



# MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART

Issue 12

January 2008

## DEPARTMENT OF MICHIGAN BI-MONTHLY NEWS

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### DEPARTMENT COMMANDER NEWS

Patriots and Ladies, I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and New Year. As we enter this new year I would ask that we continue in our objective to increase membership and to get our new members active. We exist to support our fellow veterans and their families. We must do all we can to maintain that reputation. Our actions are a demonstration of who we are as a group.

Since our last publication, I attended the VAVS meeting at the Ann Arbor VAMC and found all to be running smoothly and in order. I was a participant of the Veterans Day parade in Detroit where many of our Patriots were present but unfortunately had little audience. I was escorted by my wife, active Ladies Auxiliary member, Rosemary, for Veterans Day services at the Great Lakes Nat'l Cemetery in Holly, MI. A Commander's Group meeting was held in Grand Rapids and a luncheon followed. I was honored to have a tour of the facility by Patriot (& VAVS Rep) Don Kramer and found the staff and atmosphere exceptional. As a volunteer at the Ann Arbor VAMC, our Bingo night on 11/19/07 had 30 patrons in attendance which was certainly a wonderful turn-out. I accompanied our VAVS Director Roland Richards to a meeting and tour of the Saginaw VAMC. Again, the staff and facility were friendly and pleasant. On Purple Heart Day Chapter 127 attended a memorial service hosted by the American Legion Post In Wyandotte.

Yours in Patriotism,  
Ray Kowalewski, 8029 Bailey St., Taylor, MI 48180-2152 Ph/Fax 313-291-5613

NOTE: You can also view this publication in color at our web site [www.purpleheartmi.org](http://www.purpleheartmi.org)

### NOTICE OF "ALL VETERANS" MEETING

From: **U.P. Veterans Affairs Group "All veterans—One voice"**  
 Date: **Saturday - January 5, 2008**  
 Time: **1:00 p.m. (EST)** Place: **Big Bucks Bingo Hall – Ojibwa Casino, Baraga, Michigan**  
 Please confirm attendance by contacting: **Tom Heikkinen, WIA, Vietnam – Organizer (906) 523-4844**

#### AGENDA

- 1) **State of Michigan – Status of bills pending concerning benefits and issues related to Michigan veterans.** State Representatives will be present to address what they are doing and field questions or take recommendations from veterans present.
- 2) **U.P. specific veterans concerns.** \*Western U.P Veterans Home & U.P. National Cemetery
- 3) **U.S. Congress – Veterans Affairs report on bills concerning veterans' benefits, care for the wounded and disabled.** \*Mandatory Funding of VA Health Care & VA benefits (mileage increase) U.S. Representatives will be present to address what they are doing and field questions or take recommendations from veterans present.

\*If time allows – we will open the floor to discussion or recommendations on specific areas of concern (or) revisit a topic of earlier discussion.

#### HONOR – COURAGE - COMMITMENT

**The U.P. Veterans Affairs Group is represented by members of all Congressionally chartered and other organized veterans' organizations in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. All veterans have paid their debt to this Nation and all are welcome to come and learn what our representatives are doing on our behalf. The estimated time for this regional meeting is four hours. Veterans should wear their organizational or service caps. Thanks for attending – and caring for the future of Michigan's veterans.**

*The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportioned as to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated & appreciated by their Nation."*

*George Washington*



## SENIOR VICE COMMANDER

Greetings from the Senior: Cold, Snow, Michigan...it fits, but there is an upside, Tis the season to be jolly and as we pause to celebrate Christmas it would be the perfect time to give thanks for our greatest gifts Family, Friends and our fellow Patriots. As the year comes to a close let us reflect on some of the great things we have accomplished and look forward to yet another productive year for the Order. With that may my family and I extend to you and yours, a Merry Christmas and a joyous and prosperous New Year.

Legislative Update: They have adjourned till next year; the State is safe for at least a few days. So far this session has been focused on the budget and I am happy to report we have been funded at the same rate as last year. No gain but no loss other than cost of living. The bad news is this is the seventh year of no gain and we are about 21% plus behind the curve. I thought about a list of proposals that are starting to work their way through both houses, but it's too early to call. I'll give you an update next letter.

Lino Pretto, 1506 Eifert Road, Holt, MI 48842-1905 (517) 699-7005

## DEPARTMENT ADJUTANT

Some of our chapters are being contacted about the ROTC and JROTC programs honoring leadership involvement by our youth in High Schools and Colleges in Michigan. Those Chapters with internet access can log on to our National web site [www.purpleheart.org](http://www.purpleheart.org) and select PROGRAMS. This section will give you options for ordering awards and how it can be accomplished. On the same site you can obtain forms to change your address, report a death, or have better knowledge about the only Congressionally Chartered Veterans Organization for "Combat Wounded Veterans". Our National Commander has declared this year "The Year of the Chapter". In the absence of some Department Coordinator positions, that means the Chapters need to get involved with all of these programs and learn how to accomplish successful programs that are in place. Make every effort to learn how these programs work. You could be asked to be a coordinator in the future. If you have a question please feel free to call, write, or email as frequently as needed.

Good Work! Since July 1, 2007 we have one hundred and five (105) new members who have been signed up by twenty eight (28) of our Patriots.. A new record! Keep it going!

**Please find a new member. It's Free for life if mailed with proof to the Department Adjutant for processing. Can we exceed 150 this year?**

Ron Knapp, 167 Vantage View Drive, Petoskey, MI 49770 (231) 348-8331 Email: [jknapp@chartermi.net](mailto:jknapp@chartermi.net)



## LAMOPH Auxiliary News



Dear Ladies,

Our Free membership program has been a great success. If you read the numbers of the new Patriot members recently signed up and consider that the Ladies have the opportunity to gain two, three or more members for every new Patriot, we could see a lot more before the fiscal year ends in June of 2008.

Our new Unit numbers are also growing for Westland, Grand Rapids & Copper Country and we hope to see those Units installed before our May Convention. If you know of any members that would like to be a part of one of these before their new charter is ordered, please let me or the Department Secretary, Noreen Barnard know.

I will be making plans to visit some of your Units early this spring and hope to see many members I've not had the opportunity to meet. Also ladies, please keep us informed of what you are doing in your Units. This publication is printed every two months and goes to all members. That is how we can keep the information wheel rolling.

I hope you had a wonderful Christmas and New Year.

Department President, Tammy Reilley, 596 Garfield Ave., Cheboygan, MI 49721 (231) 499-0086

**PBS "The War" Reunites Crewmates**

Patriot and member of Chapter #41 Louis Gill of Livonia and fellow WWII veteran, Edward Schuitema were reunited due to a segment in the PBS series of The War. Both had been badly hurt when their B-17 Flying Fortress bomber, Patches, was shot down over Germany on Jan. 11, 1944. Six (6) decades later, the two were reunited at Clara's in Lansing. That story was featured in the Detroit News.

Though Gill survived the crash he was thrown from the damaged plane and captured. He spent the next 16 months moving from prison camp to prison camp. In April of 1945 the camp was liberated by General George Patton's Third Army. During The War interview, Gill choked back tears when describing Patton's jeep and the American tanks driving through the camp. "I was never so happy to see a GI."

*Submitted by Roger Kehrier*

**What's Up!**

Happy Birthday to you  
Happy Birthday to you  
I suppose you want to know  
WHO had a birthday?

**Mack Bates Chapter 37**  
turned **90** on 11/10/07

**Plaque Program Update**

As most of you know, we initiated the memorial plaque program at our 2005 Fall Convention. The intent was to recognize the families of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice during Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. From our request for presenters, we received calls & emails from volunteers who offered to present plaques. This is a VOLUNTEER project and there are no travel funds so we are grateful to those who assist in this. It's also an opportunity for those who don't have a facility nearby to be a part of a volunteer project. To date, the following (in alpha order) have presented one or more plaques or have volunteered to assist.

Albert & Helen Bergstrom, Gene Cavicchioni, John Ciecko, Frank Dougherty, David Glaza, Charles Elliott, Bob Jensen, Ron & Jan Knapp, Ray & Rosemary Kowalewski, Don Kramer, Ardath McDonald, Ted & Joyce Miller, Ray Mills, David Munson, Lino Pretto, Bob & Terry Shattuck, John Smith, Josh Thomas, Joe & Sheila Tormala, Joaquin Tuncap, Dennis & Gail Wallot, Fred Warner & Gregg Weaver. Thanks all!

**REVIVING A CHAPTER**

Kudos' to our Department Junior Vice Josh Thomas for hard work and diligence to revive Chapter 180 in Saginaw. Due to his efforts and the aspirations of those members to see it through, Saginaw will soon have its Chapter back in full swing. Because the installation may take place before our next bi-monthly news, please contact Ron Knapp at 231-348-8331 or by email jknapp@chartermi.net or Josh Thomas at (989) 239-7238 or by email Sgththomas@aol.com if you would like details for that event or if you would like to be a member of Chapter #180 before the new Charter is created.

**EMAIL COMMUNICATION**

Much of the information I receive comes by way of other members, the Governor's office and the VA. When that information is important to the membership, it is then distributed to you, the members. Sometimes it is time sensitive so, I want to get it out to as many as I can as quickly as I can, as it may be valuable information to you! If you do not receive emails from me and you have an email address, please send it to me so I can update my address book. I will continue to mail by USPS all communications; however, email has become preferable to other means for disseminating news quickly. Ron Knapp, Adjutant  
Email Ron at jknapp@chartermi.net

**VAVS Volunteer Recognized**

As part of our Chapter Scholarship Program, VAVS Rep. Bob Jensen presented a scholarship check to Desiree Aho. Desiree and her father Rod Aho (member of the Marine Corp League) are both active volunteers at the Jacobetti Home for Veterans and have dedicated the past four years to volunteer services. According to Patriot Bob Jensen, "They are always at our Bingo parties held on Sunday and many other activities at the Home." Our congratulations to Desiree and a huge Thank You to both her and her father for their dedicated work to serve our Michigan veterans.



*Picture and article submitted by Bob Jensen, Chapter 1976, Escanaba*



Department of Michigan  
 Military Order of the  
 Purple Heart

Ronald E Knapp, Dept Adjutant  
 167 Vantage View Drive  
 Petoskey, MI 49770-9211  
 Phone: (231) 348-8331  
 Email: jknapp@chartermi.net

**Submission deadline:**

News for March Bi-Monthly must  
 be received no later than February  
13, 2008


Please inform us of your upcoming  
events. This paper is only as good  
as the news we get from you.

Department of Michigan  
 Service & Rehabilitation Office  
 477 Michigan Ave Rm. 1226  
 Detroit, MI 48226-2578  
 Phone: (313) 964-6888

Need Forms or Help?

Go to [www.PurpleHeartmi.org](http://www.PurpleHeartmi.org)

*Always Remember  
 Never Forget*



Staff Sergeant Donald L. Munn II, 25  
 Saint Clair Shores, MI 10/11/2007

Private first Class Joseph M. Lancour, 21  
 Swartz Creek, MI 11/10/2007

Sergeant Phillip A. Bocks, 28  
 Troy, MI 11/09/2007

Private First Class Casey P. Mason, 22  
 Lake, MI 11/13/2007

Corporal Jason T. Lee, 26  
 Fruitport, MI 11/18/2007

**The Human U.S. Shield**

The picture below is one of many collections choreographed and photographed by Arthur Mole and his colleague John Thomas. This particular photo was taken as the United States entered into World War I and is the largest of their productions. The Human U.S. Shield was comprised of 30,000 military officers and men at Camp Custer in Battle Creek, MI.

The complete title as shown at the bottom left of the picture is

**The Human U.S. Shield  
 30,000 Officers and  
 men Camp Custer,  
 Battle Creek, Mich.**

**Brig Gen Howard L. Laubach  
 Commanding.**

The photo can also be found on the internet by it's name & in the hall of the Jacobetti Home in Marquette.

