigade or equivalent higher headquarters. The award of the Conspicuous Service Cross is based on prior award of at least one of the following military decorations:

- Medal of Honor
- Distinguished Service Cross
- Navy Cross
- Air Force Cross
- Defense Distinguished Service Medal
- Distinguished Service Medal (Army)
- Distinguished Service Medal (Navy-Marine Corps)
- Distinguished Service Medal (Air Force)
- Distinguished Service Medal (Coast Guard)
- Silver Star
- Legion of Merit
- Distinguished Flying Cross
- Navy and Marine Corps Medal
- Airman's Medal
- Coast Guard Medal
- Bronze Star Medal
- Purple Heart

The following is fairly long and was sent to just email recipients....JDR

Chaplain to get Medal of Honor 62 years after death

By Sharon Cohen, The Associated Press Apr 09 militarytimes.com

In the cold, barren hills of Korea more than 60 years ago, two teary-eyed soldiers stood in a prisoner of war camp where their chaplain lay dying. The Rev. Emil Kapaun was weak, his body wracked by pneumonia and dysentery. After six brutal months in the hellish camp, the once sturdy Kansas farmer's son could take no more. Thousands of soldiers had already died, some starving, others freezing to death. Now the end was near for the chaplain.

Lt. Mike Dowe said goodbye to the man who'd given him hope during those terrible days. The young West Point grad cried, even as the chaplain, he says, tried to comfort him with his parting words: "Hey, Mike, don't worry about me. I'm going to where I always wanted to go, and I'll say a prayer for all of you."

Lt. Robert Wood wept, too, watching the Roman Catholic chaplain bless and forgive his captors. He helped carry Kapaun out of the mud hut and up a hill on a stretcher after Chinese soldiers ordered he be moved to a hospital, a wretched, maggot-filled place the POWs dubbed "the death house." There was little or no medical care there. Kapaun died May 23, 1951.

These two soldiers — and many more — never forgot their chaplain. Not his courage in swatting away an enemy soldier pointing a gun at a GI's head. Not his talent for stealing food, then sneaking it to emaciated troops. Not the inspiring way he rallied his "boys," as he called them, urging them to keep their spirits up.

The plain-spoken, pipe-smoking, bike-riding chaplain was credited with saving hundreds of soldiers during the Korean War. Kapaun (pronounced Kah-PAHWN) received the Distinguished Service Cross and many other medals. His exploits were chronicled in books, magazines and a TV show. A high school was named for him. His statue stands outside his former parish in tiny Pilsen, Kan. But one award, the Medal of Honor, always remained elusive.

Dowe and other POWs had lobbied on and off for years, writing letters, doing interviews, enlisting support on Capitol Hill. Dowe's recommendation was turned down in the 1950s. The campaign stalled, then picked up steam decades later. Kapaun's "boys" grew old, their determination did not.

Now, it has finally paid off.

On April 11, those two young lieutenants, Dowe and Wood, now 85 and 86,

will join their comrades, Kapaun's family and others at the White House where President Barack Obama will award the legendary chaplain the Medal of Honor posthumously.

"It is about time," Dowe says. Even now, Father Kapaun's story may still have one final chapter: sainthood. ——— The Korean conflict is sometimes called "the forgotten war," overshadowed by the global cataclysm of World War II and the nation's long struggle in Vietnam. For veterans, though, there are vivid war memories: the desperation of eating weeds plucked from the dirt, the horror of discovering buddies who'd died overnight, the evanescent joy of taking a few puffs on their chaplain's pipe.

Many men of the 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry regiment, credit Kapaun for their survival, emotionally and physically. "He's in my prayers every night," Dowe says. "I ask him to help me rather than asking God to help him." Dowe first talked about the chaplain in a told-to story in the Jan. 16, 1954, issue of *The Saturday Evening Post*. He described Kapaun as "the bravest man" and "best foot soldier" he'd ever known, a humble guy with a wry sense of humor (he made a game of counting lice on their uniforms) and a fierce desire to help others. Every POW remembers something special about what Kapaun did to help the soldiers.

He'd pound rocks on bombed-out tin roofs to shape them into pans he used to wash the wounded. He'd pray to St. Dismas, the Good Thief, before he foraged in sheds and fields, stuffing corn, peaches and other food in his pockets, then giving it all to starving soldiers.

He'd drag the injured into ditches, risking enemy attack, or haul them on stretchers in the snow, gently urging others to do the same. "Come on boys," he'd say, "Let's help these guys." He'd hop on his rickety bike — his Jeep had been demolished — every time he heard gunfire, racing toward the action, zipping across rice paddies in his knit cap fashioned from a sweater arm.

"He figured somebody needed help or last rites," Wood says. "We used to call him To-The-Sound-of-the-Guns Kapaun." Wood recalls how the chaplain once joined him on the front lines when the lieutenant volunteered to deliver ammunition to some troops. As he raced up the hill, Kapaun appeared with bandoliers wrapped around him.

"What are you doing, father?" a surprised Wood asked. "I'm going with you, son," the chaplain told the lieutenant, who at 22 was about a dozen years younger. About halfway up, they were fired upon, Wood says. Both jumped into a ditch. The trusty pipe Kapaun had clenched between his teeth had been reduced to a mere stem. "Father, you still want to go?" Wood asked. "Keep going, son," Kapaun replied. Such feats were cited when it was announced in March that Kapaun would receive the Medal of Honor. The

White House and Army cited the chaplain's "extraordinary heroism" during the Battle of Unsan in Korea, walking through "withering enemy fire" to comfort and provide medical help, staying with the troops though capture was almost certain, leading prayers at the risk of punishment and resisting re-education programs by the Chinese Communists.

Also mentioned was an incredible life-saving episode.

- It was November 1950 when Chinese soldiers overran the U.S. troops near Unsan. Sgt. Herbert Miller, a hardened World War II vet, was huddled in a ditch, his ankle broken from a grenade attack. He played dead for a time, hiding beneath the corpse of an enemy soldier. But he was ultimately discovered by another.
- Miller picks up the story six decades later: "He pointed his gun at my head. I was looking into the barrel. I figured to myself: 'This is it. I'm all done.'" Then almost miraculously, Miller saw a slender GI approaching across a dirt road. As he neared, Miller noticed a small cross on the soldier's helmet. Kapaun simply pushed the enemy aside — shockingly, without retribution.
- "Why he never shot him," Miller says, "I'll never know. I'll never know. ... I think the Lord was there directing him what to do." Kapaun reached down, scooped up Miller and carried him on his back as they were taken captive. "Put me down. You can't carry me," Miller repeatedly told Kapaun. And he recalls the chaplain's reply: "If I put you down, they'll shoot you." Kapaun carried the wounded sergeant, or supported him, hobbling on one foot, until they arrived days later at the village of Pyoktong, where a POW camp was eventually established. It was there on Easter Sunday 1951 that Kapaun, defying his captors, conducted Mass with a makeshift crucifix on a brilliantly sunny day. At the end of the service, Dowe recalls, the hills and valley echoed with the prisoners singing "America the Beautiful." By then, Kapaun, a patch covering one injured eye, was very sick. About a week later, he almost died from a blood clot in his leg. But he kept going. "As the kids say, he didn't just talk the talk, he walked the walk," Wood says. "When I think about him, I get all choked up. It was chaos. It was hell. To have this one man who still had the spark of civility in him — it was an inspiration." ———

Back home, Dowe set out to have Kapaun's heroics recognized. After the Saturday Evening Post piece, Dowe made a bid to have him awarded the medal. It failed. The POWs talked about it at reunions over the decades, two Kansas congressmen tried, once in about 1990, and then about a decade later. Around the same time, a new champion entered the picture. William Latham Jr., a retired lieutenant colonel, teacher and historian, was interviewing several soldiers held captive with Kapaun while researching a book, "Cold Days in Hell: American POWs in Korea." They told moving stories and urged Latham to take up their medal cause.

Latham scoured the National Archives, gathering evidence of Kapaun's

deeds in battle and captivity. He found the chaplain's service documents and eyewitness accounts from Unsan. He collected affidavits from the obliging POWs. Latham understood the nominating process, the rules and hurdles in securing the medal — especially after decades pass — so he was sure to compile a thorough case. He sent more than five pounds of material to Kapaun's family and urged it be shared with the local congressman, who gave it to the Army. This time, there was success. Latham was thrilled — and not just for the chaplain's memory.

“Emil Kapaun didn't need a medal to prove his heroism, but this recognition is very important to the men who served with him and to the families of the many other POWs who never came home,” he says. “How many chances do any of us have to recognize so many unsung heroes?”

But there's still unfinished business in Pilsen, where townsfolk hope Kapaun will one day be elevated from war hero to saint. Around this hamlet of just 22 homes, Kapaun's name already has mythical status. Everyone knows the story of the modest farm kid who became an Army chaplain in 1944, served two years along the India-Burma border and returned to the military in 1948 for a second stint — dying at age 35 in captivity in Korea.

Today, there's a Father Kapaun Day every June at his former parish, St. John Nepomucene Catholic Church, a nearly century-old red brick building with a 115-foot steeple. Inside there's a museum celebrating Kapaun's life; outside a life-sized bronze statue of the chaplain, an Army captain, helping a wounded soldier.

An hour away, the Rev. John Hotze, judicial vicar of the Wichita Diocese, has been leading the case for sainthood.

When he officially started the project in 2008, he says, his first task was to look for any reasons Kapaun wasn't worthy. The closest thing to a flaw he found, he says, was a doctor in the POW camp who'd been frustrated because Kapaun, as a patient, gave his food to those he felt were needier. “That,” he says, “was the worst anybody said about Father Kapaun.” Over the next three years, Hotze, with a team of researchers, presented a 160-question survey to some 55 people who knew Kapaun from his childhood to his dying days. Personal interviews were conducted around the country and an 8,000-page record was amassed of every word written about and by Kapaun, including some 1,500 articles and even his homilies, some of them in Czech. (The Kansas-born chaplain learned his parents' ancestral language.)

A postulator in Rome will assemble the case for canonization, which is ultimately decided by the pope.

Two miracles are needed, and Hotze says there are potential candidates: a college student who suffered a life-threatening head injury in a pole-vaulting accident but recovered and teen-age girl who healed from liver and lung disease, without any need for dialysis. In both instances, Hotze says, their families and friends prayed to Kapaun for his intercession.

After three years of exploring Kapaun's life, Hotze says what stands out is his selflessness in extraordinary times. "If we were in the same position as Father, our focus would be on 'how am I going to survive?'" he says. "For Father Kapaun it was 'how am I going to help other people to survive?' That sums up his life."

Ray Kapaun was born after his uncle died, but he grew up hearing about him from his grandmother. "In everything that Emil did, he led by example," Ray Kapaun says. "He wasn't a preachy person. He never expected anything from anybody that he wouldn't do himself."

The medal, he says, is both a family honor and a history lesson.

"It's a huge validation, but it's almost an opportunity for a lot more people to know and see what kind of man he really was," he says. "I still read stories about him and get teared-up about what he did."

Ray Kapaun, now 56, will accept the medal on his family's behalf. He'll be joined by two other nephews and a niece of the chaplain. Kansas political leaders, Latham, the historian, Hotze, others members of the Wichita Diocese and the Pilsen parish will be there, too.

And, of course, the POWs.

This day, Ray Kapaun says, would never have arrived without their persistence. Some didn't live to witness the ceremony, but others will finally see their beloved chaplain given the recognition they've called for for so long. "What he did and what he meant is so important," Dowe says. "It's worth finding a way to carry that forward. ... I can only say I'm glad it's happening. It's a shame it couldn't have been sooner."

