



# Manuel Schneidmiller Post 154, Inc.

## Rathdrum Idaho

### Newsletter

Volume 6 Issue #1

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Editor: Jean Bledsoe



#### Commander:

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had an enjoyable and safe Holiday. We had a fantastic December at the Post thanks to all of you! We had our annual Christmas Party and as usual it was magnificent. Thank you to all the folks for planning it, decorating the KTEC hall and all who brought the delightful food and the wonderful gifts for the Toys for Tots program. We had such a great turnout with fun door prizes! We also participated in Wreaths Across America. What a great program for our Post to contribute our time to. Our Honor Guard did a remarkable job. With this new year all of us here at Post 154 will continue to strive to maintain, and even look for ways to improve, the excellence and quality of our American Legion Post. You can help by getting involved and attend our meetings on the 4th Thursday of the month at 6 p.m. Also, if you know someone that is eligible, but not a member of the American Legion, invite them in as your guest and show them our Post and see if they would be interested in becoming a member. Again, thanks to all of those that have helped me and the Post over the past year.

I encourage Post 154 Legionnaires to attend the monthly Executive Committee meetings to see how we discuss and plan for our Post. It is imperative that we conduct our business openly and address any ideas, suggestions or concerns to help our Post and organization perform better. The next meeting will be at the Lion's Club on the second Thursday, at 6 p.m.

Never forget that we are all members of the world's greatest veterans' organization: we are the American Legion! As your Commander, if there are any questions or suggestions to improve our Post, please contact me at [dsasse1962@gmail.com](mailto:dsasse1962@gmail.com)

For the Good of the Legion, God Bless America and our Community. Dee Sasse, Post Commander

**First Vice-Commander:**

# MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

## Happy New Year to All!

Since our inception in 2015, with 16 members, Post 154 has grown steadily each year. Today, we have a membership of 136, of which 99 members have renewed for 2020. There are still 37 members that have not yet renewed.

The American Legion, for most of its existence has operated under a calendar for members and a fiscal year for its general activities. This fiscal year commences after the conclusion of the National Convention held at the end of August and continues into the following August when the next National Convention concludes.

The membership dues forms are mailed sometime in July or early August and are to be paid by the end of December to remain in good standing. Payments received during January will eliminate delinquency status. The American Legion continues to send reminders through June of that same year. A procedure of reinstatement needs to be used after June.

*(Those who don't renew by June also lose their continuous years status. We don't wish this to happen.)* We encourage you to consider early payment of dues. If you misplaced your dues form, please consider the following option—make your check payable to American Legion Post 154. Post Dues are (\$45.00 per year)

American Legion Post 154  
P.O. Box 1116  
Rathdrum, ID 83858

We thank you for your continuing support of the programs and activities of our Post. Membership is an example you are "Still Serving America."

Most Sincerely, *Bill Kinder*, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander  
Membership Chairman

## Finance Officer:

As we come to the close of another year, we thank our God and our Community for their Support and for the opportunity to be of service to our local Veterans, our local Kids, and our local and larger Community. Our Post continues to be a beacon of service in all these areas, and we have some amazing Legion Post 154 members who devote a huge amount of personal time to our Post and to our Community.

As of November, our Post has contributed a total of 9,533 hours of Service. Service to Veterans (5,787 hours through November), service to our Community (1,367 hours), and service to Youth (1,367 hours). In addition, our Honor Guard has provided 619 hours of service by participating in Veteran funerals, Veteran ceremonies and other Community events. We are on track to total 10,000 hours of service this year if December mirrors the rest of the year. Volunteer hours are valued at \$22.00 per hour, so our Post is very close to donating service valued at \$220,000 this year. BE PROUD OF WHAT YOU HAVE ACCOMPLISHED.

My job gets more complicated as we near year end. I need an Audit Committee to review our bank accounts, all the checks we have written and all our deposits to insure everything having to do with our finances has been done correctly.

I need a Budget Committee to assist in the preparation of a 2020 Budget for our Post. I also need volunteers to step up to help with our major Community fundraiser – our Poppy Distribution. Much to do from lining up the stores where we distribute Poppies, coordinating Volunteers, etc., etc. In addition to my normal Finance Officer duties, I will also be preparing our 2019 Federal Tax Return.

Please step up and take advantage of these many opportunities to become more involved in our Post and to help with these important Committees. As my dear old Mum used to say when assigning me to clean the bathrooms: “Many hands make light work” ... and a much happier Finance Officer.

Merry Christmas from YOUR Uncle Scrooge!! – Len Crosby, Finance Officer



Want to make a simple and delicious cinnamon-y shortbread? [Go here.](#)

## Legislative Chairman:

**House Committee Passes the IMPROVE Well-Being for Veterans Act:** On Thursday, December 5, the House Veterans' Affairs Committee held a markup hearing to consider H.R. 3495, the *IMPROVE Well-Being for Veterans Act*. The bill passed the committee and can now be voted on by the full House of Representatives. H.R. 3495 creates a three-year pilot program that would offer grants to community providers who offer services that target factors that contribute to suicide such as financial stress, relationship, stress, readjustment and community integration issues, housing insecurity, and others. The goal is to reach the two-thirds of veterans who commit suicide and have not utilized VA prior to their suicides.

**Citizenship for Children of Military Members and Civil Servants Act Passed:** This Tuesday, December 3, the House passed H.R. 4803, *Citizenship for Children of Military Members and Civil Servants Act*. This bipartisan legislation was introduced by Representatives Doug Collins (R-Ga.) and Jerrold Nadler (D-N.Y.) to ensure that children of deployed military and government families benefit from provision of U.S. law that confers automatic U.S. citizenship and are not disadvantaged because their parents are serving our country abroad.

**Congress Holds Hearing on Military Housing:** On December 3, the Senate Committee on Armed Services held a hearing on "Government Accountability Office on Privatized Housing Findings to Include Responses from the Military Services on Ongoing Reports of Substandard Housing Conditions and Services." The Secretaries and Joint Chiefs testified on the progress being made to bring back the level of quality living our military families deserve. The House of Representatives also heard hearings on this matter on December 5, the hearing, "Privatized Housing: Are Conditions Improving for Our Military Families?" was held to discuss improving privatized military housing for our military families. The CEO's from the five largest privatized military housing companies gave their perspectives and plans for bringing family housing back to the level our military families deserve. The subcommittee has been conducting extensive oversight of the privatized military family housing program and expressed concerns over systemic failures with the military and provided graphic and disturbing testimony about lead and mold exposure, rodent infestations, rude and dismissive from military spouses.

### As we approach the Political Season - A REMINDER:

#### **The wearing of the cap and usage of The American Legion emblem, facilities and political donations**

According to Article II, Section 2, of the Constitution of The American Legion, "**The American Legion shall be absolutely nonpolitical and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles nor for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment.**" The National Charter, approved by Congress, also stipulates The American Legion as an organization is nonpolitical which has been interpreted by the National Judge Advocate as "nonpartisan" in modern lingo. Therefore, The American Legion as an organization is prohibited from contributing, helping or endorsing a candidate. However, a member, as a private citizen, and not representing the organization, can employ whatever legal and ethical means to advance his or her candidate.

**The Legion cap is considered the official Legion uniform. It is not an individual Legion member's decision on the appropriate usage of the cap and emblem. If attending a political event, The American Legion cap, or any clothing with the emblem visible, should be removed so as not to imply endorsement by The American Legion. The problem is the assumption of endorsement by those who see the emblem or name worn at an improper location, such as a partisan rally.**

**When using post facilities to host candidates, post should remove emblem and Legion flag to avoid any impression of endorsements. Candidates for all parties must be presented equal opportunity at the same time to use the facilities on the same terms and conditions as other competing candidates.**

If financial contributions are offered by candidates for political office, campaigns, political action committees or political parties, The American Legion should politely decline. Accepting these contributions may be perfectly legal, but The American Legion must avoid any perception of supporting any candidate or political party.

The American Legion values its independence and effectiveness on veterans' issues. This stance is best maintained by neutrality on individual candidates or political parties. The American Legion by legal definition is non-partisan and supports only issues which impact your Four Pillars. — Len Crosby, Legislative Chairman

## Service Officer:

2020. Twenty/twenty. What my eyesight used to be. Ahh... There are a lot of things that used to be - some good, some bad. The hope of a new year is exactly that. Hope. We can physically, mentally and emotionally throw out the trash of 2019 and focus on whatever comes our way. There's bound to be nasty weather and stormy clouds that cross our path from time to time, but as corny as it sounds.....if we look for the rainbow, well....just that small focus can bring us out of the storm. As veterans, we may experience unique struggles and so it's important to take advantage of what the VA has to offer. Maybe this is the year to have resource information at your fingertips. This might help you start:

VA provides a continuum of forward-looking outpatient, residential, and inpatient mental health services across the country. Points of access to care span VA medical centers, Community Based Outpatient Clinics, Vet Centers, and mobile Vet Centers. <https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/>

Excerpted from the guide:

- **Focus on Recovery** - Recovery empowers the Veteran to take charge of his/her treatment and live a full and meaningful life. This approach focuses on the individual's strengths and gives respect, honor, and hope to our nation's heroes and their families.
- **Coordinated Care for the Whole Person** - VA health care providers coordinate with each other to provide safe and effective treatment for the whole person—head to toe. Having a healthy body, satisfying work, and supportive family and friends, along with getting appropriate nutrition and exercising regularly, are just as important to mental health as to physical health.
- **Mental Health Treatment in Primary Care** - Primary Care clinics use Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACTs) to provide the Veteran's healthcare. A PACT is a medical team that includes mental health experts.
- **Mental Health Treatment Coordinator** - Veterans who receive specialty mental health care have a Mental Health Treatment Coordinator (MHTC). The MHTC's job is to understand the overall mental health goals of the Veteran.
- **Around-the-Clock Service** - Emergency mental health care is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week at VA medical centers. If your VA does not have a 24-hour emergency room, it must provide these services through a local, non-VA hospital. Telephone evaluations at VA medical centers and the national crisis hotline are also available 24/7.
- **Care that is Sensitive to Gender & Cultural Issues** - VA health care providers receive training about military culture, gender differences, and ethnic issues in order to better understand each Veteran.
- **Care Close to Home** - VA is moving closer to where Veterans live by adding more rural and mobile clinics and working with other health care providers in the community.
- **Evidence-Based Treatment** - Evidence-based treatments are treatments that research has proven are effective for particular problems. Mental health providers receive training on a wide variety of proven treatments. Mental health providers must offer evidence-based treatments to Veterans.
- **Family & Couple Services** - Sometimes, as part of a Veteran's treatment, some members of the Veteran's immediate family or the Veteran's legal guardian may be included and receive services, such as family therapy, marriage counseling, grief counseling, etc.

- Ruth Aresvik, Service Officer





## Shelia and Henry Snyder by Jim Belshaw |

Shelia Snyder asks a straightforward, troubling question: “Why do I have to worry about my grandkids because their grandfather served our country? There is nothing to justify that.” Her husband, Henry, served in Vietnam with the Army in 1968-69. He is diabetic and the recipient of a VA-approved claim related to Agent Orange. One of her grandchildren, born with multiple and devastating birth defects, died a few months after her first birthday. When the founder of the Agent Orange Quilt of Tears, Jennie LeFevre, died in 2004, Shelia and Henry took over, travelling with the Quilt, and sharing information about the horrific effects of Agent Orange. It wasn’t until the late 1990s that Shelia became aware of the Agent Orange issues veterans and their families had been dealing with for many years. Her husband, Henry, had met a Vietnam veteran, Jack Griffin, in an online chat room and over time forged a close friendship. Because the chat line was voice, not typed, Shelia often picked up bits of the conversation while at home with Henry. Both men came from Michigan, and there was much talk about hunting and fishing and other things they had in common. One day one of those commonalities caught Shelia’s ear. “Jack told Henry about Agent Orange,” she said. “At that time Henry had become diabetic. He used to drive a truck for a living, but once he became diabetic, he had to stop. Jack told him he needed to make a claim with the VA. He was just on him and on him and on him about having that checked out. Finally, Henry got tired of hearing Jack push, and he went to the VA.” Henry put in a claim for diabetes. Shelia called it a “lifesaver,” because it allowed both of them to educate themselves about Agent Orange. Jack advised him on what to do and how to handle the VA. When Henry’s claim finally was approved, though, the celebration was bittersweet. Jack Griffin had serious health issues of his own — non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma. “Jack died of Agent Orange-related cancer almost to the day that Henry got the letter from the VA saying that his claim had been approved,” Shelia said. “Henry went into a terrible slump when Jack died. It was like Jack was part of our family. His voice was in our house every day. It was very strange for me. Henry and I had lost parents together, and I never saw the kind of reaction I was getting after Jack passed away.” About the same time, two people came into Shelia Snyder’s life that would have great influence over the years to come. One was Fred Wilcox, who had written a book, “*Waiting for an Army to Die: The Tragedy of Agent Orange*”. The book tells the stories of veterans and their families and the legacy of Agent Orange that afflicted them. The second person was Jennie LeFevre, the widow of a Vietnam veteran and the creator of the Agent Orange Quilt of Tears. (On the Web it is at [www.agentorangequiltoftears.com](http://www.agentorangequiltoftears.com)) To read the full story of Sheila and Henry, [go here](#).



Your Toxic Exposure article this month covers the health risks involved in exposure to tetrachloroethylene. Information courtesy of the Division of Toxicology and Human Health Sciences

**HIGHLIGHTS: Tetrachloroethylene is a manufactured chemical used for dry cleaning and metal degreasing and in the aerospace industry. Exposure to very high concentrations of tetrachloroethylene can cause dizziness, headaches, sleepiness, incoordination, confusion, nausea, unconsciousness, and even death. Tetrachloroethylene has been found in at least 949 of the 1,854 National Priorities List sites identified by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).**

### **What is tetrachloroethylene?**

Tetrachloroethylene is a nonflammable colorless liquid. Other names for tetrachloroethylene include perchloroethylene, PCE, perc, tetrachloroethene, and perchlor. Most people can smell tetrachloroethylene when it is present in the air at a level of 1 part in 1 million parts of air (1 ppm) or more.

Tetrachloroethylene is used as a dry-cleaning agent and metal degreasing solvent. It is also used as a starting material (building block) for making other chemicals and is used in some consumer products.

### **What happens to tetrachloroethylene when it enters the environment?**

Tetrachloroethylene can be released into air, water, and soil at places where it is produced or used. Tetrachloroethylene breaks down very slowly in the air and so it can be transported long distances in the air. Half of the amount in the air will degrade in approximately 100 days.

Tetrachloroethylene evaporates quickly from water into air. It is generally slow to break down in water. Tetrachloroethylene may evaporate quickly from shallow soils or may filter through the soil and into the groundwater below. It is generally slow to break down in soil.

### **How might I be exposed to tetrachloroethylene?**

When you bring clothes from the dry cleaners, they will release small amounts of tetrachloroethylene into the air.

When you drink water containing tetrachloroethylene, you are exposed to it. You might also be exposed to tetrachloroethylene that is released into the air during showering and bathing.

People residing near contaminated sites or dry-cleaning locations may be exposed to higher levels than the general population.

People working in the dry-cleaning industries or using metal degreasing products may be exposed to elevated levels of tetrachloroethylene.

### **How can tetrachloroethylene affect my health?**

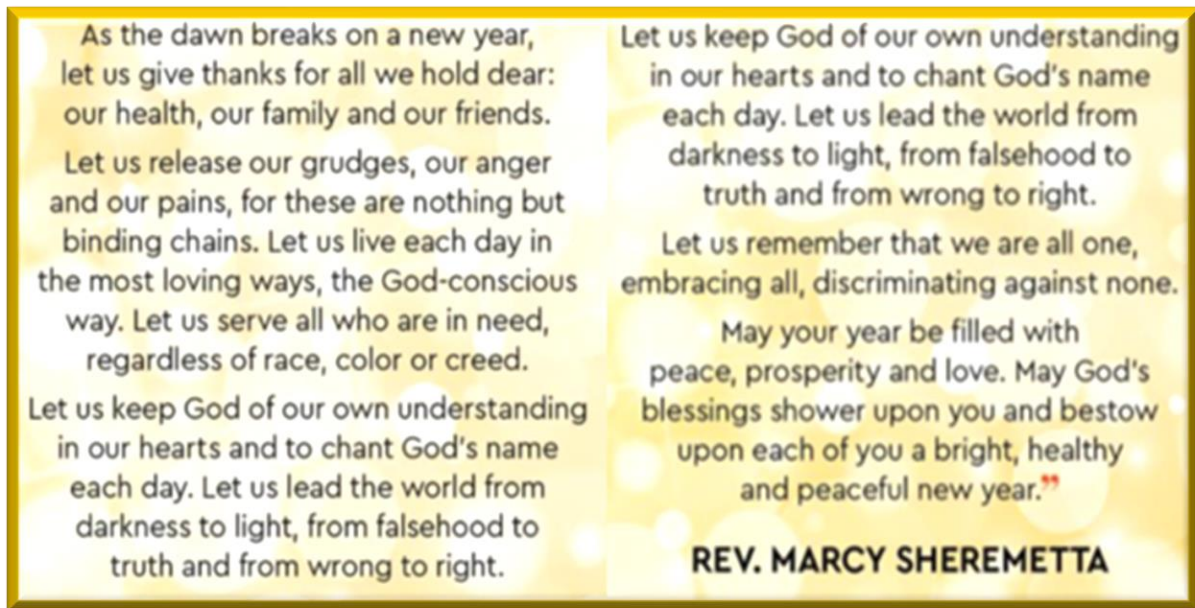
High levels of tetrachloroethylene for a brief period may cause dizziness or drowsiness, headache, and incoordination; higher levels may cause unconsciousness and even death.

Exposure for longer periods to low levels of tetrachloroethylene may cause changes in mood, memory, attention, reaction time, and vision.

Studies in animals exposed to tetrachloroethylene have shown liver and kidney effects, and changes in brain chemistry, but we do not know what these findings mean for humans. For complete article, [go here](#).

Submitted by Jean Bledsoe. If you would like to contribute to this discussion, *send an email to:* [toxicexposure.stories@gmail.com](mailto:toxicexposure.stories@gmail.com)

## Chaplain's Pew:



Submitted by Helen Kinder, Chaplain

## Veterans Help Net & Veteran Chronicle

This is a new feature for 2020 in both the newsletter and our website. **Veterans Help Net** is a volunteer Veteran Support Organization that started in the Northwest to serve Veterans in Eastern Washington and North Idaho. It was conceived by two dedicated veterans (both members of Post 154) that believed that there were a lot of Veterans out there that were not aware of the benefits and help that was available to them because they served.

One of their projects is the "VETERANS CHRONICLE," a cooperative project with the Spokesman Review. It is a six-page section that is published monthly and features: Veteran Stories and "Did you Know" articles, as well as special features highlighting Veteran service organizations and other relevant veteran stories, events, and resources.

**Veterans Help Net** has a website featuring the chronicle and a ton of information to bring help and hope to veterans. Here is a link to that site: <http://veteranshelpnet.com/>

And [click here](#) to see the current edition of the **Veterans Chronicle**, and [here](#) to go to the new page on Post 154's website.

Below is an article from the December **Veterans Chronicle** which features **Bryan Bledsoe**, one of the founders of **Veterans Help Net** and the adjutant of Post 154. – Jean Bledsoe, Editor



## Veterans Help Net and Veterans Chronicle Presents:

### *“THE MAN IN THE ARENA”*

By Don Walker

“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”

~ Theodore Roosevelt



Bryan Bledsoe, Post Falls, ID

Bryan Bledsoe is a U.S. Army veteran who grew up in Spokane and attended Lewis and Clark High School. After high school, Bryan spent three years active duty in the Army and served one year in Vietnam as a helicopter crew chief and door gunner (66/67). When Bryan returned to Spokane, he used his GI Bill benefits to graduate from Eastern Washington University. After many years working in real estate and mortgage in Spokane and North Idaho, Bryan retired in 2011. He and his wife Jean, who is also an active and committed veteran, live in Post Falls, Idaho. Bryan devotes much of his time – really, most of it – to veteran organizations and issues.

Bryan is an active member in the following organizations, and you will often see him in the Honor Guard at many of the veteran activities, ceremonies and funerals.

**Veterans Help Net:** One of founders and directors of the organization that helps publish Veterans Chronicle in The Spokesman-Review and the Veterans Press in the Coeur d’Alene Press with the mission to offer help and hope to veterans, their spouses and families.

**The American Legion:** Member and adjutant of Post 154 in Rathdrum, Idaho. Also District 1 Adjutant for posts from the Canadian border to the St. Joe River.

**Disabled American Veterans:** Member of Fort Sherman Chapter #9 (DAV) and coordinator of chapter social media.

**Veteran of Foreign Wars:** Member of Post 889 in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho.

**Vietnam Veterans of America:** Life member of Chapter 890 in Sandpoint, Idaho.

**North Idaho Stand Down:** Member of the Executive Committee for annual event; also raises money to help veterans and their families year-round under St. Vincent de Paul non-profit 501c 3.

**Employer Support of Guard & Reserves:** North Idaho chair of DOD program that develops supportive work environments for Guard and Reserve members.

Truly a “Man in the Arena,” Bryan has not just joined a veteran organization – he has participated and led many of them. His commitment to providing “help and hope” to veterans in North Idaho and the Northwest is impressive and inspiring to all of us. It is definitely appropriate that he be recognized as our very first “Man in the Arena.”

You are one incredible man. Thank you, Bryan Bledsoe, and God Bless You.

Every month we are recognizing an extraordinary veteran help provider.  
This is someone who has entered the Arena and whose service has  
distinguished them and deserves acknowledgement.

## Mark Your Calendar:

January 1st - New Year's Day

**January 9<sup>th</sup> – Post 154 Executive Committee Meeting**

January 15<sup>th</sup> - Mid-Winter Membership Target Date (80%)

For more information, contact Matt Herndon, Deputy Director,  
Membership.

[mherndon@legion.org](mailto:mherndon@legion.org)

(317) 630-1406

[www.legion.org/membership/standings](http://www.legion.org/membership/standings)

January 15<sup>th</sup> - American Legion Baseball registration opens

[www.legion.org/baseball](http://www.legion.org/baseball)

January 20th - Martin Luther King Jr. Day

**January 23<sup>rd</sup> – Post 154 General Membership Meeting**



## A Healthier You: from The People's Pharmacy



### How Can You Overcome Midnight Motor Mind?

A reader offers a simple recipe for lemon balm syrup to calm midnight motor mind and get back to sleep easily. Will you try it?

Some people with insomnia just can't get to sleep because their minds are racing. They may retrace the day and think of what they should have said or done differently. Perhaps they worry about events in the future. Either way, their motor minds keep them wide awake. Is there a way to overcome this tendency and get the sleep they need? One reader has a simple home-made remedy.

[Read this article](#)



## Shortbread Sugar Cookie Bars

### Ingredients

2 cups all-purpose flour  
1 cup butter, softened  
1/2 cup confectioners' sugar  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon baking powder  
2 tablespoons cinnamon sugar (start with 1 1/2 tablespoon sugar and 1/2 tablespoon cinnamon, increasing cinnamon to taste)

### Directions

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

1. Mix flour, butter, confectioners' sugar, salt, and baking powder together in a bowl using an electric mixer on medium speed until well blended. Pat dough into a 9-inch square baking pan. Sprinkle with cinnamon sugar.
2. Bake in the preheated oven until edges are golden, 30 to 35 minutes. Cut into bars while still warm.



## DATA PRIVACY DAY

Cybersecurity is a growing concern. Data Privacy Day is observed every January 28 as a reminder to protect and safeguard private data.

### HOW TO OBSERVE

Visit [staysafeonline.org](https://staysafeonline.org) for tips on keeping your data safe.  
Use #DataPrivacyDay to post on social media.

## THE ORIGIN OF TAPS

During the Civil War in July 1862, when the Army of the Potomac was in camp, Brig. Gen. Daniel Butterfield summoned Pvt. Oliver Wilcox Norton, his brigade bugler, to his tent. Butterfield, who disliked the colorless “extinguish lights” call then in use, whistled a new tune and asked the bugler to sound it for him. After repeated trials, the call was finally arranged to suit Gen. Butterfield and used for the first time that night. Pvt. Norton, who on several occasions, had sounded numerous new calls composed by his commander, recalled his experience of the origin of “Taps” years later: “One day in July 1862, when the Army of the Potomac was in camp at Harrison's Landing on the James River, Virginia, resting and recruiting from its losses in the seven days of battle before Richmond, Gen. Butterfield summoned the writer to his tent, and whistling some new tune, asked the bugler to sound it for him. This was done, not quite to his satisfaction at first, but after repeated trials, changing the time of some of the notes which were scribbled on the back of an envelope, the call was finally arranged to suit the general.

He then ordered that it should be substituted in his brigade for the regulation “Taps” (extinguish lights) which was printed in the Tactics and used by the whole army. This was done for the first time that night. The next day buglers from nearby brigades came over to the camp of Butterfield's brigade to ask the meaning of this new call. They liked it, and copying the music, returned to their camps, but it was not until some time later, when generals of other commands had heard its melodious notes, that orders were issued, or permission given, to substitute it throughout the Army of the Potomac for the time-honored call which came down from West Point.”

In the western armies, the regulation call was in use until the autumn of 1863. At that time, the XI and XII Corps were detached from the Army of the Potomac and sent under command of Gen. Hooker to reinforce the Union Army at Chattanooga, Tennessee. Through its use in these corps, it became known in the western armies and was adopted by them. From that time, it became and remains to this day the official call for “Taps.” It is printed in the present Tactics and is used throughout the U.S. Army, the National Guard, and all organizations of veteran soldiers. Gen. Butterfield, in composing this call and directing that it be used for “Taps” in his brigade, could not have foreseen its popularity and the use for another purpose into which it would grow. Today, whenever a man is buried with military honors anywhere in the United States, the ceremony is concluded by firing three volleys of musketry over the grave and sounding with the trumpet or bugle “Put out the lights. Go to sleep...” There is something singularly beautiful and appropriate in the music of this wonderful call. Its strains are melancholy, yet full of rest and peace. Its echoes linger in the heart long after its tones have ceased to vibrate in the air.



Day is done, gone the sun,  
From the lake, from the hills, from the sky;  
All is well, safely rest, God is nigh.

Fading light, dims the sight,  
And a star gems the sky, gleaming bright.  
From afar, drawing nigh, falls the night.

Thanks and praise, for our days,  
'Neath the sun, 'neath the stars, neath the sky;  
As we go, this we know, God is nigh.

Sun has set, shadows come,  
Time has fled, Scouts must go to their beds  
Always true to the promise that they made.

While the light fades from sight,  
And the stars gleaming rays softly send,  
To thy hands we our souls, Lord, commend.



A great big thank you to everyone who attended the Christmas Party. We had 71 in attendance. I do believe everyone enjoyed the friendships, socializing and eating wonderful food. We have some great cooks amongst us. I hope everyone enjoyed the new venue at KTEC. Lots of room to roam. Thanks to SANTA. The children were all thrilled especially the ones he sat and ate at their table. They still talk about Santa eating with them. Oh how to made a youngster's Christmas. Thank you Rod. Thank you to the many who came to help set up and clean up. Could not have done it without all of you. You are all very special. God bless all and have a very Happy New Year. Helen Kinder, Christmas Party Chair



## A Christmas card from Unit 21, 1944 (USCG)

BY [U.S. COAST GUARD NEWS](#) 12-24-2019 08:23:00

*[By Donna Vojvodich and Senior Chief Petty Officer Tina Claflin (USCG, ret'd.)]*

During World War II, the Coast Guard established the Women's Reserve. The women who joined were known as SPARs, which stands for "Semper Paratus Always Ready." Recruited and trained to "release a man for sea," the SPARs served in a variety of shore jobs, including clerical, recruiting, radiomen, parachute riggers, drivers, pharmacist's mates and cooks.

A small contingent served in more novel roles. In 1944, a group of SPARs led by Ensign Vera Hamerschlag arrived in Chatham, Massachusetts, replacing all the men at Unit 21, a top-secret LORAN monitoring station. This narrative is based on Van Hamerschlag's account, quotes from newspaper articles and stories relayed by the descendants of Unit 21 SPARs.

*"In the summer of 1943, Headquarters decided that LORAN Monitor Stations within continental United States should be manned by SPARs. . . . The monitor station is equipped with the same type of receiver-indicator, but being a fixed station, is able to check the accuracy and general operations of the transmitting stations. The SPAR operators had to stand watch 24 hours a day, taking and recording these measurements every two minutes. Having worked as an assistant to the Naval Liaison Officer for LORAN at Radiation Lab and thereby becoming familiar with the LORAN System, I was selected to be in charge of the first SPAR monitor station at Chatham, Massachusetts. One enlisted SPAR and I were assigned to a two months' course at M.I.T. in LORAN operation and maintenance of receiving equipment. We were the only women in the whole LORAN section of the*

*Naval Training School and, needless to say, caused comment. . . . LORAN was so 'hush-hush' that not even the Training Officer had any conception of what the duties of these SPARs would be, nor what their qualifications should be."* - Ensign Vera Hamerschlag, Commanding Officer

*"[During training] all of our class work, paperwork and notebooks had to be confiscated every day and secured. Even when we went to the station, it was still carried in a secure pouch."* - Radioman Third Class Marion Withe

*"Everybody hated us. They thought we were snobs because we couldn't talk to anybody."*  
- Radioman Third Class Anita Freeman

*"Unit 21 was manned 100 percent by men and the idea was for them to leave for overseas assignments as quickly as we were capable of taking over. We did this within one month – 100 percent SPARs with the exception of one male radio technician who was a veritable 'man Friday' to us all. He acted as instructor as well, and left six months later when we felt qualified to accept the responsibility of technical maintenance."* - Ens. Van Hamerschlag

*I was apprehensive about serving under a woman commanding officer because I was not sure how to act."* - Radio Technician First Class Raymond Rathjen

*"The station consisted of one small building about 50 feet long and 30 feet wide. This provided sleeping quarters, recreation room, office space, operations room, repair shop and storage space!...I was operations and engineering officer, medical officer, barracks officer, personnel officer, training officer – and even Captain of the Head. I had to learn the intricacies of plumbing, of a coal furnace, of a Kohler engine that supplied emergency power when the main line was out – and being on the Cape where nor'easters are frequent, the times were many. I remember the feeling I had when I looked at the 125' mast for the station's antenna and wondered which SPAR would climb the riggin' if something went wrong. I asked the CO whom I was replacing who took care of it. His nonchalant answer was not to worry since nothing would happen to it short of a hurricane."* - Ens. Van Hamerschlag

*"On the night of September 14, 1944, the Great Atlantic Hurricane hit Chatham with winds up to 105 miles per hour. The CO was worried about the mast toppling over and smashing one of the buildings. Operations were suspended and the evacuated SPARs were moved around from building to building while guesses were made as to which building might be damaged. - Radioman Freeman*

Hurricanes were not the only threat. U-boats patrolled the coast and German agents were a concern. All the SPARs were issued firearms, and the lighthouse was the backdrop for target practice.

*"[We were] ordered to shoot anyone who entered the LORAN building without authorization."* - Radioman Freeman

*"The monitor room was locked at all times. One night we heard a noise in the entry area, and called out asking the person to identify him or herself. There was no answer, so we armed ourselves. I was shaking. Could I really shoot someone? No shots were fired, as we determined that the intruder was the CO's dog."* - Radioman Simmons

*"The thought that we were participating in a system that was playing such an important part in winning the war gave us a feeling of being as close to the front lines as it was possible for SPARs to be."* - Ens. Van Hamerschlag

*This article appears courtesy of Coast Guard Compass and may be found in its original form [here](#).*

Submitted by Dee Sasse, Commander