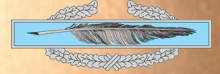


Putnam Veterans SITREP



pray thank remember

PLEASE ATTEND A MEMORIAL DAY EVENT!!!!

AN E-MAIL SITUATION REPORT (SITREP) OF THE PUTNAM COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY



FRIDAY , SATURDAY , SUNDAY, MAY 23,24,25 2025

Putnam County Joint Veterans Council-
John Morris Memorial Watchfire Vigil, At Putnam County Veterans Memorial Parl
Each day 6 PM-6AM Opening Ceremony Friday the 24th at 7:00 PM Flag Retirement through out the Vigil. Call 845-808-1620 to volunteer.



SUNDAY MAY 25 2024

VFW Post 1374 & Auxiliary, Carmel & American Legion Post 270-
9:30 AM Ceremony at monument on Terryhill Road, Kent 11:00 AM Ceremony at Post Home 32 Gleneida Ave, Carmel
Refreshments to follow 11:00 Ceremony

MONDAY MAY 26, 2024:

VFW Post 391, Putnam Valley-
The will be three short parades with ceremonies. Town Hall 11 AM, Lake Peekskill 12:00 PM. Post Home 1:00 PM (154 Oscawana Lake Road, Put Valley. Open House at Post following last ceremony.

VFW Post 672, Brewster (American Legion Post 71 & Marine Corps League Detachment 242 will be participating)
Parade forms at 930 AM on North Main Street, steps off 10 AM, Ceremony at Southeast Veterans Park (Electrazone Field). Following the parade and ceremony refreshments at VFW Post 972.

VFW Post 2362 and American Legion Post 275 Cold Spring-
Small Local Ceremonies at Main Street Memorial at 10:00 AM and laying a wreath on the Hudson River

VFW Post & Auxiliary 5491 Mahopac & American Legion Post 1080-
Mahopac VFW and American Legion will step off at 10:30 from Clark Place, followed by a ceremony at the monument near CVS. Afterwards, Mahopac VFW will have their ceremony at their post at 154 East Lake Blvd., then the American Legion will have their ceremony at 12:30 at the post on Buckshollow Road. Refreshments both Posts.

VFW Post 9257 & Auxiliary & AMVET Post 1111 Putnam Lake-
Parade forms at the Castle with a step off at 10:00 AM. To the Town Monument for a Ceremony.



PUTNAM COUNTY EXECUTIVE
KEVIN M. BYRNE

Dear Friends,

As Memorial Day approaches, it is vital that we set aside time to honor and remember the courageous individuals who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our nation. While we should continuously pay tribute to these heroes throughout the year, Memorial Day serves as a poignant and essential reminder to pause and reflect on their profound contributions in defense of freedom.

I join with our Veterans Services Agency to encourage all residents to participate in an event or activity that pays homage to our fallen heroes. If you can't participate, consider visiting a grave site to pay your respects, or sit with your children or grandchildren to explain the meaning behind the day. Every gesture of appreciation, no matter how seemingly minor, matters enormously.

In Putnam County, there are many different events going on, but the one I'm most proud to say we're going to continue is the display of flags on Lake Gleneida, our Row of Honor. This year, the Row of Honor will stand up hundreds of American Flags. I encourage folks to sponsor a flag or assist with putting up our nation's flag on May 17.

Alternatively, we need volunteers around the clock for the watchfires to guard the monuments at our Veterans Memorial Park. In 2005, during the late hours on Memorial Day Weekend, monuments at our park were vandalized. Ever since then, we've posted volunteer watchfires to safeguard the property. We welcome additional individuals to join in this effort.

Contact our Veterans Services Agency for more information about these opportunities. Again, let us seize this moment to come together as a community and express our gratitude for the sacrifices of our service members. Their memory and legacy will never be forgotten.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Byrne", is written over a circular stamp or seal. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Kevin M. Byrne
Putnam County Executive

A Brief History of The Grand Army of the Republic

Volume 15 Issue 3

Page 3

In early 1866 the United States of America — now securely one nation again — was waking to the reality of recovery from war, and this had been a much different war. In previous conflicts the care of the veteran warrior was the province of the family or the community. Soldiers then were friends, relatives and neighbors who went off to fight—until the next planting or harvest. It was a community adventure and their fighting unit had a community flavor.

By the end of the Civil War, units had become less homogeneous, men from different communities and even different states were forced together by the exigencies of battle where new friendships and lasting trust was forged. With the advances in the care and movement of the wounded, many who would have surely died in earlier wars returned home to be cared for by a community structure weary from a protracted war and now also faced with the needs of widows and orphans. Veterans needed jobs, including a whole new group of veterans—the colored soldier and his entire, newly freed, family. It was often more than the fragile fabric of communities could bear.

State and federal leaders from President Lincoln down had promised to care for “those who have borne the burden, his widows and orphans,” but they had little knowledge of how to accomplish the task. There was also little political pressure to see that the promises were kept.

But probably the most profound emotion was emptiness. Men who had lived together, fought together, foraged together and survived, had developed a unique bond that could not be broken. As time went by the memories of the filthy and vile environment of camp life began to be re-

membered less harshly and eventually fondly. The horror and gore of battle lifted with the smoke and smell of burnt black powder and was replaced with the personal rain of tears for the departed comrades. Friendships forged in battle survived the separation and the warriors missed the warmth of trusting companionship that had asked only total and absolute commitment.

With that as background, groups of men began joining together — first for camaraderie and then for political power. Emerging most powerful among the various organizations would be the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), which by 1890 would number 409,489 veterans of the “War of the Rebellion.”

Founded in Decatur, Illinois on April 6, 1866 by Benjamin F. Stephenson, membership was limited to honorably discharged veterans of the Union Army, Navy, Marine Corps or the Revenue Cutter Service who had served between April 12, 1861 and April 9, 1865. The community level organization was called a “Post” and each was numbered consecutively within each department. Most Posts also had a name and the rules for naming Posts included the requirement that the honored person be deceased and that no two Posts within the same Department could have the same name. The Departments generally consisted of the Posts within a state and, at the national level, the organization was operated by the elected “Commandery-in-Chief.”

Post Commanders were elected as were the Junior and Senior Vice Commanders and the members of Council. Each member was voted into membership using the Masonic system of casting black or white balls (except that more than one black ball was required to reject a candidate for member-

ship). When a candidate was rejected, that rejection was reported to the Department which listed the rejection in general orders and those rejections were maintained in a “Black Book” at each Post meeting place. The meeting rituals and induction of members were similar to the Masonic rituals and have been handed down to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.

The official body of the Department was the annual Encampment, which was presided over by the elected Department Commander, Senior and Junior Vice Commanders and the Council. Encampments were elaborate multi-day events which often included camping out, formal dinners and memorial events. In later years the Department Encampments were often held in conjunction with the Encampments of the Allied Orders, including Camps of the Sons of Veterans Reserve, which at the time were quasi-military in nature, often listed as a unit of the state militia or national guard.

National Encampments of the Grand Army of the Republic were presided over by a Commander-in-Chief who was elected in political events which rivaled national political party conventions. The Senior and Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief as well as the National Council of Administration were also elected.

The GAR founded soldiers’ homes, was active in relief work and in pension legislation. Five members were elected President of the United States and, for a time, it was impossible to be nominated on the Republican ticket without the endorsement of the GAR voting block.

In 1868, Commander-in-Chief John A. Logan issued General Order No. 11 calling for all De-

partments and Posts to set aside the 30th of May as a day for remembering the sacrifices of fallen comrades, thereby beginning the celebration of Memorial Day.

With membership limited strictly to “veterans of the late unpleasantness,” the GAR encouraged the formation of Allied Orders to aid them in its various works. Numerous male organizations jostled for the backing of the GAR and the political battles became quite severe until the GAR finally endorsed the Sons of Veterans of the United States of America (later to become the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War) as its heir. A similar, but less protracted, battle took place between the Women’s Relief Corps (WRC) and the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic (LGAR) for the title “official auxiliary to the GAR.” That battle was won by the WRC, which is the only Allied Order open to women who do not have an hereditary ancestor who would have been eligible for the GAR. But in this case the LGAR retained its strength and was made one of the Allied Orders.

Coming along a bit later, the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, similar to the SUVCW but for women, also earned the designation as an Allied Order of the GAR. Rounding out the list of Allied Orders is the Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, which is open to women with hereditary ties to a veteran or who is the spouse, sister or daughter of a member of the SUVCW.

The final Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic was held in Indianapolis, Indiana in 1949 and the last member, Albert Woolson, died in 1956 at the age of 109 years.

<https://suvchw.org/>

Memorial Day

Why a long article about the Grand Army of the Republic? The obelisk like monument pictured here was dedicated in 1933 to the GAR. There is a plaque listing the members of the Crosby Post 302 GAR. All Civil War Veterans. Subsequently the citizens of Brewster added markers honoring those who served in other wars of the US.

This is Putnam's connection to the organization that cemented into our hearts Decoration Day that became Memorial Day. Commander-in-Chief of the GAR, John Logan, issued General Order No. 11. Encapsulating the spirit of the day for all generations that followed.

Karl



Headquarters Grand Army of the Republic,
Washington, D.C., May 5, 1868.

GENERAL ORDERS No. 11

I. The 30th day of May, 1868 is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village, and hamlet churchyard in the land. In this observance no form or ceremony is prescribed, but posts and comrades will in their own way arrange such fitting services and testimonials of respect as circumstances may permit.

We are organized, comrades, as our regulations tell us, for the purpose, among other things, "of preserving and strengthening those kind and fraternal feelings which have bound together the soldiers, sailors and marines who united to suppress the late rebellion." What can aid more to assure this result than by cherishing tenderly the memory of our heroic dead who made their breasts a barricade between our country and its foes? Their soldier lives were the reveille of freedom to a race in chains and their deaths the tattoo of rebellious tyranny in arms. We should guard their graves with sacred vigilance. All that the consecrated wealth and taste of the nation can add to their adornment and security is but a fitting tribute to the memory of her slain defenders. Let no wanton foot tread rudely on such hallowed grounds. Let pleasant paths invite the coming and going of reverent visitors and fond mourners. Let no vandalism of avarice or neglect, no ravages of time, testify to the present or to the coming generations that we have forgotten, as a people, the cost of a free and undivided republic.

If other eyes grow dull and other hands slack, and other hearts cold in the solemn trust, ours shall keep it well as long as the light and warmth of life remains in us.

Let us, then, at the time appointed, gather around their sacred remains and garland the passionless mounds above them with choicest flowers of springtime; let us raise above them the dear old flag they saved from dishonor; let us in this solemn presence renew our pledges to aid and assist those whom they have left among us as sacred charges upon the nation's gratitude—the soldier's and sailor's widow and orphan.

II. It is the purpose of the commander in chief to inaugurate this observance with the hope that it will be kept up from year to year, while a survivor of the war remains to honor the memory of his departed comrades. He earnestly desires the public press to call attention to this order, and lend its friendly aid in bringing it to the notice of comrades in all parts of the country in time for simultaneous compliance therewith.

III. Department commanders will use every effort to make this order effective.

By Command of -
John A. Logan,
Commander in Chief

N.P. Chipman, Adjutant General

Lest

we

forget



DAVE GRANLUND ©

Every issue of the Sitrep has the above image imbedded on one page. Every issue. The simple "Lest We Forget" is how I end every e-mail I send out as Director.

Lest We Forget

Over 20 years ago someone forgot. A coward under the cloak of darkness stole into the Putnam County Veterans Memorial Park on the eve of Memorial Day to desecrate our memorials. The County Sheriffs office call me at home to advise me. I called several Veterans and we toured the park to witness the desecration.

We quickly decided not to cancel our Memorial Day Ceremonies at the park to show the public the words Lest We Forget are real to the Veterans of Putnam County. We stand by those words and no coward will prevent us from honoring the spirit of those words.

In the months following many suggestions were bantered about on how to combat such an attack in the future. Then Under Sherrif Gerry Schramek suggested that the day before Memorial Day Veterans guard the memorials at the park. It was then suggested at a Putnam County Joint Veterans Council meeting that guard duty should be on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday of Memorial Day. Finally the idea that if we are at the park for that length of time we should retire tattered American Flags.

Thus the Watchfires were born. Out of a terrible insult and desecration something wonderful was born. Please stop by and join us!

LEST WE FORGET!

Karl



Have Seen Him
IN THE WATCHFIRES

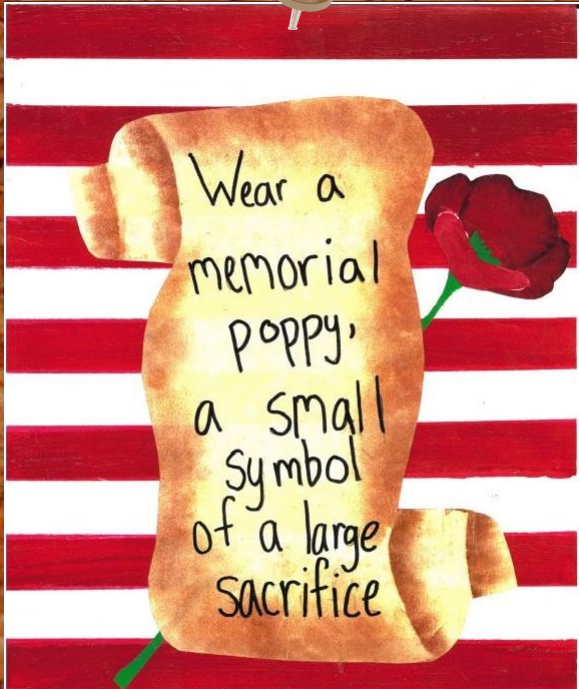
TRUTH JUSTICE
AND THE **AMERICAN WAY**



DONALD B. SMITH GOVERNMENT CAMPUS
110 OLD ROUTE 6, BLDG. #3
CARMEL NY 10512
MONDAY-FRIDAY 8-4
CALL FOR APPOINTMENT
845-808-1620

KARL ROHDE, DIRECTOR
TANYA PENNELLA, DEPUTY DIRECTOR

The Bulletin Board



MAY 17

PLEASE HELP PLACE THE FLAGS

FOR THE

ROW OF HONOR

9AM START TIME

CALL 845-808-1620



In Flanders Fields

By Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
 Between the crosses, row on row,
 That mark our place; and in the sky
 The larks still bravely singing, fly
 Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead; short days ago,
 We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
 Loved and were loved; and now we lie
 In Flanders fields!

Take up our quarrel with the foe
 To you, from failing hands, we throw
 The torch; be yours to hold it high
 If ye break faith with us who die,
 We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
 In Flanders fields.

