

American Legion  
**Post 1758**  
Newsletter



**August 2020**

Est 1949

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Good news! We can get back to having our meetings in the Old Town Hall. Our next meeting will be **Tuesday September 8<sup>th</sup>** at 7:00PM. The Old Town Hall is located at 2468 Rte. 52, next to the East Fishkill police Station.

“When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has been opened for us.” — **Helen Keller**

**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.

Great turnout at our August meeting. We had 22 members attend including new comer WWII vet **Bob Spinillo** and longtime member **Jeff Dunay** who spends most of his time volunteering with the DAV at Castle Point.



### Good of the Legion:

**William Muller's** name was drawn at our August 11th meeting and unfortunately, he was not in attendance. \$42.00 has been added to the pot.

# Welcome

In the past couple of weeks, we have added eight members to our post. Six of them were the result of transfer letters we sent asking them to transfer from NY01 to our post. They are:

**Thomas Abt** – Navy

**Timothy Bila** – USMC

**Richard Cooke** – Army

**William Goss** – Army

**Carmine Romero** - Army

**Joseph Valdina** – Navy

All 6 of these gentlemen are Vietnam era veterans and hopefully we'll learn more about them as we go along.

Also, a friend of Don Burns, **Robert Spinillo** a WWII Navy veteran joined us, and **James Rifino** sent his payment in requesting a transfer to our post. We'll be gathering further information on James in the near future.

Robert even joined us at our August meeting!

## Welcome Gentlemen!!!

Dear Veterans:

We extend an invitation to you and your Veteran group along with your families to join us in commemoration of the anniversaries of two of the world's most significant WWII events. Imagine standing on the beaches of Normandy on June 6th, D-Day, and taking part in a ceremony in remembrance of those who stormed those same beaches in 1944. Or participating in a commemoration in Hawaii in memory of the brave men and women of our military who were at Pearl Harbor, "a day that would live in infamy", December 7th, 1941. Historic Programs, a non-profit organization, produces and hosts these and other important events each year. Not only to honor and give recognition to our Veterans, Active Duty and Military Families, but also to help everyone from the "Greatest Generation" to our youngest generation to always remember our past while celebrating our future.

We look forward to welcoming Veterans from across the nation to join in these historic commemorations. As you stand with other Veterans on the anniversary of the actual event, in the location where history was made, your experience will be profoundly heartfelt and life changing. These programs honor and salute the millions of Americans who have worn the uniform in defending the freedom and the liberty we enjoy every today. We humbly recognize the families and loved ones for their unwavering support for our Veterans and Active Duty military through the years.

Please join **Historic Programs** and be a part of the **2021 WWII Events and Commemorations:**

- **Normandy, France - D-Day Memorial Parade and Commemoration - June 3-10, 2021**
- **Honolulu, Hawaii - Pearl Harbor Memorial Parade Commemorating the 80th Anniversary of the Pearl Harbor invasion - December 4-9, 2021**

For more information, please visit [www.historicprograms.org](http://www.historicprograms.org). You may reach me by phone at 800.626.8590 or simply reply to this email. Make your plans to be a part of these amazing commemorations and we hope to see you in 2021.

Thank you for your service!

***Teina***

Teina Woodburn

Director of Veteran Relations

[teina@historicprograms.org](mailto:teina@historicprograms.org)

## Wealth of Information



Our Post web site (al-ny1758.org) has a wealth of information:

- \*Meeting and executive board minutes
- \*Newsletters
- Programs
- Photos
- Post History
- Important Links
- And much more

\* For “members only” pages you need a logon which you can obtain from web master Bill Kriebel at [Historian@al-ny1758.org](mailto:Historian@al-ny1758.org)

The August meeting minutes can be found here (requires login) <https://al-ny1758.org/docs>

## Fund Raising Committee

At our February meeting it was suggested that we increase our fundraising efforts beyond the coin drops. Bill Kriebel volunteered to lead that effort. If you have suggestions for fundraising please let Bill know. You can contact him at [Historian@AL-ny1758.org](mailto:Historian@AL-ny1758.org) or 845-226-6895. Jeff Miedowski has volunteered to work with Bill but more are welcome. John Polasko has a possible contact to do something with the NY Yankees.

## MOH

**Rank:** Private First Class  
**Organization:** U.S. Army  
**Company:** A, 127<sup>th</sup> Infantry  
**Division:** 32d Infantry  
**Born:** 5 February 1921  
Campobello, SC  
**Date of Action:** 3/10/1945  
**Place:** Villa Verde Trail, Luzon,  
Philippine Islands



### Thomas Eugene “Gene” Atkins

#### CITATION

He fought gallantly on the Villa Verde Trail, Luzon, Philippine Islands. With two companions he occupied a position on a ridge outside the perimeter defense established by the 1st Platoon on a high hill. At about 0300 hours, two companies of Japanese attacked with rifle and machine-gun fire, grenades, TNT charges and land mines, severely wounding Pfc. Atkins and killing his two companions. Despite the intense hostile fire and pain from his deep wound, he held his ground and returned heavy fire. After the attack was repulsed, he remained in his precarious position to repel any subsequent assaults instead of returning to the American lines for medical treatment. An enemy machine gun, set up within 20 yards of his foxhole, vainly attempted to drive him off or silence his gun. The Japanese repeatedly made fierce attacks, but for four hours Pfc. Atkins determinedly remained in his foxhole, bearing the brunt of each assault and maintaining steady and accurate fire until each charge was repulsed. At 7:00 A.M., 13 enemy dead lay in front of his position; he had fired 400 rounds, all he and his two dead companions possessed, and had used three rifles until each had jammed too badly for further operation. He withdrew during a lull to secure a rifle and more ammunition, and was persuaded to remain for medical treatment. While waiting, he saw a Japanese within the perimeter and, seizing a nearby rifle, killed him. A few minutes later, while lying on a litter, he discovered an enemy group moving up behind the platoon's lines. Despite his severe wounds he sat up, delivered heavy rifle fire against the group, and forced them to withdraw. Pfc. Atkins' superb bravery and his fearless determination to hold his post against the main force of repeated enemy attacks, even though painfully wounded, were major factors in enabling his comrades to maintain their lines against a numerically superior enemy force.

## **Mark Graser sent this to me a few weeks ago**

**Some of us are Veterans**

**We left home as teenagers for an unknown adventure.**

**We loved our country enough to defend it and protect it with our own lives.**

**We said goodbye to friends and family and everything we knew.**

**We learned the basics and then we scattered in the wind to the far corners of the Earth.**

**We found new friends and new family.**

**We became brothers and sisters regardless of color, race or creed.**

**We had plenty of good times, and plenty of bad times.**

**We didn't get enough sleep.**

**We smoked and drank too much.**

**We picked up both good and bad habits**

**We worked hard and played harder.**

**We didn't earn a great wage.**

**We experienced the happiness of mail call and the sadness of missing important events.**

**We didn't know when, or even if, we were ever going to see home again.**

**We grew up fast, and yet somehow, we never grew up at all.**

**We fought for our freedom, as well as the freedom of others.**

**Some of us saw actual combat, and some of us didn't.**

**Some of us saw the world, and some of us didn't.**

**Some of us dealt with physical warfare, most of us dealt with psychological warfare.**

**We have seen and experienced and dealt with things that we can't fully describe or explain, as not all of our sacrifices were physical.**

**We participated in time honored ceremonies and rituals with each other, strengthening our bonds and camaraderie.**

**We counted on each other to get our job done and sometimes to survive it at all.**

**We have dealt with victory and tragedy.**

**We have celebrated and mourned.**

**We lost a few along the way.**

**When our adventure was over, some of us went back home, some of us started somewhere new and some of us never came home at all.**

**We have told amazing and hilarious stories of our exploits and adventures.**

**We share an unspoken bond with each other, that most people don't experience, and few will understand.**

**We speak highly of our own branch of service, and poke fun at the other branches.**

**We know however, that, if needed, we will be there for our brothers and sisters and stand together as one, in a heartbeat.**

**Being a veteran is something that had to be earned, and it can never be taken away.**

**It has no monetary value, but at the same time it is a priceless gift.**

**People see a veteran and they thank them for their service.**

**When we see each other, we give that little upwards head nod, or a slight smile, knowing that we have shared and experienced things that most people have not.**

**So, from myself to the rest of the veterans out there, I commend and thank you for all that you have done and sacrificed for your country.**

**Try to remember the good times and forget the bad times.**

**Share your stories.**

## **Membership**

Membership Chair Lance Ashworth reports that Post strength is approximately 112 members and about 41 members have renewed for 2021. On-line renewals are encouraged at

[Member renewal](#)



### Kevin Walsh Funeral

On Monday, August 10th, members of Post, the Marine Corps League, The Patriot Guard and state senator Sue Serino gathered at McHoul's Funeral Home in Hopewell Junction to honor Vietnam Veteran Kevin Walsh. Kevin was an East Fishkill resident who had no living relatives. He served with the Marine Corp in Vietnam and little else is known about him. Members of the Marine Corp League served as Pall Bearers. The East Fishkill Police Department, the Dutchess County Sheriff's Department and New York State Police were on hand to escort Kevin to his final resting place at Calverton National Cemetery on Long Island.

Thanks to members John Call, Don Burns, Dan Oberhauser, Bill Kriebel, John Lyons, Lance Ashworth, Bill Myer, Len Hart, John Polasko, Commander Jim Reynolds and Doug McHoul for attending.

