

American Legion

Post 1758

Newsletter



June 2023

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Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be **Tuesday, July 11th, 2023 at 7:00PM**, at the East Fishkill **Community Center** on Rte. 82.

Meeting details will be confirmed via a call out message.

“The most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or touched, they are felt with the heart.”

— Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, [The Little Prince](#)

Special Notice: If you are a veteran in emotional crisis and need help RIGHT NOW, call

988 and press “1”

or this toll-free number

1-800-273-8255

available 24/7, and tell them you are a veteran. All calls are confidential.

Don Burn’s name was drawn at our Juner 13th meeting but Don (who rarely misses a meeting) was not in attendance and the pot is now at \$552.00!!!!



Paid for in part by
Dutchess County

Upcoming Activities

Tuesday, July 11th 7:00 PM Monthly membership meeting at the East Fishkill Community Center

Saturday, August 5th - 12:00 noon – Post annual Picnic in the Pavilion at the Hopewell Recreation Park

Tuesday, August 8th – 7:00 PM Monthly membership meeting at the East Fishkill Community Center

Tuesday, September 12th – 7:00 PM Monthly membership meeting at the East Fishkill Community Center

Saturday September 23rd – 2:00 PM East Fishkill Community Day

Poppy/Coin Drop

On a beautiful May 27th our post manned 6 locations distributing poppy's and seeking coin drops. There wasn't a cloud in the sky and 56 post members spread out covering the participating businesses: The Red Line Diner, The 84 Diner, the Convenient Mart on Rte 52, Stewarts at Lake Walton Road and the two Flory's Markets on Rte 82 on the north and south sides of the Taconic Parkway. The public was very generous and we made many new friends. Thanks to post members Jim Broughton, Don Burns, Jeff Boes, Bill Kriebel, Bill Meyer, John Polasko, Don Greenwood, Len Hart, Jeff Miedowski, Joe Ryan, John Call, John Lyons, Mark Graser, Ed Morrison, Karl Sokol, Norm Dauerer, Conrad Gagnon and Jim Reynolds.

Great Job Gang!



Welcome New Member

To our post

Joe Quagliano an Air Force Veteran and 31 year member of the American Legion transferred to our post this month. Welcome Joe!

Don't forget that our Post web site (al-ny1758.org) has a wealth of information:

- *Meeting and executive board minutes
- *Newsletters
- Programs
- Photos
- * For "members only" pages you need a logon which you can obtain from web master Bill Kriebel at Historian@al-ny1758.org or 845-226-6895.

Memorial Day at John Jay High School

On May 26th we had 14 members of our post participate in John Jay High School's Memorial Day Service. For the first time the entire student body lined up to watch the ceremony....about 2,000 students. Thanks to members John Call, Don Greenwood, Karl Sokol, Conrad Gagnon, Bill Kriebel, Kevin Hines, Jim Broughton, Jeff Miedowski, Bill Meyer, John Lyons, Jim Reynolds, Tom Masch, Norm Dauerer, and John Polasko.

Bag pipers led our procession up the parking lot to the flag pole. Norm and Tom also had their vintage military jeeps on hand which delighted the crowd. Student Ava Dvorak sang the National Anthem and Commander Reynolds spoke about the meaning of Memorial Day highlighting four men from Wiccopee who died in WWII. Then student Gino Stacchini played "Taps" on the trumpet as the flag was raised. Principal Kedzielawa introduced dignitaries some of whom also made remarks about the importance of Memorial Day. The service ended with Ava Dvorak singing America The Beautiful followed by the bag pipers playing Amazing Grace as the procession marched past the school.

Please visit our web site to view many pictures of the event:
<https://al-ny1758.org/2023-civic-events#JohnJayMemorialDay>



FORT JOHNSON, La

From Military.com

FORT JOHNSON, La. -- A U.S. [Army](#) base in western Louisiana was renamed Tuesday to honor Sgt. William Henry Johnson, a Black hero of World War I who received the [Medal of Honor](#) nearly a century later.

Fort Johnson had previously been named after a Confederate commander, Leonidas Polk. The renaming is part of the U.S. military's efforts to [address historic racial injustice](#) -- work that included changing the names of nine Army posts that commemorated Confederate officers.

"Sgt. William Henry Johnson embodied the warrior spirit, and we are deeply honored to bear his name," Brig. Gen. David Garner, the commanding general of the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Johnson, said in a post on Twitter.

While serving on the front lines of France in 1918, Johnson fought off a German night raid near the Argonne Forest, according to the National Museum of the United States Army.

Johnson was wounded 21 times while beating back the attacking forces. He also prevented a wounded Black comrade from being taken prisoner when, after running out of grenades and ammunition, he killed two German soldiers with his knife.

"His frantic attacks broke the German morale and the enemy raiding party retreated," the Army museum's biography of Johnson says.

He survived the war, and former President Theodore Roosevelt named him one of the five bravest Americans to serve in the conflict. He insisted he was no hero, and the Army biography quotes him as saying, "There wasn't anything so fine about it. Just fought for my life. A rabbit would have done that."

His brave actions were recognized nearly a century later when he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor in 2015 "for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty."

However, Johnson's actions were not recognized by the Army, which denied him a disability allowance and did not award him a [Purple Heart](#). Due to his injuries, he struggled after returning home to Albany, New York, and died of a heart condition in 1929. He was 32 years old.

The current process of renaming nine Army posts marks the first time bases will be named after Black soldiers and women.

Earlier this month, [Fort Bragg](#) in North Carolina became [Fort Liberty](#), and Fort Benning in Georgia was renamed [Fort Moore](#) last month.

The original naming process involved members of local communities, although Black residents were left out of the conversations. Bases were named after soldiers born or raised nearby, no matter how effectively they performed their duties. Confederate Gen. Braxton Bragg is widely regarded among historians as a poor leader who did not have the respect of his troops.

Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony

Another good turnout for our Memorial Day Service. Jeff Boes, Jon Lyons, Jeff Miedowski, Bill Meyer, Conrad Gagnon, and Bill Kriebel provided the Honor Guard and led the parade behind bag piper Artie Hoar. Tom Masch and Norm Dauerer followed with their jeeps. Also in attendance were members Doug McHoul, Hale Engle, Don Burns, Claude Wuytack, John Polasko, Joe Ryan, Mike Miller, Bruce Coneeny, and Emcee Commander Jim Reynolds.



A couple of Auxiliary members also marched with us.



See more photo's on our web site

<https://al-ny1758.org/gallery.php?2023:05:Memorial%20Day%20Ceremony>

Delayed Flag Placement

We had a decent turn out to place flags on local cemeteries on Monday May 22nd. Commander Reynolds had changed the date due to pending rain on Saturday and was concerned we might have a small group. But the team came through and we also had help from the Liberty Belles and a couple of 1758 Auxiliary members. Thanks to post members John Call, Bill Kriebel, John Lyons, Bruce Coneey, Bill Meyer, Dona Greenwood, Bob Spinillo, Len Hart, John Polasko, Jeff Miedowski, Conrad Gagnon, and Jim Reynolds. I think I've listed everyone who helped out but there were a lot of moving parts and I apologize if I missed anyone. It's almost impossible to get everyone together for a photo but here are a few of the participants...



Officers for 2023-2024



Black Hawk Down Medals to be upgraded

Sixty American soldiers who fought in the infamous Battle of Mogadishu will receive upgraded awards later this year for their valorous efforts 28 years ago in the brutal running battle through the streets of Somalia's capital, the Army announced.

Army Special Operations Command officials will award 58 Silver Stars and two Distinguished Flying Crosses to soldiers who fought in that hourslong battle. The decision to upgrade the medals follows a review of awards ordered in 2020 by former Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy, service officials said Friday. The Oct. 3, 1993, battle was immortalized in Mark Bowden's best-selling 1999 book "Black Hawk Down" and its 2001 adaptation to film by director Ridley Scott.

The recipients of the awards will receive their upgraded medals in ceremonies hosted by the units that they were assigned to at the time of the battle, said Bonita Riddley, a USASOC spokeswoman. Riddley declined to provide the names of the soldiers whose awards will be upgraded or the units in which they served.

"We are not releasing any specifics as there are still many particulars to be worked through as well," she said Friday.

The battle broke out as American special operators — primarily members of the Army's elite 75th Ranger Regiment and 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment-Delta, or Delta Force — set out to capture two top lieutenants of warlord Mohamed Farrah Aidid, who was responsible for attacks on U.N. peacekeeping troops working to end civil war in Somalia. After the special operators, dubbed Task Force Ranger, nabbed Aidid's aides, militants attacked the troops and shot down two MH-60 Black Hawk helicopters with rocket-propelled grenades.

Eighteen American troops died in the ensuing 18-hour battle, including three of the four pilots in the downed Black Hawk. The fourth pilot was captured and later released. Two Delta Force operators — Master Sgt. Gary Gordon and Sgt. 1st Class Randy Shughart — were posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for their actions to secure the site of one of the Black Hawk crashes to recover survivors.

Both operators died in the battle.

In all, 73 U.S. troops were injured in the fight, according to the Army. The botched mission left a long-lasting mark on American foreign policy after television news broadcast images of an American soldier's body dragged through Mogadishu's streets as locals cheered.

The defense secretary at the time, Les Aspin, would resign his post in wake of the battle. Ultimately, former President Bill Clinton elected to end the mission to capture Aidid, called Operation Gothic Serpent, and he removed all U.S. forces from Somalia by March 1994. U.S. troops would not return to the country until 2007.

The Silver Star is the third-highest award for battlefield heroics. The Distinguished Flying Cross recognizes heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight.

Flag Retirement Ceremony



An improvement from my 1965 starting pay at \$87/month (I actually thought it was less)...but they deserve it!!!!

Enlisted Troops Could See 30% Pay Hike Under House's 2024 Defense Spending Bill

Junior enlisted troops could see their [pay](#) jump more than 30% next year under a proposal unveiled Wednesday by House Republicans.

A House panel's proposal for annual Pentagon spending would give E-6s and below significant increases in their base pay, and lawmakers want to set aside \$800 million to rework the military's pay scale for those service members.

On top of the rewritten pay scale, all service members would also get a 5.2% [pay raise](#) under the bill drafted by the House Appropriations Committee. That means the junior enlisted personnel would see even bigger pay bumps than the 30% increases in the pay chart.

Under the new pay scale [in the bill](#), monthly base pay would be:

- \$2,600.60 for an E-1 with at least four months of service
- \$2,799.20 for an E-2
- \$2,900.90 to \$3,050.60 for an E-3, depending on years of service
- \$3,010.50 to \$3,260.30 for an E-4, depending on years of service
- \$3,100.30 to \$3,250.20 for an E-5, depending on years of service
- \$3,210 for an E-6 with less than two years of service

By comparison, right now an E-1 with at least four months of service makes \$1,917.63 per month, while an E-6 with two years or less makes \$2,980.47 per month.

The pay scale in the appropriations bill is in line with a proposal Republicans on the Appropriations Committee [have previously put forward](#) to ensure service members make at least \$31,200 per year, or the equivalent of \$15 per hour for a 40-hour workweek.

Lawmakers in both parties in recent years have raised concerns that junior enlisted members are struggling to afford basic necessities such as food and housing. Those concerns reached a fever pitch last year as inflation soared.

While inflation has cooled in recent months, lawmakers have still worried that [military pay](#) is not keeping pace with the private sector, potentially adding to [recruiting](#) struggles.

The release of the spending bill comes the same day the House Armed Services Committee formally launched a [new bipartisan panel on service member quality of life that](#) in part is intended to look into ways to reform junior enlisted pay.

"If you do across-the-board pay increases, over time the low and the high end just keeps going a little farther and farther apart," Rep. Don Bacon, R-Neb., the chairman of the quality-of-life panel, told reporters Wednesday. "If you put something on autopilot, over time you get some distortions."