



THE AMERICAN LEGION

POST 27 / SQUADRON 27

NEWSLETTER

FARMINGTON, UTAH

DAVIS COUNTY MEMORIAL COURTHOUSE, ROOM 116, 28 EAST STATE STREET, FARMINGTON

July 2015

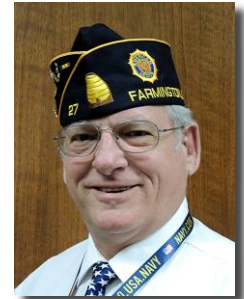
STILL SERVING AMERICA

www.post27.org

COMMANDER'S CORNER

239 Years Ago...

Meeting in Philadelphia, the Continental Congress commissioned the writing of a document that would be called the Declaration of Independence. Its purpose was, in the words of its author Thomas Jefferson "to place before mankind the common sense of the subject in terms so plain and firm as to command their assent." When the Declaration was ratified on July 4, 1776, much of our disparate citizenry joined



Kent Hansen



those who had already taken up arms to form our nation's first army. Sailors of many backgrounds turned merchantmen into men-o-war. It must have seemed an impossible task for this rag-tag amalgam of colonists had just challenged the most powerful fighting force on earth to a fight.

Thus was born from the very fabric of 13 very different colonies something that has become the mainstay of our liberties and the backbone of our nation: the American fighting man. Included in this is and must be the American fighting woman for she joined the battle from the first shot fired and continues to be an important part of our

military heritage to this day. From the Revolution, the War of 1812, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War through World Wars I and II, Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf Wars, Americans have stepped forward to offer their lives on the altar of freedom.

This Independence Day we celebrate 239 years of freedom. But amid the fireworks, the hot dogs and the parades, let us not forget those now dead and those still serving that paid the butcher's bill with their lives and blood. This is the land of the free **BECAUSE** of the brave. These are the men and women who run toward peril, not from it. These are the men and women who love their country more than themselves. These are the men and women I am proud to call my friends and my fellow Legionnaires.

May God continue to watch over our free land, ably assisted by the patriots who wear the uniform, who sacrifice time with their families, deploy to foreign lands and put their lives on the line every day. God Bless America!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- July 1 – Time to renew AL membership for 2016
- July 2 – Call Your Military Hero Day.
- July 4 – Independence Day. Fly the flag!
- July 4 – Centerville Centennial Parade. 9 am
- July 9 -- Post Meeting, 6:30 pm, Davis County Memorial Courthouse, Room 116.
- July 11 – Farmington Festival Days Parade. 9 am
- July 23 – Handcart Days Parade. 6 pm, Bountiful.
- July 24 – Pioneer Day. Fly the flag!
- July 31-August 2 – 7th Annual SAL Campout & Social. Spanish Fork River Park, Area B. Event open to entire Utah Legion family.
- August 6 -- Post Meeting, 6:30 pm, Davis County Memorial Courthouse, Room 116. Date change due to Davis County Fair Flag Retirement.
- August 13 – Flag Retirement & Military Tribute. 8:30 pm, Davis County Fairgrounds Arena. Event admission: free.

1ST VICE COMMANDER



A Promise Made; A Promise Kept

Layton City and others sponsored a Sounds of Freedom Parade Saturday, June 13, 2015. This parade was to honor all veterans, but for this year they wanted to give a special honor to all Vietnam era veterans, “with a day they deserve and the welcome home parade they never got”. I decided to attend and participate in the parade, plus our fellow Legionnaire Jay Hess was going to get a special presentation after the parade. As we assembled in the staging area, we had a choice of marching with a group of Veterans or ride in a flatbed truck with chairs. I then noticed the Jake Garn Sea Cadet Squadron, a unit that our Post sponsors, was forming up for the parade. Wondering, if I could march with them, I was warmly greeted by Commander Putnam, and invited to join his leaders and staff and March alongside the Cadets. As I was marching alongside of one the leaders, he turned to me and said, “ isn’t this a reminder of your military days”. It was, and I thoroughly enjoyed it and I was able to stay in step for most of the parade. We should be proud of the young men and women of this Squadron, they looked sharp and they performed great. I commend the leaders and staff for molding this squadron into a top-notch military unit.

The highlight of this day was the special presentation Jay Hess received in the afternoon that John Sheets and I attended. In 1970, an Yvonne Bauder, while living in Texas, purchased a bracelet for \$3 with the inscription on it reading “Maj. Jay Hess” and the date he was shot down 8-24-67. Bauder, who now lives in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, said that she wore the bracelet 24/7 for three years and prayed for his safe return. She then put the bracelet away in her jewelry box. She mentioned that her and sister bought and wore the bracelets because their Dad, former Korean era Marine, instilled in them a strong love for their country.



She recently found the bracelet in her jewelry box, and decided that after 45 years, she would try and find Jay Hess and return it to him. Through the social media, she was able to find information on Jay and make contact with Maj. Kit Workman of the Utah Military Academy. Workman thought it would be nice to give the bracelet to Jay during the Sounds of Freedom Parade program. She agreed, but informed Workman they could not afford the expense of coming to Utah. She sent the bracelet with a two page statement to be read by Workman. Well, Layton Mayor Bob Stevenson heard about that and took action, not serving as a Mayor, but as an individual. He and others arranged to bring Yvonne Bauder and her husband to Utah. They arrived at 3:00 AM on the day of the parade. She eloquently read her two page powerful tribute to Jay Hess and then gave him the bracelet. With tears running down my cheek, I was thinking that this was an experience that I never seen before and I will probably never see again. We all know that Jay Hess is a quiet and humble man, but as he was walking reluctantly towards the rostrum with a small American flag hanging from his pocket, I was reflecting how fortunate we are to have this great man in our Post; a fellow Legionnaire and friend.

ADJUTANT/ EAGLE SCOUT COURTS OF HONOR

Membership is Our Lifeblood

Membership. Statistics are membership numbers through 1 July 2015.

2015 GOAL	PUFL	REGULAR	ONLINE	NEW	TRANSFERS	2014 TOTAL	PERCENT OF GOAL
91	7	53	26	11	8	97/8	107%



Dale Crockett

Congratulations to Post 27! We have obtained a new All Time High of 107%.

We are now starting our new membership year drive of 2016. I have everyone’s membership cards and I would love to get them out to you now. We ended up getting a 107% of our goal for the end of the year. From July 1, 2015 to the end of the year you can renew and have the Early Bird stamp on your 2016 membership card. It is also time to start talking

to those around you that have served during a war period to join the American Legion. If we don't ask, we will have a hard time meeting our goals. To learn more about the American Legion member benefits, please call 1-800-433-3318 or visit www.legion.org. I also have a brochure called "Why You Should Belong" which has some great information with an application on the back page. If you would like some, again, give me a call. I believe with all your help, we can exceed the 107% that we had this year. As always, you may renew by sending your \$30 annual membership dues to American Legion Post 27, PO Box 427, Farmington, UT 84025. An even easier option is to go to www.Legion.org/renew and renew online. All you need is your current American Legion Membership Number and a valid credit card. Your renewal is instant, and the Post can see your renewal on-line within 24-48 hours. If you do not know your membership number, please give me a call or e-mail me. ***If I can do anything for you to make your membership renewal easier or more convenient, or answer any questions you may have regarding membership, please let me know. I can be reached at H (801) 4561-9493 / C (801) 560-2186 or email dalescrockett@yahoo.com.***

Department of Utah Belt Buckle Pin. A pin version of the William E. "Bill" Christoffersen "BIG BEE" 50 Years Commemorative Belt Buckles is NEW and is currently available. These beautiful pins are 1 ½ inches across and are an excellent addition to your Legion hat or lapel. We continue to celebrate Bill Christoffersen's 50 years as the Department of Utah National Executive Committeeman and his long standing support of the American Legion Utah Boys State Program. If you are interested in obtaining one or more of these pins, please let me or Chuck Stephenson know. The cost for the pin is \$10. All profits from the sale of the pins will go to the American Legion Utah Boys State William E. Christoffersen Scholarship Fund. A scholarship will be awarded to each of the two young men elected as Boys Nation Senators each summer at Utah Boys State.



SERGEANT→AT→ARMS

Here we are, Summer Time 2015. It is our busiest season of the calendar year, with Boys State, community parades, flag retirement, Eagle Court American Flag presentations, and of course our most important service in Funeral Honors in paying tribute to Veterans passing on to Post Everlasting. As a reminder of our partnership with Russon Brother's Funeral Home, we are going to participate in three Community Parades:

- Saturday, 4 July, 9:00am, Centerville 4th of July Parade.
- Saturday, 11 July, 10:00am, Farmington City Festival Parade.
- Thursday, 23 July, 6:00pm, Bountiful Handcart Days.

Russon Brothers is going to provide us with the Parade Registration Fee, provide a Truck & Trailer (similar to what we used last year in Bountiful parade). Post 27 in conjunction with J&M Innovative will decorate the Trailer, which we plan on using in all three parades.

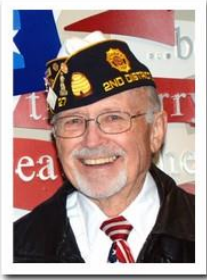
We will be asking for your help for the initial decoration of the Trailer as soon as logistics have been confirmed. We are still looking for a facility in area to keep the trailer so we do not have to remove the decorations between each parade. If you know of a storage area 40' long to keep out of weather, please let us know ASAP.

We will need all of you to clear your calendars and plan on participating in all three parades. Let us remember when we are asked to participate in Post 27 duties, some were asked to give all. All events we provide to the community and Military Funeral Honors require some physical activity and readiness. So, let's all be ready to assist the post as we can. Post 27, ready to serve for the good of The Legion, the country and Funeral Honors for the fallen.



David Layton

FINANCIAL OFFICER/MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS



John Sheets

Comrades: Too often we go through life side-by-side without knowing each other, I would like to make a start in correcting the problem for those who are often missed or forgotten.

William C. Allen Sr. was born August 28, 1928, Trumbull Co., Ohio. His father was struck by lightning on June 26th 1930, leaving a wife and seven children at the height of the Great Depression. In order to help the family survive, Bill and several buddies would "roll drunks" for their small change. He and his older brothers would go to the coal yard where he would climb the fence and throw coal over the fence to keep them warm in the cold Ohio winter. Bill made several attempts to run away from home, once he got as far as Kentucky but was caught and returned to his mother.

During the summer of 1942, after Pearl Harbor, at the ripe old age of 14, Bill ran away for the last time. He tried enlisting with each branch of service but they all said the same, come back when you turn 17. He tried several times and at about the 5th time the Army Recruiter said, "go home and get your mother's signature", which he did by going down the street, and signing the paper for his mother.

Bill completed "Basic" and additional training at "Geiger field", Spokane, Washington, sent back east to Boston and then on a troop ship to England. He was assigned to the 9th Infantry Division and the 560th Railhead company, which deposited him on the Normandy Beach on D Day plus 2 June 8th, 1944. He was in Paris to celebrate his 16th birthday, and had a short fling on the 23rd of August 1944. He then suffered through much fighting in the advance through Germany and the battle of the Bulge to return home for a discharge and within six months become bored of civilian life and reenlist, this time with his mother's consent. He was sent to Germany and remained there until discharged in 1948 to work as a civilian for the Army and then the US Air Force as a Logistics Specialist until 1958.



Bill Allen

I recruited Bill in about 2005, at his home in Farmington, shortly after the re-vitalization effort. At one time Bill was State Commander of the Veterans of Under-age Military Service (VUMS), an organization with many members scattered about the US. Bill and his wife Geri were a delight to meet and I treasure their friendship. After some serious health issues, Bill passed away on June 5th 2015.

TRAINING OFFICER

Thank you, thank you, thank you for the generous donations from Post 27 to the National Emergency Fund this year. The Department of Utah, under my command, was able to beat the goal of \$2,500 this year, thanks in part to our Post. In fact, Post 27 gave the largest single check towards this goal -- \$600.00. This included the donations received at our Christmas Party in December, a "voice vote" donation from our Post fund, and individual donations sent to our Finance Officer. If any Utah Legion member needs to file for a grant in the wake of a natural disaster in Utah (fire, flooding, etc.), you can rest assured it will be covered by donations from the state of Utah. As a side note, for anyone contributing to the American Legion Legacy Fund (fund for children of fallen soldiers), a scholarship was awarded recently to a student in Provo. So the money is actually coming back into our state to help our citizens. Thank you again.



Paula Stephenson

Our Post Commander has asked me to take the lead in Training & Education. **What do you as Legion members want to know?** The format of our regular monthly meeting has changed. There is a briefing on what the post has coming up with events/activities, each month one members gives a 5-10 minutes show & tell of their military career so we get to know each other better, an outside speaker, and concluding with small refreshments. So let me know what you would like to learn about and I can get it set up. Contact me at my email stphnsnc@aol.com (same email as Chuck's) or my cell phone 801-589-2871.



Jay Hess

The Longest Held

As a group, the POW's in Vietnam were at that time the longest held captive in American History. I was released by the North Vietnamese on March 14th 1973. What I didn't know at the time was that John Downey had been released the day before by the Chinese. By surviving more than 20 years in Chinese prisons after he was shot down over Manchuria in 1952, he became the longest-serving American prisoner of war. I'm glad he was released before me. Here are some parts of his story.

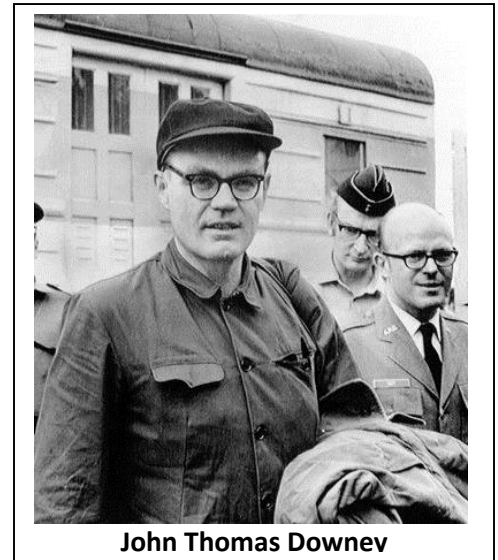
During the Korean War the United States engaged in covert operations in China in the hopes of organizing resistance to the new Communist government of Mao Zedong and fomenting a rebellion there. A revolt, the Americans hoped, would divert Chinese forces from the Korean Peninsula, where they were helping Communist forces from the north in their struggle with South Korea and its United Nations allies.

John Thomas Downey was born on April 19, 1930, in Wallingford, Conn. He was voted the "most popular, most versatile and most likely to succeed" when he graduated from High School. He went to Yale with the idea of becoming a lawyer like his father. Instead, he accepted an offer to join the C.I.A. after an agency recruiter contacted him in the spring of his senior year. His first assignment was Korea to help train a team of Chinese agents inside China. Contact with the team was by a courier who was inserted into China. The courier sent a message asking to be taken out of China. The extraction plan was for the courier to be strapped into a harness that would be hung from a line strung high off the ground between two poles. A C-47 would fly low and slow and drop a cable to hook the line. Two men in the rear of the plane would then hoist the courier up with a pulley. John and another C.I.A. paramilitary operative, Richard F. Fecteau, were assigned to the C-47 crew for this purpose. I suspect the courier was discovered by the Chinese. They were prepared to shoot down the rescue aircraft. The pilot and co-pilot were killed. Fecteau and Downey were captured. Nobody outside of China knew what had happened to them. In December 1953, Allen Dulles, the director of central intelligence, wrote to their families saying they were "presumed dead."

In November 1954, the Chinese government announced that the two were alive and serving sentences as convicted CIA spies. Fecteau was sentenced to 20 years and Downey to life. They remained imprisoned until relations between China and the United States warmed in the early 1970s, culminating with President Richard M. Nixon's groundbreaking visit in 1972. Fecteau was released in late 1971, after serving 19 years and 14 days. Nixon personally intervened to secure Downey's release after the prisoner's mother, who had visited China five times to plead on her son's behalf, suffered a severe stroke. He was freed on March 13, 1973. On his release — 20 years, three months and 14 days after his plane had been shot down — China said he had "confessed to his crimes."

Because they were seized during the Korean War, Mr. Downey and Mr. Fecteau have long been described as prisoners of war, though they were not uniformed service members. Col. Floyd Thompson, who was imprisoned for nearly nine years during the Vietnam War, is America's longest-serving uniformed serviceman taken prisoner. John died in 2014. Floyd died in 2002. As a prisoner, Mr. Downey said, he spent much time in solitary — six years in one stretch. He studied Russian and French and was given books and magazines in English. He did not study Chinese, he said, because he felt that would have amounted to an admission that he was not going to get out. He came to certain conclusions as his imprisonment stretched on, year after lonely year.

After his release in 1973, Mr. Downey graduated from Harvard Law School at 46, served in the Connecticut state government, including a term as commissioner of the Public Utility Control Department, ran for the United States Senate and became a juvenile court judge. He said many times that he did not want to be defined only as a war captive, but his story was so compelling that John O. Brennan, director of the CIA, presented Mr. Downey and Mr. Fecteau with the Distinguished Intelligence Cross, the agency's highest award for valor and, uncharacteristically, made them public.



John Thomas Downey

“It has been 61 years since Dick and Jack took to the skies over North Korea and China during the Korean War,” Mr. Brennan said, “and their ordeal remains among the most compelling accounts of courage, resolve and endurance in the history of our agency.” In 2010, the CIA commissioned a documentary film on the men’s experiences that was intended for internal training purposes. The movie, “Extraordinary Fidelity,” has been released and is available on U-Tube. It was well worth an hour of my time.

SEA CADET NEWS

June was a busy and rewarding month for the Jake Garn Squadron. The unit participated in almost too many events to list. During drill weekend the cadets certified for CPR and learned how to do a first aid, field stitch, using fresh pig skin to learn how to apply the sutures. Cadets also marched in the Sounds of Freedom Parade, received orientation on the Department of Public Safety helicopter and learned about firearms safety from the Utah Highway Patrol. During the parade, we were honored to have 1st Vice Commander Frank Ferrante march with us. The remainder of the drill time was spent preparing orders for cadets who plan to attend summer training, across the country. Cadets will be attending Recruit



Courtney Putnam



Sea Cadets assist Legionnaires at Eagle Court of Honor.

Training at Camp Pendleton and other various training throughout the United States. One cadet, in particular, was selected to drill aboard the Coast Guard Academy tall ship Baroque Eagle for a week. This will be a very special training evolution that I am certain will be very memorable for the cadet. Later in the month, the Jake Garn Squadron supported Post 27 in 10 Boy Scout Eagle Courts of Honor. It was a privilege to assist with such an honorable ceremony. Our unit continues to grow. This month, we enrolled two transfer cadets and one adult leader from California. The Jake Garn Squadron has an amazing future and I am honored to be part of the program. I am also thankful for the support of the American Legion. We seem to work great together!

LEGION LAFFS



Check us out on Facebook at “American Legion Post 27 Farmington Utah”



Visit us on Facebook

or there is a link from our Post website at www.post27.org.



Take advantage of Post 27's Veterans Outreach Program

Every second and fourth Wednesday from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm, a representative of the Veterans Administration will be at the Post (*Davis County Memorial Courthouse, Room 116*) to assist you with your questions.

Be sure to bring a copy of your DD-214 or other discharge certificate.

FROM THE DEPARTMENT VICE COMMANDER

It seems that there is always much going on with The American Legion. Many of you are familiar with most of the programs supported by our "Four Pillars" and I am proud to say that Post 27 leads the way in several of the programs within District 2 as well as all of Area 1. One of the events that I look forward to each year is the Department Convention. As District 2 Commander, we hosted the 2013 Convention in Layton and I know first-hand just how much work and effort goes in to this event. This year's Convention was held 12-14 June in Fillmore – Utah's first Territorial Capital. Congratulations to Area 4 Commander Wayne Jackson and the entire Convention Committee for hosting this amazing event. I believe all who attended this year's Convention left with a renewed state of energy and enthusiasm. The Convention provides an opportunity for the Department to conduct its yearly business. We elect new Department Officers and set priorities for the upcoming year. I express my sincere appreciation to Post 27 in its support of my bid for Department Vice-Commander. I am excited about working alongside Department Commander Dennis Wagner through his 2015-2016 term of office.

It is an amazing time to be a Legionnaire!

Next year's Convention will be held in the Vernal area, followed by Ogden in 2017, and St. George in 2018. All Department of Utah Legionnaires are welcome at the Convention. The Department Constitution calls for the Convention to be held in June of each Calendar year. With Utah Girls State, Utah Boys State, as well as Father's Day taking up much of June. We hope that future Conventions can be held on the last weekend of each June. Mark your calendars now and plan on attending a future Department Convention.

Membership is Our Lifeblood!

**Meet
Our New
Department
Commander
Dennis Wagner**



Chuck Stephenson
Department
Vice Commander

