



The Patriot's Companion

Volume 1 – Issue 4

November 2010



November 11:
Veterans Day

What is a Veteran?

Susan Frickey, 9-12 Education Committee

“A veteran – whether active duty, discharged, retired, or reserve - is someone who, at one point in his/her life, wrote a blank check made payable to “The United States of America” for an amount up to and including his/her life.” (source unknown)



November 25:
Thanksgiving

From the very earliest birth pangs of our republic during the American Revolution, through long and horrible conflicts, up until and beyond this moment, we have relied on our veterans to preserve our way of life and keep us safe. To those few among us who have proudly, solemnly and reverently taken the oath: “ I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic, that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same... and swear it with full knowledge and acceptance of the heavy burden they carry for the rest of us”... to these precious few, we dedicate this issue.

“Honor never grows old, and honor rejoices the heart of age. It does so because honor is, finally, about defending those noble and worthy things that deserve defending, even if it comes at a high cost. In our time, that may mean social disapproval, public scorn, hardship, persecution, or as always, even death itself. The question remains: What is worth defending? What is worth dying for? What is worth living for?”

~ William J. Bennett, November 24, 1997, lecture at US Naval Academy

Welcome to the 9-12 Project Idaho's family newsletter, *The Patriots' Companion*, with something for everyone. **Please share with family & friends.**

Got ideas for an article, feedback on this issue, **add someone to our distribution list?** Send email to fsmlbiz@aol.com and include 9-12 Newsletter in the Subject line.

Please check "Events" on the [9-12 Project Idaho](http://www.9-12projectidaho.com) website for upcoming activities!

Our veterans alone understand and pay tribute to that concept. Many of our veterans today were, in fact, subjected to that very same public scorn, hardship, persecution and social disapproval. And for that, we all owe them a deep, heartfelt, sincere apology. For they were the ones who stepped up when duty called. They are the sheepsdogs.

I'd like to paraphrase a story for you by Lt. Col (Ret) Dave Grossman, a Vietnam veteran:

“Most of the people in our society are sheep. They are kind, gentle, productive creatures who can only hurt one another by accident.” What this means is the vast majority of Americans, despite the crime statistics that assault us daily, are not inclined to hurt each other, no matter the provocation.

“Then there are the wolves, and the wolves feed on the sheep without mercy.” Do you believe there are wolves out there who will feed on the flock without mercy? You better believe it. *(Continued on page 2)*

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FEATURED LOCAL BUSINESS

Feature Your Business

We will feature a local 9-12 business in each newsletter as a fund-raiser for our 9-12 group. Putting in a short advertisement for your business would cost a \$50 donation to 9-12 Project Idaho. We need your business card and a short blurb to tell us what you do in a way that makes us all want to rush over to your business!

For more information, please contact:
Vicki Keen
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War is an ugly thing, but it is not the ugliest of things. The decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks that nothing is worth war is much worse. A man who has nothing for which he is willing to fight, nothing he cares about more than his own personal safety, is a miserable creature who has no chance of being free, unless made so by the exertions of better men than himself."

~ John Stuart Mill

There are evil men in this world and they are capable of evil deeds. The moment you forget that or pretend it isn't so, you become a sheep. There is no safety in denial.

"Then there are the sheepdogs, who live to protect the flock and confront the wolf.

"If you have no capacity for violence, then you are a healthy productive citizen, a sheep. If you have a capacity for violence and no empathy for your fellow citizens, then you have defined an aggressive sociopath, a wolf. But what if you have a capacity for violence, and a deep love for your fellow citizens? What do you have then? A sheepdog, a warrior, someone who is walking the hero's path. Someone who can walk into the heart of darkness, into the universal human phobia, and walk out unscathed."

"The sheep generally do not like the sheepdog. He looks a lot like the wolf. He is a constant reminder that there are wolves in the land. They would prefer that he didn't tell them where to go, or give them traffic tickets, or stand at the ready in our airports in camouflage fatigues holding an M-16. The sheep would much rather have the sheepdog cash in his fangs, spray paint himself white, and go, "Baa."

Until the wolf shows up. Then the entire flock tries desperately to hide behind the lone sheepdog.

"Understand that there is nothing morally superior about being a sheepdog; it is just something one chooses to be. Also understand that a sheepdog is a funny critter: he is always sniffing around out on the perimeter, checking the breeze, barking at things that go bump in the night, and yearning for a righteous battle.

"Here is how the sheep and the sheepdog think differently. The sheep pretend the wolf will never come, but the sheepdog lives for that day. After the attacks on September 11, 2001, most of the sheep - that is, most of the citizens in America - said, "Thank God I wasn't on one of those planes." The sheepdogs, the warriors, said, "Dear God, I wish I could have been on one of those planes. Maybe I could have made a difference." Our young warriors today, our sheepdogs, who have been transformed into warriors and who have truly invested themselves into warriorhood, want to be there. They want to be able to make a difference, just as the old warriors before them. We owe everything we are and everything we have to our warriors, our sheepdogs. Make no mistake about it.

And we all need to show them that we realize that indisputable truth. When we see an old vet proudly wearing his baseball cap/tshirt/jacket with his unit or service on it, or a young warrior in uniform - or even a young man with "that haircut", please go up and thank him/her for your freedom. That's all the sheepdogs really want: appreciation for the price they were willing to pay to protect the sheep.

The Warbird

Recently, there was a titanic air show at Genessee, New York. This “*gathering of eagles*” brought in WWII aircraft from all over the United States and Canada. Aircraft from all American military branches were there, along with combat fighters and bombers from the RAF, the Soviet Air Force, the Luftwaffe, and the Imperial Japanese Army and Navy. It was warbird heaven.



Try as I might, I couldn't adjust my schedule to attend. Feeling somewhat like the kid who didn't get picked for the team, I helped get our bomber tuned up, spit-shined, and polished. I was pretty dispirited when they left. I smiled and waved when they took off, never telling anyone how disappointed I felt. I watched until they flew out of sight, then quietly went home.

When our crew returned several days later, they brought with them a story that put my misery in its proper perspective. Just when you think that you have troubles, you always seem to hear about someone who is facing a real trial.

He was an old man, suffering from serious depression and an incurable illness. His future, such as it was, looked grim. Just a few weeks earlier he had been diagnosed as having Hodgkin's disease.

In an effort to cheer their father up, his sons had driven him from Massachusetts to the great air show taking place in Genessee. Their dad had been a Navy combat pilot in WWII. He'd often told them stories about his days as a younger man, a man they'd never met and perhaps never really believed existed. But they knew how his eyes would light up when he talked about his wartime experiences. Dad became young again, if only for a moment, as he remembered being strong and healthy, fighting against fascism so many years ago. The boys hoped that being around the old warbirds would lift his spirits for at least a day.

His sons, loving and attentive, helped him out of the car somewhere on one of the fields reserved for parking. He'd been glancing up more frequently as they got closer to the airfield.

With a veteran's practiced eye, he identified the aircraft as they wheeled and banked over the field or taxied to the parking positions. He'd already told his boys that "his" plane wouldn't be there. They weren't saved after the war like the more glorified Flying Fortresses or Liberators. Still, young men by the thousands had flown and fought in "his" type of aircraft, and not all of them had made it home. He knew that the model he flew was only a memory shared by a dwindling band of old men like himself.

(Continued on page 4)

Can you help?

Our Idaho veterans need us. The Idaho State Veterans Home in Boise is trying to raise funds to replace several dozen 30-year old beds. The cost of each bed is \$1,500. They are looking for donations of any amount and support from the community.

To donate to this worthy cause and take care of our own sheepdogs, please contact

Phil Hawkins,
philip.hawkins@veterans.idaho.gov, or

Kristy Sternes,
kristy.sternes@gmail.com

Suggested readings:

- The Constitution
- The Federalist Papers (Quick quiz: Who wrote these?)
- *The Five Thousand Year Leap* by W. Cleon Skousen
- *The Making of America* by W. Cleon Skousen
- Historical fiction that is factual is also good. Recommend *Prelude to Glory* series by Ron Carter with sources noted for each chapter
- This newsletter has short articles each month that we hope will encourage you to want to read more and dig deeper



Brief History of Thanksgiving

The first celebration of the harvest was held in 1621 by the surviving Pilgrims that arrived the previous winter aboard the *Mayflower* and the Wampanoag Indians that helped them survive their first year in America.

The harvest feast was not celebrated annually, although there were days of thanksgiving proclaimed over the next two centuries for various reasons.

In 1863, Abraham Lincoln declared the last Thursday of November as a national day of Thanksgiving and each president thereafter declared an annual day of Thanksgiving.

The date was changed several times, then in 1941 Congress finally made it a national holiday celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November.

America: This will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave. ~ Elmer Davis

The world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing.
~ Albert Einstein

His own sons had never even seen one of the planes that carried him to war. For the most part, no one knew they ever existed. The old planes, like the old man himself, were fading away.

Once they had been young, the hope and pride of a nation. But now...no one cared anymore.

They walked slowly along the crowded flight line. Over the rumble of the engines, Dad gestured for his boys. *“That one’s a B-17,” he’d explain, “we had those in the Pacific, too. There’s a P-38 Lightning. You can always tell by the twin tail booms. They were good escorts. They went in with us sometimes. We were glad to have them around.”*

Further down the line they passed a Japanese Zero. The old man glared at it silently for a moment, some strange emotion passing briefly across his face. His sons didn’t know if it was grief, fear, anger, or a combination of all. He turned and without a backward glance continued his slow walk.

The memories were becoming stronger for him. The breeze carried the scent of rubber, aviation gas, and hot oil, just like his base used to smell. Planes jockeying into position along the line revved their engines, sending gale-force prop wash blowing across the tarmac as people clutched at their hats and leaned into the wind. Overhead was the deep-throated roar of ancient propeller-driven fighter formations passing in review, a sound unlike any other. Air show announcers all over the country call it the same thing: The Sound of Freedom.

The father and his sons ambled along, pausing occasionally to look up at whatever was flying over. After one particularly low pass by a British Spitfire, the boys turned to remark to Dad and saw him standing as if he were frozen in place. He had walked around the aircraft they’d been looking at and was staring like a man possessed with the next plane in line. A look of incredulous wonder began to spread across his face...

“My God,” he whispered. “My God, there it is. It’s...someone...how...I never thought that I’d ever...”

“What is it, Dad? Are you okay?”

...to read the remainder of this poignant story, click [The Paper](#)



History Story: John Adams

By Susan Frickey, 9-12 Education Committee

Many of us are familiar with the story of John Adams through the award-winning DVD series. But did you know that it was John Adams, along with Thomas Jefferson, who had to confront America's first foreign policy crisis: the Barbary pirates?

Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, the North African Barbary states of Morocco, Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli engaged in piracy of European merchant shipping. The pirates routinely captured and confiscated ships, crews and cargo, enslaving or ransoming crews and passengers. England, France and Spain entered into treaties with the Barbary states whereby they would pay "protection money" to be left alone. These powerful European nations preferred bribery to war, partly because they perceived an economic benefit from the threat of pirates to merchant shipping of other European nations.

After the American Revolution, the British of course no longer protected American merchant ships which had traded extensively in the Mediterranean before the war.

As a result, in July of 1785, Barbary pirates seized two American ships off the coast of Portugal and forced 21 American sailors into slave labor. Another ship was seized but freed its American crew once a ransom of \$25,000 was paid.

History records them as the Barbary Pirates. In fact, they were blackmailing terrorists, hiding behind a self-serving interpretation of their Islamic faith by embracing select tracts and ignoring others.

Thus began the first foreign policy crisis for the US – how to deal with the Barbary pirates who demanded "tributes" from the US in return for the safe passage of her ships and ransoms for captured sailors and passengers now that we no longer sailed under the protection of Britain.

The capture of the three American ships created an early and important foreign policy crisis for the United States. The US response to the Barbary crisis was impacted by two factors: we had no money and we had no navy.

The Continental Navy had been disbanded in 1784, which was primarily a cost-saving measure. It was not reestablished until the Navy Act of 1794 because many Americans, including John Adams, viewed a strong navy as the best national defense against foreign threats (and they were all uncomfortable with the idea of having a standing army after their experience with recent British occupation).

Financially, it would require a significant expense at a time when the budding Federal government found itself in precarious financial condition in the years following the Revolution. The Continental Congress had borrowed \$40 million to finance the war, and found themselves having to borrow money from foreign sources just to pay the interest on the existing foreign debt.

While George Washington and John Adams were in office, the US acquiesced to the demands (i.e. bought peace) of the Barbary States as all the while the Barbary pirates continued to capture more US ships and crews.

In 1786, John Adams met with Arab diplomats from Tunis to discuss the escalating situation. He was told by the Ambassador to Tripoli that "America was a great nation, but unfortunately a state of war existed between America and Tripoli. . ."

On March 28, 1786, John Adams detailed what he saw as the main issue: "We took the liberty to make some inquiries concerning the grounds of their pretensions to make war upon a Nation who had done them no injury and observed that we considered all mankind as our friends who had done us no wrong, nor had given us any provocation."

“The Ambassador (the pirates actually had an Ambassador!) replied that it was founded on the Laws of their Prophet, that it was written in the Koran, that all nations who should not have acknowledged their authority were sinners, that it was their right and duty to make war upon them wherever they could be found, and to make slaves of all they could take prisoners, and that every Musselman (Muslim) who should be slain in battle was sure to go to Paradise.”

Hence, without a treaty of peace there could be no peace between the two. His Excellency was prepared to arrange such a treaty... the sooner the better. Were a treaty delayed, it would be harder to get.

Adams summoned Thomas Jefferson, the new ambassador to nearby France to discuss the issue. They both then met with the Ambassador who told them that peace with the Barbary States might cost \$200,000 to \$300,000 guineas (a huge amount). The request for such a large sum of money left them no choice but to refer the matter to Congress.

Adams' position was to pay tributes as had always been done. Jefferson was disgusted, declared it was throwing money away and suggested war was the only solution.

In 1794, Congress approved the construction of 6 ships – the birth of the US Navy – in anticipation of fighting the Barbary pirates. And in 1795, Congress approved a treaty with Algiers that led to the release of the hostages the following year – at a cost to the US of nearly \$642,500 in cash, munitions and a 36-gun frigate, besides a yearly tribute of \$21,600 worth of naval supplies! Ransom rates were officially set for those Americans already in Barbary prisons: \$4,000 for each passenger, \$1,400 for each cabin boy.

When Washington died in 1799, the Pasha of Tripoli, informed President Adams that it was customary when a great man passed away from a tributary state to make a gift in his name to Tripoli. The Pasha thought Washington to be worth about \$10,000.

When by 1801 no tribute had been received, the Pasha summoned the American representative to his court, demanded that his hand be kissed and to relay to the US that the annual tribute would be raised to \$250,000 plus \$25,000 annually in goods of his choice. If refused, the alternative was war.

The reason no tribute had been paid is that Thomas Jefferson had become President, three ships including the USS Constitution (Old Ironsides) had been completed, and the United States Marines were steaming towards the Barbary Coast. The battles were legendary; hence we have “to the shores of Tripoli” in the Marine Corps Hymn.

~ from www.semp.us, article from nytimes.com, www.histclo.com, Paper by Dennis Caplan, Iowa State Univ



A tribute to our military:

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong have stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who knows the great enthusiasm, the great devotions, and spends himself in great worthy cause; who, at the best, knows in the end triumph of high achievement and, at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while caring greatly so that his pace shall never be with those cold timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.

~ Theodore Roosevelt



Journal of a Young Patriot Soldier

by Jory Farnsworth,
Age 15, Emmett, ID

Dear journal,

A lot has happened in the past weeks. We lost our commanding officer due to small pox. Seventeen soldiers were killed by British marksmen and apparently I'm the new commanding officer. There was one huge thing that happened though.

I was leading the boys across a bay along the coast when we saw a huge frigate. At first we thought that it was a red's boat so we took cover and watched. I thought it was the end of us when I saw about thirty well armed men land. I pulled out my telescope and saw a huge yellow flag with the words "Don't tread on me". So we sneaked through the trees to get closer. We just got into position when a deep voice behind us said, "ya'll wouldn't be thinkin that were brits are you." I turned around quicker than greased lightning to see an American militia man behind us with those thirty men. God it was great to see a face that was friendly. He took us on board where I told him what all had happened.

After I told him what happened he gave me a cup of water, told me his name was Nathan Tompson, and said that me and my boys are now part of the newly formed United States Marines. Which now makes the Marines a total of 213 men. He then took me up deck and showed me the great yellow flag with the rattle snake on it. I felt a great warm rush hit me as I read those words again, DON'T TREAD ON ME.

When I went below deck and told the boys we are now Marines they just stared. Finally one stood up and said, "Now those fancy Royal British marines have a challenge." They all just laughed and cheered. He was right though. Now the Brits got to watch themselves on the water too.

History Trivia: November 11 -- Veterans Day

In November 1919, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed November 11 as Armistice Day to celebrate the end of fighting during WWI.

In 1938, it became an official legal holiday, and in 1968, under the Uniform Holiday Bill, it became one of those floating holidays to create a 3-day weekend for Federal employees. It was thought that the extended weekends would encourage travel, recreational and cultural activities and stimulate greater production. Many states didn't agree with this decision, however, and continued to celebrate the holiday on its original date.

Finally, in 1975, President Gerald Ford signed Public Law 94-97, forever making permanent the observance of Veterans' Day on November 11.

United States Marines, of course, believe that the date was fixed by a grateful nation to give Marines a day to recover from their Marine Corps birthday celebration . . . November 10 of each year.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MARINES!



Song of the Pilgrims

By Nancy Sue Krenrich

Across the rolling, wind-swept sea
For months we've sailed along,
I see a land that's new to me
Against the blue horizon.

Oh, beautiful land of freedom born,
I've come across the sea
To reap your fruits and build my home,
And make my people free.

Emergency Preparedness: Canning Butter

Susan Frickey, 9-12 Education Committee

We've all been trying to stock up on food/sundry supplies to take care of our families for any emergency we may encounter, whether it be economic, terrorist attack, natural disaster or whatever. This month, let's think about what we can do if we suddenly have no refrigeration and don't know how long this situation will last. Here's a really fun way to store butter without refrigeration for years! So each time you go to the grocery store, buy an extra lb. of butter or two. . . . and when you have several lbs. stockpiled, follow the easy instructions below. Even your children will enjoy this project!



Jars of canned butter & hamburger rocks. Canned butter lasts years without refrigeration!

1. Use any butter that is on sale. Lesser quality butter requires more shaking (see #5 below), but the results are the same as with the expensive brands.
2. Heat pint jars in a 250 degree oven for 20 minutes, without rings or seals. One pound of butter slightly more than fills one pint jar, so if you melt 11 pounds of butter, heat 12 pint jars. A roasting pan works well for holding the pint jars while in the oven.
3. While the jars are heating, melt butter slowly until it comes to a slow boil. Using a large spatula, stir the bottom of the pot often to keep the butter from scorching. Reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes at least: a good simmer time will lessen the amount of shaking required (see #5 below). Place the lids in a small pot and bring to a boil, leaving the lids in simmering water until needed.
4. Stirring the melted butter from the bottom to the top with a soup ladle or small pot with a handle, pour the melted butter carefully into heated jars through a canning jar funnel. Leave 3/4" of head space in the jar, which allows room for the shaking process.
5. Carefully wipe off the top of the jars, then get a hot lid from the simmering water, add the lid and ring and tighten securely. Lids will seal as they cool. Once a few lids "ping," shake while the jars are still warm, but cool enough to handle easily, because the butter will separate and become foamy on top and white on the bottom. In a few minutes, shake again, and repeat until the butter retains the same consistency throughout the jar.
6. At this point, while still slightly warm, put the jars into a refrigerator. While cooling and hardening, shake again, and the melted butter will then look like butter and become firm. This final shaking is very important! Check every 5 minutes and give the jars a little shake until they are hardened in the jar! Leave in the refrigerator for an hour.
7. Canned butter should store for 3 years or longer on a cool, dark shelf. [It does last a long time. We have just used up the last of the butter we canned in 1999, and it was fine after 5 years.] Canned butter does not "melt" again when opened, so it does not need to be refrigerated upon opening, provided it is used within a reasonable length of time.

~ from www.endtimesreport.com.

History Quiz – Could you become a citizen?

Part 2 of 4. To be continued next month.

U.S. Citizenship Test - Part 1	
26. Who makes the laws in the United States?	Congress
27. What is the Congress?	The Senate and the House of Representatives
28. What are the duties of Congress?	To make laws
29. Who elects the Congress?	The people
30. How many senators are there in Congress?	100
31. Can you name the two senators from your state?	Mike Crapo & Jim Risch
32. For how long do we elect each senator?	6 years
33. How many representatives are there in Congress?	435
34. For how long do we elect the representatives?	2 years
35. What is the executive branch of our government?	The President, Vice President, Cabinet and departments under the Cabinet members
36. What is the judiciary branch of our government?	The Supreme Court
37. What are the duties of the Supreme Court?	To interpret laws
38. What is the supreme court law of the United States?	The Constitution
39. What is the Bill of Rights?	The first 10 amendments of the Constitution
40. What is the capital of your state?	Boise
41. Who is the current governor of your state?	Butch Otter
42. Who becomes President of the United States if the President and the vice-president should die?	Speaker of the House of Representatives
43. Who is the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court?	John Roberts
44. Can you name thirteen original states?	New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia
45. Who said, "Give me liberty or give me death."?	Patrick Henry
46. Which countries were our enemies during World War II?	Germany, Italy and Japan
47. What are the 49th and 50th states of the Union?	Alaska and Hawaii
48. How many terms can the President serve?	2
49. Who was Martin Luther King, Jr.?	A civil rights leader
50. Who is the head of your local government?	Boise: Mayor David Bieter

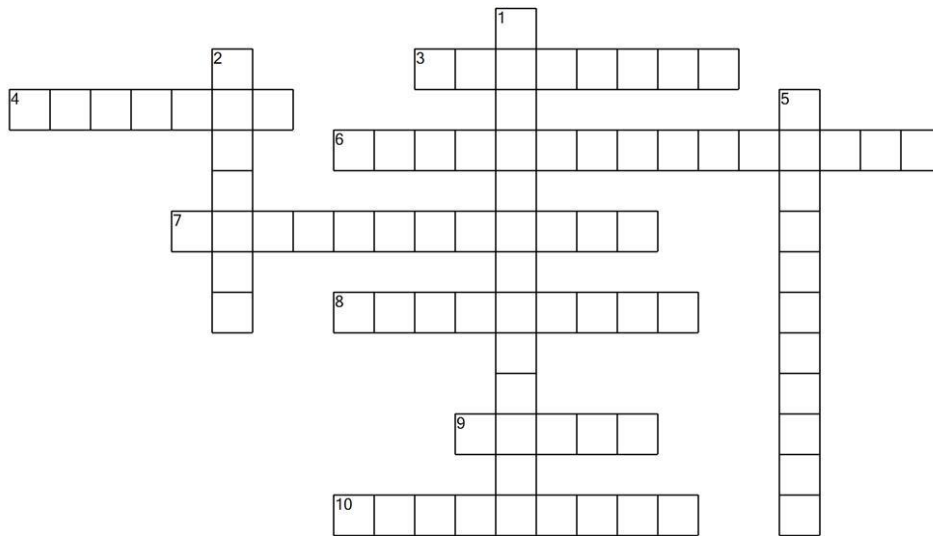
Young Patriots Corner – Crossword Puzzle

Name: _____

Date: _____

Veteran's Day Crossword

Complete the activity.



ACROSS

3. A private in military service, as distinguished from an officer
4. A symbol of Veteran's Day
6. Many people observe this at 11 a.m. on Veteran's Day
7. Original name for Veterans Day
8. A cessation of arms for a short time, a truce.
9. The absence of war or other hostilities
10. War to end all wars

DOWN

1. Location of bloody battle in Belgium
2. Long exercised in anything, especially in military life and the duties of a soldier
5. National holiday held on November 11

Veteran's Day	Armistice Day	Peace	Moment of silence
Veteran	World War I	Soldiers	
Armistice	Poppies	Flanders Field	

Young Patriots Corner – Bedtime Story



Ena Belden: Nurse mended broken bones, crushed spirits

By Chris Rosenblum - Tuesday, November 11, 2003

FERGUSON TOWNSHIP -- Ena Belden did all she could for the dying soldier.

For three weeks, the young nurse tended to him while his life ebbed away in an Army hospital in England, far from his wife and children.

"He couldn't write, but he could tell me what he wanted to write," recalled Belden, 81, of Ferguson Township. "So, I wrote letters to his family. And we really tried to make him live. It was sad. He had gunshot wounds in his abdomen and his intestines were all shot up, so he really didn't have a chance." < Rest: He would be the only patient Belden lost during World War II.

With the 194th General Hospital in England, France and Belgium, Belden treated hundreds of maimed, burned and traumatized men recovering from combat. She belonged to a vanguard generation in the Army Nurse Corps, which grew from almost 1,000 in 1941 to nearly 60,000 -- including 17,000 in Europe -- by the war's end four years later.

In part because of these nurses' skill, less than 4 percent of American soldiers receiving care in the field or behind the lines died, an "extremely low post-injury mortality rate," according to Judith Bellafaire's account of the corps published by the U.S. Army Center of Military History.

Nurses were better trained than ever and were serving closer to the front. Shelled during the 1943 landing at Anzio, Italy, four of them became the first military nurses to receive Silver Star medals for bravery under fire -- one post-humously. About 200 Army nurses lost their lives.

Belden's outfit, in the rear echelon, cared for patients recuperating to go home or to return to action. As another Veterans Day arrives today, she can still picture the men in her wards -- backs broken, limbs gone, minds ravaged. One 19-year-old called Belden, at the time only a few years his elder, "mom."

"They were just kids," she said. "To me, it was amazing how much control they seemed to have about the things they did -- getting into a plane and flying a mission and knowing that they possibly wouldn't come back. I just marveled at that."

In 1943, Henrietta Washeleski, a small-town girl from northeast Pennsylvania who later married an ex-flyboy named Bill Belden, was barely out of nursing school herself when she tried to enlist in the Navy.

She failed the physical, but as casualties mounted, trained nurses were desperately needed. In June 1944, when she was 21, the Army commissioned her a second lieutenant.

After basic training, she went to Woodrow Wilson General Hospital in Staunton, Va. At her request, she was posted to overseas duty, but not before the home front impressed her.

"You'd go downtown and have dinner at a restaurant and somebody would come over and pick up the bill or invite us to their homes," Belden said.

Her unit, the 194th, formed in Illinois -- 90 nurses, more than 60 doctors and about 200 enlisted men. Issued a steel helmet and combat boots in addition to her nursing uniforms, Belden learned to bivouac in the woods and dig holes for pup tents.

In October 1944, she arrived aboard a converted liner at damp, foggy England, home to the weary 61st General Hospital and 317th Station Hospital. Since the D-Day Invasion in June, a steady stream of patients had passed through their doors.

"The nurses were very, very happy to see us because they were burned out and ready to go on leave -- home really," Belden said.

Her unit split between the two hospitals, she went to work near Oxford with the 61st. Large tents heated by pot-bellied stoves served as quarters; wooden planks led to the hospital building. Blackouts and air raids were common.

Eight-hour shifts often stretched to 12.

"Particularly, amputees were the saddest thing because they went through a period of denial and disbelief," Belden said. "They used to talk about the phantom pain that they would be having. They'd scream with pain and they would have no legs. Many times, I was in tears -- not while there, but when I would get off duty."

On the job, nurses dispensed as much cheer as medicine. They played checkers by bedsides, read books, shared stories of trips to London. Entering a ward almost guaranteed grins and flirtatious remarks.

"And it was good for our ego, too," Belden said.

Bands like the Glenn Miller Orchestra regularly showed up; Belden recalls patients dancing with her despite leg casts.

"You tried to keep their spirits up," she said. "It was amazing how they would help each other. If somebody was acting up or was upset, the others would come around and talk with him and try to help."

In December 1944, the 194th regrouped and headed to northern France. The following March, it set up in a former school in Paris, an off-duty delight for the nurses.

The Germans surrendered in May, but the battle was just starting for some soldiers -- the one who trembled under his hospital bed in panic, the tanker whose buttocks had been blown off down to the bone.

Returning to the states as a first lieutenant in 1946, Belden wondered what happened to the tanker, who from his bed had flowers sent to her. Even now, she thinks about the men whose lives briefly touched her own. A lot has happened since then -- a degree from Catholic University of America; a long nursing career; eight children with Bill, who died this year -- but the youthful voices of long ago remain fresh in her mind.

"Some of them were so pleased when you came on duty," she said. "They would flatter you and say, 'Oh, here comes my girl. I'm going to get better now.'"

Read more:

<http://www.centredaily.com/2007/11/08/255609/ena-belden-nurse-mended-broken.html#ixzz13QugliNA>

The Centre Daily Times, in partnership with WPSU, is collecting and sharing the stories of our World War II veterans for our children and their children. Here, brought back from our archives, are stories based on interviews with veterans, including a weekly profile series published in 2005.

Read more: http://www.centredaily.com/war_stories/#ixzz13QvOluiH