



The Military Order of the World Wars

The Association of All Military Officers
Chapter 131, West Valley, Arizona
P. O. Box 7938, Surprise, AZ 85374
WEB SITE-www.moww131.org



Bulletin No. 5

December 2022



Commander's Message

John Hannan
Commander

Time does fly. Our November breakfast meeting was attended by a steadfast group. The flu season had an impact on us, but hopefully, that's in the past. In the staff/business session of our meeting, we accomplished quite a bit by solidifying our budget and reviewing equipment needs.

Our recruitment team is working hard and spent several hours at the Luke AFB Retiree Appreciation Day. G.O. Jenson got there bright and early. Later, Jerry and Pam Wojtas relieved G.O. for a bit.

The MOC is on schedule and Jerry Wojtas has received word from several flag units and high schools indicating their attendance. We're moving in the right direction to once again providing a terrific MOC.

SPECIAL FEATURE (Page 8)

The Six Triple Eight (6888) Central Postal Directory Battalion



Breakfast Meeting

An in-person meeting is planned for December 10, 2022 at 0930 at **Chef Peter's Bistrot**, 17300 N. Village Parkway, Surprise Arizona, 85374.

Fred Garnett reported that a team of people from several MOWW units are working diligently to assure that the Arizona Youth Leadership Conference (AZYLC) will resume after the Covid pause.

In addition, Fred also informed us that the Essay contest is moving right along and produced a RUBRIC that will be used to determine winners.

We reviewed the wording of our bylaws to ensure that our chapter will welcome veterans who have attained the rank of E-4 and above and are age 18 and above. We feel that including more non-commissioned officers will strengthen our local chapter. I'm personally looking forward to an eighteen year old member.

The next meeting is December 10th and will be hosted by Senior Vice Linda Howry. Our scheduled speaker, Mile Tree, is the military liaison officer for Congresswoman Debbie Lesko. Get your questions ready.

I'll miss this meeting as I'm out visiting grand-kids. Linda has also volunteered to attend the Apache Junction MOC on December 7th. I'm sure she would appreciate a "ride along".

I'm looking forward to January and a new year. We have a lot planned for 2023.

Respectfully
John F. Hannan
Commander West Valley Chapter 131

Surgeon's Note

By Linda Howry RN MS

Three Important Immunizations for Seniors

Fall vaccinations include those we know as the annual influenza vaccination and now Covid boosters. But there are three other vaccinations recommended by the Center for Disease Control (CDC). These are DPT (diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis), pneumococcal pneumonia, and shingles.

DPT immunization protects against the bacterial diseases of diphtheria, tetanus also known as lockjaw, and pertussis, also known as whooping cough. Diphtheria bacteria is spread by person-to-person contact. This serious disease can affect the skin, nose, throat, and tonsils. The tetanus bacteria, found in dust, soil and manure enters the body through a deep cut, puncture wound or burn. Pertussis bacteria causes violent uncontrollable coughing spasms that causes difficulty in breathing, and it too is spread by person-to-person contact. Most individuals receive the first DPT injection in childhood. The CDC recommends a booster of either all three or of just tetanus and diphtheria every 10 years.

Shingles is caused by the varicella zoster virus which causes chicken pox in children. The symptoms of varicella heal but the virus remains dormant in the body. Researchers are not sure what causes this virus to reoccur, but some believe it may be caused by a weakened immune system as one ages. Shingles cause fluid filled blisters which usually occur on one side of the body, or it can occur on the face. These are painful and may cause fever. They are irritated by movement and breezes in severe cases. Mild cases may just report itching. The blisters break followed by dry scabbing. This process can take up to 5 weeks. The shingles vaccine is recommended in healthy adults over 50 years of age to help prevent the reappearance of the virus. Shingrix is given in two injections, 2 to 6 months apart. Side effects include pain at injection site, tiredness, muscle pain and fever.

Pneumococcal diseases, especially pneumonia, is caused by the pneumococcal bacteria. This is one of the leading causes of severe pneumonia in elderly adults. The CDC recommends the pneumococcal vaccine for adults 65 and older.

As with all immunizations, you should talk to your doctor about receiving these injections for your individual health care plan. It is also important to carry with you a list of all immunizations you have received and the date the shots were given. This information may come in handy if you are seen in an emergency room or urgent care.

Sources: NIH, CDC, Mayo Clinic

Treasurer's Report

Buz Isban
Treasurer



Financial Report

As of 11 Nov 2022

General Fund	\$14,893.93
Petty Cash	\$50.00
TOTAL	\$14,943.93
Patriotic Savings Account	\$5,819.52
Endowment Fund	\$13,940.69
GRAND TOTAL	\$34,704.14

Chapter Dues are Due

Chapter dues is only one source of revenue. The other two sources are from the 50/50 raffle and MOWW National Headquarters' annual dividend for our perpetual members. We need every bit to fulfill our Chapter's financial obligations.

Our dues remain the same as last year; \$15 for a member and spouse and \$10 for a member without a spouse. We hope all of you will see your way clear to help our Chapter remain financially sound. Make checks payable to "**MOWW Chapter 131**". You can mail your payment to our treasurer Michael Isban at 8980 W. Runion

Drive, Peoria, AZ 85382. Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

New Website

Ken announced that we have switched our website hosting services. As a result, our new chapter website URL is www.moww131.org. Check it out.

Veteren's Day Presentaions

Two of our Chapter Companions, made presentaions to an audience at the Annual Sun City Festival (SCF) Veterens Day Celebration sponsored by Festival Veterens Club 11 Nov 2022.



G.O. Jensen, USMC, Col (Ret), gave a speech on the meaning of Veterans Day talking about various veterans, i.e., Rosie the Riveters, Housewives, school teachers, etc.



Jerry Wojtas, USA, Col (Ret) spoke about a little known WAC unit, the 6 triple 8, and what they did as their part of the war effort. They were the only black women's unit to serve overseas. Jerry decided to change hats every two minutes. He started with his fatigue hat, then his COL overseas hat, then his retiree cap, then his MOWW hat, his MOAA cap and finally his AZ Veterans Hall of Fame hat.

It was a cold morning, but Jerry thinks everyone enjoyed a story from the past that resulted in the 6 triple 8 getting the Congressional Gold Medal 25 years later. The story is the Special Feature Article on page 8 of this Bulletin.

This Month in History in Viet Nam

December 1964 - 10,000 NVA soldiers arrive in the Central Highlands of South Vietnam via the Ho Chi Minh trail, carrying sophisticated weapons provided by China and the Soviet Union. They shore up Viet Cong battalions with the weapons and also provide experienced soldiers as leaders.

December 1, 1964 - At the White House, President Johnson's top aides, including Secretary of State Dean Rusk, National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy, and Defense Secretary McNamara, recommend a policy of gradual escalation of U.S. military involvement in Vietnam.

December 20, 1964 - Another military coup occurs in Saigon by the South Vietnamese army. This time Gen. Khanh and young officers, led by Nguyen Cao Ky and Nguyen Van Thieu, oust older generals including Gen. Minh from the government and seize control.

December 21, 1964 - An angry Ambassador Taylor summons the young officers to the U.S. embassy then scolds them like schoolboys over the continuing instability and endless intrigues plaguing South Vietnam's government. Americans, he had already warned them, are "tired of coups."

Taylor's behavior greatly offends the young officers. Gen. Khanh retaliates by lashing out in the press against Taylor and the U.S., stating that America is reverting to "colonialism" in its treatment of South Vietnam.

December 24, 1964 - Viet Cong terrorists set off a car bomb explosion at the Brinks Hotel, an American officers' residence in downtown Saigon. The bomb is timed to detonate at 5:45 p.m., during 'happy hour' in the bar. Two Americans are killed and 58 wounded. President Johnson dismisses all recommendations for a retaliatory air strike against North Vietnam.

By year's end, the number of American military advisers in South Vietnam is 23,000. There are now an estimated 170,000 Viet Cong/NVA fighters in the 'People's Revolutionary Army' which has begun waging coordinated battalion-sized attacks against South Vietnamese troops in villages around.

December 4, 1965 - In Saigon, Viet Cong terrorists bomb a hotel used by U.S. military personnel, killing eight and wounding 137.

December 7, 1965 - Defense Secretary McNamara tells President Johnson that the

North Vietnamese apparently "believe that the war will be a long one, that time is their ally, and that their staying power is superior to ours."

December 9, 1965 - The New York Times reveals the U.S. is unable to stop the flow of North Vietnamese soldiers and supplies into the South despite extensive bombing.

December 18-20, 1965 - President Johnson and top aides meet to decide the future course of action.

December 25, 1965 - The second pause in the bombing of North Vietnam occurs. This will last for 37 days while the U.S. attempts to pressure North Vietnam into a negotiated peace. However, the North Vietnamese denounce the bombing halt as a "trick" and continue Viet Cong terrorist activities in the South.

By year's end U.S. troop levels in Vietnam reached 184,300. An estimated 90,000 South Vietnamese soldiers deserted in 1965, while an estimated 35,000 soldiers from North Vietnam infiltrated the South via the Ho Chi Minh trail. Up to 50 percent of the countryside in South Vietnam is now under some degree of Viet Cong control.

December 8-9, 1966 - North Vietnam rejects a proposal by President Johnson for discussions concerning treatment of POWs and exchange.

December 13-14, 1966 - The village of Caudat near Hanoi is leveled by U.S. bombers resulting in harsh criticism from the international community.

December 26, 1966 - Facing increased scrutiny from journalists over mounting civilian casualties in North Vietnam, the U.S. Defense Department now admits civilians may have been bombed accidentally.

December 27, 1966 - The U.S. mounts a large-scale air assault against suspected Viet Cong positions in the Mekong Delta using Napalm and hundreds of tons of bombs.

By year's end, U.S. troop levels reach 389,000 with 5008 combat deaths and 30,093 wounded. Over half of the American casualties are caused by snipers and small-arms fire during Viet Cong ambushes, along with handmade booby traps and mines planted everywhere in the countryside by Viet Cong. American Allies fighting in Vietnam include 45,000 soldiers from South Korea and 7,000 Australians. An estimated 89,000 soldiers from North Vietnam infiltrated the South via the Ho Chi Minh trail in 1966.

December 4, 1967 - Four days of anti-war protests begin in New York. Among the 585 protesters arrested is renowned 'baby doctor' Dr. Benjamin Spock.

December 6, 1967 - The U.S. reports Viet Cong murdered 252 civilians in the hamlet of Dak Son.

December 23, 1967 - Upon arrival at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam, President Johnson declares "...all the challenges have been met. The enemy is not beaten, but he knows that he has met his master in the field." This is the President's second and final trip to Vietnam during his presidency.

By year's end, U.S. troop levels reach 463,000 with 16,000 combat deaths to date. By this time, over a million American soldiers have rotated through Vietnam, with length of service for draftees being one year, and most Americans serving in support units. An estimated 90,000 soldiers from North Vietnam infiltrated into the South via the Ho Chi Minh trail in 1967. Overall Viet Cong/NVA troop strength throughout South Vietnam is now estimated up to 300,000 men.

December 1, 1969 - The first draft lottery since World War II is held in New York City. Each day of the year is randomly assigned a number from 1-365. Those with birthdays on days that wind up with a low number will likely be drafted.

December 15, 1969 - President Nixon orders an additional 50,000 soldiers out of Vietnam.

December 20, 1969 - A frustrated Henry Cabot Lodge quits his post as chief U.S. negotiator at the Paris peace talks. By year's end, America's

fighting strength in Vietnam has been reduced by 115,000 men. 40,024 Americans have now been killed in Vietnam. Over the next few years, the South Vietnamese Army will be boosted to over 500,000 men in accordance with 'Vietnamization' of the war in which they will take over the fighting from Americans.

December 10, 1970 - President Nixon warns Hanoi that more bombing raids may occur if North Vietnamese attacks continue against the South.

December 22, 1970 - The Cooper-Church amendment to the U.S. defense appropriations bill forbids the use of any U.S. ground forces in Laos or Cambodia.

American troop levels drop to 280,000 by year's end. During the year, an estimated 60,000 soldiers experimented with drugs, according to the U.S. command. There were also over 200 incidents of "fragging" in which unpopular officers were attacked with fragmentation grenades by men under their command. In addition, many units are now plagued by racial unrest, reflecting the disharmony back home.

December 17, 1971 - U.S. troop levels drop to 156,800.

December 26-30, 1971 - The U.S. heavily bombs military installations in North Vietnam citing violations of the agreements surrounding the 1968 bombing halt.

December 13, 1972 - In Paris, peace negotiations between Kissinger and Le Duc Tho collapse after Kissinger presents a list of 69 changes demanded by President Thieu.

President Nixon now issues an ultimatum to North Vietnam that serious negotiations must resume within 72 hours. Hanoi does not respond. As a result, Nixon orders Operation Linebacker II, eleven days and nights of maximum force bombing against military targets in Hanoi by B-52 bombers.

December 18, 1972 - Operation Linebacker II begins. The so called 'Christmas bombings' are

widely denounced by American politicians, the media, and various world leaders including the Pope. North Vietnamese filmed footage of civilian casualties further fuels the outrage. In addition, a few downed B-52 pilots make public statements in North Vietnam against the bombing.

December 26, 1972 - North Vietnam agrees to resume peace negotiations within five days of the end of bombing.

December 29, 1972 - Operation Linebacker II ends what had been the most intensive bombing campaign of the entire war with over 100,000 bombs dropped on Hanoi and Haiphong. Fifteen of the 121 B-52s participating were shot down by the North Vietnamese who fired 1,200 SAMs. There were 1,318 civilian deaths from the bombing, according to Hanoi.

December 3, 1973 - Viet Cong destroy 18 million gallons of fuel stored near Saigon.

December 13, 1974 - North Vietnam violates the Paris peace treaty and tests President Ford's resolve by attacking Phuoc Long Province in South Vietnam. President Ford responds with diplomatic protests but no military force in compliance with the Congressional ban on all U.S. military activity in Southeast Asia.

December 18, 1974 - North Vietnam's leaders meet in Hanoi to form a plan for final victory.

Future Events

- 10 December 2022 – Chapter Meeting
- 14 January 2023 – Chapter Meeting
- 11 February 2023 – Chapter Meeting
- 21 February 2023 – *Massing of the Colors*
- 11 March 2023 – Chapter Meeting
- 8 April 2023 – Chapter Meeting
- 13 May 2023 – Chapter Meeting

Bulletin Deadline

The deadline for submission of articles for the January 2023 Bulletin is the 22th of December. If it is possible to get articles earlier, it would be

very much appreciated. With all that is going on we will be flexible.

Email articles to cbjerkaas@cox.net

Thank you.

Carlton Bjerkaas, Editor

SCF Veteran Club Newsletter Veteran Day Article

The following is extracted from the Sun City Festival Veterans Club Newsletter, Buckeye AZ December 2022, page 3 and 4.

'Nov 11th .. Veterans Day Program in Festival Ranch'

"And we must never forget that it is the mighty arm of the American warrior — never bending, never breaking, never yielding — generation after generation that secured for us the blessings of a nation that still stands today as the beacon of liberty, democracy, and justice around the world."
— President Joe Biden

'Even if you disagree with his politics, you have to agree with his statement. We live in a country where men and women, for centuries, made many sacrifices to preserve the freedoms we enjoy today. As a country, we must never fail to recognize them for their sacrifices, great and small'.

'On a personal note, it is an absolute privilege to participate in and be a part of, this annual Veterans Day Program here in Festival. Like any event, it takes a lot of work and planning and this years' program was put together by Jack Harrington with the help from Ken Blanchard who secured our MOWW guest speakers, Pastor Daniel Scott who is always available to participate in our events and our Color Guard and members lead by Gary Yerks, who proudly attend the colors'.

'In addition, we applaud and thank the Desert Harmony Group for joining us on this day. I cannot imagine us having an event that honors America without Desert Harmony. Their patriotic songs are an expression of our freedom as Americans'.

'Our event is also aided by the Lifestyle Staff who set up the chairs and PA system. They are always eager to help the Veterans Club in our events and programs, and for that we are truly grateful. Thank you, Janet and Gail'.

'And lastly, God Bless The USA'.

If one looks closely, they'll see some MOWW members speaking at the Veterans Memorial celebration in Festival Ranch. Thanks for volunteering your time and making this event special. It's nobler to serve than to be served.

VETERANS DAY IN FESTIVAL



God Bless
the USA



2022
5055

SPECIAL FEATURE

The Six Triple Eight (6888) Central Postal Directory Battalion

By Jerry Wojtas

The time was in the early 40s and war was raging overseas, when one of President Roosevelt's advisors bent the ear of Mrs. Roosevelt and explained how black women felt excluded in helping our nation win the war. Mrs. Roosevelt listened, agreed and soon had Secy. of War, Henry Stimson, admitting black women, although segregated, into the Woman's Army Corp.

The WACs trained primarily at Fort Des Moines, IA. The women trained 4 to 6 weeks in basic training and then an additional 4 to 12 weeks of specialist training. An aside that might be worth mentioning, is that Lydia Thornton, from Phoenix, AZ wanted to do SOMETHING because her brother has been bayoneted on Guadalcanal. She signed up for the WAC, and was asked if she wanted to join the white WACs or the black WACs because her skin was so light. Since she was of black heritage, she chose the black WACs.

It was late 1943, and as you might expect, mail was being sent to our troops in Europe. At that time there were approx. 7 million troops and civilians there. The problem was that the mail wasn't reaching the troops and moral was suffering. Keep in mind there were no cell phones or lap tops to be used to communicate with loved ones on the other side of the world.

The challenge was to get the mail out in a timely manner. There were postal personnel stationed in Birmingham, England, but not enough to alleviate the problem.

Various African American organizations demanded that black woman in the WAC get the same opportunity to serve overseas. In 1944 the War Department gave in to their demands and the 6888th Central Postal Directory Bn. was created.

Major Charity Adams (the highest-ranking black woman officer in WW II) was selected to serve as Bn. CO. In the summer of 1944, MAJ Adams and 30 other officers and 824 black WACs at Ft. Des Moines received orders to move in mass, and train at Ft. Oglethorpe, GA., an overseas Training Center. At the Training Center, MAJ Adams oversaw 4 companies. The preparation was intense: gas mask drills, obstacle course, classroom training, clothes packing exercises, physical exams, and close order drill. The women performed well despite the ever-present specter of racism. When they arrived there, the commander of the base stated to MAJ Adams, "I know why you are here and I will do nothing to help you go overseas". That's great help from one of your own!



By Dec. of 1944 the women were trained and went home to visit family before sailing overseas. They were told to report to Camp Shanks, NY. MAJ Adams and her XO received orders for England to prepare for the coming troops. On the flight over to England she opened an envelope marked 'SECRET'. Inside were her orders to proceed to London, but still no word of her mission.

On Feb 3rd the US Army sent the Bn. overseas on SS Ile de France. 12 days later, after dodging German U-boats, the ship docked in Glasgow, Scotland. MAJ Adams recalled, 'Thanks to

seasickness, the salt-water spray and the limited personal conveniences, when they arrived after 12 days at sea, the group was a very unhappy looking lot.”

On Feb. 14th the unit arrived at their new home at the King Edward School for boys near downtown Birmingham. The living conditions were austere. The women had to take cold showers outdoors. They placed their gear on their bunks and were taken to nearby warehouses.

They were met with numerous warehouses full of packages and letters stacked floor to ceiling. The buildings lacked sufficient lighting and were inadequately heated. The windows were covered to prevent them from becoming a target during nighttime raids. Rats had been eating into boxes and packages that contained food items. When on duty sorting mail, the women wore long johns and two or three layers of clothing to combat the cold.

But even before she could tackle the mail problem, MAJ Adams and her XO had to fly to France and meet with her immediate boss, MAJ GEN John Lee. He asked her if her women could march. MAJ Adams replied, ‘They are the best marching women you have ever seen’. Gen Lee stated he would be in Birmingham in 3 days to watch them march. Three days later when he was in Birmingham and saw the women march, and he was pleased.

MAJ Adams was told it would take 6 months to clear out the backlog. She broke the unit down into 3 eight-hour shifts and they worked 7 days a week. They developed a system for sorting mail. Every morning the trucks loaded with mail and packages arrived and they would sort them. Through all the challenges they organized the mail by creating information cards with serial numbers for proper identification. They identified mail that was improperly addressed and used clues to see who it was intended for. Sometimes the mail received simply stated John Smith or Junior with no mention of a unit or an individual’s serial number.



The women dealt with ‘undeliverable’ mail that was sent to their location for redirection. They investigated insufficiently addressed mail for clues to determine the location of the intended recipient, and also the sad duty of returning mail of those killed on duty.

One of the women had been assigned to sort all mail that was addressed to a person with a last name starting with V. She thought she had a soft job. Then she found out just how many people had last names starting with V.

Through heavy work demands, they had to adjust to increased attention. The locals came to watch them at work. They made friends and were welcomed into public spaces. Living and eating facilities were segregated by race and gender. Black male soldiers were allowed into a local club for enlisted soldiers, but the black women soldiers were not. MAJ Adams led a boycott of the alternative segregated facilities that were offered to the women. They decided to run their own food hall, hair salon, and refreshment bar. They experienced food shortages in their daily ration of Spam. The women were subjected to slander spread about by male soldiers who resented that Black Women were allowed in the Army.

MAJ Adams had issues come up on a regular basis. It seemed like every weekend her troops were marching for one General or another. A visiting Gen, NOT in her chain of command, wanted to see her soldier's march. On this occasion, the Gen arrived, but only 300 of her women were ready for inspection. The General wanted to know where the rest of her women were. She explained that one third were on duty sorting mail and the other third resting. The Gen did not find that answer satisfactory. 'I'll tell you what I'm going to do, MAJ Adams. I'm going to send a white 1st LT down here to show you how to run things!' MAJ Adams replied, 'Over my dead body, Sir'.



The General assured her that she would hear from him. As she prepared for her court martial, her staff found a memorandum from HQ that stressed racial segregation. The general relented. Months later, in France, she found herself in the General's command and he came out to see her. That meeting was much different.

The 6888th did not allow these distractions to affect their work. With their system in place, they were able to process about 65,000 pieces of mail per shift and cleared the backlog in 3 months! By war's end, it added up to 17 million pieces of mail. Their motto was 'No mail, low morale'.

When not on duty, the women ventured into the city. The citizens of Birmingham were just as curious about these black women soldiers as the 6888 were about them. With one exception, the women soon realized that they could go anywhere they wanted. They went dancing, bowling, and eating at the local restaurants. On Sunday evening they were invited into local homes for a Sunday dinner. All the women adhered to a 11 p.m. curfew.

With the inventory in Birmingham cleared, the Bn. sailed to France. They traveled to Rouen (Rooaan) where they participated in a victory parade. While there, they stayed in some old French barracks once used by Napoleon's troops. It was while here that 3 of the women were killed in a jeep accident. The 3 women were buried in the American Normandy Cemetery in France. Of the 9,400 Americans buried there, only 4 are women and 3 are from the 6888th.

When they cleared the six month backlog of mail in just 3 months in Rouen, they were moved to Paris in October of 1945 where they were able to enjoy a 'better taste' of living. They got to stay in one of the fine Paris hotels, and had maid service and meals cooked for them. With the war over, in Feb of 1946, the unit was sent back to the US to be disbanded. Upon arrival there they received no welcoming ceremony. None of our troops who received their mail from home ever gave it a thought of how the mail got to them. The 6888th arrived at Camp Dix with no fanfare, no 'thank you for your service', no 'a job well done', no 'NOTHING'. They were the ONLY black women's unit to serve overseas. No senior officer came to express the thanks of a grateful nation. At Camp Dix, NJ the unit's colors were cased, the unit was disbanded and all personal were discharged and sent back to their homes.

It was some 75 years later after a documentary was made about the 6888th that proper recognition started to come the 6888th's way. First, in 2018, a monument was erected in Buffalo Soldiers Park at Ft. Leavenworth, KS to honor the 6 triple eight. The monument contains a 25" bust of MAJ Adams on top. The sides contain the names of all of the members of the 6888th.

In March of 2022, the award of the Congressional Gold Medal was signed by President Biden. Then in May of this year, a ceremony was held at the Commemorative AF location in Mesa. The ceremony was put together by members of the Archer-Ragsdale Chapter of the Tuskegee Airman. Fannie McClendon, age 101, one of only six remaining members of the 6888th, was present to receive her gold medal. In the audience were two daughters of Lydia Thornton, the woman who could have joined the white WACs.

The 6 triple eight opened the door for black women to join other branches of the military because it showed what they could do in wartime. And now you know the rest of the story!



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TO: