



CHENEY-ARMSTRONG POST # 5 NH

Wayne E. Thomas, Commander

G. Jarvis Coffin, Adjutant

Robert A. Benoit, Chaplain

Bernard F. Wynn, Children & Youth Officer

John H. Franklin, Sr. Vice Commander

Richard L. Loudon, Finance Officer

Cles V. Staples, Service Officer

Alan J. Zeller, Sergeant-at-Arms

John Franklin, Historian and Liaison for US Naval Sea Cadets

Henry Emery, Jr. Vice Commander and Committee Chairman of Veteran Affairs

Dear Post 5 Members,

March 7th, 2016

March 6th, 2016 Post meeting at the Peterborough Community Center at 2 pm, 25 Elm Street.

April 3rd, 2016 Post meeting at 1400 at the Peterborough Community Center.

May 1st, 2016 Post meeting

May 21st, 2016: Armed Forces Day- Poppy Day please let us know if you can give out Poppies. Two of the places we are going to give out Poppies on Friday and Saturday. The Poppy Fund is at \$00.00.

May 30th, Memorial Day

In Memory of Eileen Elizabeth (Dupree) Varnum of Greenfield who died on February 24th at the age of 90. Eileen was married for 63 years to **Arthur Varnum**. \$25 was donated to The NH Food Bank.

Membership: We nag you about membership. Please help us find new members. National wants to have 1,000,000 members by March 9th, 2019 which is the 100 year Anniversary of the American Legion. So far we have had 100% for the last nine years and this year our goal is 190 but our 2019 goal is 204 members which is what National says was Post #5's all time high which must have been right after WWII. The Post currently has 188 members (98.9%) and the Auxiliary has 43 members.

New Members: **Lester M. Herzog**, from Greenfield, WWII- Air Force; **William E. Yoe**, of Dublin, Vietnam- Coast Guard; **Stephen J. Mallory**, from Peterborough, Panama/Gulf- Army; **William F. Edson**, from Peterborough, Iraq- Army, (Bill has been a member of the Legion for 20 years): *Nancy J. Mallory*, of Peterborough joined the Auxiliary. Welcome

Wayne presented **Albert E. Roy**, of Peterborough, with his 60 year certificate as a member of the American Legion. Al served in the Army during WWII from 1942-1945.

Moved: **David R. Irwin** and wife Anne Marie moved from Peterborough to Beaufort SC; **William R. MacDuff** and wife Susan moved to Governor Square in Peterborough; Please let us know if you move or change your phone number or change or drop your email. At the end of the month, **Bill Severn**, of Nashua will be moving to the Tilton Veterans' Home. Bill was a submariner during Korea and former Adjutant of Post 5.

February's meeting was very interesting and covered a lot of topics. 16 members were present. This is a good representation because a lot of Posts don't hold meetings or have quorums to validate their meetings.

The election of officers was held and the present slate was re-elected and will be sworn in at the May meeting.

We were reminded that \$27 of your \$35.00 dues goes to National, State, and District. The \$8.00 is what this Post will be running on. Poppy money is for Veterans' needs only. Donations are always appreciated and members and spouses have been generous in the past.

Member **Arthur Pendleton**, of Temple, shared his published work about Guadalcanal during WWII. Arthur was in the first wave of Marines to land. If you wish to read it please ask Wayne.

Finances: Current checking Account Balance: \$428.89

Current Available Scholarship Fund Balance: \$2227.98

USNSC Monadnock Squadron: *The big news is that Monadnock Squadron scored approximately 3.8 on its annual inspection. I haven't seen the official report yet, so there may be a minor adjustment in the final grade. At any rate, LCDR David Hull, our Regional Director, said it was the highest grade he's ever given. How we may stack up against other units, both regionally and nationally, isn't known yet. Our current strength is 23 cadets, seven of whom are female. On March 5, several of our cadets will be helping display a giant American flag at Verizon Arena in Manchester, a patriotic event sponsored by the Manchester Monarchs hockey team. Also in March, on the 19th, there will be several cadets attending a Sea Cadet dinner/dance put on by the Harlan R. Dickson Division of Londonderry. Respectfully submitted, LTJG John Franklin, Executive Officer.*

Awards presented at the Inspection were: Petty Officer 2nd Class Lucas Beteau, recipient of the SAR Good Citizenship Award; Chief Petty Officer Christian Hirsch recipient of the DAR Good Citizenship Award and Region 1-3 Cadet of the Year; Petty Officer 1st Class Patrick LaRoche recipient of the VFW Leadership Award.

Honor Flight New England: Honor Flight New England is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization with one goal- to take New England area WWII and Korean veterans on a one-day trip to Washington DC to visit and reflect at the memorials that were built in their honor. Since June of 2009. Honor Flight has made this dream come true for over 1300 veterans. The trip is completely free to the veterans- they paid the price though the sacrifices they made many years ago. You can visit their website (honorflightnewengland.org).

The POW/MIA Committee is looking to purchase a set of service flags and a flag stand to be used during the Spirit Of The Eagle 24 hour Vigil held each year, the weekend after the third Friday of September. (The third Friday of September is the National POW/MIA Recognition Day.) The Department of NH has held the Vigil for almost 20 years. The cost of each flag, (pole, flag and topper) is \$115.00. They need 18 different flags. Wayne is going to ask the members on Sunday for the money.

Bill Edson, who just joined the Post, has offered to build the Post a website and put us on Facebook. He is the Executive Director of the Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center, Inc. located in Gardner

MA. www.veterans-outreach.org “Montachusett Veterans Outreach Center provides support to military veterans and their families in need of services to develop a resilient, self-sufficient lifestyle essential to succeed in today’s environment. Since its inception, the Center has been faithful to the mission, vision, and guiding principles of founder Cathy Stallings McWilliams. The MVOC offers low-income housing alternatives and residential readjustment programs, mental health counseling, case management, employment training, personal development, veterans’ benefits resource assistance, medical transportation, and food assistance.”

“Never Leave Anyone Behind”

DID YOU KNOW...

- *84% is the divorce rate among returning veterans
- *89% of homeless Veterans received Honorable Discharge
- *210,000 Iraq and Afghanistan Vets being treated for PTSD

The Post sponsored River Marmorstein in the District and State High School Oratorical. River came in 3rd in the State Competition. They had to write and memorize an 8-10 minute speech about the Constitution plus write four, 3-5 minute speeches on two Amendments and 2 Articles. (The person who runs the competition draws one of the 3-5 minute speeches from a hat which they also have to give). River came in third. He received \$100 from the Post, \$100 from District 2, and \$500 from the Department. Here is Rivers speech.....

We the people. Those three words have a special meaning, those three words are the first three words from the most important document in the entire United States of America. The document which is so important it has been amended many times, debated endlessly, interpreted in an unlimited number of ways, and something defines a way of life for Americans. This document, which was signed almost 230 years ago in 1787, is the foundation for the American Government.

Our Constitution has been amended 27 times over its lifespan. It is flexible, yet humble. The original version had only 7 articles. 200 years after the first ten amendments to the Constitution called the Bill of Rights was written, the 27th amendment was ratified by the states in 1992. This amendment set the rules for Congressional pay. It amazes me every time I wonder about our Constitution how this one idea means so much to the United States Government, how it’s even still applicable to us today in 2016? The world has certainly changed so much in the past 230 years; and the Constitution has changed with it.

The reason the Constitution is still applicable: is because it was founded on a set of basic principles and values which the American people hold *near and dear to our hearts*. These principles are the framework of our nation – these principles are what insure life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The Constitution is what keeps the **power in the hands of the people** and out of the Federal Government.

However, as our world changes, the Constitution needs to be able to adapt. Adapting a policy is never anything to be taken lightly – especially when its adapting the base for the entire United States government. I’ve had a unique privilege of being “*at the table*” for many discussions of *local policy changes and decision making*. This experience has given me a great respect for the process and admiration for doing it – after all it is a *duty* to my fellow citizens that I uphold.

I relate this duty to the Constitution - albeit on a much smaller scale, the same basic principles still apply. I’ve been elected by my peers to represent them at the ConVal school board level, a position I created with the blessing of the school board. I’ve been asked to be the students’ representative on this board. Being elected by the people, to serve the people covers two of the seven basic principles our Constitution is founded on: popular sovereignty, and republicanism.

Changing things as small as athletic fees is nothing compared to making an amendment to the Constitution. The basic principles stand true. The duty of the American citizens to make the changes required to keep the government in order with time; many get by with just simply voting for their representatives. When my school district was started in the

1960s, it was vastly different than the school district today and I've been part of making the changes to reflect that – same goes for the United States when the Constitution was signed 230 years ago. The Constitution provides a mechanism for flexible and continuing governance. Our forefathers created a Constitution that gave the citizens the duty to amend over time – as we've seen with the civil rights, woman's and 18-year-old's rights to vote.

The basic principles that are the cornerstone of our democracy hold true.

When I think about the duties and obligations a citizen has to our government, I think of civic engagement. Supporting and defending the Constitution and your country if needed, respecting and obeying the law and the rights of yourself and others, paying your taxes and serving on a jury if called upon, staying informed in the issues affecting your community, and participating in your local community and in the democratic process. These are all forms of civic engagement, and are all vital to a community.

However, as we go further into the 21st century, I've noticed a trend of our youth caring less about exercising their rights. I've heard all too many times “**why should I vote; my vote *doesn't* matter**”. In reality, their vote does matter; it's part of being a good citizen; and it is their duty. The vote of a young person matters the most. My generation will inherit this great nation. We need to be exercising our right to be a part of the democracy and making this country a better place for our children and grandchildren.

It is disappointing to me, that my peers and other youth are not as civically engaged as they should be, and as was intended by our forefathers in writing the Constitution.

A study conducted at the University of Pennsylvania¹ in 2011 showed that only one third of American citizens could not name the three branches of government. *Do you know the three branches?* They are the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branch. This statistic is troubling. Our Constitution was based on 7 basic principles, two of those mean that the power of the government comes from the people, and the government is elected by the people. As we move further into the 21st century, in my opinion it feels as though less and less people every day are involved in our government; not upholding their duties and responsibilities as a citizen.

Another statistic from New Hampshire: Secretary of State Bill Gardner predicted that in NH's presidential primary 550,000 ballots would be cast, which would be equal to just 55% of the eligible voters in our state. His prediction was off by 8000.² Just under half of the people eligible to vote in New Hampshire will not vote in the upcoming election; and this is a *good turnout*. In the 2014 elections, only 1-in-5 people between the age of 18 and 29 cast a ballot. Furthermore, in school district elections, the turnout can often be under 25%. I am 17, and I do not yet have the right to vote, and it is something that I certainly would not throw away.

This year, for my school district meeting – only 140 people from nine towns were in attendance. This is a disappointment to the way that our civic should be. The process and the responsibility of our citizens isn't being carried out.

The right to vote and be a part of the democracy is one of the most vital rights of any American citizen. It's shameful to have such a low voter turnout, especially in local issues where the issues are more focused on the community you're a part of.

Seeing more people take advantage of their constitutional right to vote would be a way to both elect better candidates for Congress and reflect the views of the people. If we become more active in the election process then hopefully better candidates will be elected and more things will get done on the Federal, state and local level.

¹ Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania

² Accessed from NH Secretary of State's Office (2/19/16)

But, if we can't force people to vote – what can we do to better serve our country? The Constitution intends that the government will come from the people; it's the duty of the people to be involved in their governance. It is a responsibility granted to us under the Constitution to vote, why do so many people simply choose not to vote?

If we want to get more citizens following up on their duties under the Constitution, we need to focus on the problems at stake. Young people are less and less likely to get involved in the democratic process nor be a part of the local community – some are scared of the process, some don't know the process, and others simply don't care about the process. **Education is the key! Let's put Civics back into the schools!**

Are we at a point in time as a nation where the times have changed so much that we need to make another change to the Constitution? A change that will bring more Americans into being civically engaged – upholding their duties under the Constitution. The Constitution has mechanisms for change with the world and our great nation – is it time to make that change to better reflect the world today?

Donation: The Auxiliary Department President thanked all the Posts and Auxiliaries for the donations totaling \$2517.00 to Liberty House.

March Dates:

March 3rd, 1915: Naval Reserve Established
3rd, 1911: Dental Corps Established
3rd, 1945: American Forces capture Manila
4th, 1925: Navy Band Established
5th, 1942: U.S. Navy Sea Bees Birthday
9th, 1847: U.S. Forces land in Vera Cruz, Mexico
13th, Daylight Savings Time Begins
17th, St. Patrick's Day
17th, 1776: British Forces evacuate Boston
19th, 2003: Operation Iraqi Freedom Began
20th, Palm Sunday/ First Day of spring
23rd, 1953: Battle of Pork Chop Hill
24th, 1999: NATO began Operation Allied Force in Kosovo
25th, Good Friday
25th, National Medal of Honor Day
27th, Easter
29th, 1780: British besieged Charleston SC
29th, 1863: Vicksburg Campaign begins
30th, 1973 Last U.S. Troops left Vietnam

Respectfully Submitted,
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