



November 11, 2018



November 2018
Region 8 Veterans Newsletter

Veterans Day is a United States public holiday observed on **November 11** of every year **to honor all persons who have served in any branch of the United States Armed Forces.**

On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918, World War I ended.

This day became known as "Armistice Day." In 1921, an unknown World War I American soldier was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. Similarly, unknown soldiers had been buried in England at Westminster Abbey and at France at the Arc de Triomphe. All of these memorials took place on November 11th to commemorate the end of the "war to end all wars". In 1926, congress resolved to officially call November 11th Armistice Day. Then in 1938, the day was named a national holiday. Soon afterward war broke out in Europe, and World War II began.

Armistice Day Becomes Veterans Day

Soon after the end of World War II, a veteran of that war, Raymond Weeks, organized "National Veterans Day" with a parade and festivities to honor all veterans. He chose to hold this on Armistice Day. Thus, began annual observances of a day to honor all veterans, not just the end of World War I. In 1954, Congress officially passed and President, Dwight Eisenhower, signed a bill proclaiming November 11th as Veteran's Day. Raymond Weeks received the Presidential Citizens Medal from President Ronald Reagan in November of 1982 due to his part in the creation of this national holiday.

In 1968, Congress changed the national commemoration of Veterans Day to the fourth Monday in October. However, the significance of November 11th was such that the changed date never really got established. In 1978, congress returned the observance of Veterans Day to its traditional date.

Celebrating Veterans Day

National ceremonies commemorating Veterans Day occur each year at the memorial amphitheater built around the Tomb of the Unknowns. At 11 a.m. on November 11th. A color guard represents all military services executes, "Present Arms" at the tomb. Then, the presidential wreath is laid upon the tomb. Finally, the bugler plays taps.

The brave men and women who have risked their lives for the United States of America. As Dwight Eisenhower said, "It is well for us to pause, to acknowledge our debt to those who paid so large a share of freedom's price". As we stand here in grateful remembrance of the veterans' contributions we renew our conviction of individual responsibility to live in ways that support the eternal truths upon which our Nation is founded, and from which flows all its strength and all its greatness."

The Difference Between Veterans Day and Memorial Day

Veterans Day is often confused with Memorial Day. Observed annually on the last Monday in May, Memorial Day is the holiday set aside to pay tribute to the ones who passed away while serving in the U.S. military. Veterans Day pays tribute to all people — living or deceased — who have served in the military. In this context, Memorial Day events are often more somber in nature than those held on Veterans Day.

On Memorial Day in 1958, two unidentified soldiers were interred at Arlington National Cemetery having passed away in World War II and the Korean War. In 1984, an unknown soldier who died in the Vietnam War was placed next to the others. However, this last soldier was later exhumed, and was identified as Air Force 1st Lieutenant, Michael Joseph Blassie. Therefore, his body was removed. These unknown soldiers are symbolic of all Americans who gave their lives in all wars. To honor them, an Army honor guard keeps day and night vigil. Witnessing the changing of the guards at Arlington National Cemetery is a truly moving event.

We also always seem to recognize the Marines for their birthday but here's to the NAVY!



KENTUCKIANA COALITION FOR HEROES PRESENTS TRACY LAWRENCE!



Tracy Lawrence is coming to Louisville to support Veterans in our community!

- Friday, November 16
- Brown Theatre
- Tickets on sale now! Tickets are available at the Kentucky Center Box Office.

<http://www.kentuckycenter.org/all-shows/rally-for-our-heroes>

Kentuckiana Coalition for Heroes is a 501 (c)(3) formed by the region's largest veteran friendly businesses. In addition of the concert, the Coalition also hold a Resource Fair to help service members and veterans find employment after their service.

Proceeds from the show will go to benefit the USO Fort Campbell/Nashville, Where Opportunity Knox, and Dogs Helping Heroes.



<http://vip.baxters942.com/joinvip/>

Did You Know:

Region 8 covers 13 states to include: the southeast, including Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Delaware, and the following counties in Pennsylvania: Franklin, Cumberland, Adams, and York.

Visit the Region 8 website at:

<http://region8.uaw.org/>

Here is a great tool to aid and assist a successful Veterans Committee:

How to form a Veterans Committee: duties and responsibilities, tips for running your committee, and resource links for veterans.

UAW Veterans Committee website:

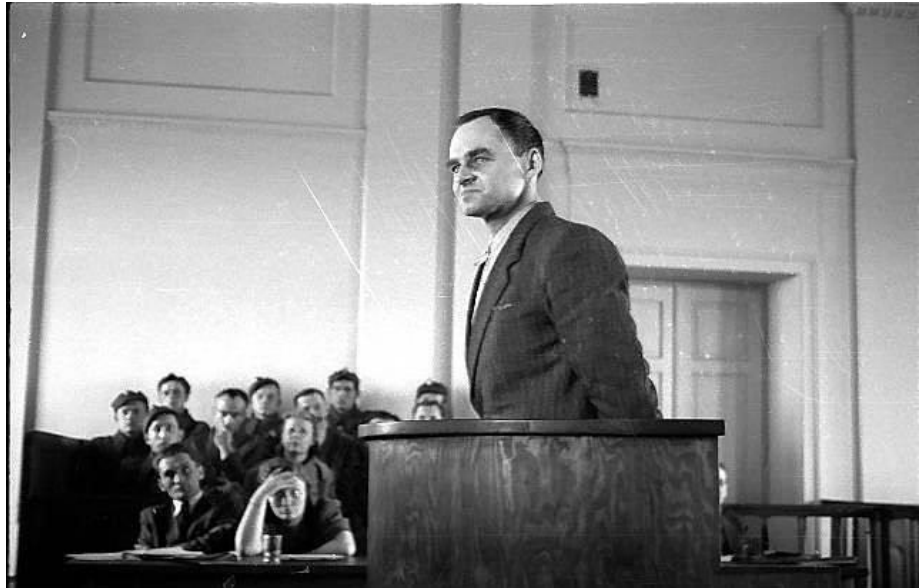
<https://uaw.org/standing-committees/veterans-committee/>

<https://uaw.org/app/uploads/2017/02/Veterans-Committee.pdf>

The 6 greatest military heroes you've never heard of

1. The Polish Resistance Agent who got himself sent to Auschwitz — on purpose

Nazi concentration camps were one of the most hideous and disturbing tragedies to arise out of the second world war, but few countries were aware of their existence before the Allied liberation in 1945. Fewer still had any idea what atrocities were taking place within their gates — which is



exactly why Witold Pilecki, a Polish resistance agent, decided to see the inside for himself. How did he do it? By getting himself arrested and sent to the worst death camp of them all - Auschwitz.

He gathered intelligence inside Auschwitz and sent it to the underground Polish army for two years, enduring brutal conditions and near-starvation to detail Nazi execution and interrogation methods. When the Allies continued to put off any aid (some even accused him of exaggerating his reports, [according to NPR](#)) he broke out of the camp and escaped. Pilecki continued to gather intelligence throughout the war, and did not let up afterwards either, though now it was against a different government — the Soviet regime in Poland.

Sadly, Pilecki was later captured by the communists, arrested for espionage in 1948, and issued not one, but three death sentences. The communists also wiped his name from the public record after his execution, and no accounts of Pilecki's bravery were known until after the fall of the Berlin wall.

2. The Middle Eastern soldiers of France's Free Army

France gets a pretty bad reputation when it comes to military valor. Some of the jokes actually are true — when France fell to the Nazi regime during World War II, General Charles De Gaulle, struggled to gather soldiers who were ready and willing to drive out the Fuhrer's army - not exactly the kind of bravery you write home about. Which is exactly why a frustrated De Gaulle set his sights outside of France to raise an army, recruiting instead from French colonies in Africa. Arabic, African, and Tahitian volunteers rallied to the French cause, and the French Free Army was born.

Amazingly, this rag-tag militia, many of whom had never stepped on French soil before, did a phenomenal job in the war against Hitler, winning several battles. So why haven't you heard of them? Sadly, the Allies weren't too thrilled with these guys, and when The Free French Army geared up to liberate Paris, the Allies actually refused to fight with them — unwilling to go into battle with “dark-skinned foreigners”.

As tragic as this is, it was typical for the time — U.S. military units were still segregated between blacks and whites in the 1940's. The Allies then essentially told De Gaulle if he wanted their help, he needed to white-wash his army, which he did — by calling a bunch of Spaniards to fight and sending the original French Free Army back to Africa. The colonists who fought for their Mother country never received any military recognition, and France would later cut off their military pensions, effectively removing them from its history.

3. The Real-Life Rambo who beat the U.S. military at its own job

Sylvester Stallone graced us with one of the most iconic military characters ever when he played man-of-few-words and probable-sociopath John Rambo in "Rambo: First Blood", "Rambo: First Blood Part II", and "Rambo III". Well, you get the drill. Stallone may have jumped the shark with the franchise, but the story of this real-life Rambo will never get old.

Richard Marcinko, nicknamed "Demo Dick," was a teletype operator who dreamed of transferring to UDT, or Underwater Demolitions Team — a unit that would eventually evolve into the Navy SEALs. When he kept getting rejected, Marcinko decided he would find an alternative way into the unit — by punching some guy in the face. Just as he'd planned, Marcinko got sent to the UDT as punishment.



During his time with the UDT and later with the SEALs in Vietnam, Marcinko became so notorious amongst the Viet Cong that there was actually a 50,000-piaster reward for whoever was brave enough to bring back his head... yikes!

Marcinko survived Vietnam but continued his aggressive lifestyle searching out conflict in Cambodia before being asked by the U.S. military to carry out a program called Red Cell. The mission? Infiltrating American bases all around the world to find their weak spots. Not surprisingly, Demo Dick took his job a little too seriously, and ended up mock-kidnapping a lot of officers and even their families to see if they would crack under interrogation.

Marcinko also founded SEAL Team 6 in response to the U.S. military's failed attempt to extract Americans from the U.S. Embassy in Iran during the Iranian hostage crisis. He was the leader of the anti-terror detail and would largely shape the elite force into what it is today.

The U.S. military still had not let go of his Red Cell shenanigans, however, later sent Marcinko to jail for conspiracy. Demo Dick did not go down without a fight, and ended up writing best-selling book "Rogue Warrior" during the year he was behind bars, detailing his escapades while in uniform and humiliating the military. What a guy.

4. The Oskar Schindler of Japan

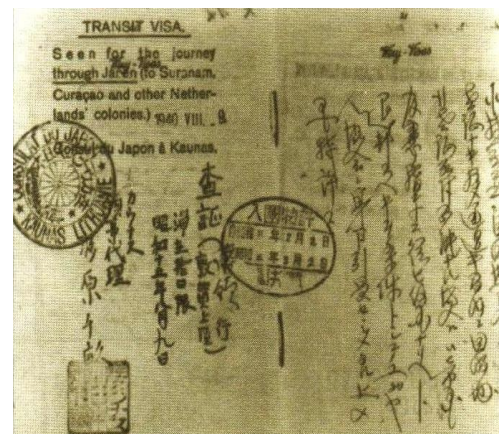
As the Nazi regime began tightening its grip on Europe Japanese Consul-General Chiune, Sugihara and his wife Yukiko watched with increasing concern as Lithuanian Jews were persecuted, driven out of their businesses, and forced away to "labor camps." Finally, Sugihara decided enough was enough, and set out to bring the Jews of Europe onto Japanese soil and out of Hitler's reach. The Japanese government, however, did not approve of the idea, and shut down Chiune's request to issue visas for the fleeing Jews. In response — and in true Liam Neeson fashion — Sugihara essentially told them to shove it and began to write the visas by hand.



He and his wife ended up writing what some estimate to be around 6,000 visas for Lithuanian Jews, an incredible feat that's even more unbelievable when you compare it to Oskar Schindler's record of 1,200 saved through his work program. The last foreign officials to remain in Kuanas, Lithuania save for a Dutch consul, Sugihara and his wife worked around the clock, issuing close to 300 visas a day and distributing them to the refugees who gathered outside of the Japanese consulate gates.

When Sugihara was finally ordered to leave, he continued to write visas and throw them from the train as he departed, and left his official visa stamp with one of the refugees so they could continue his work in his absence. It is estimated that he saved nearly all of the people who received visas, and after arriving in Japan, the Jewish refugees called themselves the Sugihara Survivors in honor of his bravery.

So why hasn't his story been broadcast like Schindler's? Unfortunately, Japan was still operating under the samurai code of honor during this time, and to defy a superior was considered unforgivable. ***So rather than award their comrade for his contributions to the war, he was removed from his government position and forced to live in dishonor until his death in 1986.***



5. The British Lieutenant Col. who fought with a sword, longbow and bagpipes.



Lieutenant Col. John Malcom Thorpe Fleming Churchill, or "Mad Jack" as he would later be known, may have been the bravest person to walk the earth. He joined the British military in 1926 at age 20, only to leave shortly after to pursue professional bagpiping and compete in the World Archery Championship in 1939 — because why not. When WWII rolled around, Churchill was more than ready to jump back into the fray, and racked up a war record so unbelievable we're shocked the guy does not have his own movie yet.

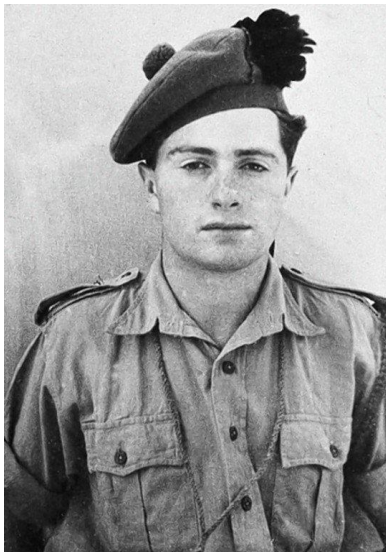
Churchill stormed the beaches of Normandy carrying a Scottish sword, wore his bagpipes in battle, and made many of his kills with a longbow he wore on his back. During a night raid on the Nazi lines, Churchill led his men to capture 136 enemy soldiers — and he himself captured 40 plus Germans at sword point. During a different battle on the Nazi-controlled island of Brac, "Mad Jack" fought until he was the last of his men standing. Then, when he ran out of ammo, he stood his ground, playing his bagpipes on top of a hill until a grenade knocked him out and he was captured by the Germans.

Churchill would later escape his POW camp and meet up with American troops, only to find out — to his profound disappointment — that two atomic bombs had been dropped, and the war was essentially over. According to Vice, Churchill reportedly complained, **"If it hadn't been for those Yanks, we could have kept the war going for another ten years!"**

6. The Scottish soldier who went full "Braveheart" on Nazi soldiers

"Mad Jack" may have donned Scottish bagpipes to fight in WWII, but Sir Tommy Macpherson had the Courage to go full "Braveheart" on the battlefield, sporting a kilt while he raised issues with the Scottish commandos. Nicknamed "the kilted killer," Macpherson's flashy battle attire and relentless tenacity earned him a 30,000 Franc bounty on his head for whichever German could kill him first.

Amazingly, Macpherson made it through the entire war, despite the Germans' determination to take him out, even orchestrating the surrender of 23,000 German troops at the Das Reich Headquarters by bluffing that the Royal Air Force would unleash consequences if they did not cooperate. In reality, Macpherson was alone, and the RAF had no idea he was there, but he still managed to convince German General Botho Henning Elster to give up his men and vehicles.



Macpherson walked away from World War II as the UK's most decorated living soldier in history, earning the Military Cross for his escape from a Nazi prison camp in Poland, a papal knighthood and two bars for his valiant — and unusual — service.

Reminder

If you have any interesting facts to share, flyers, and or pictures for any event(s), upcoming or past please send to:

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