



# The Star



Issue #102

“We Speak Their Names”

Fall 2021

## The Fallen Hero of Center Field

By Bill Sarver, Jr.



Above: Second Lieutenant William Allen Sarver, Sr. Lieutenant Sarver was killed in action April 6, 1945.

William Allen Sarver, one of four sons of Mr. and Mrs. J.R. Sarver, was born in Kansas City, Missouri, January 31, 1920. William, called Bill by family and friends, graduated from Central High School January 19, 1937. At Central High, he was a star basketball and track man. He was also a member of the Criterion Class, 1936, of the Linwood Methodist Church, and a member of the class basketball team.

When the American Legion formed a baseball club from Central High, he played as a member of the nine sponsored by the Edward H. Shaughnessy Post, No. 129. He went on to play third base for the Lapetina, in the Ban Johnson League - a baseball league begun in 1927 that served and still serves the greater Kansas City area.

After making a name for himself, Bill tried out for the first New York Yankees baseball school held in Kansas City. From a group of 500 registrants, Bill was one of a group of five selected from the area possessing the qualifications the field of professional baseball was looking for. He started his pro career with the Neosho Yankees, playing Class D Arkansas-Missouri league, and over the course of four years, moved up the ranks in the minor leagues, as a center fielder. His combination of strong hitting and center fielding led some to compare him to Joe DiMaggio.

Bill Sarver was playing with the Rugmakers, the home team of Amsterdam, New York, in the Class C Canadian-American League, when called to the armed forces of his country. He was inducted into service at Leavenworth, Kansas November 15, 1941, and was sent to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, with assignment to the field artillery.

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# President's Message

by Walt Linne

As mentioned in my last message, our membership numbers have been growing - including a welcome influx of grandchildren. Every new and renewing member helps to continue our mission to reach out for more orphans and keep our Father's sacrifice alive. Keep up the good work. If you are interested in being more involved with the operation of AWON and/or help out at the National Conference at the National WWII Museum in New Orleans, 4-8 May 2022, please contact us at AWON Headquarters, 5745 Lee Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216 or via email at [president@awon.org](mailto:president@awon.org).

The registration form for our 30th National Anniversary Conference, "Honor and Remember," can be found on Page 9. You can also purchase an ad that will be published in the conference program in remembrance of your Father - more about this on pages 22-23. The conference will be held at the Higgins Hotel in New Orleans, Louisiana across the street from the National WWII Museum, May 4 to May 8, 2022. See you in New Orleans!

Has anyone found "Kilroy" in our AWON Website at [www.awon.org](http://www.awon.org)? Maybe the prize has to be BIGGER!?

Position open! I have been advised our Board member Paul Bremer will be leaving the Board effective 12/31/2021, with one year remaining on his term. As noted above, if you would like to be more involved with the operation of AWON, as a Board member, please contact me at [president@awon.org](mailto:president@awon.org). I would like to thank brother orphan Paul for his professionalism and many years of service to AWON as a Board of Director, Board Treasurer, Past Chairman of the Election Committee, Co-chair of the 2016 "Cruisin' In Freedom - Honoring Our Fathers" National Conference and the Lorraine American Cemetery Wreath Coordinator. Thank You, Paul!

Also, I would like to thank Lorin McCleary and Barbara Kelly for their work in keeping the AWON database up to date. Please, please if you have moved, changed telephone number and/or email address send changes to AWON Headquarters, 5745 Lee Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216 or post to Lorin at [ldmccleary@gmail.com](mailto:ldmccleary@gmail.com).

...The President's Message concludes on Page 29



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...Fallen Hero, from front page



Above: Before he served his country in WWII, Bill Sarver, Sr. first wore another uniform as a talented minor league baseball hitter and outfielder.

In July 1942, Sarver was sent to Officer Candidate School at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, from which he graduated Oct. 10, 1942, commissioned as a second lieutenant. On December 9, 1942 he married Miss Marian Smith of Augusta, GA. Two children were born of this union, daughter Kathleen, and a son, William Allen, Jr.

On January 3, 1945, Lieutenant Sarver was sent overseas with the 67th Field Artillery Battalion. He served with General Hodge's First Army as forward observer, attached to the 3rd Armored "Spearhead" Infantry Division. The 3rd Armored broke through enemy forces to the Rhine River, and captured Cologne on March 7, 1945.

Two weeks later the 3rd Armored Division crossed the Rhine, moving north to capture Paderborn on April 1. While leading his men against the enemy

near Dreikens, Germany, April 6, 1945, Lieutenant William Sarver encountered a German outpost, and was injured by small arms fire. He was hit and fell to the ground, while his men took cover in a nearby ravine upon his order.

After fifteen minutes had elapsed, one of his company crawled out to attempt rescue, but was ordered back to safety by Lieutenant Sarver. Making a third trip to the scene, the comrade succeeded in dragging the wounded officer - against his own orders - to the security of the ravine. Sarver died enroute to a medical aid station, still within the safety of his men, whom according to reports, were his only concern.

For Lieutenant Sarver's gallantry in action, an awarding of the Purple Heart and Silver Star were made, and were posthumously presented to his wife and two children at Fort Gordon, Georgia. William Allen Sarver, Sr. was buried at the Netherlands American Cemetery, in Margraten.

Below: Second Lieutenant William Sarver, Sr.'s gravestone stands proudly at Margraten.



Fallen Hero, Continued page 4

...Fallen Hero, from page 3



Above: Young Bill Sarver, swinging for the fences

Aside from his widow and two children, Bill Sarver was survived by his parents and three brothers, Donald, Herbert, and Robert Sarver of Kansas City. Donald and Herbert both served with the United States Navy. Don Sarver, the only surviving brother at 99 years of age, was a Torpedoman, Second Class. He served in the Pacific on the destroyer escort, USS Cockrell DE366. The USS Cockrell was one of the ships sent to look for survivors of the sinking of the Indianapolis, but found no survivors, only floating bodies. Afterwards, the sailors served at Saipan, Titian, and the Cockrell was one of the first into Tokyo Harbor after the surrender.

Sadly, it was in a moment of victory that Don Sarver found out about the loss of his brother. Don was on board ship, entering the harbor of Saipan, when the men got word that the war

in Europe was over. All the ships started blowing their horns in celebration. The sailors were so happy to hear the news, and they immediately began celebrating. Once the Cockrell had anchored, someone went ashore to pick up their mail.

Sailors had to wait a while to get their mail in those days - they never knew when they'd get a letter or letters. Don received seventeen letters that day. The very first one he opened was from his wife. She told him she didn't know how to tell him but his brother, Bill, had been killed on April 6, 1945, only a month before the war ended in Europe. He went from the pinnacle of joy to utter heartache in a short time. One can only imagine how he felt that day.

Despite the sorrow that the news of Bill's death brought to the members of his family, they were forever cognizant of the fact that he, along with thousands of other young Americans, had made the supreme sacrifice for the high ideals of Americanism and the principles of freedom. Lieutenant William Sarver was taken in the greatest cause to which man has ever been called, and his family remains thankful for the fine record he made, and filled with pride over his display of courage and gallantry, shown to the last.

The letters the family has received from members of his company from time to time have brought condolence to bereft hearts, and all members of the Sarver family are appreciative of the high esteem, respect and love shown in hours of grief, thanking everyone who has written or spoken words of compassion. The Sarver family hopes to continue doing their part towards maintaining the principles of Americanism for which Bill gave his life.

### **With Your Help, We're Making Progress!**

So far, we've collected \$575 in donations for our Victory Paver at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans. We're a sixth of the way towards meeting our goal of \$3000!

Please see pages 12-13 for more information about how YOU can help keep our Fathers' memories alive for generations to come.

**The Star Guidelines for Submitting Material**

We want to tell your story and your family's story. We accept submissions both electronically and via US mail. If you have an article or picture and aren't sure how to submit it, that's ok. Message *The Star* and we will work with you.

Please keep text reasonable in length. 500-1000 words or 1 page is a good guideline, but we publish longer pieces too. Preference is given to material written by, for, and about AWON members and families.

Authors retain copyright to published original writing. Permission to reprint should be obtained from the author by contacting the editor.

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[atomicagebrush@gmail.com](mailto:atomicagebrush@gmail.com)

## Make Sure the Next Generation Hears YOUR Family Story!!!!



*The STAR* needs your submissions today!  
Don't let your family's stories go untold!!

As we enjoy AWON's Thirtieth year, we here at *The Star* want to urge every AWON member to share with us the story of your father's life, your family's loss, and your personal journey of self-discovery.

Please don't hesitate - contribute!

It's easy - our editors will do all the hard stuff, we just need to hear from YOU! Submit today!

The new MeWe ListServ



All AWON members in good standing are invited to participate in AWON's MeWe page!

To find out more about MeWe (it's just like Facebook, but with better privacy protections) and receive an invitation to join AWON's MeWe Page contact Lorin McCleary at [ldmccleary@gmail.com](mailto:ldmccleary@gmail.com).

# AWON Moments

by AWON President Walter Linne

*The mission of our AWON Moments series is to review AWON history, celebrating special moments experienced by AWON orphan members since Ann Bennett Mix founded the organization in 1991.*

**From American WWII Orphans Network Newsletter Issue #39, November 2005** – AWON Founder Ann Bennett Mix and AWON President Patricia Gaffney-Kindig attended Memorial Day breakfast at the White House in 2001 when President Bush signed a bill to ensure the construction of the National WWII Memorial. They were honored to meet Ambassador F. Hayden Williams who is serving as Commissioner of the America Battle Monuments Commission and Chairmen of the National World War II Memorial Committee. He directed the selection of the Memorial's site on the Mall and helped with coordinating all aspects for the design.

**Issue #40, February 2006** – Mark your calendar for AWON's 7th National Conference – AWON Lone Star Conference - San Antonio, Texas – May 26-29, 2006.

**Issue #41, May 2006** – Regional Group – Thirteen was a lucky number when that number of orphans from southern California met for lunch in San Diego in February for the first-ever meeting of the newly-created SoCal Regional Group. AWONer Roger Connor got things started by having everyone introduce themselves and their Fathers or in Vic's case – brother. The sharing experiences that followed brought everyone closer together. As a result of the get-together, some who had been less active said they will become more active and plan to go to the conference in San Antonio.

**Issue #42, August 2006** – *National Military Veterans Alliance* – The National Military Veterans Alliance was founded in 1996 as an umbrella organization to allow the various military and veteran associations a way to work toward common goals. The Alliance expands the ability of military and veteran communities to present a



united front to the Department of Defense, Department of Veteran Affairs, Congress and the White House. AWON is a member.

**Issue #43, November 2006** – “The D-Day Museum in New Orleans is now the National World War II Museum.” writes Janice Ott Buterbaugh. “They are receiving many new items and exhibits. The website is great.” AWON Webmaster Rik Peirson has added it to the Links Page on our website. There is a tremendous amount of information, in case you haven't been there recently. Thank you, Rik. *Note - the current National WWII Museum website can be found at:*

[www.nationalww2museum.org](http://www.nationalww2museum.org)

**Issue #44, February 2007** – *AWON Database Management Report: 1/21/2007* by Ann Mix, Database Manager. Dads Database: AWON now has 3245 War dead listed in the “Dads” Database, up from 3225 at last report. There are now 5153 total names/records in the AWON Database. Membership: AWON now has 716 Active members, more than the 703 members last reported.

**Issue #45, May 2007 – Resources, Queries and Information** – Compiled from the AWON Listserv by Rosalie Francisco – On June 6, 2007, a new visitor's center will be dedicated and opened to the public at the Normandy American Cemetery. Part of the center will be dedicated exhibit space that will include personal stories, photos and interactive displays. The center will inspire future generations to explore, understand and emulate the values for which our brave Americans fought. -Lynn Taylor

**Unforgettable AWON Moment** – WWII pilot finds his way home – Lt. William M. “Bill” Lewis was a Tulsa native who joined the Army in 1943. Soon after joining the service, he learned his wife was pregnant. He attended flight school and was assigned to the Eighth Air Force in England. He briefly saw his daughter, Sharon, before reporting for duty in England.

He disappeared on September 11, 1944, in a mission over Oberhof, Germany and was reported missing in action. His daughter Sharon, only 6 months old when he died, always wondered about her Father, but it was not until she saw the movie *Saving Private Ryan* in 2001 that she decided she had to learn his fate.

With the combined help of a friend, a university worker in Prague and a German forester who buried Lt. Lewis at the crash site and tended to it for over 30 years he was able to finally come home on May 28, 2004.

Please send your AWON Moment to:

AWON STAR  
5745 Lee Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216  
or email to:  
[president@awon.org](mailto:president@awon.org)

Walter Linne, brother of John  
Sons of Walter John Linne  
KIA March 24, 1945  
Germersheim-on-the-Rhine, Germany

Hey! Are you following AWON on Facebook? Give us a like for the most up-to-date AWON news! ⇒⇒⇒

## A Gathering of Airbirds

by Stewart Lerch

For the thirtieth year, the sky over Reading, PA came to life with history this June. WWII aircraft including B-17, B-25, and B-29 bombers as well as fighters, dive bombers, and torpedo planes delighted onlookers at the Mid-Atlantic Air Museum's annual WWII Weekend, *A Gathering of Airbirds*.

This meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Air Museum's WWII Weekend had everything any WWII enthusiast could expect and want for the 30th annual air show. The show included 22 special WW II guests, 80 WW II aircraft, 1,500 reenactors, 200 military vehicles including 3 Sherman tanks, and over 20 acres of WW II encampments. As you toured the home front and visited the 250 military flea market vendors you had a chance to see and hear FDR or Gen. George Patton. Era-appropriate entertainment was provided by Theresa Eaman, America's Sweethearts, Swing Fever and Let's Dance big bands, and also featured radio shows by the Spirit of the Airways Players.

Although we had one small thunderstorm on Friday and hot weather on Saturday & Sunday, there were large crowds all three days. It was all worth it to see the 101st A/B Div. reenactors parachute out of a plane Saturday and Sunday. As always it was a step back in time to the days of our fathers.

Many people stopped by our AWON table to talk to us. No orphans, but several Gold Star Family members and many veterans. Some organizations were looking for speakers at their upcoming events and a few asked for help in looking up military records. We heard many interesting stories about family members who served during WW II.

During my time spent at this three day show I always feel just a little closer to my dad. It is just one of those things that happens at each WW II Weekend.



# Register Now for AWON's 2022 Conference:

<https://group.curiocollection.com/AmericanWWIIOrphanNetworkAWONBiennialMeeting>



AWON is pleased to announce our upcoming 2022 "Honor and Remember" conference. It will be held at the Higgins Hotel and Convention Center at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans, May 4-8, 2022.

Since its opening in 2000, the National WWII Museum has become a popular destination for history lovers, war buffs, and families. The museum's stated mission is to tell the story of the American experience during the Second World War, or in their words, "the war that changed the world" - why it was fought, how it was won, and what it means today - so that all generations will understand the price of freedom and be inspired by what they learn.

At first blush, a hotel like the Higgins, part of the distinctive Curio Collection by Hilton, built alongside a war museum seems a strange pairing. But when that museum is the National WWII Museum - the #3 museum in the United States and amazingly, the top tourist destination in tourist mecca New Orleans - it only makes sense to give the museum's hundreds of yearly visitors a place to stay while they explore one of the most important chapters in our nation's history.

The Higgins Hotel and Conference Center provides a luxury hotel experience only a minute's walk from the National WWII Museum, and ample meeting space for organizations like AWON to conduct their business. Named after shipbuilder Andrew Higgins, whose company, Higgins Industries, built the amphibious LVCP (Higgins Boat) widely used in WWII, the Higgins Hotel features spectacular Art Deco stylings with all the modern amenities, including a free fitness center. Free coffee and bottled water is available in every room.

The National WWII Museum features a vast array of displays, exhibits, and much more. For a gorgeous gallery of photos from the Higgins Hotel and the National WWII Museum, please visit: <https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/msyrvqq-the-higgins-hotel-new-orleans/gallery/> Participants are due to arrive at the "Honor and Remember" convention May 4, 2022, and depart May 8. However, should you wish to extend your stay, the booking agent can help you with that when you call to make arrangements.

To book your room, please call 833-357-1172 with your credit card at the ready. Know your desired arrival and departure date and if you would like a room with a king bed or two queen beds. Your group code will be **AWONCI** and the group name is the American WWII Orphans Network. This will make it easier for the booking agent to find the right group for your reservation. Or, use the handy link found under our title above and at the bottom of this page to book online!

After booking, you will receive an automated confirmation email. Guests will be able to earn Hilton Honors points according to their membership. Parking fees will be \$32 per night.

To book online, use this link or copy/paste this address into your browser bar:

<https://group.curiocollection.com/AmericanWWIIOrphanNetworkAWONBiennialMeeting>





2022 National Conference – Honor and Remember

# Registration

New Orleans WWII Museum • Higgins Hotel • May 4-8, '22

Please return registration and fee by April 1, 2022

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this your first AWON Conference? Y N Do you want your name listed in the conference roster? Y N

Do you have special needs?: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Fee (includes Reception, Banquet, Meeting Room Fees and WWII Museum Admission)

\_\_\_ Members & Guests X \$200 . . . . . \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ New Members & Renewals X \$225 (includes 1 year AWON Membership Dues) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Registration Fees enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name Tag Information (please print clearly – and include State of Residence)

Your Name: (include maiden name) \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Guests Names: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Serviceman's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Service Branch: \_\_\_\_\_

Rank First Middle Last

Circle One: KIA MIA Died while on Duty Date of Death: \_\_\_\_\_ Country Died: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail Registration Form with check or money order payable to AWON to:

AWON 2022 National Conference  
5745 Lee Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46216



# Airport

New Orleans • WWII Museum Higgins Hotel • May 4-8, '22

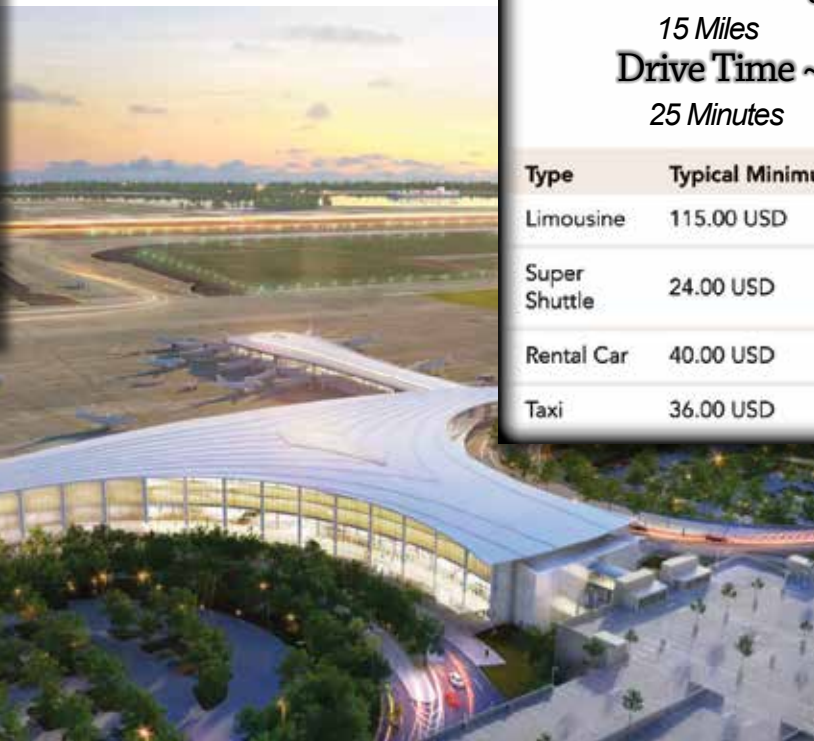


**Louis Armstrong New Orleans  
International Airport**

*Airport Code*

# MSY

Address ~ 1 Terminal Drive  
Kenner, LA 70062 Phone ~ 504/464-083



**Distance to the Higgins ~**

*15 Miles*

**Drive Time ~**

*25 Minutes*

| Type          | Typical Minimum Charge |
|---------------|------------------------|
| Limousine     | 115.00 USD             |
| Super Shuttle | 24.00 USD              |
| Rental Car    | 40.00 USD              |
| Taxi          | 36.00 USD              |



2022 National Conference – Honor and Remember

# Schedule

New Orleans • WWII Museum • Higgins Hotel • May 4-8, '22

**Wednesday ~** **5/4**  
*Noon - 5:00 PM - Conference Registration*  
*5:00 PM - 7:00 PM Free Time*  
*7:00 PM - 10:00 PM Informal Welcome – Hospitality Room*

**Thursday ~** **5/5**  
*9:00 AM - Noon - Conference Registration*  
*Noon - 1:00 PM - Free Time*  
*1:00 PM - 1:30 PM - Welcome by Museum Representative*  
*1:30 PM - 3:00 PM - Presentations*  
*3:00 PM - 5:00 PM - Sharing Circles*  
*5:00 PM - 7:00 PM - Free Time*  
*7:00 PM - 9:00 PM - Welcome Reception*

**Friday ~** **5/6**  
*9:00 AM - 10:00 AM - Dedication of Father's Commemorative Paver*  
*10:00 AM - 11:00 AM - Memorial Service*  
*11:00 - Closing - Museum Tour*

**Saturday ~** **5/7**  
*9:00 AM - 10:00 AM Business Meeting*  
*11:00 AM - 5:00 PM - Free Time*  
*6:00 PM - 6:30 PM Cocktails*  
*6:30 PM to 8:00 PM - Dinner*  
*8:00 PM - Presentations and Entertainment*

**Sunday ~** **5/8**  
*Free Day*  
*7:00 PM - 9:00 PM - Farewell – Hospitality Room*



# AWON Memorial Fund Raiser National WWII Museum Victory Paver

Over the years AWON has dedicated a memorial or plaque at most of our national conference sites to commemorate our organization and our Fathers.

The first AWON Memorial was established on the waterfront in Bremerton, Washington at our first national conference in 1995. Subsequent memorials have been in the form of AWON plaques presented to the host conference site as a memorial to our visit and to our Fathers.



Of course, the dedication of the National WWII Memorial in Washington DC was celebrated by AWON, along with the nation, at our 2004 National Conference.

AWON raised several thousand dollars for the memorial that honored all WWII veterans.

And AWON was involved in the design process, ensuring that the Gold Stars be added to the National WWII Memorial to commemorate our Dads and all who died in the war.



In keeping with AWON tradition, a commemorative Victory Paver has been purchased at the National WWII Museum in New Orleans, in celebration of AWON's 30th anniversary. The cost is \$3,000.00, of which we have raised \$575 so far.

This Victory Paver will be installed in the heart of the National WWII Museum campus on the Colonel Battle Barksdale Parade Ground and Founders' Plaza, commemorating the selfless sacrifice of our Fathers and guaranteeing that AWON's commemorative Victory Paver honoring our Fathers will be appreciated by hundreds of thousands of Museum guests every year.



The commemorative Victory Paver will be located in the Founders' Plaza pictured at left, the largest gathering area at the National WWII Museum.

The size of the Victory Paver is illustrated at the bottom right of this page - 18" x 12", the largest size available.

**To donate:**  
**American Orphans Network**  
**Victory Paver**  
**5745 Lee Road**  
**Indianapolis, IN 46216**

Any donations above \$3,000.00 will roll over to the AWON Wreath Fund. Thank you!

AWON's commemorative Victory Paver at the National WWII Museum will contain the lettering featured below:

AWON  
 AMERICAN WWII  
 ORPHANS NETWORK  
 183,000 CHILDREN  
 LEFT FATHERLESS  
 "IN THEIR MEMORY"



# Wreaths Across America 2021 - Remember, Honor, and Teach

By Sandra Walker

Their hopes buoyed after seeing the Allies triumphant in several horrific battles, by September 1944 American journalists started writing that troops could be home for Christmas. Soldiers and families were hopeful, not about just "being home for Christmas, if 🎵 only in dreams 🎵" but actually celebrating the holiday together.

Alongside the exciting headlines, reality existed: many Gold Star families endured an empty place at the dinner table. Into November 1944, the war in the Pacific and in Europe grew even more horrendous. During the Battle of the Bulge, Christmas Day was white.

Rather than any "dreaming", a hideous nightmare ran for hours as fighting raged through bitterly cold, cruel conditions. The season brought remembrances, especially for grieving children, wives, mothers, brothers and sisters. From both theaters of war, more telegrams were delivered well into the summer of 1945.

Today, remembrances from that profoundly sad, silent era will be beautifully expressed. This December 18, Wreaths Across America will orchestrate the placement of tens of thousands of wreaths across Arlington National Cemetery, and in over 2,500 additional locations. WAA's iconic fresh evergreen wreath with a bright red bow placed against a snowy-white background spreads a heartfelt expression honoring selfless service to the United States and to the world.

Wreaths Across America (WAA) began in 1992 because of Mr. Morrill Worcester in Harrington, Maine. As a 12-year-old boy Worcester had visited Washington D.C. and the Arlington National Cemetery for the first time. The indelible impression of the vast cemetery stayed in his soul. When Mr. Worcester retired, he created a way to honor soldiers, especially ones who made the ultimate sacrifice.

From those humble beginnings at Arlington National Cemetery, today WAA reaches across the nation and even to our international American cemeteries.

While we at AWON observe the date of our Father's death, we also respect our national dates of remembrance

through the official Memorial Day, Fourth of July and Veterans Day commemorations. National Wreaths Across America Day is another opportunity for us to pay our respects and remember the sacrifices of our fathers and the other young men just like our fathers, true American heroes.

In 2021, AWON will continue our outreach project with WAA. If we as members actively participate, AWON interaction with WAA, a huge and nationally renowned organization, will help expand awareness of AWON, enabling us to possibly find more of our fellow orphans.

Above all else, we align with the WAA stated purpose: **Remember, Honor and Teach**, for WAA is committed to teaching younger generations where the value of their freedom rests. This AWON outreach project can broaden our ongoing commitment for lasting remembrance of the selfless sacrifice by our heroes.

Recognition day for Wreaths Across America was established in 2008 by the United States Congress, to be observed each December 13. In 2021 the placing of the WAA wreaths will be held on Saturday, December 18. The extensive national WAA organization offers the opportunity to send \$15 for a wreath and also fund additional wreaths. WAA is a non-profit 501-(c) (3). Additionally, WAA needs and welcomes volunteers regardless of location.

To read more about WAA's broad national and international involvement, one can go to their website, sign up for the weekly newsletter, and/or visit their home office in Columbia Falls, Maine. The Wreaths Across America website is found at: [www.wreathscrossamerica.org](http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org)

Mailing address for Wreaths Across America: WAA, P.O. Box 249, Columbia Falls, Maine, 04623.

And one of the easiest ways to order from WAA is by phone: 877-385-9504.

Deadline to order is **November 29, 2021**



Let's make our holiday season more meaningful by enhancing the remembrance of our Fathers through a joint commitment with Wreaths Across America, and beyond the United States. Join AWON's Wreaths Across America outreach project!

How do AWON members or supportive family engage in this important outreach project?

You can help in two ways:

1. donating funds for a wreath or wreaths
2. volunteering to help WAA in the placement of thousands of wreaths.

One wreath is \$15. The most common donation is \$75 (five wreaths) but smaller donations are accepted. It is critical that anyone wishing to donate do so by **November 29, 2020**. All funds are due in the WAA office by that date.

For every 2 wreaths purchased, a third wreath will be credited to AWON.

To volunteer requires no financial investment, only a commitment of your time.

From AWON's WAA page, you can send invites to family and friends to encourage them to donate too.



**IMPORTANT!!!!** For AWON to be credited with our involvement in Wreaths Across America please follow certain steps using our Group ID and Location ID. If you don't follow these steps AWON will not receive credit for your donation.

State the spelled-out Group name: American World War II Network and then the Group ID: NJ0153. The Location ID is: NAGVRW.

The online AWON direct link is:

[www.wreathscrossamerica.org/NJ0153](http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/NJ0153).

WAA is a non-profit 501-(c) (3). Online donations are completed securely on the WAA online fundraising page. Or if you prefer, you may mail donations by cash or check using the fundraising form available on the WAA website at: [www.wreathscrossamerica.org](http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org) Remember, the ordering deadline is **November 29**.

To indicate the choice of where to volunteer, on the WAA website go to the "all locations" listing and then find a convenient "specific location". Volunteers are guided by the location coordinator.

To donate wreaths to a specific cemetery, use AWON's direct link above. Click on "Sponsor Wreaths". A drop down menu will appear to allow you to select a cemetery (*Ed. Note: I entered the ABMC Sites into the dropdown menu and it appeared that all overseas cemeteries are now being served by the WAA program. That's great news!*) There is also an option to type in a cemetery manually. If you don't select a cemetery, your wreaths will go to cemeteries where they are needed.

**Deadline to order is November 29!**

Let's spread the AWON holiday spirit across the world this year! Support Wreaths Across America...

**Remember, Honor and Teach!**

# Baseball: America's National Pastime, Even in War

By Kristin Holmes



*Above: American Troops swing the bat at the beachhead in Anzio, Italy, enjoying some precious downtime*

After the attack on Pearl Harbor pulled them into the war, Americans were faced with innumerable tough decisions to make, both individually and as a people. American life couldn't go on as it had been, but at the same time, retaining as much normalcy as possible was key to keeping up morale on the battlefield and the homefront alike. Debates broke out nationwide about where to draw the line between tightening up the country's belt for the war effort, and keeping spirits high by not depriving the citizens of every pleasure.

The day after Pearl Harbor, the leadership of Major League Baseball met for their annual winter meeting. Instead of discussing batting averages and ticket prices, there was only one topic of conversation - should baseball continue during the war?

In our sports-obsessed, and indeed, entertainment-obsessed culture of 2021, it seems a little surprising they even asked the question. We found ways to continue with sports and other popular pastimes in the face of a global pandemic, and likely there would have been an uproar if we hadn't. But in the America of the 30's and 40's, while baseball was certainly loved, people were used to making sacrifices for the greater good, used to working hard and keeping even the simplest of pleasures in perspective - to engage in only after our work was done. No wonder the baseball question was set upon the collective table for a debate.

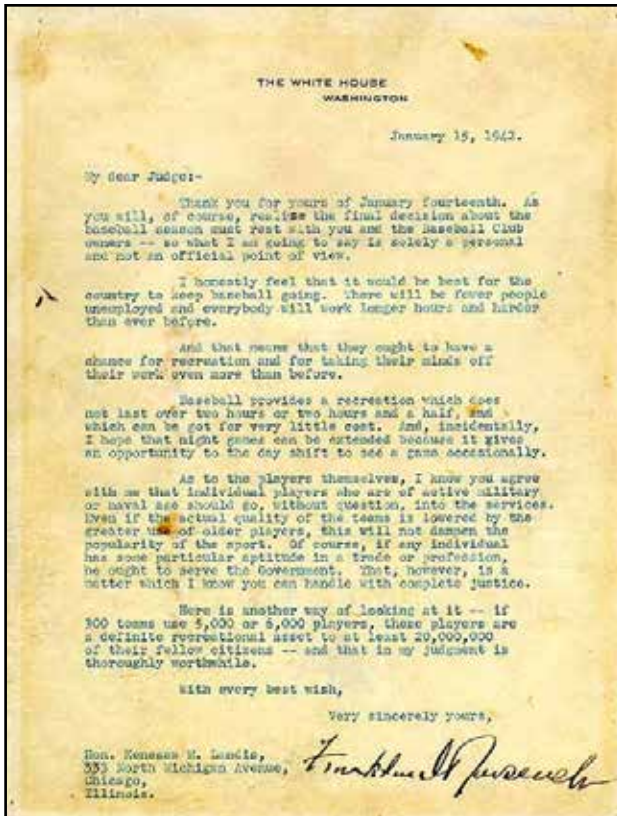
On the one hand, baseball was undoubtedly good for morale, but on the other, was it really right for anyone to waste valuable time watching able-bodied men playing what many people still considered primarily a child's game? A generation of young men would be fighting and dying overseas while others ran around on the grass pursuing a ball. And baseball cost money, money that would desperately be needed for the war effort. For many, it seemed the best course of action to postpone the game indefinitely, certainly for the duration of the war, and perhaps beyond it if needed.

This prompted MLB Commissioner Judge Kenesaw Landis to write to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, seeking his guidance. Roosevelt, a baseball fan and former, if admittedly untalented, player and team manager in his boyhood and college days, sent his reply, a letter that has come to be known as "The Green Light Letter." Roosevelt opined, "I honestly feel it would be best for the country to keep baseball going." The president pointed out that the money spent on baseball would not be wasted, because it would provide entertainment for thousands of people, and that since all teams would be losing their talented players to military or government service, no team would receive an advantage over the others.



*Above: Longtime baseball fan President Franklin Roosevelt throwing out the first pitch for Opening Day.*





Above: *The Green Light Letter*, in which President Roosevelt laid out his rationale for wanting baseball to continue even while American troops fought overseas.

The baseball season of 1942 began as planned, and baseball continued to be enormously popular, despite the athletes themselves being mostly older men or those deemed 4F - most famously Pete Grey, who played in the minors and then in the majors for the St. Louis Browns, despite having only one arm. In addition to league play, games were held to sell war bonds and to raise money for the Army, Navy, and other war-related causes. Many teams' players donated 10% of their salaries to the purchase of war bonds.

The athletes themselves did not shy away from duty. Though some naysayers had claimed that men would surely use their status as a ballplayer to get out of duty, it didn't happen. Those who were capable served. More than 500 Major Leaguers were sent overseas to fight, over 4000 players from the minors joined up, and 120 men from the Negro Leagues enlisted as well. It is believed at least 150 ballplayers died serving their country, including Major League players Elmer Gedeon and Harry O'Neill. Fame did not prevent service; big names like Ted Williams, Phil Rizzuto, Stan Musial, and Jackie Robinson all willingly did their part.



Above: Ted Williams served his country as a Naval aviator voluntarily, despite being ineligible for the military draft.

Below center: Satchel Paige pitches for a crowd at Yankee Stadium, 1942.

Below bottom: The 7th Army Air Force Team, featuring Sgt. Joe Dimaggio, front row, 6th from left.



As it turned out, President Roosevelt was quite right about the necessity of baseball for all Americans during hard times. The popularity of the Negro Leagues also surged during the war; with many African Americans employed by war industries and making excellent salaries, crowds packed league games in every city.

Military teams like the Third Marine Division All-Stars and The Manila Dodgers entertained the soldiers, helping to keep anxiety at bay. Even in POW camps, the men organized into teams and played baseball. The notion of athletics as stress relief in wartime worked so well that as the war ground to a halt, military bigwigs set up competitive intramural leagues in many sports. Of course, baseball was the most popular.



Baseball, continued pg. 21

# Call for Tributes!

**Add a Tribute to the AWON Website!** This could be one of the most long-lasting and satisfying ways to remember your Father, Grandfather, Brother, or Uncle. Just be a current AWON Member!

**Here's How:** 1. Have a look at our website's TRIBUTE section at [www.awon.org](http://www.awon.org) (click "Our Fathers") to see what others have done; 2. Check the web page on "How to prepare a Father Tribute" – (at [www.awon.org/check5.html](http://www.awon.org/check5.html)); then 3. Scan (or have a Kinko's scan) your best picture of your loved one in uniform; 4. Collect your thoughts, memories, and service record of your loved one; 5. Send your JPG-formatted image and between 500 and 1,100 words to our Tribute Stager, Nancy Sue Johnson. Her E-Mail address is . . . [janceysue@gmail.com](mailto:janceysue@gmail.com). If you need her snailmail address, just call Nancy Sue at 406/529-2315.

**Don't let another day go by.** AWON is honored to help you honor your Father or loved one! . . . a Tribute page is yours for the asking.



## AWON Wishes to Thank Our New and Returning Members From May-September

Betty Birdwell  
Marilyn Reese  
John Hull  
Janice Kiolbassa  
Ted Leonard  
Suzanne Parker  
Rosalend Grabowski  
William Sarver  
Cherril McMillian  
Rik Peirson  
Lindsey Peirson Hayes  
Zack Hayes  
Tanner Hayes  
Bernard Achten  
Marie Achten  
Shirley Willrett  
James Price  
Billy Winters  
James Boese  
Frances Blanchard-Randall  
Emelyn Collins  
Linda Dolmer  
Phyllis Fish  
Judy Gamble  
Apryl Graham

Tim Nosal  
Carla Sue Holcomb  
Theodore Krismann  
Shirley Santini  
Thomas Wiedmeyer  
Jim Gregory  
David Schaper  
Duane Ticknor  
Diana Wood  
Michael Davis  
Paula Baker  
Jerome Leclerc  
Diana Sears-Viullemin  
Jeanne Rhinehart  
Anthony Heller  
Dale Roybal  
Ellen Jones  
Pamela Wachutka  
George Sterhaus  
Roger Connor  
Fred Lubinger  
Kathleen Mayerski  
Rosemary Fannin  
Clyde Gasparick  
Walter Carter

Jeff Valentino  
Robert Emeigh  
Janet Cotton  
Maxine Stanley  
Elizabeth Claire  
Betty Nester  
Sandy Johnson  
Ann O'Connor  
Terrance Evison  
James Simcoke

Julie Jones  
Frank Burtnett  
Donna Allen  
Jo Hunt  
Joyce Reynolds  
Mary Martin  
Andy Mannering  
Richard Basile  
Ginger Gregory  
Charles Wardle

### Position Open: AWON Board of Directors

The AWON Board of Directors will have an open Board position that will run for one year starting January 1, 2022. Any interested parties please contact Walt Linne at [president@AWON.org](mailto:president@AWON.org).

Board of Directors Membership is a great way to get more involved in AWON's Mission honor our Fathers and reach out to other orphans. We'd love to hear from you!

# AWON Board of Directors Board Meeting Minutes - June 27, 2021

## MINUTES

AWON 2020 BOD

Sunday, 6/27/2021

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm EST by President Walt Linne.

Present: Lorin McCleary - LM, Walt Linne - WL, Barry Barr-Finch - BF, Rik Peirson - RP, Judi Kramer - JK, Bob Meek - RM, Barbara George - BG, Gloria Layne - GL, Kristin Holmes - KH. Excused: Ann Mix - AM, Paul Bremer - PB.

Bob Holliday was present to request a Letter of Support from AWON in the effort he and several AWONers have been making toward restoration of the Flower Program by the ABMC. The Board agreed to have Lorin McCleary and Rik Peirson draft the letter for Board approval. He has been working with other AWON members and they have met with ABMC in Washington DC. He asked AWON to send a letter of support to ABMC to restore the overseas flower program.

BM: Bob Dole sent a letter to ABMC concerning this. BF: can we get a list of current ABMC board members? RP: yes, it is on the ABMC website. WL: we need to find out to whom to send a letter. GL asked what committee has oversight of the ABMC. She suggested to get in touch with other organizations in TAPS to seek their support. RP: suggested we send letters of support to Bob Holliday who will get the letters to the right people. GL: will ask Tony Cordero for input on how best to support the effort to restore the flower program.

## Minutes

JK moved that the minutes of the 4/11/2021 meeting be approved, BF seconded. GL: abstained since she was not at the meeting. Motion carried.

## President's Report

We are getting into planning for the Conference. He will talk with Penny LeGrand to see if she will still be involved as co-chair and will be talking with the Higgins Hotel to confirm details on pricing and program. Conference information will appear in the Summer issue of the Star

## Treasurer Report

BM reviewed the financial data that had been sent out before the meeting. He asked if AWON had considered other safe investments than money market funds which now pay almost no interest. BM will look into

this and come back to the Board with some ideas. He expressed thanks to RP for his work on the Wreath and Banner program which netted \$1200 over the cost of the wreaths for the Wreath Fund. He mentioned that Ken Underwood's son who is a USAF pilot would like to present the AWON wreath next year. GL: let's not miss an opportunity to get out press releases on this for next year. BM: his sons who are in the military presented the AWON wreath this year. GL: Michael Naya might be willing to do some press releases for AWON. WL: suggests that BM get in contact with Jerry Pinkerton to see how he handled our AWON investments when he was Treasurer. BM: will have a report for the next Board meeting concerning PayPal.

## Membership

LM: Reviewed the latest membership stats with the Board, updating them through June 27, 2021. He commented that we have made progress in growing our membership for the reasons he cited in his recent memo to the Board.

|                |      |      |
|----------------|------|------|
|                | 4/11 | 6/27 |
| Orphan Active: | 277  | 300  |
| Family Active: | 36   | 39   |
| Supporting:    | 4    | 5    |
| Associate:     | 1    | 1    |

He commented that the Board has been more focused on membership and the membership week event was a good idea. He said that an email reminder is sent out to members in the month their membership will lapse, reminding them that they need to renew by the end of the month. The second step is that Barb George then sends an email reminder to those who have lapsed and have not renewed, reminding them that they need to renew. The third step is to call members who do not respond to the first 2 email reminders asking them to renew. He also commented on the phone calling that he, RP and Ken Underwood did, saying that it was a really rewarding experience. In many cases the lapsed members have been members of AWON for 8, 10 or 12 years really appreciated getting the phone call reminder. He encouraged all of the Membership Committee and all of the Board to participate in the telephone calling of lapsed members.

RP shared a web address at which he put up information about the membership renewal week schedule:

<https://www.awon.org/renewals-june21>

Membership, continued:

....Minutes, 6-27, continued from page 19

RP: whenever we have a new member, either JK or Jeanne Rinehart will call the new member. GL: is concentrating on calling the lapsed members from Margraten to get them to rejoin. JK: mentioned that Jeanne Rinehart will be glad to do membership renewal reminder phone calls.

#### Committee Reports

GL: reported on the Associated Gold Star Families Coalition. Tony Cordero of SDIT would like a letter of support from AWON for each of the Bills introduced in Congress relating to Gold Star Children and Families. This is also the 100th Anniversary of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and she will send the information about that to the Board. She has asked how AWON can participate in the event at Arlington. The Board agreed that we should send a letter as GL requested. WL: asked GL to prepare a rough draft of the letter which we should send. He also asked LM and RP to draft the letter which Bob Holiday requested concerning the ABMC Overseas Flower Program.

#### Star

KH said the deadline for the Summer Star edition would be July 15th with everything sent to the printer no later than August 1. She asked if she will have the Conference information in time for the Summer edition to which WL replied in the affirmative. GL: will send something to KH concerning WAA for the Summer edition also. WL: has received many positive comments concerning the 100th Edition of The Star. WL: plans to print an extra 100 copies to send to the WWII Museum. GL: suggests that we also send copies to the TAPS group as well. WL: asked Board members to give him suggestions of other organizations which should receive copies of the 100th Edition. GL: suggests sending copies to the new Army museum which is just opening in Washington DC. JK: thanked KH for the great job she is doing with The Star.

#### Website

RP: In the last 30 days, we have had 561 visits, including 501 unique visits. 75% of the visits come from desktop computers, 20% come from phones and 5% come from tablets. He has put up a page on Woody Williams and his foundation. WL: has met Woody Williams and has invited him to our National Conference.

#### Social Media

BF: AWON Facebook page has 339 members.

LM: MeWe has 93 members. Biggest problem is lack of participation and contribution of posts by members. He encouraged Board members to participate on MeWe. It would be immensely helpful if the Board would do that. We have honored every AWON father on the anniversary of his death since the beginning of the site in November. There has not been a single day when there has not been at least one AWON father who died on that date.

#### National Conference

WL: will keep the Board updated on planning via email.

#### AWON Wreath Fund

RP: The webmaster has put up a wreath-themed webpage at: <https://www.awon.org/wreath-banner21> which shows the results of all 16 cemeteries. We raised \$3587 of which \$2364 went for wreath costs, donations exceeded wreath costs by \$1222 but other costs for printing and shipping of banners must come out of this. We remembered 657 AWON fathers on the banners.

KH: The Star has reserved a 2 page spread in a future Star edition for a "call for Cemetery Coordinators". GL: suggests we should send 5 copies to each of the Overseas Cemeteries and a copy to each director of the ABMC along with an accompanying letter. RP: pointed out that GL raised \$743 for Margraten and since she is donating the wreath, all receipts will go to the Wreath fund. Brian Hope raised \$350 in donations for the wreath for Brittany and personally donated the wreath. WL: The majority of membership registration forms received with those contributions to the Wreath Fund do not specify which cemetery the donation should be applied.

#### 2020 Taxes

BM: the 2020 tax return has been accepted by the IRS and he has completed the annual registration for AWON with the State of Washington. He mentioned that he used JK address on the Washington registration.

#### PayPal

BM will have a report ready for the next Board meeting concerning the use of PayPal. AWON earned \$60 from Amazon Smile program but the money has not been received in the AWON checking account. BM will check with Amazon to make sure they have the correct bank account information.

#### DC Liaison:

GL agreed to serve as the DC Liaison. She is in touch with many of these groups already through the TAPS

...Minutes, 6-27, continued from previous page

program.

#### Bylaws

BM moved that we approve the Bylaw amendments proposed by BG and sent by WL to the Board. BF seconded. Motion approved.

#### New Business

##### Wreath program for Stateside Cemeteries

WL: 67% of overseas WWII dead were returned for burial in the US. Should we consider offering a Wreath and Banner for US National Cemeteries? LM: has been working to correct the US cemeteries entries in the AWON database and once that is done, it will be possible to produce a list of those buried in each National Cemetery.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.



*Above: All Star Dorothy Harrell of the four-time champion Rockford Peaches, one of only two AAGPBL teams to play all twelve seasons of pro ball.*

...Baseball, continued from page 16-17



This story is continued on the AWON Website - please click the Connected 'W' for more information about baseball during the war years or visit the AWON website at:

[www.awon.org](http://www.awon.org)

A notable development of the war era was the creation of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League. Concerned by the possibility of the ongoing war bringing pro ball to a complete standstill, and likely inspired by the example of Rosie the Riveter, several baseball executives, led by Phillip Wrigley, owner of the Chicago Cubs, created a women's baseball league to take over should the men's leagues become too depleted by military service to continue. The All-American Girls League proved popular even after the war, peaking in popularity in 1948 with nearly a million attendees.



*Above: Joe DiMaggio receiving his sergeant's stripes.*

When the war ended, life slowly returned to normal. Over time, baseball has become just one small part of a vast array of options for entertainment, and is no longer truly America's National Pastime. But for a brief moment, during a very dark and frightening time, it was baseball that brought people together, assuaged their fears, gave the country nine innings of happiness in which the world felt no larger than the green diamond on which the players ran. Play ball!



"Honor and Remember" your Father while celebrating AWON's 30th year! Take out an ad in AWON's

**Honor and Remember Commemorative Conference Program!**

Looking for more information about how you can take part in AWON's upcoming 2022 "Honor and Remember" Conference? Please see pages 8-11 in this edition of *The Star*. We hope to see you all there!

Lest We Forget Line (100 character limit)- \$10

Quarter Page Ad (4 1/16" x 5 13/16")- \$25

Half Page Ad (8 1/4" x 5 13/16")- \$50

Full Page Ad (8 1/4" x 10 3/4") - \$100

If you're curious about what your ad in the "Honor and Remember" Program might look like, below you'll see some examples that will help you picture what the final result will be. Sizing and pricing at left.

Order Deadline: March 1, 2022 Earlier orders are VERY welcome!

Please send check or money order payable to AWON, along with your completed form to Kristin Holmes, PO Box 242, Creston, WA, 99117, or email your relevant info to: [atomicagebrush@gmail.com](mailto:atomicagebrush@gmail.com)

**Honoring**  
Private Henry J. Tannenbaum  
83rd Inf. Div. 331st Inf. Regt. Co. F  
KIA January 11, 1945 • Otrre, Belgium (Battle of the Bulge)  
and  
Bertha F. Tannenbaum





**Remembering the Sacrifice**  
Beloved Parents, Grandparents and Great-Grandparents  
Samuel V. Tannenbaum & Rachel E. Tannenbaum  
Lisa Tannenbaum Wals & Carlor Michael Wals  
Jayna I. Wals & Jesse "Shai" E. Wals (Henry's namesake)  
Irisa Jordoff & Henry F. Jordoff



White Death - Recipient Jerry Jordoff, Pvt. Henry J. Tannenbaum, Otrre, Belgium, January 1945.  
Is one of many photographs that tell the story of the 83rd Airborne Division.

Nothing Gold Can Stay  
Nature's first green is gold  
Her hardest hue to hold.  
Her early leaf's a flower,  
But only so an hour.  
Then leaf subsides to leaf.  
So Eden sank to grief,  
So dawn goes down to day.  
Nothing gold can stay.


by Robert Frost



Remembering My Daddy  
Lt. Vere Becker  
Love, Cathy Becker Light  
(Naty)

**IN LOVING MEMORY**

PFC Maurice Joseph Ott  
29th Division, 116th Infantry  
Landed on Omaha Beach D-Day June 6, 1944  
Killed in Action June 22, 1944  
Couvains, France



Loving and Proud Daughter  
Janice Ott Buterbaugh  
and Grandsons Steve,  
Michael and Mark  
and their families




2LT David Baird Finch November 1944 Philippines  
Zelpha Galloway Finch April 1990 Seattle

Together again...  
Love you, Mom and Dad  
Barry Barr-Finch

Remembering my father,  
1st Lt Kenneth E. Lecrone



on his 100th birthday March 6th and those 71 years I missed not knowing him since he was KIA April 23, 1945, before I was born on May 9, 1945.



Your daughter and only child,  
Lynne Carol Lecrone

# 2022 AWON National Conference "Honor and Remember" Program 30th Anniversary Memorial Ad Order Form

If you would like to place a memorial ad honoring your loved one in the AWON 30th Anniversary Commemorative Program, please fill out the form below and enclose a COPIED photo or email a JPG image separately. PLEASE do not send original photos as we cannot guarantee their safety. If sending via US mail, please identify the subject on the back of the picture. If emailing, please identify the subject by file name (such as JohnDoe.jpg). If possible, please send resolution of 300 DPI jpg file or better. If you can't print this form, please neatly copy the relevant information onto a separate piece of paper with your name and contact info OR send an email with the info to [atomicsagebrush@gmail.com](mailto:atomicsagebrush@gmail.com). Thank you!

## Forms and Payments Due March 1, 2022 (But orders placed sooner are GREAT!)

If you need more time to provide photos or art, we can work that out when you place your order.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please select one of the following options:

Full Page \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ Half Page \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ Quarter Page \$25 \_\_\_\_\_

\$10 \_\_\_\_\_ "Lest We Forget" Line (100 character limit)

For example: Walt and John, In memory of our Mother,  
Wife of S/SGT Walter John Linne, KIA 3/2/45

Everyone placing an ad will receive a program book whether or not they attend the conference.

Message: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Make checks and money orders payable to AWON and mail forms, photos, and payment to:

Kristin Holmes

PO Box 242

Creston, WA, 99117

or email your relevant information and digital artwork to [atomicsagebrush@gmail.com](mailto:atomicsagebrush@gmail.com)

# Popeye, the REAL Sailor Man

by Rik Peirson



Everybody knows Popeye. The spinach-eating, pipe-smoking Sailor Man whose girlfriend was (Ms. Thin) Olive Oyl. The Greatest Generation, growing up in the 20's and 30's, enjoyed the antics of Popeye and the Oyl clan in the papers and on the movie screen. Perhaps real-life heroes on the battlefield even found some inspiration in their youthful recollections of Popeye's courage and sense of justice.

Despite being bereft of manners and seemingly uneducated, Popeye is cleverly imaginative, and many of his solutions to insurmountable problems astound the mere mortals around him. Popeye is equal parts Sherlock Holmes, McGyver, and Superman.

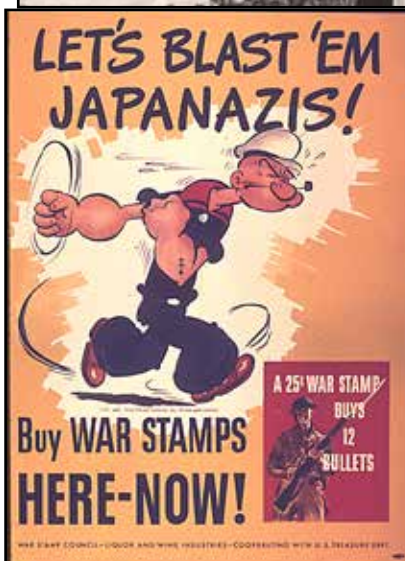
Popeye entered the scene on January 17, 1929, as a bit character in *Thimble Theater*, a comic strip created in 1919 by writer Elzie Crisler Segar. Believe it or not, it was Olive Oyl and not her more famous beau who came into existence first. Popeye joined the *Thimble Theater* crew when Olive's big brother, Castor Oyl, hired the Sailor Man for his seafaring abilities. Popeye quickly became the star of the show, and *Thimble Theater* was rechristened *Popeye*.

Surprisingly, Popeye was not originally a Navy man, serving first as a civilian mariner, and later on serving at a Coast Guard station, once telling his arch-enemy Bluto to "stop in the name of the Coast Guard." In 1941, Popeye finally joined the Navy, stationed on the ship *USS Pennsylvucky*. It was then he first donned his iconic uniform, including his naval "Dixie Cup" hat. Not to be outdone, Bluto quickly followed suit, and the two embarked on a series of wartime adventures.

Like so many other comic book characters, during the war years, Popeye faithfully served his country. After "officially" signing up with Uncle Sam, Popeye fictionally served as a boatswain's mate, helped the Army with its tank program, built battleships alongside slacker Bluto, and processed incoming draftees. In the real world, Popeye shorts were used to boost morale both at home and abroad. Popeye sold war bonds and war stamps, and his image was oft featured in the nose art of military aircraft.



Above: "Popeye", the Grumman F4F-4 Wildcat flown by Sam Folsom, VMF-121/VMF-111, while stationed in Faleolo, American Samoa.



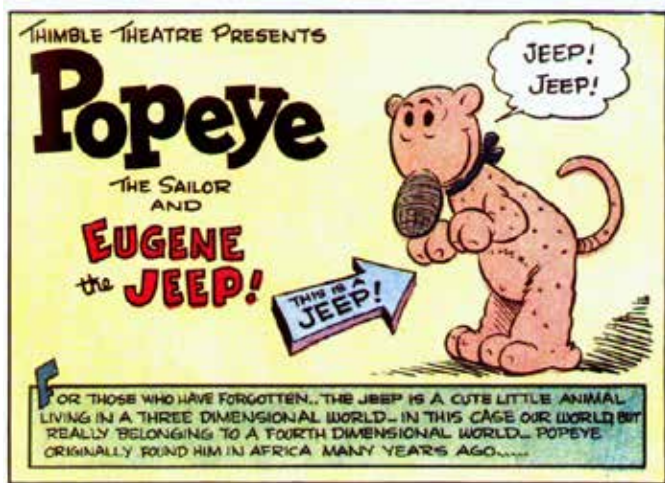
Left: Popeye rolls up his sleeves to sell war stamps to support the American troops during WWII.



While there is some debate as to the man on the above right's identity, many sources maintain that he is Frank "Rocky" Fiegel, the inspiration for EC Segar's Popeye. Others claim he's a British WWII soldier nicknamed after the beloved character. Either way the resemblance is uncanny!



...Popeye, continued from prev. page



The best-known legacy of Popeye's wartime years was giving the Jeep its name. The original "Jeep," an adorable critter named Eugene, hailing from the 4th dimension by way of Africa, was Popeye's pet/sidekick. Eugene the Jeep was a small creature, but his magical ability to go anywhere and do anything to overcome impossible situations led to troops nicknaming their highly capable 4-wheel-drive vehicles with the designation "GP" as Jeeps. The name stuck!

As his popularity increased, Popeye became the centerpiece of not only his own comic strip, but the shining star of the cartoon division of the King Features Syndicate owned by noted newspaperman William Randolph Hearst. Over the years Popeye became SO popular that in addition to a daily strip, he has appeared in comic books, television cartoons, as a fried chicken mascot, and even in video games. In 1980, Robin Williams starred in a live-action film, *Popeye*, directed by Robert Altman. *TV Guide* has ranked Popeye as the 20th greatest cartoon character of all time.

What most people DON'T know is that Popeye was based on a real person, whose name was Frank "Rocky" Fiegel. Rocky Fiegel was an immigrant from Poland who'd spent a 20-year career with the Merchant Marines. When he retired, he was hired as a bouncer at a rowdy bar in Chester, Illinois, where he regaled the locals with colorful stories about sailing the seven seas, and entertained the area's children by performing feats of strength.

EC Segar, who "created" Popeye, grew up in Chester. He met Rocky as a relatively young man and spent hours in the tavern hearing stories ~ all told out of the side of his mouth because Fiegel smoked a pipe. Eventually, Segar became a cartoonist, and he asked Fiegel if he could model a comic character after him. Rocky Fiegel was flattered, and quickly agreed.



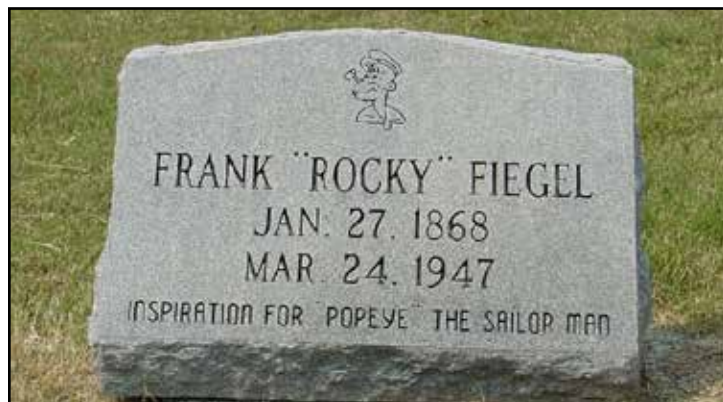
*Left: One of the few authenticated photos of Frank "Rocky" Fiegel, inspiration for Popeye. Below: Fiegel's tombstone, erected by fans in 1996.*

In the strip and cartoon, Popeye's pipe was commandeered for some number of fanciful purposes - serving as a cutting torch, a periscope, a propeller, a musical instrument, and even a whistle - which of course produced Popeye's trademark "toot." He often consumed SPINACH through his pipe (spinach being the implied source of Popeye's strength). Interesting though that sometime in the 70s, Popeye's pipe stopped being depicted as smoking tobacco at all!

It was later claimed that another important character in the story came from Chester - one Dora Paskel, who owned a grocery store in town and was especially thin. Dora reputedly was the spitting image of Olive Oyl. By all accounts, Dora and Rocky, unlike their romantically intertwined cartoon counterparts, were never anything more than small-town neighbors.

Segar kept in touch with Rocky Fiegel over the years, helping him with money here and there, sharing a small percentage of what he earned from his Popeye illustrations. Tragically, their friendship was cut short when Elzie Crisler Segar died from leukemia at only 43 years of age.

Rocky Fiegel continued on taking great pride in his notoriety as the man who inspired Popeye till his death in 1947. While he was originally buried in an unmarked grave, fans rectified this in 1996, raising money to purchase him a tombstone. It is inscribed simply, "Inspiration for Popeye The Sailor Man."



# How to Stage a Father Tribute on AWON's Website, and WHY You Should

The original AWON Website (vintage 1995) was established specifically to provide an online home for our collection of AWON Father Tributes. Among our highest ambitions in AWON is to remember and honor these men to the best of our ability ~ before we leave the building ourselves. Tributes are a personal and fundamental way to do that. And for all involved in their creation and maintenance, it's a solemn honor.

These remembrances will continue for as long as AWON maintains our website. We never have and never will remove a Tribute from the group. Once a Father Tribute has been completed, it will never be removed.

If you have not yet had the privilege of looking over these Tributes, please visit the AWON site at:  
<http://www.awon2.org/fathers/fathers1.html>

Standard Tributes are provided with current AWON membership. Advanced Tributes of a larger size are provided for current Board Members and key AWON volunteers. Current members of AWON who have done a Standard Tribute may elect to develop an Advanced Tribute, for which a donation is encouraged, and for which there is a waiting list. Starting in 2021, new members now have the option of developing either a Standard Tribute (with standard dues) or an Advanced Tribute (with donation). Donations may include negotiable volunteer hours toward an approved AWON cause or initiative.

If you are an AWON member and have not yet created your Father Tribute, it's not too late!

There are three parts of a Tribute you need to create and E-Mail to AWON:

A brief, basic Bio (for the linking page featuring all the Fathers' names), the body of the Tribute itself (500-1100 words), and a copy of your Father's Photo (for its own individual Tribute page).

## For the BIO, please provide:

Your Father's Rank  
First Name, Middle Name,  
Initial, Nickname, Last Name  
His Military Unit  
MIA Date, KIA Date, or his  
Date of Death  
Burial or Memorial Information

## BIO, TRIBUTE, PHOTO - it's just that easy to honor your Dad.

If you aren't sure what to include in your Tribute, check out the Tribute page below for examples:

<http://www.awon2.org/fathers/fathers1.html>

## Include 500-1,100 words in a TRIBUTE to your Father.

Write the tribute in any way you feel is appropriate. Some ideas:

Birth Date and Place of Birth  
Names of Parents and Siblings  
Childhood/Education details  
Career and Marriage Info  
Military Induction and Training  
Military Assignments  
Date sent Overseas  
Circumstances of his Death  
Circumstances of his Burial  
What you have heard about him  
A few of his favorite things  
What you most miss about him



## Include a PHOTograph of your Father in Uniform:

It's easiest to send a JPG file electronic photo attached to an email. If you don't have a JPG, you can visit a local Kinkos or similar copy shop for scanning.

If you need scanning assistance we may be able to help. Please contact Nancy Sue below for more information.

Submit all three parts to our lovely volunteer Nancy Sue Johnson for staging at:  
[janceysue@gmail.com](mailto:janceysue@gmail.com)

We'll get back to you when your tribute has been posted!

## Star of The Star

Celebrating those who make AWON work!



**Paul Bremer**



We here at The Star want to give Paul Bremer a very heartfelt "Thank You" for his many years of hard work and effort on behalf of AWON, fulfilling such roles as AWON Board Treasurer, Co-Chair of the "Cruising in Freedom - Honoring our Fathers" Conference, and the Wreath Coordinator for the Lorraine American Cemetery.

Thanks from all of us, Paul!!

**AWON Members -**

Is your father buried in a national cemetery?  
Check out the Veterans Legacy Memorial (VLM)!

VLM is an online memorial space managed by the National Cemetery Administration (NCA). NCA manages over 150 national cemeteries to honor our Nation's veterans, and memorializes more than 3.7 million veterans interred in those cemeteries in a digital memorial, providing a VLM profile page for each veteran, to which personal touches like photos and tributes can be added.

Find out more by visiting their homepage at:  
[www.va.gov/remember](http://www.va.gov/remember)

## Help Wanted!!

An AWON membership chairperson  
and volunteers to assist!

Part of AWON'S mission is to find the  
other 100,000+ war orphans out there.  
We need your help!

In AWON's database we have over  
5,000 names, but not all these people  
are active dues paying members.  
We need help to reach out to those  
members who have lapsed, and to find  
more of our long lost orphan siblings  
who do not know us yet.

Can you help? Please message

Barry Barr-Finch:

[barrfinch1@gmail.com](mailto:barrfinch1@gmail.com)

or Judi Kramer:

[ladybug5@juno.com](mailto:ladybug5@juno.com)

for more information about how  
you can get involved!!

## AWON Treasurer's Report - January - October 2021

AWON 2021 EOM Account Totals - Treasurer's Report Through October 2021

| Month     | General (Wreath) & (Paver)     | Conference | Book Source | Money Market |
|-----------|--------------------------------|------------|-------------|--------------|
| January   | \$19,006.27 (\$3288.00)        | \$374.50   | \$325.97    | \$48,069.26  |
| February  | \$19,927.32 (\$3,348.00)       | \$369.50   | \$320.97    | \$48,051.63  |
| March     | \$20,933.77 (\$3,605.00)       | \$364.50   | \$315.97    | \$48,070.08  |
| April     | \$23,412.77 (\$4,292.00)       | \$359.50   | \$337.96    | \$48,070.47  |
| May       | \$24,260.09 (\$4,797.27)       | \$354.50   | \$332.96    | \$48,070.88  |
| June      | \$24,613.40 (\$5,024.27)       | \$349.50   | \$367.02    | \$48,071.28  |
| July      | \$25,231.45 (\$5,602.27)       | \$344.50   | \$472.87    | \$48,071.69  |
| August    | \$25,351.51 (\$207.27) (\$25)  | \$339.50   | \$467.87    | \$48,072.09  |
| September | \$24,092.20 (\$702.27) (\$525) | \$1,159.50 | \$446.27    | \$48,072.49  |
| October   | \$23,745.29 (\$702.29) (\$575) | \$1,184.50 | \$441.27    | \$48,072.90  |

# Roger Connor - Oct. 9, 1937 - Sept. 17, 2021



Longtime AWON Member Roger McKee Connor of San Diego, CA, passed away from a rare neurological disease on Sept. 17, 2021.

Roger was with AWON to honor his father, PVT George Roger Connor. Roger was born in Danville, IL on October 9, 1937.

*airport and ran into Roger, who was an inveterate traveler. Roger liked to walk and was out strolling in the terminal before his flight when we ran into him. I recall that as he walked, he wore a holder of some sort around his neck which had his tickets and travel documents. That was Roger, always prepared! I also recall how dutiful Roger and Sharon were in holding regional AWON meetings in the San Diego area. Roberta and I attended one of these when we were vacationing in Southern California and had a very pleasant afternoon talking about all things related to AWON and WWII.*

After an adventurous childhood being raised by his father's extended family, in the same home his father had grown up in, Roger served in the military, worked as a teacher, and for the EPA as a program analyst before his retirement in 1998. At that point, his family recalls fondly, his life truly began, and he spent his time traveling the world, making friends in places as far apart as China, Australia, and Europe. Roger was also able to visit his father's gravesite and to learn as much as was possible about his dad's death. He was able to be in Luxembourg for the turning of the millenium and the 55th anniversary of his father's death, January 4, 2000, and was able to place some dirt from the family home on his father's grave.

*Gloria Layne: One of my fondest memories of Roger was the wonderful job he did at AWON conventions, bringing to life the Missing Man tribute.*

*Ann Mix: Roger loved life and loved people. He never had a bad word to say about anyone. He was special. We bonded closely early on. He was there for me in the beginning, a sweet and loyal supporter, and helped me in many ways. He always had my back. Every time I saw Roger he said in parting, "I love you Ann." So many times, just him saying that, gave me strength when I was exhausted or full of self doubt. I am so glad I got to see him and Sharon in DC. It warmed my heart that he and Sharon found true love in AWON.*

Roger is survived by his wife Sharon (Crowley), also an AWON orphan, and two children, Michael and Annie. But he was also beloved by his AWON siblings, near and far, and our Missing Man will not be forgotten by his AWON brothers and sisters. His absence will be felt by us all.

Below: Roger and Sharon (Crowley) Connor met in AWON. Our deepest condolences to Sharon.

To paraphrase those words Roger often said during his "Missing Man" tribute to AWON fallen fathers - "Let's raise our glasses in silent salute to our AWON brother Roger Connor. In gratitude...Hear! Hear!"

A few AWON members were kind enough to share their personal recollections of Roger:

*Lorin McCleary: I have two personal recollections to share about Roger Connor. My wife Roberta and I were in an*



...Roger Connor, cont. from previous page

*Kristin Holmes: I never had the privilege to meet Roger Connor in person, but from the first minute I took over as editor of **The Star**, he was one of the most helpful individuals assisting me in settling into the role. He sent me updates about orphan get-togethers, meetings he had attended, and he was always willing to go the extra mile to make sure that all my many questions were answered.*

*When I was compiling the 100th issue of **The Star**, I came across a perfectly beautiful piece of prose that Roger had written, and I immediately knew I had to include it. (please read Roger's amazing piece, *The Reservoir of Sadness*, at right)*

*I really think it's fitting to share it once more in remembrance of this fine man, our AWON brother, who has crossed that Great Divide and is undoubtedly in a place beyond the Reservoir of Sadness.*

...President's Message, continued from pg. 2

To date we have raised over \$575.00 towards our goal of \$3,000.00 for purchasing a Victory Memorial Paver at the National WWII Museum. We plan to hold a dedication of our Fathers' Victory Memorial Paver at our national conference in May 2022. See more information regarding the Victory Paver on pages 12-13.

And, finally and sadly, we lost our brother orphan Roger Connor, husband of sister orphan Sharon Connor, who has joined his Father, George Roger Connor. Both Roger and Sharon have been very active in AWON, volunteering for many positions and projects and participate in all our national conferences. They started the SoCal Regional Gathering in San Diego, California. Roger was greatly endeared to all of us with his special presentation of "The Missing Man" table at our national conferences. In his memory - Walt Linne

## The Reservoir of Sadness

by Roger Connor, from Issue 71 of **The Star**  
published January of 2014

For a very long time I have had within me what I call The Reservoir of Sadness. Most of the time, this Reservoir, this lake of melancholy, is just below my awareness. Only a thin veneer separates it from the surface of my life, the part other people see. It is always there, in good times and bad, a nearly physical presence.

I have always believed - known is probably the more accurate term - that the Reservoir is somehow connected to my father. Long before AWON, long before I learned so much about his life and death, mixed up with thoughts of my father was always this quiet sadness, this yearning for something I never knew or can't remember.

Other thoughts sometimes tap into the Reservoir. All involve a scene or sound or memory that touches me: patriotic music, World War II songs, the Missing Man Table at AWON conferences, a song that reminds me of a long-ago romance.

No matter what my mood - light, reflective, contented, or whatever - if I see or hear or think of something which penetrates the thin layer, I am suddenly aware of the Reservoir. When it comes to the surface, tears sometimes come with it - warm tears, sweet and cathartic, as well as sad.

I do not understand the Reservoir, but it is such a part of me that I cannot imagine being without it. I would not get rid of it if I could. We are partners, me and the Reservoir of Sadness. My father is a silent partner.

The Reservoir of Sadness - the mysterious, watchful presence that seems to link my conscious self with the tangled, turbulent, submerged part of my psyche that never rests. I sometimes wonder, is it trying to tell me something, and I just don't get it? Could it be as frustrated with my dullness as I am mystified by its longevity, its persistent intrusions?

I don't know the answer and I don't think I ever will. Not this side of the Great Divide, anyway.



# AWON BOOKSTORE

## Price List / Order Form

### Books

Authors in **BOLD** are orphan or family members

Items marked with (\*) include P&H

|   |                 |  |                                     |
|---|-----------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| _____ <i>Pieces of Us</i>   |                 | _____ <i>Love Always, Ben</i>  |                                     |
| <b>By Janice Crandell Powers</b>  | <b>\$20.00*</b> | <b>By Huey Tyra, nephew</b>  | Reduced! \$2.00                     |
| _____ <i>A Daughter's Quest: Retracing My Father's Footsteps During World War II</i>        |                 | _____ <i>Sporty Course</i> (bomber pilots)   |                                     |
| <b>By Laura Smail Sims</b>  | \$16.95         | <b>By Col. Jack Swayze</b>   | \$10.00                             |
| _____ <i>The Gun Club: U.S.S. Duncan at Cape Esperance</i>                                  |                 | _____ <i>The Hotton Report</i> (About the Battle For Hotton)   |                                     |
| <b>By Robert Fowler</b>   | \$15.99         | <b>By Robert McDonald</b>  | \$13.95                             |
| _____ <i>Collateral Damage, A World War II Orphan: Lost and Found</i>                       |                 | _____ <i>World War II: A Legacy of Letters-One Soldier's Journey</i>   |                                     |
| <b>By Reda Reynolds</b>   | \$9.00          | <b>By Clinton Frederick</b>  | \$26.95                             |
| _____ <i>Feisty: Chronicles &amp; Confessions of an Old PR Warhorse</i>                     |                 | _____ <i>An 8th Airforce Combat Diary</i>  |                                     |
| <b>By Joe Finnigan</b>  | \$12.99         | <b>By John A. Clark</b>  | \$49.95                             |
| _____ <i>A Bit of Earth</i>   |                 | _____ <i>When I See a "Forty and Eight"... I Remember World War II</i>   |                                     |
| <b>By Wendy Crisp Lestina</b>   | \$13.95         | <b>By Lt. Col. Jacques Adnet USAF (ret.)</b>   | Reduced! \$5.00!                    |
| _____ <i>K.I.A.: An Orphan's Search for His Father Through the Fog of War</i>               |                 | _____ <i>In Their Memory: American WWII Orphan's Network</i>   |                                     |
| <b>By Patrick Audinet</b>   | \$10.00*        | <b>By Turner Publishing Company</b>  | Was 49.95 Reduced \$10.00           |
| All proceeds from Audinet book benefit AWON   |                 | _____ <i>The Fighting Tigers: The Untold Story Behind the Names on The Quachita Baptist University WWII Memorial</i> |                                     |
| _____ <i>The Beauty of What Remains: Family Lost, Family Found</i>                          |                 | <b>By William Downes</b>   | \$24.95                             |
| <b>By Susan Johnson Hadler</b>  | \$15.00*        | _____ <i>The War Journey of Major Damon "Rocky" Gause</i>  |                                     |
| _____ <i>In Search of a Pilot: Hanford "Rusty" J. Rustand</i>                               |                 | <b>Forward by Damon L. Gause</b>   | \$21.95                             |
| <b>By Marilyn Rustand Lieurance</b>   | \$7.00*         | _____ <i>No Greater Sacrifice, No Greater Love: A Son's Journey to Normandy</i>                                      |                                     |
| _____ <i>My Father: More than a Picture, a Beer Bottle and a Flag</i>                       |                 | <b>By Walter Ford Carter</b>   | Reduced! \$18.00                    |
| <b>By Jerry W. Pinkerton</b>  | \$12.00*        | _____ <i>D-Day + 60 Years: A Small Piece of Airborne History</i>   |                                     |
| _____ <i>The Lost Submarine: A True Story of Love and War</i>                               |                 | <b>By Jerome J. McLaughline</b>  | \$25.00                             |
| <b>By Nancy Kenney</b>  | \$16.00         | _____ <i>They Also Served: Women's Stories From the WWII Era</i>   |                                     |
| _____ <i>"Daddy's Gone to War": The Second World War in the lives of America's Children</i> |                 | <b>By Jeanie Sutton Lambright</b>  | New Price!                          |
| <b>By William M. Tuttle Jr., PhD</b>  | \$30.00         | _____ <i>Finding Billy</i>   | Hardcover \$20.00 Softcover \$10.00 |
| _____ <i>In My Father's Words: Letters From a WWII Soldier</i>                              |                 | <b>By Diana Thompson Dale, niece</b>   | \$16.95                             |
| <b>By Bill McElvain</b>   | \$16.00         | _____ <i>Father Found: Life and Death as a Prisoner of the Japanese In WWII</i>                                      |                                     |
| _____ <i>Farebersville 1944</i>   |                 | <b>By Duane Heisinger</b>  | \$13.95                             |
| <b>By Jeff Wignall</b>  | \$18.95         | _____ <i>Shobun: A Forgotten War Crime in the Pacific</i>  |                                     |
| _____ <i>A Soldier's Daughter</i>   |                 | <b>By Michael J. Goodwin</b>   | \$19.95                             |
| <b>By Lois Brown Klein</b>  | \$17.00         |  |                                     |
| _____ <i>The Ordinary Infantrymen: Heroes Then, Heroes Again</i>                            |                 |  |                                     |
| <b>By Imogene Woods and Twelve WWII Infantrymen</b>   | \$15.00         |  |                                     |
| _____ <i>Full Fathom Five: A Daughter's Search</i>  |                 |  |                                     |
| <b>By Mary Lee Coe Fowler</b>   | \$29.95         |  |                                     |

# AWON BOOKSTORE

## Price List / Order Form

### CD/DVD



\_\_\_ *Leather and Strings*

by **Mark LaPoint**, grandson of Sgt. William G. Aubet featuring *Somewhere in Germany*, written and sung by Mark at AWON's 10th conference memorial service \$6.00

\_\_\_ *Letters of Love and War* (CD for Mac or PC)

By 1LT John and Betty Peirson \$19.44

\_\_\_ *AWON 2004 Conference & WWII Memorial Dedication* (VHS)

Reduced!! Was \$5.00 \$3.00\*

\_\_\_ *We Speak Their Names: A Tribute to Our Fathers* (VHS) produced by Patrick Tierney and **Terry Boettcher**

Reduced! was \$15.00 now \$3.00

\_\_\_ *AWON 2000 Conference Journeys - Finding Our Fathers* (VHS)

by Justin Taylan was \$15.00 \$3.00\*

\_\_\_ *Sleep My Sons: The Story of the Arisan Maru*

by Shawnee Brittan Reduced! was \$30.00 \$20.00\*

## AWON Logo Products

*Closeout on the Following AWON merchandise*

\_\_\_ AWON Hat \$15.00

\_\_\_ Scarf (royal blue fleece - only 3 left!!) \$10.00

\_\_\_ 20th Anniversary Tote Bag (small) \$5.00  
REDUCED!

\_\_\_ Tote Bag (large) \$10.00

\_\_\_ 20th Anniversary Garden Flag (without holder) \$10.00

\_\_\_ \*AWON Holiday Ornament \$10.00

\_\_\_ \*AWON lapel pin \$10.00

\_\_\_ \*AWON Button 2 1/4" \$3.00

\_\_\_ \*AWON Lanyard w/nametags and ticket holder (blue with white lettering, 4"x6"holder) \$6.00

\_\_\_ \*AWON notecards & envelopes (pkg of 20) (Only 2 left!!) \$20.00

\_\_\_ \*AWON bookmarks

Circle amount: 1 for \$1.00 5 for \$3.00 10 for \$5.00

## The Star Newsletters

\_\_\_ \*Individual issues: \$4.00 - Includes P&H

\_\_\_ \*All archived issues: \$40.00 - Includes P&H

\_\_\_ \*Special!! Most recent five issues: \$15.00 Inc. P&H

### Ordering Information

Postage and handling: \$8 for each item. Items marked with an asterisk (\*) include postage and handling.

For multiple purchases: Up to \$40 - \$10 P&H \$40-\$60 - \$12 P&H \$60 and up - \$15 P&H

Washington State residents please add 7.8% sales tax

For more information and color photos please visit <http://www.awon2.org/resources/bookstore.html>

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Enclosed** (check/money order payable to AWON): \_\_\_\_\_

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 5745 Lee Road  
 Indianapolis, IN  
 46216  
 email: [bookstore@awon.org](mailto:bookstore@awon.org)

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# The Star

“Breaking Down the Wall of Silence”

AWON Headquarters  
5745 Lee Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46216  
www.awon.org



## AWON Mission

To locate and bring together sons and daughters of those who died or are missing as a result of American involvement in World War II, honor the service and sacrifice of our fathers and provide information and support to these people who were orphaned by the war.

# AWON Directory

## Address Corrections

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## Archives

OPEN POSITION

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OPEN POSITION

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