

## Remembered With Gratitude

### Dutch Nationals Honor American Soldiers



*Above: Bertha Bouwers, nee Bastin, caretaker of the Margraten gravesite of Pvt. William D. Wilson, KIA at the Battle of the Bulge. Wilson was the father of AWON member Lois Wohlers*

*by Lois Wohlers*

It was the summer of 2005 when I finally visited the Netherlands American Cemetery in Margraten, Holland, where my dad was laid to rest in January 1945. I was only two years old when my father, William Wilson, was killed in the Battle of the Bulge. My mother was left to raise three children by herself. As I grew older, I often wondered why my mother never brought my father home.

Upon visiting the cemetery in Margraten, I knew almost immediately my mother had made the right decision. As I looked across the endless rows of white marble crosses and Stars of David, I was in awe of the sheer beauty of this final resting place for American soldiers, men who sacrificed so much for both our freedom and that of the people of Europe.

It was particularly stirring to know my dad was laid to rest in such picturesque surroundings. My son Jeff traveled with me and since we were direct descendants of a soldier in the cemetery, we were allowed to climb a tower to overlook the rows of crosses and the beautiful countryside. To say it was an emotional moment, would be an understatement.

It was during this visit that I learned each and every grave site at Margarten had been adopted by a member of the local community. Thus began the search to find the person who had adopted my father's grave. What I found has left me amazed and forever grateful.

I wish to share the story of one great lady whom I have never met, yet owe a boundless debt of gratitude. This lady is Bertha Bouwers, who adopted my father's grave in 1945 when she was just twenty-four years of age.

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# President's Message

by Walt Linne

Our 15th AWON National Conference from 5/11 to 5/15, 2020 will be hosted by the Higgins Hotel and Conference Center in New Orleans, Louisiana, across the street from the National WWII Museum. The conference theme "Honor and Remember" will be centered around the mission of the National WWII Museum - to create and maintain a world-class museum through exhibits, multimedia experiences, and thousands of personal accounts to take us on a tour of every theater of WWII. Of special note, a crew from the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) will be at the conference if any member would wish to document their family stories.

The itinerary for the conference is as follows:

**Monday, 5/11** - Registration and welcome hospitality room. Evening is open.

**Tuesday, 5/12** - Registration; a welcome by Stephen Watson, President and CEO, National WWII Museum Executive Team and Sharon Estill Taylor, WWII orphan and Museum Board of Trustees Member; sharing circles with presentation by fellow orphan Gretchen Wronka; and an evening welcome reception.

**Wednesday, 5/13** - Memorial service; tour of the National WWII Museum. Evening is open.

**Thursday, 5/14** - Business meeting; an evening banquet with presenter George Lutz, "Honor and Remember" Founder.

**Friday, 5/15** - Farewell hospitality day.

Please keep in mind that the Higgins Hotel has afforded us the same room rate, \$149, three days prior to the conference and three days post to enjoy the WWII Museum and the local sites such as the French Quarter, Swamp Tours, Plantation Tours, Dinner Jazz Cruise and Walking Tours. All tours can be arranged by the hotel Concierge.

I was asked if it was OK to bring past conference name holders and lanyards...yes, good idea! We are looking for volunteers to help at the conference - registration table, hospitality room, sharing circles, raffle, memorial service, banquet, reception, photographer. Please send a note along with your registration form or email us at [awon@awon.org](mailto:awon@awon.org) if you can help out. Thanks! What a wonderful location to "Honor and Remember" our Fathers. Please see page 6-7 for conference registration and program ad form. Registration forms are due to the Indianapolis Headquarters by April 3rd, 2020. See you in New Orleans!



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### *...Remembered, from front page*

At that time she was only 24, not yet married, and her maiden name was Bastin. Bertha Bastin began to place flowers on my father's grave on special days like Memorial Day, Christmas, and a day the Dutch call Dodenherdenking which quite literally translates into "Remembering the Dead."

She continued to faithfully adorn his grave with flowers after she married and started a family of her own. For 70 years, she did not miss a day during these special events!

In Mrs. Bouwers' later years, her daughter Lea Hochstenbach joined in helping her mother. When her mother passed away in 2015, Lea adopted the grave that her mother had so lovingly tended for so long. Lea told me that taking care of my dad's grave meant so much to her mother, that she desires to continue the legacy. She says that her mother was always thinking of my father and was thankful for the opportunity that was presented to her.

My family and I are forever grateful to Bertha Bouwers and Lea Hochstenbach for the faithfulness, dedication, and love they have shown to us in caring for our father's grave.

Born and raised in New Jersey, but having lived in Alabama longer than in any other state and having come to consider myself an Alabamian, I was pleasantly surprised to learn that the plan to adopt and lovingly care for the graves at the Netherlands American Cemetery had its beginnings in a letter written by a young woman in a small Alabama town. According to a 1963 Reader's Digest article about the cemetery, she had lost her husband in WWII just six weeks after their marriage. She wrote to the burgermeister of Maastricht, a town near the Margraten cemetery, asking if he would locate her husband's grave, place flowers on it, and send her a picture along with a short letter.

It's at this point that I see the providential hand of God at work! You see, shortly before the burgermeister received this letter, his wife had proposed the idea of adopting the graves of the fallen American soldiers in Margraten. However, the burgermeister had originally vetoed his wife's plan. His exact words are recorded to have been, "Out of the question, unless you get a sign from heaven."

Well, talk about a sign from heaven! The letter from

the young woman from Alabama was exactly that. The very next day, the baroness covered the man's grave with irises and took photographs showing both the flowers and the fallen soldier's name on the cross. She mailed the pictures with a note which began, "With all my heart I will help to give your dear one's grave the care you would give it yourself."

You can imagine how this Alabama widow was touched by such an act of kindness. In a desire to share this much appreciated gesture with others, she sent the picture to Life magazine, which published it. Others were prompted to send letters to Maastricht with similar requests. This led to a committee being formed in response to the pleas of American family members who had lost their loved ones in battle.

Also, the people of Maastricht and Margraten desired to do something to express their gratitude to the soldiers who had fought for their freedom from the Nazis, and in some cases even had been quartered in their homes. According to the Reader's Digest article, the committee's appeal for people to adopt the graves was met with an overwhelming response. All the graves were adopted, and there was even a waiting list of 3000 people who desired to sponsor a grave.

More than 8000 soldiers were laid to rest in the Netherlands American Cemetery in Margraten. The names of over 1700 soldiers are on the Walls of the Missing. Each of these fallen has been adopted by a member of the local community. The people bring flowers to the cemetery and research the life of the service member as a way to honor their sacrifice.



*Above: After her mother's death in 2015, Bertha Bouwers' daughter Lea Hochstenbach took over caring for Pvt. William Wilson's gravesite in Margraten, Netherlands American Cemetery*

*...continued on page 9*



# Knitting For Victory

## The Humble Way Women Helped Win World War II

by Kristin Holmes

January brings the snow, makes our feet and fingers glow.  
That sounds nice, doesn't it?? Cozy - if you have warm clothes and a hot fire waiting.

But what if you don't?

Men in wartime endure great discomfort, perhaps most of all in the winter cold. Throughout history those left at home to tend the hearth have longed to do something, anything to help ease the suffering of their loved ones. Knitting has long been a way for those on the homefront to reach out across the miles and wrap their beloved soldier in warmth from home, like a hug from far away.

Knitting dates back at least to the Middle Ages and probably much farther. Knitting was a popular pastime of women because it was possible to do it young or old, sick or healthy. Women knit in the dark when the oil in the lamps ran out, while tending flocks and rocking cradles and stirring the pot. We know for a fact that women knitted for soldiers during the Civil War, because it's included in the pages of Louisa May Alcott's beloved book *Little Women*. Says heroine Jo, *"...I'm dying to go and fight with Papa! And I can only stay home and knit like a poky old woman!" And Jo shook the blue army sock till the needles rattled like castanets and her ball bounded across the floor.*

As World War II began, the world was in the midst of a leap from the old ways to the new. Modernity was definitely on the horizon, but it hadn't fully dawned yet. Nowadays we have the technology to quickly machine-knit reams of cozy fabric for socks and hats and undergarments, but as the war began, that infrastructure had not yet been put into place. Men were sent off to fight in Northern Europe without hats, without gloves, and worst of all, without warm stockings. As true now as it was back then, [cold, wet feet are as great an enemy](#) as the enemy actually is. During WWI, 20,000 men were killed from trench foot. Providing the fighting men of the Second World War these basic lifesaving necessities fell onto women back home, armed with their knitting needles and balls of wool.

The writer Alison Lurie reminisced (in the pages of [Knitting Yarns: Writers on Knitting](#)) that during high school in wartime, she and her friends were issued balls of heavy, oily, khaki-colored wool and mimeographed sheets of knitting patterns and sent off to do their part for the war

effort, producing socks, hats, scarves, and face masks. Her experience was in no way unique. American women from coast to coast picked up their needles and wool, making knitted goods to be shipped off overseas firstly in "Bundles for Britain" to aid British troops and the Londoners being brutalized by the Blitz.

Yes, even before America's entrance into the Second World War, women were knitting. *Life Magazine* answered the question "What can I do to help the war effort?" with a single word: "Knit." The volunteer organization Citizens for the Army and Navy set a goal of a million standard Army sweaters knitted by Christmas of 1941, a project well underway by the time the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor.

By January of 1942, the Red Cross was designated as the clearinghouse for all coordinated national knitting programs in the US. As wool was being strictly rationed and was incredibly difficult to ship from faraway places like Australia with the war on, yarn was hard to come by. The Red Cross was given priority for wool supplies, but with so many uses for wool, it wasn't long before yarn for knitting was in short supply. Some branches of the Red Cross even set up programs to card and spin their own yarn from raw wool. And when the war effort made steel for needles impossible to attain, newcomers to the project learned to knit on bone and celluloid needles instead and kept right on knitting.

The Red Cross handed out millions of patterns for socks, scarves, sweaters, gloves, fingerless mitts to be used when shooting, hats and helmets. Companies like Red Heart Yarn printed booklets of military-approved patterns like ["Knit for Defense"](#) and ["Knit for Victory"](#), with which knitters could produce garments in either olive drab or navy blue, useful for any branch of the service.

The Red Cross knitters - perhaps unsurprisingly given their overall mission - even created medical supplies. They knitted stretchy bandages from cotton yarn that were sterilized and used in the field. They knitted covers for stumps in both arm and leg size. They knitted toe covers to fit over the ends of casts. Soldiers were even given knitting needles themselves as they laid in hospitals recovering from wounds or illness, both to aid the war effort and for a kind of occupational therapy, to give them something constructive to focus their energies upon.

The knitting groups turned out a [prodigious amount of clothing](#) and other items for the war effort. One group alone, called the "Three Tree Point Knitters" - 30 women strong - within the span of 3 months turned out 244 knitted garments representing 4290 work hours. Imagine that kind of effort, nationwide, for the span of years. Many women became specialists, memorizing a single pattern and making it again and again so they could turn out as many items as quickly as possible.

*continued on next page>>>*



Left to Right Above:

*How to Knit for Victory* instruction booklet, *Knit for Defense* instruction booklet, Nov. 24, 1941 edition of *Life Magazine* featuring wartime knitting, and the sheet music for *The Pretty Little Mitt that Kitty Knit*

The entertainment industry got into the act, producing [pro-knitting propaganda](#), including a surprising amount of [knitting-themed sheet music](#), comic books, and even a movie called *Mr. Lucky*, which came out in 1943 and featured Cary Grant trying to learn to knit for the war effort!

Other women used knitting as a tool of espionage more directly, passing along messages in the pattern of the stitches themselves. [The Belgian resistance frequently used courageous older women as spies](#), tracking the passing of trains and recording them in their knitting.

The American knitting effort went all the way to the top. [First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt](#), called “Knitter-in-Chief”, was a prodigious knitter, and was rarely seen sitting idle without some sort of handiwork in her lap to work on while she went about her business. There are several pictures that survive of Mrs. Roosevelt knitting on planes, in meetings, even at the beach. Her knitting patterns, most of which were handwritten, still survive in the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library in Hyde Park, NY. She was known to [produce war work](#), even mentioning it [in her autobiography](#). It is entirely possible that one or more AWON fathers went off to war wearing socks or mittens knit by the Knitter-in-Chief herself!

The bravery of these knitting heroines is even more amazing since the Germans were aware of the possibility that knitting may be being used against them, as evidenced from the lyrics in the popular 1940 song *The Pretty Little Mitt That Kitty Knit*:

*"The Nazi agents sent it to Der Fuhrer, and he threw a fit, for he thought there was a trap or a secret code or a map in the Pretty Little Mitt That Kitty Knit!"* It's mind-boggling to think of the formidable Germans worried over knitting.

Incredibly, knitting played an active role in the Allied victory by helping Allied spies pass messages along. [British spy Phyllis Latour Doyle](#) parachuted into occupied Normandy to gather intelligence ahead of D-Day, and her weapon of choice was a pair of knitting needles. Using a piece of silk that contained her codes (easily hidden by wrapping it around a knitting needle, as if it was an innocent ribbon meant to adorn a future sweater) and knitting to disguise her activities, she passed along 135 messages to the Allies about Nazi troop positions used to plan the assault on Normandy and later aiding in the subsequent liberation of France.

When we think of the war we often think of battlefields, self-sacrifice, and big sweeping acts of heroism - as well we should. But wars are fought and won by the actions of many - those on the front lines certainly, but also those millions of nameless faceless individuals who simply did their bit to help support the men in the trenches.

Let's remember those humble folks at home who picked up their needles and their balls of wool and helped keep our heroes warm and dry in places that were cold and snowy. They may not have served in the same way, but they helped win the war in their own small way by knitting their bit.



# Registration

New Orleans WWII Museum • Higgins Hotel • May 11-15

Please return registration and fee by April 3, 2020

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

\_\_\_ Members & Guests X \$185 . . . . . \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ New Members & Renewals X \$210 (includes 1 year AWON Membership Dues) . . . . . \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

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

Rank First Middle Last

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

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

AWON 2020 National Conference  
5745 Lee Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46216

# 2020 AWON National Conference

## "Honor and Remember"

### Conference Program Book Memorial Ad Order Form

If you would like to place an ad memorializing your family member in the AWON "Honor and Remember" conference program please complete the form below and include a photo or email an image. Please do not send original photos as we cannot guarantee their safety. If sending via US mail, identify the subject of the photo on the back. If emailing photo please identify by file name (such as JohnDoe.jpg) if possible and send a quality resolution JPG file (300 dpi or better)

If you can't print this form, please neatly write on a separate piece of paper or send the info via email.

Forms and Payments are due by Mar. 15

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

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

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

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

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

Select one of the following options:

\$100 \_\_\_\_\_ Full Page

\$50 \_\_\_\_\_ Half Page

\$25 \_\_\_\_\_ Full Page

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

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

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

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

Make checks payable to AWON and mail form, photos, and payment to:

Kristin Holmes  
PO Box 242  
Creston, WA  
99117

email: [atomicsagebrush@gmail.com](mailto:atomicsagebrush@gmail.com)



# Memorial Day 2020 is Coming Soon!



## Remembering

our fathers and loved ones is an AWON tradition this time of year. If your father rests in an overseas cemetery, our Coordinator will be contacting you. To see Memorial Day services 2019 – Click Here!



# Support AWON when you Shop!



When you shop through [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), the AmazonSmile Foundation donates .5% of the purchase price on all eligible products to AWON, at no extra cost! Just enter "AWON" as the organization you support.

**amazon**smile  
You shop. Amazon gives.

# Call for Tributes!

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

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

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







The gravesite of PVT William D. Wilson, father of author Lois Wohlers, at Netherlands American Cemetery. Wilson's grave has been carefully tended by the same Dutch family since 1945

They think of their soldier as a member of their family and want their soldier to stay in the family. Today, the Foundation for Adopting Graves at the American Cemetery Margraten manages the program.

With a similar intention, the Foundation United Adopters American War Graves created a program known as [The Faces of Margraten](#). They collect photos of the fallen and display them next to the crosses, the Stars of David, and along the Walls of the Missing every two years in the early part of May, providing an even greater connection between the visitors and their liberators.

The devotion of the Dutch is awe-inspiring. An American descendant speaking at the 70th Memorial Day observance asked, "What would cause a nation recovering from losses and trauma of their own to adopt the sons and daughters of another nation? And what would keep that commitment alive for all these years when the memory of the war has begun to fade? It is a unique occurrence in the history of civilization."

Their commitment fills my heart with gratitude. The phrase "fallen but not forgotten" is truly brought to life by the dedication of Dutch people who give so selflessly to the soldiers and the families they represent.

Reflecting upon the dedication and devotion Mrs. Bouwers demonstrated in looking after my dad's grave, I asked myself, "Would I care for the grave of a stranger for 70 years?"

I must admit, I have not even been that faithful in visiting graves of family members to whom I owe a tremendous debt of gratitude. As Americans, we should ask ourselves if we show this level of appreciation for those who have sacrificed for our freedom.

The people of the Netherlands have a deep respect for the American soldiers who freed them from the occupation of the Nazis. An area school is named after one of the soldiers buried in the Margraten Cemetery. Children are taught that these victims of WWII are not just numbers, but they were people who also had families they left behind. They speak with great pride of the soldier their family has adopted.

The Dutch people of Margraten faithfully attend the Memorial Day observation at the Netherlands American Cemetery. The neatly cared for graves are beautifully adorned with flowers and a Dutch and an American flag. I have watched the Dutch people of Margraten observe their Memorial Day, sometimes standing in the rain sheltered only by their umbrellas.

What motivates a people to do this? I believe it has its beginnings in the deep sense of gratitude in the minds and hearts of the Dutch who lived through the horrors of WWII, and who did not neglect to pass this appreciation and thankfulness unto the generations that followed.

An inscription on a wall at the Netherlands American Cemetery reads, "Here we and all who shall hereafter live in freedom will be reminded that to these men and their comrades we owe a debt to be paid with grateful remembrance of their sacrifice and with the high resolve that the cause for which they died shall live."

Let us not let their sacrifices be forgotten and not let them be in vain.

# AWON Moments

by AWON President Walter Linne

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

We will be celebrating our 15th AWON National Conference, 5/11 - 5/15 2020, in New Orleans.

All are invited to "Honor and Remember" our Fathers at the National WWII Museum. Registration and program ad form are located on page 6-7.

**From American WWII Orphans Network Newsletter Vol 6, Spring 1995:** "As you know, there is a new group of Luxembourg citizens who have and are in the process of adopting each of the 5,076 graves at Hamm American Military Cemetery. Their name is U.S. Veterans Friends, Luxembourg. I am their honorary President, Galen Cole."

Galen, a supporter of AWON, hosted over one hundred Luxembourgers to his Transportation Museum in Bangor, Maine.

**From Vol 7, Summer 1995: Burial Benefits.** "Veterans or their families who need information concerning headstones or grave markers can now call the VA's National Cemetery Service hotline at (800)697-6947 weekdays from 8am to 4:30pm Eastern Time. Remember, if your father was missing in action and his body was not recovered and/or there is no marker for him in any cemetery, you are entitled to a free government

marker. A burial service with color guard can be arranged locally through the nearest military base."

**From Vol 8, Winter 1995:** "Gold Star Pin order form placed in the newsletter. The lapel pin, with a gold star on a purple background, are the government's acknowledgement of your sacrifice in losing a father in war. Available for your mother and siblings."

**From Vol 9, Spring 1996:** "The AWON Website is now online thanks to Lorin McCleary and especially to RIK Peirson, Webmaster. A key section on the AWON Website is our Father's Tributes."

**Unforgettable AWON Moment** - The first time I saw my Father's Tribute on the AWON Website. Sgt Walter John Linne, Tank Commander, Father of Walter and John was now known to the world for his valor in action and supreme sacrifice for his country.

Please send your *AWON Moment* to:

AWON STAR, 5745 Lee Road, Indianapolis, IN 46216 or [president@awon.org](mailto:president@awon.org), so we can share in the joy of knowing your Father!

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

**AWON Wishes to Thank Our New and Renewing Members  
from October, November, December**

Sharon Harville  
Phyllis Solangi

Pamela Wachutka  
Michel Lorquet  
Robert Lombardo

William Blake  
Roberta Russo

# White House Gold Star Evening Reception

By Marilynn Lieurance, AWON White House Liason

The American WWII Orphans Network was invited to the White House Gold Star Evening Reception May 31, 2019, honoring Fifty Fallen Heroes from various wars. Three AWON members - Roger Connor, Robert "Bob" Meek, and Dianne Baczynski - were in attendance. Each of these three members was allowed to bring two guests related to the soldier being honored. Thoughts from the AWON members in attendance follow:

**Roger Connor:** Roger's daughter, Annie, and her husband, Greg D'Amico, were his guests: "My daughter Annie, her husband Greg, and I were thrilled and honored to be invited to the White House Reception in honor of Gold Star Families. I was particularly pleased that Annie could be part of this event honoring her grandfather. I have been to the White House twice before as a tourist, and during the presidency of Ronald Reagan I was invited to a ceremony in the Rose Garden.. However, I have never been to an event inside the White House. This was quite an extraordinary event for me."

**Retired Colonel Robert "Bob" Meek, Jr.:** Bob's wife, Nancy; and son, Major Robert Meek III, were his guests. "It was very moving and I think a wonderful tribute to our Dads. I was particularly touched by the eight-year-old girl sitting in front of us who had just lost her dad about a year ago. She was cold and my son and namesake loaned her his jacket.

I think his granddad is proud of him and my heart hurt for this young girl. I spoke with her after the formal program and tried to offer a little encouragement. I do want to thank Marilynn for all the leg work she does to coordinate this for AWON and I encourage everyone who can, to try and attend this event. It was also great to see Dianne and Roger, as it had been awhile. It is so gratifying to have AWON and all our brothers and sisters in the group."

**Dianne Baczynski:** Dianne's husband John; and Grandson, Max, were her guests. "Attendees included Vice President Mike Pence and his wife, Karen; every member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff--truly incredible to have all of these people in one room! Fifty fallen heroes were honored and we had the chance to meet many of their families, and hear their stories. We are proud to have represented three generations (Father, Grandfather; and Great Grandfather, Frank H. Wiegand KIA in Mindanao, Phillippines on May 9, 1945). It was a truly humbling, emotional, and memorable experience, and we are

extremely grateful for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

**Marilynn Lieurance:** "The White House added a last-minute invite for a person to represent our organization. I presented this to our AWON President, Walt Linne, however, Walt already had plans in place to be in Europe and gave the okay for me to attend in his place. Each one of us was very proud to be there representing our dads--all of our dads and our organization as a whole.

One by one we were announced before entering the room to meet and shake hands with President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania. We were escorted into the next room to be seated for the program. President Trump shared heartfelt thoughts at the beginning of the program. Mary Tollefson, a Gold Star Mother, gave a personal and moving speech during the program.

It was an added honor this night to have the dads of three AWON members remembered and their names spoken during the Candle Lighting Ceremony while they were being honored in the White House of our Country.

I enjoyed seeing how much this meant to our members and others, as each family took their turn standing in honor of their fallen soldier. It was an evening filled with deep emotion, honor, pride, and gratitude for the privilege of being there.

An opportunity arose, and I reached out and shook hands with Vice President Pence, had several conversations with General Robert Neller, United States Marine Corps and his wife, D'Arcy--you can't help but respect the Four Stars on General Neller's shoulders; and I spoke with several other guests throughout the evening.

I must mention that Dianne's Grandson, Max, was given a Challenge Coin by General Mark A. Milley, Chief of Staff for the United States Army. It was a Grand Evening, and I wasn't the only person that spoke of moments wondering if it was all a dream.

Yes, an Evening Event at the White House is everything you might think it could be and more--so much more.

Truly, this was a memorable experience that will always be cherished and remembered the rest of our lives.



My triplet sisters Dr. Janet Bachant, Karen Bachant Sellars and myself, Nancy Bachant, returned to Rennes five years after having discovered the place our father died securing the release of the capital of Brittany from the Nazi regime, August 1, 1944.

In 2014, we were invited by the city of Rennes and the village of Saint-Gregoire to commemorate the 70th anniversary where 50 4th Armored Division soldiers were ambushed by German 88 anti-aircraft gun emplacements while racing down the road to liberate Rennes.

M. Etienne Maignen, an amateur historian who was researching the event and discovered one of those soldiers had triplet daughters, was just finishing up his first book, "Rennes During the War" and was working on his second book about the amazing day of liberation, Aug 1, 1944. He was our host and interpreter, and introduced us to his friend M. Jean Chasle, who was an eye witness to what unfolded that fateful first day of August.

These kind men took us to the spot where our father's half-track was hit, and even had a picture of the blown up truck that was in the local exhibition. We also participated in several commemorative events, and rode into the city in a half-track on behalf of our father during the parade of WWII vehicles, finishing the journey he was never to see.

Five years later, through M. Maignen's new book, "The Strange Story of the Liberation of Rennes" we discovered EVERY detail of the saga about the combat at Rennes, and when we came this past August we brought my sister Janet's daughter, Miriam, and granddaughter, Dax, to be with us for the event.

Also there in 2014 and on this trip 5 years later, was the grandson of Gen John Shirley wood, his namesake John S Wood, III, and his French wife Carolyn. Gen. John Shirley Wood was in charge of Patton's 1st Army spearheading a column down from Avranches to quickly take Rennes back from the Nazis.

At long last, 75 years later, the final details of what was a very complicated tragic event during the fog of war and the fatal blunder of the American captain was revealed to us. The column was advised by that local eye-witness, M. Jean Chasle to go around

the other way, and enter Rennes "like butter" but if they continued the route they were on, they would be shot "like rabbits." Very tragically, the captain did not heed this advice and 11 tanks, 3 half-tracks, and 50 men were lost, including our father Herbert R. Bachant.

While in Maison Blanche in 2019, we were again treated to honors and participated in the laying of flowers on the monument in the village. Bringing the youngest descendant

## Three Daughters of Liberty

The Bachant Triplets Return to Rennes for the 75th Remembrance of the  
Liberation of Rennes

By Nancy Bachant



Karen B. Sellars, Nancy Bachant, and Dr. Janet Bachant  
Aug. 3, 2019, 75th anniversary of the liberation of Rennes



Left: Dax Malice, 5, great-granddaughter of Herbert R. Bachant, placing a rose on the memorial at Maison Blanche

Right: PFC Herbert Bachant's widow, Muriel Snyder Bachant, with her triplet daughters August 23, 1944.



of our father, Dax, was very special to us all, and our hearts will always be with our friends in Rennes.

During our first visit to Rennes and the village of St-Gregoire, the local stamp club presented to us a beautiful stamp and reproduction of a V-mail letter.

It read: Dear Janet Lee, dear Nancy Sue, dear Karen Ann,

On behalf of the citizens of Rennes, on behalf of those who have experienced the tragedies of war, on behalf of those who were born and now live in a country at peace, we send you, from the bottom of our heart, our eternal gratitude. Your father, Herbert Bachant, died as a hero during the battles for the liberation of Rennes on August 1, 1944, without ever meeting his daughters who were born on the other side of the Atlantic. His sacrifice on French soil makes you our sisters in remembrance. You will be forever, for all the people of Rennes, the three daughters of Liberty. With our dedicated and fraternal affection. "



Above: Nancy, Janet, and Karen Bachant being presented with photos of their parents at the commemoration of Maison Blanche, August 2014

Read the amazing full story of the Bachant Triplets online in #53 (June 2009) of *The Star*, available to AWON Members at [www.awon.org](http://www.awon.org)!

### AWON Treasurer's Report

Submitted by Paul Bremer 12/31/2019

General Fund - \$14,237.30

Money Market Savings - \$48,187.81

Bookstore Account - \$582.35

Conference Account - \$2385.55

### Great News!

Janice Crandell Powers, Author of *Pieces of Us* (as featured in Issue 94 of *The Star*) will be attending the upcoming "Honor and Remember" AWON Convention and will have more copies of her wonderful book available! If you were unable to purchase *Pieces of Us* before it sold out, you can pick one up at the conference bookstore!!

### AWON Director Email Addresses

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### The Star Guidelines for Submitting Material

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

Please keep text reasonable in length. 500-1000 words/one page is a good guideline.

Preference is given to material written by, for, and about AWON members and families.

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

**Kristin Holmes, Editor**  
**PO Box 242, Creston WA**  
**99117 (509) 279-5241**  
**atomicagebrush@gmail.com**

AWON Member Penny Le Grand was featured in the Tucson, AZ newspaper **The Oro Valley Voice** last year. Penny has been using her wonderful creative talent to paint portraits of fathers killed in WWII, like her own father, 1st Lt. Charles E. Hopkins Jr, who went missing in action over the Marshall Islands when Penny was only 2 ½ months old.

Penny began painting as she neared retirement. After having lost her mother and her beloved daughter, she decided she needed a hobby to fill her time, and she began taking art lessons at a nearby community center, followed by workshops at an art gallery. Eventually, she felt confident enough to paint her father's portrait.

"When I finished the portrait," LeGrand told reporter Theresa Poalucci of **The Oro Valley Voice**, "it was the first time in life that my dad looked back at me. I felt I had finally brought him home." Since that time, she has completed several more portraits for her fellow AWON members, bringing their fathers home as well, with even more requests pending. Rather than receiving payment for her work, Penny says her gratification comes from giving the gift.

AWON members who have received LeGrand's handiwork include Sharon Connor and Pat Albani. Connor says that when she received the portrait of her father, Sgt. William E. Crowley, she cried. And Albani expressed how amazing it was to finally see her father's face in a nearly life-size form rather than a small photograph and in full color, revealing his vivid blue eyes for the first time. She, too, was overcome by tears of gratitude. "When I do these portraits, I always start with the eyes," LeGrand explained. "It is where all the emotion centers."

Penny LeGrand's artwork is both a gift to the appreciative recipients of her work, and is truly a labor of love. "I hear such heartwarming things from those I have done portraits for. I really believe this is what I'm meant to do for now."

## Reunited Through Art

Awon Member  
Penny LeGrand is  
reuniting  
separated families  
across time and  
space



Above: PVT George R. Connor, father of Roger Connor

Below: Patricia Temte's father, SSGT Ernest Gilbert Radcliffe, with his recovered ID bracelet which had been miraculously returned to his daughter the same week his portrait arrived!







Upper row from left to right:  
 CDR George B. Nicol, father of Norma Nicol Hamilton, PFC Frank H. Wiegand, father of Diane Wiegand Baczinski, 1LT Charles E. Hopkins Jr, father of Penny Hopkins Le Grand



Middle row L-R: 2LT George Riley Francis, father of Barbara Kelly, S1c Albert M. Cervenak, father of Patricia Cervenak Albani



For larger versions of these portraits online please click the Connected "W"!

Bottom row L-R: CDR Austin C. Behan, father of Patricia Behan Armstrong, Catherine Regina Larson, US Navy WAVE, SGT William E. Crowley, father of Sharon Crowley Connor



## A Fallen Father, Finally At Rest

by Gretchen Hintz Wronka

*Editor's Note: The January 2019 **AWON Star** (Issue 91) featured the story of AWON Member Gretchen Hintz Wronka and brother Loren Martin Hintz' journey to Italy to locate and recover the wreckage of their father, Lt. Loren Hintz' P-47 fighter shot down over Northern Italy April 21, 1945. On November 16, 2019, the complete remains of Lt. Hintz were interred at Florence American Cemetery in Florence, Italy.*

*Gretchen Wronka shares her experience:*

Hello to my AWON colleagues, especially those whose dads are buried in the American Battle Monuments Commission's Florence American Cemetery.

On Saturday, November 16, 2019, my family had the great honor of participating in the memorial and military burial of my father, Lt. Loren Hintz. Several other AWON members' fathers are buried in this beautiful cemetery or are listed on the Tablets of the Missing.

We had cool and cloudy weather the day of the Memorial. It poured rain all night and into the morning. I'd promised to lay a rose on each AWON dad's grave, but since it was pretty wet and miserable Cemetery Associate Rorenzo Iacono generously offered to fulfill my promise. When the weather cleared, he and the cemetery staff went to each grave with a fresh rose that had been part of my dad's memorial. They laid the rose and took a picture for each of you. These pictures are available for viewing on the AWON website at [www.awon.org/connected95/fallen95.html](http://www.awon.org/connected95/fallen95.html)

At the end of the memorial ceremony, my brother and our youngest grandchildren who were with us (ages nine down to almost two) reverently laid a large laurel wreath at the base of the Tablets of the Unknown in honor of all the soldiers buried in this cemetery and those in other ABMC cemeteries. I said a silent prayer for all of your fathers.

I was proud of my grandchildren and great nieces who with great dignity solemnly performed this ritual. My three teenage grandchildren spoke during the memorial. All ten of Loren's great-grandchildren present had the honor of taking down the flag at the end of the ceremony.

ABMC has a great short video clip of the occasion [available on YouTube](#). The US Army mortuary unit that guarded dad's remains from the US Army 21st TSC Mortuary Unit based in Landstuhl, Germany, also posted a short clip on their website in remembrance.

My family and I were incredibly moved by these young soldiers and the respect they paid both to our living family members and to my father's memory. Over the course of a couple of days we had an opportunity to get to know them. What a fine team of young people who are nobly carrying out all of our fathers' legacies. Salute to them all.

An honor guard from Viano Air Force Base also participated in the ceremony. This experience reinforces to me and my brother Martin how fortunate we are to have the ABMC cherishing the ground where our father and yours lie. This cemetery is pristine and I know all the other ABMC cemeteries receive the same respectful and loving care. Angel Matos, the Superintendent, Fiorenzo Iacono and the rest of the staff coordinated the ceremony flawlessly.

So much gratitude owed to so many people!

*The Hintz family kindly arranged to have roses laid on the graves of several AWON fathers buried at Florence American cemetery, and a laurel wreath laid at the base of the Tablets of the Unknown. Fathers so honored were:*

*Raymond Manning, Steve Tobis, Clifford Audinet, Earl Alfred Thompson, Gerard J. Flannick, Loren E. Hintz, Philip C. Whiteside, Robert H. Taylor, George B. Darby, Godfrey J. Savard, Harry Koerner, Lewis B. Hubbard, Owen W. Fligg, Jr., William B. Marshall, Paul W. Blommen, William M. Shepard, Darold I. Garman, Albert W. Reinecker, Geno J. Polverari, Jerry T. Dillard, Joseph P. Croke, Lee B. Mappes, Lewis U. Sheller, Adam J. Hudzik, Donald McDonald, Eugene G. Goodner, Frank J. Piller, Joseph Ochal, Nicholas M. O'Neill, Roy R. Husted, Steeny L. Koon, Sydney W. Bennett, Thomas L. Shaw, William A. Haddock, William A. Kynoch, William F. Myers, Sr., John M. Palmer, Robert A. Borucki, Fred I. Thomas, George M. Paddock, John J. Doherty. To see pictures of these graves decorated with roses and the names on the Tablets of the Unknown visit the AWON Website by clicking the Connected "W" below.*



Left: The gravesite of the remains of Lt. Loren Hintz, father of Gretchen Hintz Wronka and Loren Martin Hintz, recovered in July of 2016, interred Nov. 16, 2019 at the Florence American Cemetery



## Wreaths Across America 2019 Wrapup

By WAA



AWON had the great privilege of partnering with Wreaths Across America this holiday season. The theme for Wreaths Across America in 2019 was "Everyone Plays a Part" and this sentiment was present in abundance on December 14, 2019 as 2.2 million wreaths were placed at 2158 participating cemeteries in all 50 states, at sea, and abroad, speaking the name of the fallen soldier as they did.

Nearly 600 truckloads of live balsam wreaths were shipped across the country by hundreds of volunteers using donated trucking services and fuel. These wreaths are gifts of respect and appreciation, each one donated by a private citizen or organization and placed on the graves by volunteers as a token of gratitude for the freedoms we all enjoy.

For centuries, fresh evergreens have been used as a symbol of honor. Wreaths Across America honors America's fallen from the Revolutionary War, to World War II, to the nation's present day conflicts. WAA believes that this tradition represents a living memorial that honors not only those we lost, but also our living veterans, active duty members of the military, and their families.

National Wreaths Across America Day will be held on December 19, 2020. Join in the mission of WAA: "Remember, Honor and Teach" - Remember the Fallen, Honor those that serve, and Teach the next generation the value of freedom at [www.wreathsasscrossamerica.org](http://www.wreathsasscrossamerica.org).

## Hey...where'd our AWON Connections go?

Unfortunately no one contributed AWON Connections photos this month. If you get together with your AWON siblings be sure to take a photo and send it to: Kristin Holmes, Editor, *The Star*, PO Box 242, Creston, WA, 99117, or email [atomicagebrush@gmail.com](mailto:atomicagebrush@gmail.com).

Do you want to take part in an AWON meetup, but aren't sure where to start? The best way is by taking part in a local or regional group.

AWON has roughly 50 hardworking regional coordinators. A Local Regional Coordinator, or LRC, is a source of first contact for new members, reaching out to welcome them to AWON. They will also ask if new members wish to be further contacted for gatherings. Gatherings don't have to be fancy. They can take place in a local restaurant, a park, a private home. They can even be as simple as presenting a wreath at a local national cemetery on Memorial Day, Veteran's Day, or at a Gold Star Families Memorial Monument.

If you joined AWON thinking that maybe getting together with people wasn't your cup of tea but have since changed your mind, it's not too late! Just contact Barry Barr-Finch at [barrfinch1@gmail.com](mailto:barrfinch1@gmail.com) and he will put you in touch with your LRC. And don't worry, your personal information is always kept confidential!

And if you haven't ever been contacted by your LRC, it may be that your area is lacking one. That could be you! AWON does not have LRCs in all areas, and in many of the larger states, distance is a factor. It's just too far for people to travel no matter how badly they would like to meet their AWON brothers and sisters. Having more people willing to organize gatherings and help keep our membership database current is of paramount importance to keeping AWON going into the future.

If you are interested in contacting your LRC or becoming a Local Regional Coordinator yourself, please contact Barry Barr-Finch at [barrfinch1@gmail.com](mailto:barrfinch1@gmail.com).

And if you're an LRC and haven't been in touch for a while, please reach out to Barry as well. Even if you'd prefer not to continue on in your coordinator role, AWON leadership would appreciate being updated on that decision so we can find another person to pick up the mantle. Thank you!





# AWON BOOKSTORE

## Price List / Order Form

### Books

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

Items marked with (\*) include P&H

**NEW!!!** *Pieces of Us*

By **Janice Crandell Powers** \$20.00\*

*A Daughter's Quest: Retracing My Father's Footsteps During World War II*

By **Laura Smail Sims** \$16.95

*The Gun Club: U.S.S. Duncan at Cape Esperance*

By Robert Fowler \$15.99

Collateral Damage, A World War II Orphan: Lost and Found

By **Reda Reynolds** \$9.00

Feisty: Chronicles & Confessions of an Old PR Warhorse

By **Joe Finnigan** \$12.99

*A Bit of Earth*

By **Wendy Crisp Lestina** \$13.95

*K.I.A.: An Orphans's Search for His Father Through the Fog of War*

By **Patrick Audinet** \$10.00\*

All proceeds from Audinet book benefit AWON

The Beauty of What Remains: Family Lost, Family Found

By **Susan Johnson Hadler** \$15.00\*

*In Search of a Pilot: Hanford "Rusty" J. Rustand*

By **Marilynn Rustand Lieurance** \$7.00\*

*My Father: More than a Picture, a Beer Bottle and a Flag*

By **Jerry W. Pinkerton** \$12.00\*

*The Lost Submarine: A True Story of Love and War*

By **Nancy Kenney** \$16.00

*"Daddy's Gone to War": The Second World War in the lives of America's Children*

By William M. Tuttle Jr., PhD \$30.00

*In My Father's Words: Letters From a WWII Soldier*

By **Bill McElvain** \$16.00

*Farebersville 1944*

By **Jeff Wignall** \$18.95

*A Soldier's Daughter*

By **Lois Brown Klein** \$17.00

*The Ordinary Infantrymen: Heroes Then, Heroes Again*

By **Imogene Woods** and Twelve WWII Infantrymen \$15.00

*Full Fathom Five: A Daughter's Search*

By **Mary Lee Coe Fowler** \$29.95

Love Always, Ben

By **Huey Tyra**, nephew Reduced! \$2.00

*Sporty Course* (bomber pilots)

By Col. Jack Swayze \$10.00

*The Hotton Report* (About the Battle For Hotton)

By Robert McDonald \$13.95

*World War II: A Legacy of Letters-One Soldier's Journey*

By **Clinton Frederick** \$26.95

*An 8th Airforce Combat Diary*

By John A. Clark \$49.95

*When I See a "Forty and Eight"... I Remember World War II*

By Lt. Col. Jacques Adnet USAF (ret.) Reduced! \$5.00!

*In Their Memory: American WWII Orphan's Network*

By Turner Publishing Company  
Was 49.95 Reduced \$10.00

*The Fighting Tigers: The Untold Story Behind the Names on The Quachita Baptist University WWII Memorial*

By William Downes \$24.95

*The War Journey of Major Damon "Rocky" Gause*

Forward by **Damon L. Gause** \$21.95

*No Greater Sacrifice, No Greater Love: A Son's Journey to Normandy*

By **Walter Ford Carter** Reduced! \$18.00

*D-Day + 60 Years: A Small Piece of Airborne History*

By Jerome J. McLaughline \$25.00

*They Also Served: Women's Stories From the WWII Era*

By Jeanie Sutton Lambright  
New Price! Hardcover \$20.00 Softcover \$10.00

*Finding Billy*

By **Diana Thompson Dale**, niece \$16.95

*Father Found: Life and Death as a Prisoner of the Japanese In WWII*

By **Duane Heisinger** \$13.95

*Shobun: A Forgotten War Crime in the Pacific*

By **Michael J. Goodwin** \$19.95

# AWON BOOKSTORE

## Price List / Order Form

### CD/DVD



\_\_\_ *Leather and Strings*

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

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

By 1LT John and Betty Peirson \$19.44

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

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

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

Reduced! was \$15.00 now \$3.00

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

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

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

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

## AWON Logo Products

*Closeout on the Following AWON merchandise*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

\$6.00

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

\_\_\_ \*AWON bookmarks

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

## The Star Newsletters

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

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

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

### Ordering Information

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

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

Washington State residents please add 7.8% sales tax

For more information and color photos please visit [www.awon.org/bookstore/bookstore.html](http://www.awon.org/bookstore/bookstore.html)

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AWON Bookstore

5745 Lee Road

Indianapolis, IN

46216

email: [bookstore@awon.org](mailto:bookstore@awon.org)

## Want to contribute to *The Star*?? Heres's how!!

The purpose of *The Star* is to serve the needs of AWON. While these tips help make our job easier, please don't hesitate to contribute even if you can't meet all these guidelines. We want to tell your family's story, honor our fallen heroes, and share news and information that AWON members find helpful above all else. We don't sweat the details, we're here to help! But the better the quality of information you give us here at *The Star*, the more easily we are able to do that.

Before contributing, be sure to check out the previous edition of [The Star](#) to get an idea of the type of features we publish. Most often, we share family stories about our fathers. That having been said, we are open to any submission - general history, biographies, current news items, editorials, fiction, art, and even poetry! We also love receiving pictures, and even if we can't run everything we receive in *The Star*, the extra items we receive are often featured on the AWON website.

*The Star* is published 4 times a year, Spring, Summer, Winter, and Fall. We can't always fit every article into every issue and sometimes we have to hold items for the next edition to include time-sensitive items. The sooner you submit your story, the more likely it is to be run in the next edition, but sometimes circumstances arise that make that impossible. Stories that are bumped will be given top priority for the next edition.

It is best for us to receive stories in .doc form and photos in a .jpg form (300 dpi or better if possible)

1) If writing a story about your father please include as much of the following info as you're able:

Full name, nicknames if any  
Date and location of birth  
Where he grew up  
His childhood and education  
Occupation  
Military Unit and location where he served  
MIA, KIA, or Date of Death  
Burial and Memorial Info  
Any additional information of historic or military importance regarding his service



2) Please don't forget to include information about your extended family as well:

Your name (PLEASE include your name in your contributions, we can't always figure out who you are from email!!!)  
Your mother's name  
Details of marriage (where and when)  
Father's parents' names  
Father's siblings names  
Your sibling's names and your ages when you lost your father  
Where you grew up  
How the loss of your father affected your family both emotionally and in a practical sense  
Your search to learn more about your father

3) Tell your story in any way you feel is appropriate. While 1000 words is a good goal length, be as thorough as you feel is required to paint a full picture of your father and how his loss affected your family.



It is best for us to receive your stories in .doc form as this allows us to edit them more easily.  
Some other details that may be welcome additions:

How and why he joined the military  
His military training (what, when, and where)  
Military assignments and special duties  
Medals awarded and special commendations he received  
Date he was sent overseas  
Circumstances of his death  
Circumstances of his burial  
What you have heard about the kind of man he was  
What you and your siblings miss about your father  
The legacy he leaves behind



4) Any photos you have are welcome additions. However, we do NOT want you to take any chances with your precious and irreplaceable pictures. For this reason, electronic files of pictures are preferred. While we at *The Star* are willing to receive photos via US Mail, scan them in ourselves, and return them to you, this does put your photos at risk of loss or damage while they travel in the mail.

To avoid this danger, it is best if you provide electronic files of your pictures:

Scan your photo with a scanner or have Kinko's or some other computer service bureau scan it for you (300 dpi or better)  
Put the photo into a .JPG file format with 300dpi resolution or better (and if you have the option, naming the file with your father's name really helps us identify who the photos are of.)

Attach the electronic photo file to your email and send it to [atomicsagebrush@gmail.com](mailto:atomicsagebrush@gmail.com) or [star@awon.org](mailto:star@awon.org).

We can also accept contributions sent by a third party such as a child, grandchild, or friend via email, but be sure to identify who the photos are originally coming from and what article they're meant to accompany!

If you don't have an email address and can't find someone to send the information on your behalf, we are willing to receive photos via US Mail to Kristin Holmes, Star Editor, PO Box 242, Creston WA, 99117, but this should be a last resort as sending in the mail puts your photos at risk of damage or loss. Whenever possible, computer files are preferred to protect your precious and irreplaceable photos.

5) If your story has already been published in a newspaper or other location, it's fine to send a copy of that article IN ADDITION to telling your story in your own words. But we can't run already-published articles as written. We also cannot use photos that have been printed in a newspaper. We need the original photo or a digital file to get enough resolution for publication. Newspaper articles that are scanned into a computer sent in a .PDF file are also very difficult for us to transcribe (and the photos are not useable as they are part of the PDF and can't be moved separately, in addition to being inadequate resolution.)

It is best for us to receive your story in your own words, in a .doc form, with pictures sent separately as .JPG files.

6) To send your stories and photos electronically please send to: [atomicsagebrush@gmail.com](mailto:atomicsagebrush@gmail.com) or [star@awon.org](mailto:star@awon.org)

And to send stories and photos via snail mail, please send to  
Kristin Holmes  
Editor, The Star  
PO Box 242  
Creston, Wa  
99117

**MINUTES**  
**AWON 2019 BOD**  
**Regular Tele-Meeting**  
**November 24, 2019**

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

Present: Lorin McCleary (LM), Rik Peirson (RP), Walt Linne (WL), Jeanne Rhinehart (JR), Gloria Layne (GL), Barry Barr-Finch (BF), Paul Bremer (PB), Judi Kramer (JK) Excused: Ann Mix (AM),

**President's Notes:**

WL: Facebook, Listserv and the reminders we are sending are helping keep members involved and on board. We are doing a nice job in bringing lapsed members back in. We just need to keep up the good work.

**Discussion of the 2020 Budget and Finances:**

A review of programs and spending plans for 2020 and the draft operating budget was conducted. GL: moved that next month, we have a separate meeting entirely about the budget for 2020. JR second. Motion carried.

**2020 National Conference**

Conference co-chairs WL and Barbara Kelly have visited Higgins hotel and it is very nice. They met with the Event Planner and he has lots of contacts with the WWII Museum. Sharon Taylor, an AWON member, is on BOD of WWII Museum and the Museum President Watson will be a speaker at the conference, likely on Tuesday night at the formal reception. Wednesday will be an open day for visiting the Museum and seeing the sites of New Orleans. Thursday will be Sharing Circles and the Banquet. The Museum has so much to offer our members. We are hoping to have 150 people in attendance.

BF: asked about any planned excursions as a part of the conference? Wednesday is an open day. WL: There are many things that can be done. The decision has not yet been made on whether excursions will be offered for the whole group of attendees. GL: are meetings in hotel or museum. WL: says both will be used. RP: is the museum near the hotel? WL: yes, the Higgins is about 100 steps from the main entrance to the Museum. The Civil War Museum is on the other side of the WWII Museum. GL: make sure everyone knows about the United Airlines 10% discount for flights.

**Proposed Projects for 2020**

RP and Membership Committee have a list of 30 projects that could be done for Membership in 2020. The Committee needs to meet to review the list and particularly emphasize projects that develops membership rolls. BF: suggests sending the list of projects to the entire BOD to review and respond to, setting priorities for the various tasks. RP will send out the original list of 30 projects to the BOD members and each person should respond.

GL: has been sending notes to people who post to the AWON Facebook pages informing them that family memberships are available and telling them about the AWON Conference in New Orleans at the WWII Museum.

**New Member Processes**

WL: Requests for new member packets were being sent to wrong email address for Judi Kramer. That has been fixed. WL: what is in the packet? JK: reviewed the information she sends out in a new member packet WL: we should also have an AWON membership card sent out to new members. JK: already always includes a membership card. RP: has sent 3 possible designs of a new membership card to the BOD for response. LM is now responding to new member inquiries received in the AWON email inbox.

**Past Members Rights:**

WL: How should we handle people who are no longer paying members of AWON but they are still on the Listserv and Facebook page? He is assigning that decision task to the Membership Committee to make a recommendation to the Board.

**Treasurer Replacement:**

WL: Paul Bremer is hoping to leave by the end of 2020. He agreed to continue to serve as Treasurer until a replacement can be found.

**Need for Volunteers:**

**Listserv**

WL: The Listserv moderators have asked to be replaced by December 31. LM: will be taking over the Listserv administrator job on a temporary basis. This cannot be done, however, until wp.org can make that change. Judy Hoffman and Judy Hathaway have agreed to continue to serve until the change can be made by wp.org. New members need to be added to the Listserv list.

JK: will Barbara Kelly let JK know when new members' checks are received? WL: yes she will.

GL: would like a report at the next meeting from BF about how things are going with the regional coordinators and he agreed to do that.

BF: The FB page has non-members enrolled. How we should handle this? LM: didn't WL assign that matter to the Membership Committee to resolve?

WL: we need to look at RP materials and respond by December 10th and we need to get the budget finalized for publication in the next newsletter. The budget needs a lot of cleaning-up to make things clearer and remove non-recurring items. WL will work with PB and establish a budget meeting in the second week in December.

RP: has only had 2 responses on the beta website from board members. He needs all hands on deck and is planning to launch the beta in January and the official .org site by the Conference. He needs input from the Board.

GL: Rik, just set a deadline for comments and move things along.

The Meeting was Adjourned

# Membership



This is a ☐ New Membership  
☐ Renewal  
☐ Family Membership  
☐ Database Registration Only

## About You:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mobilephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 If you're renewing, skip to the Dues Section  
 Your Relationship to Serviceman \_\_\_\_\_  
 Your Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
 How did you hear about AWON \_\_\_\_\_

## About your WWII Service Member:

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 First Name \_\_\_\_\_ M.I. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hometown & State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Military Unit \_\_\_\_\_  
 Rank \_\_\_\_\_ Service Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Death \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Burial Location \_\_\_\_\_  
 Wife's Maiden Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Additional information on your WWII Service Member's  
 Military Service, Death, or Burial. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## Please send your check:

Payable to AWON, include it with this form and send it to:

**AWON Treasurer**  
**5745 Lee Road**  
**Indianapolis, Indiana 46216**



## Membership Types:

☐ **Orphan Member:** Any son or daughter of a member of the US Armed Forces, Coast Guard, or Merchant Marine who was killed, remains missing in action, or who died in the line of duty, or who later died of wounds or injuries sustained during WWII.

☐ **Family Member:** Other relations who are not a son or daughter.

☐ **Supporting Member:** Other individuals with an interest in WWII, who wish to support us and participate in our outreach activities and programs.

## Membership Dues:

**Basic Orphan Member Dues** are \$25 a year – starting when we receive your check. This includes your AWON Membership Card, a Web Tribute for your father, a physical or E-version of our quarterly newsletter, **The Star**, a personal account on the AWON online List-serv, and an account on the AWON Facebook Page.

**Family Member Dues** are \$25 a year – including a printed Star – OR \$10 a year for Membership with an E-Star.

**Supporting Member Dues** are \$25 a year – including either version of **The Star**.

## Membership Dues Levels:

Please circle your Dues Level below:

	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years
Orphan	\$25	\$48	\$70
Family (Printed Star Version)	\$25	\$48	\$70
Family (E-Star Version)	\$10	\$20	\$30
Supporting	\$25	\$48	\$70
Gold Star (Increased Donation)	\$100	\$192	\$280

## Donation Considerations:

Memorial Day Wreath Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 General Operations & Outreach \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total Dues & Donations Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Submittable  
 Online >>>





Editor, The Star  
JH Geiger Operations Center  
5745 Lee Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46216

Non-Profit  
U.S. Postage PAID  
Indianapolis, IN  
Permit No. 6985

### Address Service Requested

Is it time  
for you to  
renew? 🖐️

## The Star

"Breaking Down the Wall of Silence"

AWON Headquarters  
5745 Lee Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46216  
[www.awon.org](http://www.awon.org)



### AWON Mission

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

# AWON Directory

#### Address Corrections

Lorin McCleary [ldmccleary@gmail.com](mailto:ldmccleary@gmail.com)

**Archives** OPEN POSITION

#### Bookstore

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**Friends of the National  
WWII Memorial Liason** OPEN POSITION

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#### The STAR

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#### Washington, D.C. Liason

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