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# The Bugle Call



June, 2023, Volume 13, Number 6

Warminster, Pennsylvania

*Ann's Choice Residents and Guests are invited to attend Veterans Group Programs and Events  
(Meetings are open to ALL with no charge)*

## Regular Meeting, Elections and Program for June 20

On June 20, at 7:30 pm in the PAC the Veterans Group will have a regular meeting followed by a special program. The primary purpose of the meeting is election of new officers. We will be electing directors from each of the three club houses, a secretary, a treasurer and a vice-president. Every two years the vice-president replaces the outgoing president and we elect a new vice-president.

**However**, the office of vice-present is vacant and we will elect both a vice-president and a president. We need you to consider serving others in one of these two roles. There are plenty of active members in other roles who will help you in this service.

The program for the June meeting will be a presentation by the Military Order of the Purple Heart.

## Why Do You Need the Veterans Group?

The Veterans Group provides several services to veterans and fellow residents of Ann's Choice. These include –

- Color Guard for presenting the U. S. flag at Veterans Group programs and some Ann's Choice programs.
- Annual Memorial Day remembrance service in the Chapel for veterans.
- Annual program on Veterans Day.
- Deploying and retrieving memorial flags in front of the clubhouses.
- Deploying and retrieving small flags around the campus.
- Valet service for mobility devices.
- Free transportation to the Horsham VA clinic.
- Military movie nights in the PAC.
- Having this newsletter to read.

## Meeting Schedule for 2023

The Veterans Group will meet in the PAC these days, except as noted:

- Jan. 17 – Business Meeting, Program
- Feb. 21 – Program Only
- Mar. 21 – Program Only
- Apr. 18 – Business Meeting, Program
- May 16 – Military Movie Night
- May 30 – Memorial Day Service (Chapel)
- Jun. 20 – Business Meeting, Election, Program,**
- Jul. 18 – Military Movie Night
- Aug. 15 – Military Movie Night
- Sep. 18 – Program Only (Monday am)
- Oct. 16 – Business Meeting, Program
- Nov. 10 – Veterans Day Program
- Dec. 12 – Military Movie Night

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**It takes volunteers to make these things happen.**

Even if you don't use these services now, there may come a time in the future when you may need to take advantage of them. Our concern is that due to the declining number of veterans or

**The Veterans Group  
needs YOU!!**



**YOU need the  
Veterans Group!!**

the lack of awareness of the need for volunteers, we may not be able to provide needed services in the future.

If you are a veteran or an interested resident and would like to help provide these services in the future, please contact one of the officers and volunteers listed in the left-most column.

## History of the Purple Heart

The Purple Heart is a military decoration awarded in the name of the President to those wounded or killed while serving, on or after 5 April 1917, with the U.S. military. With its forerunner, the Badge of Military Merit, which took the form of a heart made of purple cloth, the Purple Heart is the oldest military award still given to U.S. military members.

### Badge of Military Merit

In Hasbrouck House, Newburgh, New York, on Wednesday, August 7, 1782, George Washington, Commander in Chief of the Continental Army, sat at his desk in what had once been the Hasbrouck family kitchen. The intense summer heat was relieved only by the gentle breeze from the Hudson River 400 yards away. This house had served as Washington's headquarters since March 31 when he had returned to the Hudson Highlands after his victory at Yorktown.



Hostilities had ended and peace talks were under way in Paris. Washington's thoughts were with his men camped nearby at New Windsor. They had suffered appalling privations for over six years. His officers were on the verge of mutiny because of lack of pay, rations and supplies withheld by a corrupt and negligent Congress. Worse, Congress had taken away the authority of his general officers to recognize their soldiers' courage and leadership by awarding commissions in the field. Congress could not afford to pay existing officers, let alone new ones. As a result, faithful service and outstanding acts of bravery went unrewarded and unrecognized. Washington was determined to end that. So, he issued a general order establishing the "Badge of Distinction" and "Badge of Merit." During the

Revolutionary War, meritorious service was primarily rewarded with promotions – usually to officer rank.

Washington was acutely aware of the suffering endured by his troops. He was, of course, a strict and sometimes ruthless disciplinarian. He had to be. But he was also a compassionate military manager deeply devoted to the well-being of his enlisted men. He was devoted to improving the health and welfare of his troops and to lobbying Congress and the States for the food and other supplies they had promised him. No detail was ever too small for him to attend to if it improved the life of an enlisted man.

Washington was indomitable, usually working at least 12-14 hours per day; but his task throughout the war was monumental. He had to transform thousands of brave, inexperienced and undisciplined citizen soldiers into an effective fighting force capable of fighting a conventional as well as a guerilla war. Moreover, he also had to create an effective intelligence service to deliver accurate, actionable information, persuade Congress and the States to deliver the supplies they had promised him and work effectively with the French who had different strategic objectives. Add to that the constant political interference in the appointment and promotion of officers and the corruption and profiteering in the supply chain and you begin to understand the appalling burdens that sat upon Washington's shoulders for over seven years.

It was not until after Congress took away the power to grant commissions in the field and the war was winding down in August 1782 that Washington had the time to devise ways to honor the courage of his enlisted men and non-commissioned officers. His decision to create awards exclusively for enlisted men and non-commissioned officers was unprecedented. No European army had decorations for anyone other than their officers. But he believed passionately in the republican ideals of the revolution, and he also understood that his continentals were the first people's army of patriotic volunteers who had fought for these ideals and who had been pushed to the outer limits of human endurance during the war.

To determine who should receive the badge, Washington ordered that a board of military officers be convened whenever the Adjutant General had recommendations for them to consider. This board never met because the Adjutant General never supplied any recommendations, perhaps because

none had been supplied. By April 1783, the Commander in Chief had received no recommendations and then news of the peace agreement reached headquarters.

Washington demanded immediate action before the Army began to disband. A new review board convened and recommended results within days. The new board recommended two candidates: Sergeant Elijah Churchill, Fourth Troop, Second Troop of Light Dragoons and Sergeant William Brown of the 5th Connecticut regiment. A little later, they recommended a third candidate: Sergeant Daniel Bissell of the 2nd Connecticut regiment, one of Washington's most important and successful spies.

According to Professor Ray Raymond, State University of New York:

"We know for sure that Sergeants Churchill, Brown and Bissell received the Badge of Military Merit. Recent research by the Military Order of the Purple Heart's National Americanism officer, Ron Siebels, shows that Peter Shumway, John Sithins and William Dutton, three other soldiers in Washington's Continental Army, also received the Badge of Military Merit. But we do not yet know the exceptional acts of courage for which they were honored. It is possible that there were other candidates and other recipients. But we will never be sure unless the "Book of Merit" (in which all of the recipient's names and heroic deeds were to be recorded) is found. But it has been missing for over two centuries."

After the Revolutionary War, the Badge of Military Merit fell into disuse although it was never officially abolished. By Executive Order of the President of the United States, the Purple Heart was revived on the 200th Anniversary of George Washington's birth, out of respect to his memory and military achievements, by War Department General Order No. 3, dated February 22, 1932. At that time, it was also determined that the Purple Heart Medal would be considered the official "successor decoration" to the Badge of Military Merit.

The criteria were announced in the War Department circular. It authorized award to soldiers, upon their request, who had been awarded the

Meritorious Service Citation Certificate, Army Wound Ribbon, or were authorized to wear Wound Chevrons after to 5 April 1917, the day before the United States entered World War I. During the early period of American involvement in World War II, the Purple Heart was awarded both for wounds received in action against the enemy and for meritorious performance of duty. With the establishment of the Legion of Merit, by an Act of Congress, the practice of awarding the Purple Heart for meritorious service was discontinued.

Sources include articles on Wikipedia on the Purple Heart and on the Badge of Merit, and on the website for the Military Order of the Purple Heart.

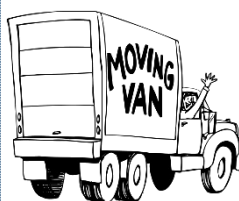
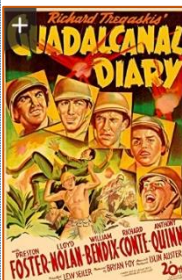
## Military Movie Nights - July and August

On Tuesday, July 18, the Veterans Group will present the 1951 feature *The Desert Fox: The Story of Rommel*. This biopic movie follows the final years of the respected WW II German general, Erwin Rommel. The film was based on a book by British army officer and North African Campaign veteran Desmond Young; his life was personally spared by Rommel's insistence on military law being scrupulously adhered to.



On Tuesday, August 15, the Veterans Group will present *Guadalcanal Diary*. This story concentrates on the personal lives of some of the marines in a task force bound for Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands in 1942. The movie was shot from May to late July, 1943, mostly at Camp Pendleton, near Oceanside, California. Many of the Marines stationed there were filmed on maneuvers, and others appeared in the picture in small parts.

Both movies will be shown in the PAC at 7:00 pm with a pre-show at 6:45.



## Veterans Group Meetings

Beginning in September the Veterans Group will gather for regular meetings and program in the Keystone Multi-Purpose room at 10:00 am. The September meeting will be on September 18, and the October meeting will be on October 16.

## Veterans Flags

For certain national holidays, the Ann's Choice Veterans Group deploys government-issued U. S. flags in front of each clubhouse. The holidays are Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Veterans Day. There are twenty-one in-ground mounts in front of the three clubhouses and Rose Garden. These flags have been donated to the Veterans Group by families of veterans.



Twenty-one flags are deployed on the three holidays. Volunteers deploy these flags and take them in after the holiday.

**Volunteers are needed.** If you would like to join this team as a way to honor veterans, contact Gordon Larson at (630) 926-7334.

## AV Opportunities

There is an opportunity to help with the Veterans Group during the meetings and Military Movie



Nights by volunteering in the AV booth in the PAC.

Contact Keith Lawrence at (215) 444-0116 for more information about this service opportunity.

## VA Benefits

You may have received an application for VA benefits recently in a mailing from PA with the renewal for your driver's license. If you are not already registered for VA benefits, take this opportunity to sign up. The Veterans Group Service Officer, Jerry Byrnes will be available both before and after the meeting and program on June 20 to answer questions; he will also have blank forms.



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

The Veterans Group Service Officer, Jerry Byrnes will be available both before and after the meeting and program on June 20 to answer questions; he will also have blank forms.

## Bucks County Veterans Affairs

The new Director of Veterans Affairs for Bucks County is Matthew Allen. He can be reached at (215) 345-3881.

## Celebrate Our New Member

A big welcome to the following new member who has joined the Veterans Group:

- John (Mark) Bernheisel (Oct. 1968 – Oct. 1976, U. S. Navy)

## Volunteer for the Color Guard

### The Veterans Group Color Guard needs you!



This service opportunity requires three members for proper presentation of the colors. We also need to have a couple of alternates to fill in if someone is unavailable.

Without alternates there is the possibility of not being able to have a color guard at our meetings.

This volunteer opportunity requires no more than thirty minutes of your time each month to present the colors plus two special programs – Memorial Day and Veterans Day. If you can help, please contact Jim Seyboldt at (267) 401-4420 or [cbolt35@gmail.com](mailto:cbolt35@gmail.com).

## Flags on Campus

Volunteers deploy these smaller flags around the campus for Memorial Day, Fourth of July and Veterans Day.



All of us enjoy seeing the flags around the community on these special holidays.

**More volunteers are needed for this service to the community.** To join the team helping with this project,

contact Jim Kibelstis (215-837-7660).



## Thanking Flag Volunteers

Flags will be retrieved on Wed., July 5 (weather permitting). Afterwards at 10:30 there will be coffee and doughnuts for the volunteers on the patio outside Liberty Commons lobby.

## Membership Open

At the Veterans Group meeting in June 2022 the membership approved changes to the By-Laws to expand eligibility to all residents for membership in the Veterans Group. Veterans may apply to be a Member, and non-Veterans may apply to be an Associate Supporting Member. Lifetime membership fees are \$50 and \$35 respectively.

All members 1) receive a copy this monthly newsletter, *The Bugle Call*, 2) will not be asked for a donation at Military Movie Night if wearing their Veterans Group shirt, and 3) may participate in any of the service projects of the Veterans Group. Note: Associate Supporting Members are not eligible to be elected to the Board of Directors.