



THE PURPLE HEARTBEAT

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS' NEWSLETTER

NATIONAL ADJUTANT'S CALL . . .

National Convention. I urge you to register as early as possible to enhance both personal and HQ planning. Members should also be submitting issues for the Convention agenda to their Commanders for appropriate staffing - this is your yearly opportunity to get any concerns before MOPH's governing body.

Trustee Report. We still get queries on submitting a Trustee Report. While the report has been discontinued, the requirement for Chapter Trustees to conduct an audit and report the results to the Chapter membership is still required by the ByLaws. That report is then filed with the Chapter Adjutant.

Department Assistance to Chapters on Reporting. Request that Departments continue to assist Chapters in drafting and sending reports required by the National level. The quality and timeliness of Chapter reporting is improved markedly when Department mentoring is involved. As you know, report submission is critical to Life Member reimbursements.

Burn Pits. President Obama signed a new law requiring the VA to establish a burn pits registry for Veterans who may have been exposed to pits in Iraq or Afghanistan. VA will announce how to sign up once the registry is established. VA is also conducting studies on possible ill health effects from exposure to burn pits to complement the registry. If any member feels that his or her disability could be attributed to participating in burn pit activities, then it is not too early to begin collecting supporting documentation.

USAA Credit Card. We are getting a significant number of calls in response to National Commander McKenty's recent letter to members on the MOPH-USAA credit card offer. Please advise your members to call 1-855-221-MOPH (6674) to talk with a USAA Representative for details as we don't have them available at HQ. They can also visit usaa.com/moph for information.

VA Partnering With Ancestry.com. VA is partnering with the internet-based genealogy research firm Ancestry.com to bring burial records from historic national cemetery ledgers into the digital age. This effort will make the collection - predominantly of Civil War interments—accessible to researchers and Ancestry.com subscribers.

[Continued on Page 2]



THIS NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED EVERY MONTH EXCEPT AUGUST, BUT ONLY IN DIGITAL FORMAT. ALL MEMBERS WITH VALID EMAIL ADDRESSES WILL RECEIVE AN EMAIL NOTICE OF THE NEWSLETTER WITH A LINK TO THE COMPLETE NEWSLETTER. IT ALSO CAN BE DOWNLOADED FROM THE MOPH WEBSITE AND PRINTED FOR LOCAL DISTRIBUTION.

Inside this issue:

National Adjutant's Call (cont.)	2
Anita Kaufman Foundation	2
National Convention Ad	3
Patriot Horace Rodgers, WWII Pilot	3
Patriot Clifton Romesha, Medal of Honor	4
Gen MacArthur, 1st Purple Heart	6
Patriot John Shier POW	6
Patriot Tammy Duckworth	6
MOPH Calendar	7
Purple Hearts Returned	7
Grumman F8F Bearcat	7

NATIONAL ADJUTANT'S CALL . . . [Continued from page 1]

Purple Heart Trail Development. Former National Commander Jim Sims reports that the Oregon State Senate voted 49-0 to name Highway I-5 from the Canadian Border to Portland as part of the Purple Heart Trail. The Bill now moves to the House Transportation Committee for consideration. Sims commented that "it has taken three years to get here, but success is finally within reach."

Other activity includes the following highways becoming *Purple Heart Trails*: I-37 and I-40 in Texas May 2012; part of State Highway Route 42 in New Jersey August 2012; I-90 in South Dakota from the Wyoming border to the Minnesota border May 2012; Highway 6 running from the Alabama line towards Arkansas in January 2013 and I-44 and I-70 in Missouri March 2013.

Yours in Patriotism,
Jack

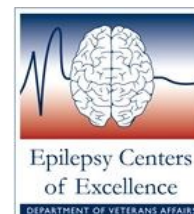
ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUPPORT VETERANS **THE ANITA KAUFMAN FOUNDATION (AKF)**

This Foundation, started by Anita Kaufman who suffered from epilepsy and seizures, initially focused on programs to provide factual information to the public about the disability and on-going medial research and treatment for it.



Now, AKF is collaborating with the VA's Epilepsy Centers of Excellence to provide education and support to Veterans with traumatic brain injury and epilepsy under a program called Heads Up For Vets. This program will provide the following support to Veterans returning to their homes and communities:

- Free epilepsy information
- Free seizure recognition and first aid training for individuals, employers, community groups and organizations
- Free consultation and linkages to information about services for social support, employment, transportation, etc.
- Opportunities to connect with AKF advocates experiencing similar situations
- Opportunities to become involved in the epilepsy community as an advocate, educator or volunteer.



Along with this supporting activity, AKF created unique seizure recognition and first aid posters as well as information sheets for Veterans. These will be distributed free to every US Veteran Organization and will be made available to our returning Veterans and their families. Information sheets and small posters can be downloaded from the AKF website at www.akfus.org/programs/veterans-programs.

Interesting to MOPH, AKF adopted purple as the organization's official color and is now running a campaign to raise funds called *Pledge for Purple Day* which will end on March 26, its annual Purple Day. Checks can be made out and sent to The Anita Kaufmann Foundation, PO Box 11, New Milord NJ 07646.

For more information or if you have questions about AKF's Veterans' program, contact Heads Up Vets Program Director Ann Marie Bezuyen at 845-800-5158 or annmarie@akfus.org.

"We cannot be their friends [Americans] because they do not speak our language."
Afghan Soldier, October 2012

MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART 81st NATIONAL CONVENTION**LAMOPH 80th****6-10 August 2013****John Q Hammons Hotels and Resorts****Embassy Suites Hotel, Spa & Convention Center**

3303 Pinnacle Hills Parkway, Rogers AR 72758

Reservations: 1-800-362-2779 - Identify as **Military Order of the Purple Heart**Reference Group Code: **MP3****Deadline for Reservations: Sunday, July 7, 2013****NO Reservations** will be taken at the Group Rate after this date**CONVENTION CHAIRMAN: VESS LAWBAUGH****Home: 1-479-442-8132 Email: sonjalawbaugh@att.net****PLEASE FOLLOW THESE PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS**

MOPH Members (Life & Associate) will use ONLY the MOPH Form; LAMOPH (Life & Associate) will use ONLY the LAMOPH Form - each is to be accompanied with a single check for that form only. **Because of the separate accounting, we will return any combined checks.**

Registration forms can be found on the *PH Website* Home Page at the bottom right ("Click here for Convention Information and Forms") and in the *Purple Heart Magazine*.

PATRIOT HORACE C. RODGERS (1920-2012)**PILOT OF B-26 "FLAK BAIT" DURING WWII**

Patriot Rodgers, Life Member of Chapter 1867, Texas for 23 years, was one of the pilots who flew the B-26B **Martin Marauder** medium bomber, *Flak Bait*, that holds the record for the number of missions survived during WWII. The plane was manufactured in Baltimore MD, completed in April 1943 and christened *Flak Bait* by its first pilot who adapted his brother's nickname for the family dog, *Flea Bait*. The bomber was assigned to the 449th Bombardment Squadron, 322nd Bombardment Group stationed in England.



During the course of its 202 (some say 207) bombing missions over Germany as well as the Netherlands, Belgium and France, *Flak Bait* lived up to its name by being shot with over 1000 holes, returned twice on one engine and once with an engine on fire, lost its electrical system once and its hydraulic system twice and participated in bombing missions supporting D-Day and the Battle of the Bulge.

Flak Bait returned to the US in 1946. The front portion of the fuselage is currently on display at the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum in Washington

DC.

Patriot Rodgers lived in Granbury TX and served in the US Army Air Force from 1940 to 1945. He was wounded in 1943 on one of his missions over Europe

when *Flak Bait* came under fire. After the war, he was with the Federal Aviation Administration for 37 years, retiring in 1977. He continued to fly private planes and, with his brother Joe, restored numerous classic vehicles and aircraft throughout the years. Rodgers and his wife, Maria loved to travel and much of it in planes that he piloted. One of a kind, Patriot Rodgers



loved telling stories about flying *Flak Bait* and that he was a proud recipient of the Purple Heart.

APPLICATIONS FOR MOPH MEMBERSHIP

ATTENTION: RECRUITERS

Please assist your Patriots in completing a complete Membership Application to National Headquarters:



The Application must include documentation that supports the award of the Purple Heart Medal.

Associate Member applications must also include documentation of the **relationship** and proof of the Purple Heart award, if the Purple Heart recipient is not a member.

- Fill in each required line – Print legibly –
- Signature of Applicant is required
- \$50 Life Membership Dues

IMPORTANT

An **incomplete application** holds up the process. Applications that come in without payment and/or signature are put into a pending folder. It then takes a lot of time for the staff to make calls to either the applicant or the recruiting officer to assist in the completion. For the states that pay for each of their applicants, when sending in multiple applications to HQ, please include an inventory of your applications to assure documentation and payment.

Membership applications are on the MOPH Website, where you can download a copy to submit by mail or complete and submit online, and in each issue of the Purple Heart Magazine.

MOPH MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT

CLINTON L ROMESHA

Patriot Clinton L. “Clint” Romesha, former US Army Staff Sergeant, is a member of Chapter 5355, Dakota, and recipient of the Medal of Honor, Bronze Star and Purple Heart, all awarded for his heroic actions in Afghanistan. On October 3, 2009, he was assigned to the 61st Cavalry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division and deployed to Combat Outpost Keating



in eastern Afghanistan. A force of 300 Taliban insurgents, occupying the high ground on all four sides of the complex, attacked the base employing concentrated fire from recoilless rifles, rocket propelled grenades, anti-aircraft machine guns, mortars and small arms. Romesha was credited with rallying his comrades and leading the counterattack, directing close air support and providing suppressive fire to help the wounded to an aid station. Despite being wounded, he continued to fight through the 12-hour battle. “Sergeant Romesha’s heroic actions throughout the day-long battle were critical in suppressing an enemy that had far greater numbers.” (Citation)



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Patriot Romesha joined the Army in 1999 and served tours in Kosovo, South Korea, and Iraq before deploying to Afghanistan. He left the Army in 2011 to spend more time with his family, later taking a job in the oil industry in North Dakota. On February 11, 2013, he received the Medal of Honor from President Obama.

in



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AMERICA IN WORLD WAR I

[April 6, 1917 - November 11, 1918]

Battlefield Deaths: 53,513

Army: 50,275* Marines: 2,461 Navy: 431 Army Air Service: 235
 Coast Guard: 111
 *excluding Air Service

Deadliest US Battle: 26,277

Meuse-Argonne Offensive, September 26 - November 11, 1918

Highest KIA Division: 1st Infantry, 4,996

First KIA: Navy Armed Guard Chief Boatswain's Mate John Eopolucci perishes in a life boat after the steamer *Aztec* was torpedoed off Ushant Island France on April 1, 1917

Last KIA: Army Private Henry Gunther of A Co., 313th Inf Regt., 79th Div. was KIA while charging a machine gun nest at Ville-devant-Chaumont, France, one minute after 11 a.m. on November 11, 1918. He was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.
[Excerpted from VFW, May 2011]



GENERAL DOUGLAS MACARTHUR RECIPIENT OF THE FIRST PURPLE HEART MEDAL

The January/February issue of the Purple Heart Magazine has General Douglas MacArthur (1880-1964) on its cover, a fitting choice as he was the recipient of the first Purple Heart Medal. MacArthur received two Purple Heart Medals in 1935 for WWI service with



the 42nd RAINBOW Division that was involved in intense combat operations in 1917-18. Although a number of private efforts were made to have the medal reinstated, it wasn't until January 7, 1931 that MacArthur as Chief of Staff of the Army confidentially reopened the case. Later, he insisted that he be the first recipient of the new medal which he had engraved "#1." In addition to his two Purple Heart medals, MacArthur had over 100 military decorations that included three Distinguished Service



Crosses, seven Silver Stars and the Medal of Honor for his role in WWII defense of the Philippines as a result of special Congressional legislation in 1942. Arthur MacArthur and his son, Douglas, were the first father and son to be awarded Medals of Honor - Arthur for the Battle of Missionary Ridge with the Union Army during the Civil War and Douglas in WWII for the Philippines. The second father and son recipients of the Medal of Honor were President Theodore Roosevelt posthumously in 2001 for his service in the Spanish American war and his son, Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., posthumously for service in WWII.

PRISONER OF WAR PATRIOT JOHN H. SHIER (1924-2012)

Born in Pasadena CA, John grew up during the Great Depression and enlisted in the Army during WWII. He fought with the 361st Regimental Combat Team, 91st Division, in Italy



361st Crest

beginning in 1943, participating in battles of Rome, Arno River, Goth Line, and Futa Pass. He was wounded in 1944 near Bologna before being captured and sent to two German POW work camps -one in Bavaria and one near Munich. It's not recorded how long he was held, but many of the men captured from the 361st were held over 200 days. The line that caught our attention in Patriot Shier's obituary was that *he was liberated by his brother Lloyd's army unit at the end of the war!*

Patriot Shier was described as "easy going and happy, with a warm welcoming spirit about him, an embracing hand shake, an outgoing demeanor and smile that lit up a room." He and his wife Ann were married for over 50 years. A Life Member since 1999, he belonged to Chapter 0392, California.

PATRIOT TAMMY DUCKWORTH, LIFE MEMBER, CHAPTER 0159, ILLINOIS



Patriot Duckworth graces the cover of the March/April edition of the Purple Heart Magazine and contributes an interesting article. But she doesn't say much about herself, a true hero who served as an Army helicopter pilot, suffering loss of both legs and damaging her right arm. She is the first female double amputee from the war, first Asian-American woman (born in Thailand) elected to Congress from Illinois and first disabled woman to be elected to the US House of Representatives. Before election to office, she was an Assistant Secretary in the VA and Director of Illinois Department of Veteran Affairs. She continues to serve as a LtCol in the Illinois Army National Guard. Along with the Purple Heart Medal in 2004, Representative Duckworth was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal and Army Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster. She has a BA (Political Science) and MA (International Affairs).

MOPH CALENDAR

MARCH 2013

- 17-22..... NSO ANNUAL TRAINING ORLANDO FL
- 22..... PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE, ST LOUIS MO (1330-1700)
- 23..... NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP MEETING, ST LOUIS, MO

APRIL 2013

- 01..... MAGAZINE DEADLINE - MAY/JUN ISSUE
- 06..... COMMANDER'S MINI-LEADERSHIP MTG, DALLAS-FORT WORTH
- 19..... PHHH BOARD MEETING, NEW YORK
- 25..... INVESTMENT COMMITTEE TELECONFERENCE

MAY 2013

- 07-09..... MOPH/MOPHSF BUDGET MTG, MYRTLE BEACH, SC
- 18..... ARMED FORCES DAY
- 27..... MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVED - HQ CLOSED

JUNE 2013

[NO ENTRIES]

JULY 2013

- 04..... HOLIDAY - HQ CLOSED
- 05..... **LATE FEE BEGINS FOR MOPH CONVENTION REGISTRATIONS**
- 08-10..... NFC FY2014 BUDGET REVIEW, DALLAS FORT WORTH
- 18..... INVESTMENT COMMITTEE TELECONFERENCE
- 19..... PHHH ANNUAL MEETING

2013 NATIONAL CONVENTION, ROGERS AR..... AUGUST 06-10, 2013
 2014 NATIONAL CONVENTION, DENVER CO..... AUGUST 05-09, 2014
 2015 NATIONAL CONVENTION, LAS VEGAS NVAUGUST 04-08, 2015

PURPLE HEARTS REUNITED RETURNS ANOTHER PURPLE HEART MEDAL

A southern California woman who never knew her father has received his Purple Heart, Silver Star, and other military medals that he earned before he died. Thanks to Patriot Zac Fike and his



Purple Hearts Reunited program, Hyla Merin was presented with the eight medals earned by her father, 2nd Lt Hyman Markel while fighting in Italy with the 88th Division, 351st Infantry Regiment before he died in 1945.

While cleaning out some lockers in a laundry room, the manager of a West Hollywood apartment building where Ms. Merin's mother lived in the 1960's found a box containing papers and the Purple Heart. The manager contacted Fike who located Ms. Merin and discovered other medals that were awarded to Markel.

On 17 February 2013, Capt. Zike pinned her father's Silver Star on Ms. Marin's lapel during an emotional ceremony and then presented her with a plaque that contained the rest of her father's medals - Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Army Good Conduct Medal and three Campaign medals.



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 SPRINGFIELD, VA 22151

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E-mail: info@purpleheart.org

WAR BIRDS



The **Grumman F8F Bearcat**, affectionately called "Bear," was Grumman's final piston engine fighter aircraft. The first production aircraft were delivered in 1945, but WWII came to an end before **Bearcat** saw combat service. Often mentioned as one of the best handling piston engine aircraft ever built, its performance was sufficient to outperform many early jets. The first combat for the F8F was during the French Indochina War when nearly 200 **Bearcats** were delivered to the French in 1951. When the war ended in 1954, 28 surviving F8F's were transferred to the new South Vietnamese Air Force and were used between 1956 and 1959. **Bearcats** were also supplied to Thailand during the same time period. Astronaut Neil Armstrong flew the F8F during his Navy Advanced Flight Training, qualifying in it at age 19. When asked what was his favorite plane to fly, Armstrong's immediate and unequivocal answer was the **Bearcat**.