

# AMERICAN LEGION

**McMINNVILLE POST 21 - 126 NE ATLANTIC STREET – McMINNIVILLE, OREGON 97128 – 503 435-2218**

**Commander:** Hello again, I hope that you all had a great Merry Christmas with your family and friends. We can all thank the Lord for that.

I received an e-mail from Crystal Mai Purty-Newland, who is with the Lincoln Memorial Park and Funeral Home in Portland, wanting help to make a Vietnam Navy Veteran's birthday special this year. Richard Elizondo was diagnosed with cancer and has exhausted all treatment options. He is now in hospice care. His birthday was the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December. She wanted our help with flooding his mailbox with birthday cards. Well, Post 21 answered the call with 42 birthday cards. I am sure this made his day and put a smile on his face. I want to thank everybody that signed a card for him without hesitation.

The Post got the Christmas Tree program rejuvenated this year with the help of several members. Your First Vice Commander, Paul Krutsch, was instrumental and the PIC (person in charged) of this program. He was able to raise \$2,000 from several members and got the trees at a special price. This made it possible to sell the tree at \$35 each so anybody could purchase a tree. Everybody that volunteered felt good in seeing the smiles on people who purchased the trees. The kids and the bigger kids got free hot cocoa too. The money that was made this year enables us to have a head start for trees in 2024.

The Post had a fun time with a White Elephant gift exchange and potluck Christmas party. We had a great turn out and lots of laughs. It's open to all members and their guests and we hope to see an even larger turn out next year.

We experienced an increase in both young and older people coming in and enjoying good food and conversation here at our Post. This has lead to a few new members as well.

May God continue to Bless you all and Semper Fi.

*Juan M. Palacios, Post 21 Commander*



**Sons:** I certainly hope everyone had a merry Christmas and a happy and safe new year celebration.

The SAL had a great turnout for the Pearl Harbor remembrance breakfast. Thank y'all for coming down and supporting the SAL and the post family.

Here is part of our Sons crew looking sharp for the Pearl Harbor remembrance breakfast, Angel Mendoza, Pete Jensen, Terry Naig and Steve Randles.



Starting with the 2025 membership year which starts after state convention in June 2024, our membership dues will increase. Sons general membership dues will increase from \$30 to \$40.

Dual membership dues will increase from \$20 to \$30. We haven't increased our dues for some time but National keeps increasing their dues, so it has come to a point where we need to keep up with the times. We value all our members and hope these increases will not be a financial burden on anyone.

Our membership is coming along slowly. We are currently at 38 of 53 paid which puts us at 71.70%.

If your 2024 dues are not paid by 12/31/2023, you will be a delinquent. Detention may be necessary.

Looking forward to a great 2024.

Take care and be safe.

*Del White, Squadron Commander*



**Chaplain:** Well, here we are into a new year for our Post. I hope that all has gone well with all that take the time to read this newsletter. I have to say that I have been praying for all of you as a whole. I don't know everyone, so I pray for all Legion member.

The other day I was asked to contact a Veteran who had been sick for 6 months and no one ever called or checked up on him. I have to say that the call didn't well. I told him who I was and was calling to see how he was doing.

After telling him that I was Post 21 Chaplain, he told me right away that he didn't want me to call him ever again because of the way that he was treated when he came home from Vietnam. He wanted to join the American Legion, but he was told he couldn't because Vietnam was not a real war. Looking back, I can understand his feelings, I was treated the same way when I came home in 1968. People didn't like that we were in Vietnam.

Looking back that was a long time ago. But before I go any more, I have to say that I told this man that I was sorry to hear about how he was treated but I would still keep him in my prayers. This shows that as Veterans need to reach out to other Veterans and let them know that we still care for them, and we are here. As your Post 21 Chaplain I ask that you take the time to call or text me if you know of anyone that needs help.

When I first became a Legion Chaplain, I had someone come up to me and said that we have never had a chaplain like you. When I asked what I was doing wrong they told me that I was always there to pray and visit them when they needed it, and yes even going to the Portland VA Hospital to be there and pray for them. As I close, I ask please, please if you need me or you know of someone that needs me, please get the information to me. No Veteran should ever feel that they are walking alone because we don't leave anyone behind. May the good Lord keep you safe in this new year.

Army Navy Vet all the way!

*Chaplain Thomas Clayton*  
*armynavy6782@gmail.com*  
*503-550-8044*

*May God Bless you all*



## CHRISTMAS TREES

Thanks to everyone who made our Christmas tree sales successful. From the guys who donated the seed money to get the project started; to the guys who picked up and unloaded 200 trees; to the volunteers who helped sell the trees; and to the ones who cleaned up the mess we made in the back patio.

Thanks to all. We brought in \$7,300 in sales and after adding in the seed money and deducting the money spent on the trees, we added \$5350 to our treasury that will be earmarked for next year's Christmas tree project.

We were able to help the community and our veterans by providing beautiful but inexpensive trees. Looking forward to doing it again next year.



We continue to support Tunnels to Towers and the good work that they do for our veterans and first responders. To date our small dollar donations have allowed us to send them \$1800. Not bad for a buck here and a buck there. Post 21 members are truly generous.

When you see the small jar in the club room with the Tunnels to Towers emblem, pitch in a buck. It will go a long way to helping those who need it most.



## Russell Hamler of famed WWII Merrill's Marauders dies at 99.



Russell Hamler, 99, the last member of the famed American jungle fighting unit in World War II nicknamed "Merrill's Marauders" died on Tuesday, December 26<sup>th</sup>. Hamler was the last living Marauder according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

President Trump awarded the Marauders the "Congressional Medal of Honor" in 2022. Dozens of Marauders were awarded individual decorations after the war, from the Distinguished Service Cross to the Silver Star. The Army also awarded the Bronze Star to every soldier in the unit.

They battled hunger and disease between firefights with Japanese forces during their secret mission, a grueling journey of roughly 1,000 miles on foot that killed almost all of them.

Merrill's Marauders — nicknamed for the unit's commander, Brig. Gen. Frank Merrill — were tasked with cutting off Japanese communications and supply lines along their long march to an occupied airfield. Starting with 3,000 soldiers, the Marauders completed their mission five months later with barely 200 men still in the fight.



Hamler was wounded in the hip by a mortar fragment during a battle. The injury immobilized Hamler in his foxhole for more than 10 days until rescuers arrived and evacuated him to a hospital in India.

Marauders spent most days cutting their way through dense jungle, with only mules to help carry equipment and provisions. They slept on the ground and rarely changed clothes. Supplies dropped from planes were their only means of replenishing rations and

ammunition. Malnutrition and the wet climate left the soldiers vulnerable to malaria, dysentery and other diseases.

The Marauders eventually captured the airfield, the only all-weather strip in northern Burma, their key objective, according to the U.S. Army Center of Military History. The unit was disbanded afterward.

Hamler was awarded a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart. He became an aircraft mechanic for Trans World Airlines and retired from it in 1985.



**1<sup>st</sup> Vice:** Happy New Year. It's now 2024 and time for all membership renewals. Please submit your 2024 dues if you haven't already. Don't forget that your paid-up membership gets you a discount on beverages in our restaurant. Currently we have 352 paid up members. That is, by far the most in District 2. It is 84% of our goal. This makes us the largest Post in the district. Let's see if we can get to 100%.



If your card does not look like this then your membership has expired, and you are no longer a member in good standing.

*Paul Krutsch, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice.*



**Service Officer:** American Legion website online features five main areas under the Services tab. They are as follows:

1. Veterans Benefits – The American Legion helps veterans and families understand and apply for benefits.
  2. Veterans Career Center – The American Legion helps veterans find employers who understand their skills and values. Oregon Employment Department serves as a force multiplier for veterans, spouses, and survivors of a U.S. Service Members Killed in Action (KIA). Veterans have earned Priority of Service at the Oregon Employment Department including priority referrals to jobs and other employment and training services, including job search assistance, workshops, resume assistance, labor market information, career counseling, and referrals.
  3. Veterans Education Center – The American Legion provides links to Federal and State education benefits and programs for veterans including financial aid. Oregon provides \$50.00 per month for full-time undergraduate studies; or other studies at \$35.00 per month.
  4. Veterans' Health Care - Services and advocacy for veterans who earned and deserve timely, high-quality care and available linked up accordingly through <https://www.legion.org/veteranshealthcare>.
  5. USAA Financial Services – In the military, there's a sense of camaraderie like nowhere else — a bond among service members that runs strong and deep. At USAA, we share that same loyalty and dedication to the military community. Since 2009, we've been joining forces with military affiliated groups to help spread the word about our financial products and services while assisting programs that benefit veterans, military members and their families. In addition to the American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion. A full listing of Military Affiliate Groups with USAA is online at [https://www.usaa.com/inet/wc/about\\_usaa\\_military\\_affiliated\\_relationships](https://www.usaa.com/inet/wc/about_usaa_military_affiliated_relationships). These include Society of the First Infantry Division, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Wounded Warrior Project, and many more.
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*Chris Dauterman, Service Officer*



**Riders: Purpose:** Our purpose is to support the objective of the American Legion by participation in events, Parades and Ceremonies in service to our Community State and Nation. And to use our association to promote and support American Legion programs.

Charlie McCarthy ORALR Director West is considering local contacts to care for Veterans memorial signs flags and poles. Scholarship committee to meet in January Doc Wilson and Gale to visit the Willamina and McMinnville High school seniors. August Poker run hot wash remains and issue to be delt with to our future success.

Road Captain Tony reminds us of safety during winter Riding considering leaves, limbs and fir needles. Keep your eyes open ride safe! Rider miles total 45,627 miles reported ridden during the year. Coach Connley wants to thank the ALR and Aux members for judging the Red, White and Blue Bunny contest at the Yamhill County Fairgrounds during the veteran's day events.

State ALR Mtg. June 2024 (state election) in Lapine, Toy Ride dates to come.

Receiving a positive vote from the membership Kia Bailly was provided a \$500.00 dollar donation for Cheerleader Championship in Las Vegas. She was a national champion during the recent years.

Wishing all Post 21 members the very best in the new Year.

*Gale Sears, Director*





## DOUBLE FUNERAL FOR WWII AIRCREW MISSING FOR 79 YEARS.

On Halloween 2023 when many families worldwide are making lasting memories two families with a unique bond nearly 80 years in the making came together on the hallowed ground of Arlington National Cemetery to lay their loved ones to rest in a double funeral.

2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Pile and TSgt Triplett flew together, died together and now their families have chosen to have them buried side-by-side, at Arlington.

During World War II TSgt. James Triplett was serving as a radio operator aboard a B-24H Liberator bomber during a large mission to bomb the industrial city Kassel in northern Germany. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Pile served as the navigator on the September 27 mission. While in flight the aircraft encountered heavy resistance from enemy ground and air forces resulting in the rapid loss of 25 Liberators including Triplett's and Pile's. Although six of the crew were able to bail out Triplett and Pile were not able to escape the crash and their bodies were not recovered following the war.

In 1944, before even learning of his disappearance, Bill Triplett, James' younger brother put together a box containing small things such as chocolates, cigarettes and coffee, which he thought were in short supply. He labeled the box, took it to the post office and sent to England with hopes that his brother would receive it in time for Christmas.

One day later, the doorbell rang at Bill's house. His wife, Ellen, answered the door to find a man holding the same wooden box.

"It had been sent back labeled 'address unknown.' "That was the first indication that James was missing."

It was a normal fall day for the Triplett's family in Oregon in 1944. In a quiet corner of their house high up on a shelf in the pantry, sits a small unassuming piece of the family's history. It will go on to serve as both a reminder of loss and a beacon of hope for future generations. Their heirloom remained untouched and unopened for over 30 years: A plain, wooden box,

In 2007, a team from DPAA met a local historian who took the team to a wooded area he believed was the crash site of the James' B-24 Liberator. The team excavated the crash site in 2015 and 2016 and found aircraft data plate with the tail number of James' aircraft. The team also recovered an identification tag for one of the crew members from James' aircraft.

James' family and Lt. Pile's family both provided a DNA sample in hopes that his uncle could be identified. Lt. Pile's family also provided a DNA sample. The families were notified that their loved ones have been identified. The families decided to hold a double funeral and honor both lives at once. Tech Sgt Triplett. And 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Pile were given a proper funeral and full military honor and laid to rest alongside each other at Arlington National Cemetery on October 31, 2023.



### "WE ARE BACK"

Bingo Buffs will resume on Saturday, January 6<sup>th</sup> with our Cancer Bingo Program, then regular sessions will resume Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup>.

All sessions will start promptly at 1 pm so come early so you can get your food and drinks before we begin.

We have missed you all and are looking forward to seeing you all again!

*Your Bingo Committee, Randi, Chirs & Mikey.*



The most recent identified POW/MIA.

## World War II

**Army Air Force Staff Sgt. Franklin Hall – 21.** Lost January 21, 1944 when the B-24 Liberator “*Queen Marlene*” he was a left waist gunner on was attacked by German forces in France. Accounted for July 2023. Announced November 27, 2023.

**Army Sgt. George Bishop – 22.** Lost May 6, 1942 when he was captured by the Japanese after they invaded the Philippine Islands. Sgt. Bishop was forced to endure the Bataan Death March then held as a prisoner of war. Sgt. Bishop died as a prisoner of war at Cabanatuan Prison Camp. Accounted for November 28, 2023.

**Army Pfc. Hood Cole – 26.** Lost January 14, 1945 when his unit was attacked by German forces near Baerenthal, France. Due to the intense fighting his body was unable to be immediately recovered. Accounted for February 22, 2023. Announced December 12, 2023.

**Army Pvt. Homer Mitchell – 20.** Lost December 10, 1944 when his Division was attacked by German forces while tasked with holding defense positions in the Pachten Forces near Dillingen, Germany. Accounted for July 24, 2023. Announced December 18, 2024.

**Army Pvt. Robert Hurst – 21.** Lost May 6, 1942 when he was captured by the Japanese after they invaded the Philippine Islands. Pvt. Hurst was forced to endure the Bataan Death March then held as a prisoner of war. Pvt. Hurst died as a prisoner of war at Cabanatuan Prison Camp. Accounted for July 10, 2023. Announced December 21, 2023.

## Vietnam

**Marine Captain Ronald Forrester – 22.** Lost December 27, 1972 when the A-6A Intruder he was navigating on a nighttime combat mission ceased radio communications and never returned to base. Accounted for December 4, 2023.



**Auxiliary:** December was a busy month starting with a festive day of making door swags and wreaths for our auxiliary members.

100 stockings were filled for our vets in the care homes and distributed by our service officer Carol Doege. The week continued with staging our collected food for 25 applicants and toys for 33 children. Our auxiliary elves then distributed any leftover food and toys to the St. Vincent de Paul food bank. Thank you all for your generous donations.

If you haven't sent in your renewal, please do so as soon as possible. Our next meeting is Jan. 16<sup>th</sup>, and we will be planning activities and fund raisers for 2024. Your input is welcomed!

The auxiliary KP is Friday, Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>. Please contact any of our board members if you can help.

*Jenni Burkhead, Auxiliary Membership Chair*

## Depoe Bay Raffle

We want to thank everyone who participated in the Depoe Bay Raffle. We sold 150 tickets for a total of \$3000.00.

**Mr. Read Worth** was the lucky winner.

A few of you that not only bought tickets, but also made this happen.

A special “Thank You” goes to: Shirley Brown for creating & printing the professional-looking tickets. Sim Sears for designing the flyers and helping sell tickets. Mike Balcombe for ticket sales. Mike Billings for donating a very good bottle of Texas Whisky to the lucky winner.



Becky will be donating \$1500.00 to the Auxiliary Scholarship Fund, and I will be donating \$750.00 to the Legion and \$750 to the Legion Riders.

*Submitted by: Bob and Becky Berweger*







1

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sat
	1	2	3 <a href="#">SON's</a> 6:30 PM	4	5 <a href="#">Prime Rib Dinner Special - Legion KP</a> 5:00 PM	6 <a href="#">Cancer Bingo</a> 1:00 PM
7 <a href="#">Legion Bingo</a> 1:00 PM	8	9	10	11	12 <a href="#">Prime Rib Dinner Special - Auxiliary KP</a> 5:00 PM	13
14 <a href="#">Legion Bingo</a> 1:00 PM	15 <a href="#">Activities Committee</a> 5:00 PM <a href="#">Executive Committee</a> 6:30 PM	16 <a href="#">Auxiliary</a> 6:00 PM	17 <a href="#">General Membership</a> 6:30 PM	18	19 <a href="#">Prime Rib Dinner Special - Sons KP</a> 5:00 PM	20
21 <a href="#">Legion Bingo</a> 1:00 PM	22	23	24 <a href="#">Legion Rider Meeting</a> 7:00 PM	25	26 <a href="#">Prime Rib Dinner Special - Riders KP</a> 5:00 PM	27
28 <a href="#">Legion Bingo</a> 1:00 PM	29	30	31			

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

Jeanne Ayala, Milton Bates, Marcia Beaudry, Karen Belt, Becky Berweger, Patrick Bevan, Daniel Burns, Rufus "Butch" Clason, Jeanne Clayton, Curtis Crossley, Robert DeKar, James Densmore, William Ellis, Gerald Evers, Lawrence Evers, Steve Farley, Don Frasier, Larry Gannaway, Paul Gelinas, Rick Goodman, Darla "Mike" Gregory, Gene Hamilton, Clair Hutton, Bill Hurliman, Rob Jackson, Wayne Jarshaw, Peter Jensen, Dan Jones, Keith Kirkman, Stan Kosmiki, Steve Kossman, Ed Kulkis, Richard Lund, Don McInnis, Thomas Miller, John Mohamed, Mary Morris, Michael Morris, Terry Naig, Ray Nash, Leonard Pardue, Dennis Parr, Paula Port, Craig Pubols, Denise Ricketts, Brian Sauer, Kenneth Schmidt, Jimmy Smith, Steve Smith, Robert Scyoc, Rich Pimm, Richard Skeffington, Andrea Smothers, Laurel Spenser, John Stensland, Dennis Strutz, Ben Unger, Keith Urban, James Vansoyk, Roland Vorath, James Wagner.

**AMERICAN LEGION – POST 21**  
**126 NE ATLANTIC STREET**  
**McMINNVILLE, OR 97128**  
**503 435-2218**  
**VETSCLUB21@GMAIL.COM**

## OFFICERS

### THE AMERICAN LEGION

Commander – Juan Palacios  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice – Paul Krutsch  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice – Jim Connelly  
JAG – Steve Randles  
Finance – Cheryl Saville-Miller  
Adjutant – Shirley Brown  
Sgt. at Arms – Armond Pilotte  
Historian – Leroy Brown  
Chaplain – Thomas Clayton  
Service Officer – Chris Dauterman  
At Large – Mike Billings  
At Large – Bruce Peterson  
At Large – Gale Sears

### AUXILIARY

President – Debra Godwin  
Vice President – Goya Hernandez  
Treasurer – Becky Berweger  
Secretary – Becky Berweger  
Membership – Jenni Burkhead  
Historian – Glenna Smith  
Service Officer – Carol Doege  
Chaplain – Shirley Burkett  
Sgt. at Arms – Susan Hailey

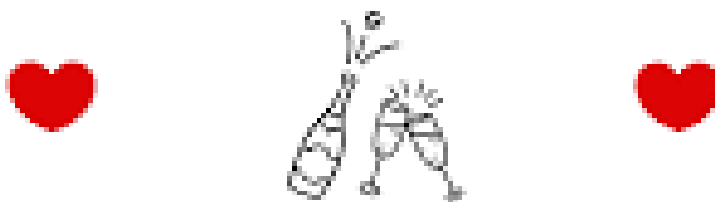
### Sons of the American Legion

Commander – Del White  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice – Bill Lindemann  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice – Steve Kindel  
Finance – Terry Naig  
Adjutant – Terry Naig  
Chaplain – Pete Jensen  
Sgt. at Arms – Brandon Lepkowski

### The American Legion Riders

Director – Gale Sears  
Asst. Director – Bill Linneman  
Secretary – Bob Wilson  
Treasurer – Sim Sears  
Sgt at Arms – Wayne Jarshaw  
Road Capt. – Tony Amodeo  
Historian – Jim Connelly

**WE ARE ON THE WEB!**  
**VISIT US AT: VETSCLUB.ORG.**



**Not everyone will be home  
for New Years.**

**Hear's a big**

**THANK YOU**

**and a**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**to our Troops.**

