



The Knox County Joint Veterans Council Honor Guard is looking for **volunteers!!!**

The Knox County Joint Veterans Council is located at the Knox County Veterans Service Office located at 105 E Chestnut St. Mount Vernon, Ohio. The post conducts regular meetings on the third Thursday of each month. The meeting time is 7:00 P.M. **Contact Terry Walters @**

614-679-3852 if you are interested in volunteering.



They stand guard silently, vigilantly through whatever Mother Nature dares throw at them. They do so with great pride to honor one of their own. For them, honoring a fallen brother-in-arms is compensation enough.

For the families of the deceased veteran, they are the ever-watchful sentinels, and their selfless act is a much-appreciated tribute.

[Chinese Army defector claims air force cooked meals using missile fuel](#)

In 1785, poet William Cowper wrote, “Variety is the very spice of life, that gives it all its flavor.” But if variety is missile fuel and life is hot pot, perhaps bland is better. At least, that’s what members of China’s air force may feel after reportedly cooking meals using missile fuel bricks.

One former People’s Liberation Army member who defected and escaped to the United States claimed that corruption in the leadership ranks led to meals cooked over missile fuel, according to a Radio Free Asia report.

Navy Lt. Col. Yao Cheng, a former staff officer of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army Air Force — he fled to the U.S. in 2016 — reportedly witnessed troops burning “missile fuel to make hotpot,” a dish that typically involves a pot of hot soup stock, into which diners dip meats and other vegetables.

“When we would eat hotpot, we would take out the solid fuel in the missiles piece by piece, because there were insufficient supplies,” Yao told the publication. “I would often go along to the armory and ask them for a small round piece of solid fuel when we wanted to have hotpot.”

Cheng attributed the act to corruption and the misallocation of funds.

“Some military departments have no money, and if they need money, their chief has to allocate some from the equipment budget,” Yao said. “The equipment budget would have been sufficient, but not after being misappropriated.”

While this is simply one former officer’s personal account, Bloomberg also recently reported that U.S. intelligence confirmed that corruption within the military has prompted Chinese President Xi Jinping to carry out a “military purge.” The publication added that an unnamed source confirmed that these circumstances may ultimately prevent the Chinese military from engaging in widespread conflict.

[The man who made Belleau Wood — and the Marine Corps — immortal](#)

“I am up at the front and entering Belleau Wood with the U.S. Marines.” And with that final dispatch, war correspondent Floyd Gibbons — armed with nothing but his pen and paper — strolled into a melee of artillery and machine gun fire. This dispatch would later help to shape the ethos of the United States Marine Corps and more than a century on, define the public’s view of the “Devil Dogs.”

A seasoned reporter for the Chicago Tribune, the charismatic Gibbons had reported on the Pancho Villa expedition in 1916 and the sinking of the RMS Laconia in 1917 before accepting his latest assignment as one of only 36 American reporters officially accredited in World War I. As a noncombatant, Gibbons ignored the request that he stay back and joined a Marine attack on June 6, 1918, through the waist-high wheat toward the woods some several hundred yards away.

By early June “more than 2,000 German soldiers with at least 30 machine guns had ensconced themselves in Belleau Wood, and another 100 Germans with at least six machine guns held Boureches,” recalled historian David John Ulbrich. All awaited the Marines.

As the Marines advanced, the enemy fire “was more than flesh and blood could stand,” Col. Albertus W. Catlin wrote in his memoir “With the Help of God and a Few Marines.” Catlin was awarded the Medal of Honor in 1914 for action in Vera Cruz and led the Sixth Regiment at Belleau Wood.

With no defense Gibbons was eventually cut down — bullets striking his left arm, left shoulder blade and left eye. Made to lie in the field for three hours until the safety of darkness, Gibbons wondered if he was dead. With his left hand and arm numb and his left eyeball split in half and lying on his cheek, Gibbons used his right hand to pinch himself for reassurance. He was indeed still alive.

The news censor, however, incorrectly believing Gibbons to be dead, “concluded that it would be a crime to cut the last dispatch of Gibbons’s life, so he decided to let it go through as written,” according to an account in the Washington Post. When he sent his final dispatch, Gibbons had expected the word “Marines” to be omitted. Up until that point no correspondent was permitted to name which troops were on which fronts due to wartime censorship. “Because the censor let Gibbons’s dispatch go through, all correspondents were given the same privilege,” the Post continued.

For three days, reports of Marines in action at Belleau Wood went uncensored, and the American public, hungry for news of the war, were regaled with stories of the Devil Dogs as they fought in close-quarters combat with fixed bayonets, and, “worst of all,” historian George B. Clark noted, “machine guns at point-blank range.” “For all intents and purposes, the old warriors of the U.S. Marine Corps were virtually wiped out,” Clark wrote. The Marines suffered 4,000 casualties and 1,000 killed — a 55 percent attrition rate — losing more men in this single campaign than in all its previous existence.

The dispatch from Gibbons, who would live another 21 years after the engagement, gave full credit to the 9,500-strong 4th Marine Brigade, altogether ignoring the U.S. Army’s 2nd Division of the American Expeditionary Forces who fought alongside the Marines. Even before the conclusion of the battle on June 26th, thanks to Gibbons getting past the censor, the legend of the Marines at Belleau Wood emerged.

Remembered for their gritty, victorious stand some 105 years ago, Belleau Wood stands immortal in Marine Corps lore. “The Germans were good,” Clark wrote. “The Marines were better.”



MEMORIAL DAY 2024

As we enter May, our thoughts always turn to Memorial Day.

We hope that you will contact your local municipality to find out times and locations of your local parades and ceremonies. We are looking forward to many opportunities this year to honor those no longer with us. There are no words that can describe our deepest sympathy for the families of those no longer with us and thankfulness to those who have given so much.

There is little I can share in this month's newsletter that could express how myself and our staff feel when Memorial Day comes around, so I will simply leave you with the little known fourth verse of our Nation Anthem The Star Spangled Banner.

Oh! thus be it ever, when free-
men shall stand
Between their loved home and
the war's desolation!
Blest with victory and peace,
may the heav'n rescued land
Praise the Power
that hath made and
preserved us a nation.
Then conquer we must, when
our cause it is just,
And this be our motto:
"In God is our trust."
And the star-spangled banner in
triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the
home of the brave!



Kevin Henthorn
Executive Director



Monday May 30th

Mount Vernon Memorial Day parade will travel west on East High Street starting at 10:30am.

Ceremony following at the Memorial Building at approximately 11:30am

Pictures of the Month



Soldiers conduct a mortar live-fire demonstration at Fort Moore, Ga., April 11, 2024.



Marines conduct helicopter support operations to help distribute equipment, personnel and supplies at Camp Lejeune, N.C., April 4, 2024.