In 1896, the Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A. (JWV) was founded to refute the lie that Jews did not serve in the military during our Civil War. We did in significant numbers – for both sides. Now, 122 years later, the “Big Lie” came from the lips of an unusual source – The Deputy Foreign Minister of Israel, Tzipi Hotovely. In an interview with i24 News in Israel, Ms. Hotovely stated that American Jews “never send their children to fight for their country.”

Once JWV and its leadership got over the initial disbelief, shock, and hurt of this statement, we surged into action. Our National Commander issued a press release denouncing the comment. He met with personnel of the Israeli Embassy. Moreover, Embassy staff were invited to come for a tour of our museum – The National Museum of American Jewish Military History in Washington, D.C. When they came they saw proof of the honorable and sometimes heroic service of American Jews to this country.

But all American Jews, especially those who have served and their families, deserve more. On their behalf, we fought for a retraction and apology, and we received it! On January 28, 2018, Minister Hotovely sent a letter to JWV in which she apologized to Jewish American service members and veterans of all wars. “My words were shortsighted and not reflective of my beliefs, and I deeply apologize,” she wrote.

You can read her letter to JWV on page 14.

Silence and shirking duty are not characteristics of JWV. In March 1933, two months after Hitler came to power, the Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A. organized and carried out a protest march in New York City – despite the admonitions of various Jewish groups not to anger the new German Chancellor (a video of the march is on display at our National Museum).

Today, as we have done for over a century, JWV has responded to “The Big Lie.” Over that period, we have earned respect and prestige in our Capitol and others. The resultant apology is being communicated to all of you in memory of the 57 Jewish-American brothers and sisters killed in action in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Yes, American Jews do send their children to fight for their country, and sometimes their children pay the ultimate price.
D'vrei HaShomrim

Choosing to Love

As I began to think about what to write, I thought back on my beginning of a military career. I am a third generation American. Each generation has family who served in the military. In my family, one person was disappointed. My grandfather was a Marine. He served with Teddy Roosevelt, was on the White Ships mission and had service wounds. He was disappointed that I did not choose to be a Marine!

As did all in JWV, we entered the military coming from different backgrounds. I had just finished receiving rabbinical ordination and entered a new “world” about which I knew nothing except what I read. My first assignment was a Strategic Air Command base in Loring, Maine. Upon arrival I was told I would also be the Stockade Chaplain. I quickly learned a stockade was not like I knew (a pen for animals), but in the military, it was the word for a prison. My first day I got a call from the Stockade that they needed me. I went to the building and was told an airman was contemplating suicide and I had to see him. I said a psychiatrist would be better. I was told that the psychiatrist would come in the morning. I saw the airman, and I asked him why? As he told me his story, I was about in tears. When he finished, I was ready to commit suicide. I knew nothing of what to say. Finally, I told the person that this was my first day. I really do not know what to tell you. I said if you die now, everyone will know I failed. Please wait until the psychiatrist sees you. The next morning I got a call from the Stockade - a book with not only the story of our people, but the time when generations meet and find memories. Rabbi Soloveitchek once said when we study Talmud - a book with not only the story of our people, but the time when generations meet and find memories. Rabbi Soloveitchek once said when we study Talmud.

In the autumn of 1914 the German army stood at the gates of Paris and the Kaiser believed that his victory was at hand and that his troops “would return home before the leaves fall.” The Kaiser believed the war was won. His arrogance betrayed him. The war lasted 4 more years, with uninformed proportions of bloodletting and destruction. At the battle of the Marne the German army was stopped. We know the German Army was no longer strong, and the results were horrendous for all.

The Talmud records when Rabbi Akiba visited the site of the destruction of the Temple, all with him cried. He laughed. He said this was predicted, but G-d also predicted we have a wonderful blessed future. We make this future. It is in our hands.

The service ends, with the positive words, “Next Year in Jerusalem.” Not a prayer, but the reality that wherever we are, we can choose to create a city of peace, an ambiance of love in our homes and all living in peace with in our hearts - with all others and all God’s creations.

And may we, expressing our indebtedness to JWV, (and like in Dayton, our grand chapters) live the words from Les Mis:

"Remember the truth that once was spoken, to love another person is to see the face of God."

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National Commander Paul D. Warner
National Editor Lance Wang
Managing Editor Anna Selman
Graphics/Production Editor Christy Turner

EDITORIAL OFFICE
1811 R Street, NW • Washington, D.C. 20009
Telephone (202) 265-6280 x504
Fax (202) 234-5662
E-mail jwv@jwv.org
Web Site www.jwv.org

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MESSAGE

FROM THE COMMANDER

National Commander Paul D. Warner, Ph.D.

Dear Friends and Comrades of JWV,

It has been a busy year to say the least. As you read on the front page, our “friend” from Israel had a few choice words to say about Jewish American Military Service, and needless to say, when the Embassy came to speak to us about it, I had a few choice words back for them. We worked hard to make sure that our service members get the credit and respect they deserve.

However, they are not getting the respect they deserve at home. There are many veteran benefits that should have and will be approved with the work of JWV. We have been fighting too long to make sure our brother and sister Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans get the benefits they deserve. We also have been fighting to make sure our family caregivers get the resources they need to take care of our service members and veterans. Here is a brief overview of what we here at National are fighting for:

Providing Benefits to Blue Water Navy Veterans

In the last issue of The Jewish Veteran, NED Herb Rosenbleeth provided you with an extensive background on the Blue Water Navy situation. Although there is some repetition of the facts, I want to update you on how badly Congress has acted in regard to this problem.

During the Vietnam War, approximately twenty million gallons of Agent Orange were sprayed over the Republic of Vietnam, contaminating the lands, rivers, harbors, and territorial seas. Under the Agent Orange Act of 1991, Blue Water Navy Veterans were initially entitled to presumptive service-connected disability status, relieving them of the burdensome process of producing evidence that directly established service connection for a specific health condition. However, in 2002, the VA reinterpreted the language of the Agent Orange Act of 1991 to apply only to veterans who served in the inland waterways or set foot in the waters off Vietnam. This contaminated water was used for cooking, cleaning, showering, laundry, and drinking, exposing U.S. Navy personnel to high levels of the toxic chemical.

We support the passage of the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act (H.R. 299), to provide the same presumptive VA benefits to those personnel who served off the coast of Vietnam as are provided to those who had “boots on the ground” in Vietnam. It is quite clear that those who served in the waters off Vietnam are deserving of VA benefits. Thousands of veterans who served in the territorial waters of Vietnam are now suffering from higher rates of disease and other chronic health conditions, which can be attributed to exposure to Agent Orange.

When HR 299 was to come up for a vote, Congress decided that it should be paid for by reducing the veteran’s cost of living adjustments. They wanted to have veterans pay for those veterans who were injured by our government. Fortunately, this outrageous proposal was never voted on.

Benefits to Care-Givers

Disabled veterans depend on the quality care that family caregivers provide. Whether the veteran was disabled recently or pre-9/11, the need for quality care is the same. Caregivers provide the best quality of life outcomes our veterans deserve. Additionally, caregiver support for all veterans would provide better care outcomes at a lower cost than if those being cared for at home had to be housed and cared for in VA or private care facilities.

The Senate Veterans Affairs Committee has embraced a plan from Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.) to expand eligibility for Post-9/11 caregiver benefits to older generations of veterans and caregivers, attaching her bill to a legislative package whose centerpiece – reform of the Choice program – is seen as critical for Congress to pass The Caring for Our Veterans Act (S. 2193).

Even if this strategy succeeds, caregivers of severely injured veterans from earlier wars face at least a year’s wait and possibly longer before the first group of them gains eligibility for a monthly stipend that first became available to the Post-9/11 generation of caregivers six years ago.

Under these bills, caregiver benefits couldn’t be expanded to older generations until the VA certifies it has modernized its information technology sufficiently to support a bigger program. This could take at least a year.

Benefits then would be extended first to caregivers of veterans severely injured in the line of duty on or before May 7, 1975, which would include the Vietnam War and earlier conflicts. If that expansion runs well, two years later eligibility for the program would be opened to veterans with severe injuries incurred in the line of duty from May 8, 1975 through September 10, 2001.

CBO estimated the average cost to VA per participant at $30,000 a year.

The House committee didn’t hold a hearing last year on a companion caregiver bill, although it has 82 co-sponsors.

It is my opinion that this proposal is designed to reduce the number of veterans who will be eligible, since the current budget short-changes the VA and limits its ability to fund the modernization of its information technology systems.

PNC JERRY COHEN REMEMBERED

By Dan Cohen

On January 5, 2018, at the age of 92, retired New York State Supreme Court Judge, Past National Commander of the Jewish War Veterans Jerry Cohen passed away. He was the beloved father of Barry, Carl and Daniel as well as a proud grandfather and great-grandfather. He passed away after a trip to see his sons and families.

This extraordinary man lived a wonderful life and contributed so much to society and his family. He lived a real American dream, born on 19th Street in Coney Island, Brooklyn, New York, served in WWII and was awarded the Purple Heart, in addition to many other forms of recognition for his service.

Jerry and his wife, Nancy, were married quite young and after the war he had to finish high-school, university and law school already with the responsibilities of a growing family.

He was a successful trial attorney who moved to the pinnacle of his profession, the Supreme Court of the State of New York. He was active with the Jewish War Veterans from age 18 through to his death and attained the post of National Commander in 1972. He dedicated himself to tons of pro-bono work and placed many war criminals behind bars.

After leaving the court, he remained in private practice for the rest of his life. An avid sailor and golfer, he remained active by going to the gym and working every day until the end.

Nancy and Jerry managed to raise three children and gave them everything they could possibly want and never forgot their roots, with feet firmly planted on the ground. His sense of humor and ability to connect were unsurpassed, especially given that his father spent his time as a comedian in the Catskills. How cool!

Nancy, Jerry’s beloved wife, pre-deceased him, and he missed her for the rest of his life. He was a great father who gave all of his children something to aspire to.

JWV will miss Jerry’s presence both in our annual get-togethers, but also, his voice guiding our organization. Donations can be made to the National Museum of American Jewish Military History in Jerry’s name.

www.jwv.org

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Veterans Day 2021

By COL Herb Rosenbleeth, National Executive Director

JWV will be the host organization at the Veterans Day ceremonies at Arlington National Cemetery in 2021. It seems far off, however, the time will go quickly!

Each year one of the organizations which serves on the Veterans Day National Committee becomes the host organization on Veterans Day at Arlington National Cemetery. In 1996, the year of JWV’s 100th anniversary, JWV was the host organization. It was a day we will always remember!

On the morning of the Arlington Cemetery program, Past National Commander Bob Zweiman was seated on the dais with President Bill Clinton, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jesse Brown, and the leaders of the other Veterans Service Organizations. PNC Zweiman gave an eloquent, rousing speech to a standing room only packed house at the Arlington Cemetery amphitheater. He said it is a tragedy that no one really cares about our veterans, noting that “our government has a moral and a real obligation to provide for our veterans.” The crowd cheered and applauded throughout PNC Zweiman’s speech and several times during the speech, President Clinton nodded approvingly. PNC Zweiman closed with the words “For your tomorrow, we gave our today.” The entire crowd in the amphitheater rose to their feet, applauded, and cheered. What a great day for JWV!

Next came the Veterans Day Reception hosted by JWV at the Ft. Myers Officers Club. It was a perfect setting and was extremely well attended, including the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Honorable Jesse Brown. The spirited program went off smoothly.

Fast forward to Thursday, November 11, 2021: JWV will again be the host organization. Our National Commander will be on the dais and will address the crowd. Our reception will follow. JWV is in the process of raising the money necessary to fund the reception. Tax deductible donations may be sent to JWV, Attention: 2021 Reception.

#MeToo - How Should The Military and JWV Respond?

By Jennifer Brande, Post 126 NJ

The #MeToo movement is the latest word in the American vernacular. With Hollywood, politics and everything in between being touched by the accusations and proven acts of sexual assault and harassment, the one completely glaring missing area is the United States Armed Forces. Occasionally it comes to light, such as with the Marines United Facebook group, which went to great lengths to not make the pervasive sexual military culture invisible to the public so that their pristine image of duty, honor and country would not be tarnished. Another example, would be the Army Major General, who was brought back on leave the Army to help keep our battle buddy, friends and brothers/sisters and po-
We Need a Universal Draft

By COL Carl A. Singer, PNC

America needs a "Universal Service" where every young woman and man contributes to society via mandatory service. As witnessed within Israeli society, such service is a vital resource, a badge of honor, and the price of admission so to speak as a full-fledged member of society. This calls for a draft!

Why? Our military is overused, understaffed, and not representative of our population. Today's military is deployed worldwide and we are relying too heavily on the Guard and Reserve which are being grossly overused with multiple deployments – all to avoid having a draft. Today there are approximately 1.3 million brave women and men in the U.S. military. Only about 0.4% of the population is serving. That’s only 1 in 250!

But for crisis events, our 16 year long war is not in America's consciousness. For the men and women who are serving and for their families – we are at war. For the rest of us it is pretty much business as usual.

The Vietnam era draft, which ended in 1973, was grossly unfair. Despite a draft lottery which gave an illusion of fairness, local draft boards were gerrymandered and subject to political influence. For example, Shaker Heights, Ohio, a wealthy Cleveland suburb. Its local board was carved out to include a portion of inner-city Cleveland. The latter supplied sufficient draftees so the former was a source of easy deferments. Unfortunately, this is just the tip of the iceberg. There are many tales of questionable deferments – easy to come by in certain draft boards, impossible in others. A doctor's letter asserting "severe allergies" was sufficient for a friend of mine.

Additionally, the demographics of today’s U.S. military do not reflect this great nation's people. The poor and immigrants are disproportionately represented. They see the military as a way to serve, a pay check, a source of training, and an opportunity to later go to college or receive occupational training via the GI Bill. Thankfully, there are additional patriot young women and men who choose to serve – but most do not consider the military within their plans. They are takers, not givers.

It is no secret that our military is being stressed. Reinstitutioning a draft is considered political suicide. Thus in a misguided attempt to avoid having a draft, administration after administration has in essence “drafted” the Guard and Reserve instead. In short, the military makes do by grossly overusing its existing assets. This cannot go on forever. One can logically speculate that the disproportionate rate of PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) and the high rate of military suicides are symptoms of the current situation.

I cannot pretend to design a new draft in a paragraph or two – but here are a few points: (1) To assure fairness local draft boards should be eliminated. The draft pool should be on a state wide basis. This helps level the playing field so to speak; (2) National health and fitness standards will be established. All physicals will be done at the Department of Veterans Affairs – personal physicians will be out of the equation; and (3) there should be a four-year college deferment. School deferments beyond these initial four years (say for Medical School) shall be tied to a commitment for extended service upon graduation.

The measure of success for a new draft program will be the quality of those drafted. The measure of fairness will come in a decade or two. When looking back, no one will be able to complain about this new draft as having been unfair or biased.

The benefits would be enormous. I steadily heap praise on our World War II veterans – not only for their service in uniform, but also for what they did upon coming home. Some historians say that World War II ended the Great Depression. To me this is an understatement. Bolstered by the GI Bill, they went to school, learned trades, became professionals and thus ushered in a booming age of prosperity. They truly rebuilt this great nation! Today, universal service can similarly provide a generation of trained, motivated and disciplined young men and women to reinvigorate our nation.

I am not a sociologist, but I believe that in addition to providing our military with young men and women from across American society, a universal draft would benefit all of our maturing youth. The opportunity to serve, be it in the military or in another significant capacity, will have a positive influence and provide lifelong benefits.

#MeToo - How Should The Military and JWV Respond?

Continued from page 4

sisters safe, while also providing for those who need help and may not be Jewish? We have our national and local conventions, and fight on Capitol Hill for so many important missions and we need to extend this to include military sexual trauma.

There is so much that can be done and the narrative for the #MeToo Movement should read that we lead the way in actions and deeds, just as we have for over 122 years and will do in the future. Be the voice for the silent and fight for those in the shadows.

JWV FOUNDATION

Spring 2018

Jewish Warrior Weekend

By CDT Jacob Widman

On February 2-4, 53 cadets and midshipmen participated in the 2018 Jewish Warrior Weekend. The event was hosted this semester by Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas. Highlights of the program included learning the essentials of lay leadership, listening to speeches by high ranking officers about being Jewish in the U.S. Armed Forces in this day and age, meeting other future officers in the military, and speaking to Chaplains on the ins and outs of being Jewish in the military.

The Jewish Warrior Weekend Program is a retreat which is held once every college semester for cadets and midshipmen from colleges across the country to come together and meet other Jewish future service members and learn about various things specific to being Jewish leaders in the United States Armed Forces. The program was originally formed as a way for Jewish cadets and midshipmen from the military academies to meet each other. It later grew to include Texas A&M University Corps of Cadets, culminating this year to include most of the service academies, many of the senior military colleges, and some ROTC programs.

This event allows Jewish future service members to meet each other and provides ample networking opportunities. Many cadets who have graduated from this program return to share their experience and gained knowledge with current participants. The Jewish Warrior Weekend has grown and developed over the past several years and continues its mission to educate and inform future Jewish leaders. Some prominent guest speakers that the cadets learned from included RDML Harold Robinson, CAPT Dan Goldenberg, and Past TALO Commander Dr. Barry Schneider.

Jewish Warrior Weekend Spring 2018 was generously sponsored by Jewish War Veterans, Texas A&M University Corps of Cadets, Texas A&M University Hillel, Texas A&M Chabad, Jewish Welfare Board, United States Military Academy Jewish Chapel, United States Naval Academy Jewish Chapel, and the United States Air Force Academy Jewish Chapel.

Next semester, Jewish Warrior Weekend will be hosted at the United States Naval Academy on Veterans Day weekend.
MEMBERSHIP CORNER

On behalf of the Jewish War Veterans (JWV) Membership Committee, I would like to take this opportunity and thank the JWV staff at National Headquarters for their commitment and dedication during our recent JWV National Executive Committee (NEC) Meeting. The Membership Committee would especially like to thank everyone involved with the development, planning and coordination of our first Leadership Shabbaton Workshop.

While waiting for our Shabbaton Workshop to start, I had the opportunity to personally welcome several of the attendees in our audience; civilian, military and JWV members. It was a pleasure to meet many members of our faith from the Washington, DC, and Virginia area that attended the Shabbaton Workshop, each wanting to listen and learn about our organization.

Our panel members were exceptional, each bringing their own views to the topic, ranging from their role in the military to their life experience as a Jewish military service member. Their message to the audience also included several items of interest, especially “things that matter” to today’s generation of military members and their families.

On a personal note, I would like to thank Colonel Richard Goldenberg (currently serving as a National Guardsman in New York) and Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Lance Allen Wang - both JWV members of Post 105 in Albany, NY. Colonel Goldenberg facilitated a workshop titled “Crafting JWV’s Story,” a powerful presentation reminding the audience of who we are: an organization made up of proud Americans who are of the Jewish faith who have served and continue to serve in today’s U.S. armed forces. The Colonel’s topic made me stop and think, we can be the best veterans organization in town and be the best advocate for our veterans, but if we can’t get the word out about who we are and what our JWV has achieved, we might as well be invisible to our audience. The single most effective way to recruit new prospects into our organization is through personal contact; here is where telling our story begins.

At every echelon of JWV, we must inspire our members to tell the story not only of their own military experience, but the story of JWV’s achievements. I am always amazed when I look back into the lineage of our organization. Our individual JWV posts spread throughout numerous communities of our nation, some small in number, have achieved that we are all extremely proud of their accomplishments.

This March 15th marks another anniversary of accomplishments since the Hebrew Union Veterans, later known as the Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America, first met in New York City’s Lexington Opera House. Through that lineage, we are the longest continuously running veterans’ organization in the United States. We have come a long way since that first meeting in 1896, and this is only one example of the many stories that we must tell our audience about who we are and what we have achieved.

Member: Samuel Yudin
Post: Tibor Rubin Capitol Post 786 CA
Current Residence: Long Beach, CA
Military Service: Iraq and Afghanistan
Member Since Year: 2018

1) When and why did you serve in the military?
My decision to join the military is a long, complicated story centered on many chance encounters and a confluence of events and ideas. While in college, I was curious about learning anything I could and reexamining all that I had come to know especially when it came to my Judaism. I was reading, among other things, anything by Philip Roth and Leon Uris. The stark contrast of Jewish masculinity depicted did not sit well with me and I wanted to be a nice but tough Jew.

While studying in Germany I worked as a bartender on a US Army base and learned about the military language school which made me think that I could pursue one of my intellectual passions while serving so I could become that nice tough Jew.

2) What was a special moment for you serving in the military?
In my almost 19 years serving so far there have been many special moments. Each graduation of a special military school, competition, or each promotion are always memorable. Every training exercise, mission, or deployment suffering in the inclement weather in some godawful place with your buddies is a special moment we all share which bonds us together like no civilian will ever know.

Out of all those special moments the most memorable was being promoted in a ceremony in front of friends and family by my friend and hero, Holocaust survivor, and Medal of Honor recipient, Corporal Tibor Rubin.

3) How did you get introduced to JWV?
When I first got back home from Active Duty I was curious to find other Jews like me who could understand where I was coming from. I was told about JWV but was told it was just a bunch of old guys sitting around who did not want youngsters around. I joined the Reserves and then the Guard but kept moving around so did not get involved. Then a few years ago Corporal Tibor Rubin’s daughter, Rosie, told me I needed to meet Greg Lee, the commander of the JWV Department of California. Greg got me energized to be part of JWV which has in turn gotten a group of several of us currently still serving to join JWV.

4) What national issues are you interested in seeing JWV fight for?
I am uneasy about organizations, especially Jewish ones, creeping outside their mission statements because that alienates some people they are supposed to represent. I am interested in the JWV advocating for Jewish veterans, veterans in general, and getting the positive message of Jewish service out there.

5) What displays of patriotism makes you the proudest?
My definition of patriotism differs from most. I believe the best display of patriotism is living your life with the values and ideals that this country was founded on. It is the same way I look at Judaism. If I wave the flag and chant USA but am a miserable human being not living a life of American values than I am not patriotic. I am proud of my Judaism and my country but I could have just as easily been born to different parents in a different country. What I can choose is how I live my life. Some of the most patriotic Americans I know are my Vietnamese and Cambodian friends. They love this country because it saved their lives and they embody American values in how they live with love of liberty, freedom, and responsibility.

6) What is the best military Jewish holiday story you have?
Chanukah in Korea is a reoccurring theme. I spent the one in 2003 on a hill top surrounded by North Korea on three sides. It happened to be Christmas so they flew the Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders up in a Blackhawk so got a nice picture with my menorah, my officers and all of them. Arranging a Passover Seder in Kosovo two years ago was another great success.

7) What is your favorite Adam Sandler movie?
I would have to go early Adam Sandler, so anything in the 90s; Airheads, Billy Madison, Happy Gilmore, or Waterboy.

Want to know what your everyday JWV member is like? Then let’s play 7 questions! Contact the Membership Department (membership@jwv.org) if you wish to be featured.
The list of those Jewish servicemen/women who have been killed in action since 9/11 is provided each year by our National office. It is also available to download from our National Museum of American Jewish Military History at https://nmajmh.org/fallen-heroes/.

Upon receipt of this list, a copy should be sent to each Department Officer and Post Commander. Those that do not have e-mail addresses should be sent the list via US Mail.

Each member should be asked to contact their local synagogue and ask if the Rabbi would include reading the names of the fallen at the Shabbat service that comes just before Memorial Day. As part of a membership and/or fund raising campaign, the Post or Department may look to sponsor either the Friday evening service, or the Saturday morning Kiddush. If a Rabbi is reluctant to read the names (I have found that some are), they should be asked if a member of JWV can read them.

Prior to reading the names, a few remarks should be made such as:

“People believe that Jews do not serve in the military. This list I am about to read will help you to understand that Jews do serve, and, in these particular cases, paid the supreme sacrifice while serving in the military.

The list of names is then read – stating the Rank, Name, City and State. If you are only reading the names of those from your particular state, then simply eliminate the state name.

At the Florida Department Convention, we partner with the Ladies Auxiliary and hold a joint memorial service. During this service, the names of those departed comrades and sisters (who passed away since the last convention) are read out loud – in Post order.

As each Post name and number is called, a JWV Post and Auxiliary member marches down the center aisle and approaches the altar. In addition to the altar cloth and bible, the table also has a few Styrofoam blocks sitting on it. As each Post member approaches, he places a small American flag (attached to a small wooden stick the size of a toothpick) into the Styrofoam, for each departed member that is named. A hand salute is then rendered. The Auxiliary member then places a carnation on the table. Regardless of the number of Auxiliary names that are called out, only one carnation per Auxiliary is placed on the table.

After all of the departed comrades and sisters are named, we then read the listing of fallen Jewish soldiers. Mourners Kaddish is then recited and the program is closed.
Late one night I read an article about a female Air Force Captain who had committed suicide. She had also been a combat veteran. Everyone who knew her had thought she was fine. But the sad fact was she suffered from PTSD—a disorder that far too often proves to be fatal.

I soon learned the shocking statistic: approximately 20 veteran commits combat suicide EVERY DAY in the U.S.! Up until 2017, the number of veteran suicides was 22 a day, but a new VA study was released with a change in the right direction. However, this statistic does not include military spouses and contractors, who also are at high risk for suicide.

To illustrate the enormity of this number: if you take the number of all the casualties of U.S. wars fought since 2001, that number does NOT equal one year of U.S. veteran suicides.

This is a shameful national tragedy! As far as I'm concerned, stopping veteran suicide is our most pressing issue.

After I read about the Air Force Captain and the 22 doomed veterans, I decided to do something about it—immediately! I reasoned that the best way to get the word out was with a YouTube video. That night I started composing a script.

The next day, I telephoned many people to help with this project. I'd need someone to film the video, someone to edit it and also a place where to film, which believe it or not, turned out to be a major challenge. A number of colleges turned me down. Plus I had to locate 21 combat veterans. For the purpose of this video, I was number 22.

After countless calls for donated help, I found Phil Falcone, producer of “Joe’s War” (please go see). Finally, after three stressful months, we were ready to film at the Deal, N.J. JCC, home of Post 125. I was honored to have five WWII vets, Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan vets to be in the video. It was a fantastic day.

Since then I have been on TV twice, met with N.J. Congressman Frank Pallone, and made the Garden State Film Festival. I hand out cards daily for the video and average about 600 a month—if you’re within hands reach of me, you’re getting a card.

The video is a call to action, not awareness. Please call, write and/or e-mail your Congressman and the President and tell them to stop this (please also send them my video).

To watch my video go to www.youtube.com or any search engine, for example Google, and type in “22 a day no way.”
Reflections of a Jewish Naval Officer

By Rear Admiral Paul Becker, USN, Retired, Post 100

I recently retired from the Navy after 33 years of service in peace, crisis and combat, serving afloat and ashore around the world. Before sharing my reflections as a Jewish Naval Officer at Tampa’s Temple Schaarai Zedek last month it was important to set the context by informing others of the proud history of Jews who honorably served in uniform and were decorated for valor from our colonial era through conflicts of today. Of particular note were several four-stars, including an Air Force Chief of Staff, a Chief of Naval Operations and the Father of the Nuclear Navy. As a Board Member at the U.S. Naval Academy’s Jewish Chapel, I also placed special attention on its namesake, Commodore Uriah Levy, our nation’s first Jewish Flag Officer.

Commodore Levy’s most famous citation is, “I am an American, a Sailor, a Jew.” I read of his exploits as a teenager growing up in New York and I drew inspiration from his example that someone could be all three. So why do Jews join the military in the first place? There’s a myriad of answers for the approximate 1% of the military that is Jewish, but I joined because I felt I had ‘skin in the game.’ As Jews we expect our nation to contribute generously to those less fortunate. However, when it’s time for our own harm’s way, my observations growing up in the Bronx and a middle class suburb of Long Island was that many Jewish families discouraged military participation. In my mind this created a perception to some that we were the Jewish War Veterans and offering our support, ”A Jew, no matter how far he strays from the path, is still a Jew.” It was never for me to tell more junior Jewish personnel what should be their Jewish path or how far they should stray … their Jewish path was their choice. But I made it a point to never stray during the big holidays when junior Jewish personnel turn to a senior Jewish officer for ritual leadership. It was in this way that I sought to educate the next generation of American military personnel who are Jewish to remember where the path is if they need it.

Finally, in matters more practical I found in the military it’s important to get along, to be one of the guys. Many of the guys I met in the Navy had never met a Jew. Some weren’t inclined to like me. On those occasions I tried twice as hard to be a regular guy in an attempt to disavow any erroneous stereotypes others had about Jews … joining sports teams, taking on collateral duties, missing a little sleep if it means some extra social events. As a lone Jew in some commands I chose to play a broader role than I might have chosen otherwise, becoming a representative of a religion to which I’m a part, representing Jews even when I thought I wasn’t worthy of representing an entire people. But thanks to lessons learned from Rabbi Chaplains along the way it dawned on me I was worthy, and that realization, allowed me to be better as an American, a Sailor, a Jew.

By COL Rich Goldenberg, Post 105 NY

More than a dozen members of the JWV Capital District Council came together on Christmas Eve this year for the annual JWV “Operation Jingle Bells,” visiting with dozens of patients at the Stratton VA Medical Center here December 24, 2017. The event dates back for decades when JWV would visit with patients and staff at the VA and distribute phone cards for veterans to make long-distance calls to family over the Christmas holiday, explained Past Post Commander Dr. Howard Pressman, DDS, the coordinator of the event.

The spread of cell phones made the holiday distribution of phone cards unnecessary more than 15 years ago, Pressman said. Today, JWV distributes coupons for patient use at the hospital canteen or exchange, where veterans can purchase snacks or sundries.

“As times changed, so did JWV,” Pressman said. Pressman worked full-time at the VA for more than three dozen years, and annually leads the effort to identify patients unable to be discharged, meeting with each ward’s nursing staff the day before Christmas Eve to identify how many patients will still be under the hospital’s care for the holiday.

“No veteran should be alone for the Christmas holiday,” noted Albany Post 105 Commander Fred Altman. “This is a terrific mitzvah to share our best wishes with the VA staff and patients of all faiths who are unable to be home for the holiday.”

Operation Jingle Bells is the high point of JWV efforts during the holiday season. Support in the veterans’ community ranged from volunteers helping load Christmas Trees bound for military installations for the annual Trees for Troops program and the financial donation to place holiday wreaths at the local national cemetery at veteran headstones for Wreaths Across America.

Operation Jingle Bells is one of the most satisfying JWV outreach events, Pressman said, because of the one on one interactions with fellow veterans in need.

“One year, we were at the hospital and when a patient asked who we were during the visit, I explained that we were the Jewish War Veterans and offering our support,” Pressman said. “The veteran took one look at our JWV caps and said he couldn't accept our phone cards because he wasn't Jewish.”

After a brief laugh and explanation about JWV’s commitment to all veterans of all faiths during the Christmas season, the patient was happy to receive the gift from JWV, Pressman explained.

The holiday season is all about sharing joy, Altman said, and there’s no better way to do that than with our fellow veterans who can’t be home for Christmas.
JWV IN THE COMMUNITY

Wanted: WWI Memorials and Monuments, Reward: Saving History

By CDT Jacob Widman
The Great War was a war that was supposed to be the end of all wars. In the minds of people around the world, the deaths of so many soldiers and civilians had guaranteed that no one would ever wage war again. To this effect, after November 11, 1918, or Armistice Day, many memorials to the fallen and monuments to the survivors were erected across the nation and the world. Today, a century and countless wars later, too many of these monuments and memorials have been neglected, destroyed, removed or abandoned.

In 2013, an Act of Congress created the World War 1 Centennial Commission (hereafter referred to as the Commission). The Commission’s mission is to commemorate the centennial of the occurrence of WWI, to include but not limited to preserving WWI monuments and memorials, and educate others on WWI. This mission is not unique to the Commission, but is its main focus.

In order to involve the nation in preserving, refurbishing, and even rebuilding monuments and memorials dedicated to those that fought in WWI, the Commission created the “100 memorials, 100 cities” program and the Volunteer Monument Hunter program. With the creation and continued activity of these programs, many monuments and memorials that would otherwise be obscured to history forever are uncovered, documented, and registered for all to enjoy. Some are found simply hiding in plain sight, like six small brass plates at the base of the trees at the entrance of the courthouse in Orofino, ID commemorating six men who had died in WWI from the area, or an unfinished memorial in the Old Agudas Achim cemetery in Columbus Ohio that has not been used since 1952 (shown top right). Others are more noticeable, like the large plaque in The First Presbyterian Church in Seattle, Washington.

The Volunteer Monument/Memorial Hunter program, as described above, is one of the latest and largest programs created by the Commission to encourage and spread the interest in finding and documenting WWI memorials and monuments. These entries are uploaded to a national database with the specific location, names of those honored, pictures of the memorial, and the names of those that rediscovered the memorial. So far, hundreds of monuments have been documented with this initiative. The memorials have been found across the country, in abandoned cemeteries, active cemeteries, courtyards and memorial walls in churches, synagogues, colleges, universities and other religious and educational institutions as well as parks and county court house lawns. Featured at the bottom left is one such a memorial found slowly sinking in a park and restored by Robert Shay. The people who look for these monuments are as varied as the memorials they are trying to preserve. What they all have in common is the drive to preserve, protect, and, in a sense, defend those who did the same for us a hundred years ago. All the volunteers had to do was spend a few hours walking around town looking for these historical markers.

The other principal program supported by the Commission is the “100 memorials, 100 cities” program. As mentioned previously, almost every city and town has a memorial to those that made the ultimate sacrifice during WWI. Because of this, the

Continued on page 12

Profile of Alan Goldberg: A Winner in and out of the Ring

By Amy Lefkof
During World War II, a bathtub saved Alan Goldberg’s life. Goldberg served in the infantry — an eighteen-year-old private first class in the 13th Armored Division, 46th Tank Battalion. A bathtub was welded onto the back of his tank when General Patton visited Goldberg’s battalion as they were preparing to cross a bridge somewhere near Simbach, Germany. Patton refused to let Goldberg’s tub-tank go first. When the soldiers were unable to remove the welded bathtub from the tank, the tub-tank moved to third in line. The bridge collapsed under the weight of the first two armored tanks.

While in Germany, Goldberg went to a USO show held for the 13th Armored Division. A woman in a two-piece swimsuit danced on a makeshift stage—a raised wooden platform in the back of an army truck. Goldberg shouted to the men in his Company, “That’s my cousin Josephine from Brookline, Massachusetts!” After the show, Goldberg, trailed by the hundred or so men in his Company, went “backstage,” took off his helmet and asked his cousin, “Jo, do you remember Alan Goldberg from Brookline?” According to Goldberg, his cousin broke down crying and told the rest of the Company, who had lined up to meet her, to go on home and leave her alone with her cousin Alan. In a letter to her mom dated May 12, 1945, Josephine Axelrod described her encounter with Goldberg: “I threw my arms around him and kissed him and he was so cute and excited and pleased that he got all choked up.” After commenting on how “this poor kid” was too young to endure army life, she added, “I kissed him goodbye and got lots of lipstick on his cheek and told him to be sure and leave it on till all his buddies saw it.” These and other Goldberg WWII antics are featured in Jewish American Soldiers: Stories from WWII, a documentary that tells the stories of Charlotte-area Jewish American World War II veterans.

After the war, Goldberg returned to the Boston area. Brandeis University was in its infancy and a birthday party was given for Alan’s uncle who was a University founder. The student selected to give a speech in honor of Alan’s uncle was a young woman named Ruth Abrams. Goldberg’s mother was in the audience and was so impressed with Ruth that she asked Ruth for her phone number. Goldberg’s mother gave him Ruth’s phone number and said, “This is the girl you should marry.” With what Goldberg concedes was the worst pick-up line of all times, he dutifully called the number and said to Ruth, “My mother said that I should call you.” Asked whether it was love at first sight, Goldberg says yes. Ruth says by the third date. They both say that sixty-four years later they’re still in love.

For seven years, Goldberg has served as photographer for Shalom Park Freedom School, a six-week summer literacy-based program for economically disadvantaged children, mostly Hispanic and African American. Each summer Goldberg braves sweltering
Benjamin Cooper Inducted into CT Veterans Hall of Fame

By Barbara Fischler, Sr. Vice Commander, Post 45 CT

Our own Ben Cooper, member of Sgt. John L. Levitow, Jewish War Veterans Post 45, was recently inducted into the 2017 Class of the CT Veterans Hall of Fame.

Ben was born in Avon, CT, December 24, 1921. Drafted at age 20, he enlisted in the U.S. Army. Serving as a combat medic with the 45th Infantry Division (AKA the “Thunderbird Division”). The Division originated in Oklahoma, and contained a high percentage of Native Americans. He was in the European Theatre in two battles: The Rhineland Campaign, and the Central Europe Campaign. Ben took part in the liberation of Dachau Concentration Camp with the 45th Division.

For 45 years after he came home from the war in November of 1945, Ben was so traumatized by the tragedies witnessed as a combat medic with a front-line Infantry Platoon, he did not tell his wife, his parents, or his children about his experiences. In 1990, while being interviewed by a history teacher from Torrington High School, Ben was first able to talk about his experiences.

Every year since then, he has been speaking at schools throughout Connecticut. He has dedicated his life to sharing his stories with the hope that by advocating kindness, he can help children and adults put an end to bullying and hatred at any level. Ben has shared his stories with countless people and veterans throughout Connecticut and beyond, and many schools too numerous to mention. He is a captivating and inspirational speaker and brings history to life with his personal stories and memorabilia. He wants people of all ages to realize war is a terrible thing, to understand the realities of war, and to remember the Holocaust. It is an eye opener for them and still a healing process for Ben. He also speaks to civic groups and libraries.

He had a small camera during the war. The photos and artifacts he brought back from the war enhance his presentations. He deeply touches all who he meets and has received countless letters and emails from students and teachers. Ben enjoys meeting and thanking all veterans who have served our country. He has been interviewed on several radio and television programs. He was an Honorary Grand Marshall in the CT Veterans Parade in 2004. He has marched in many Veteran’s Day and Memorial Day parades wearing his Eisenhower jacket.

Ben is an active member of the Sgt. John L. Levitow Post 45, Jewish War Veterans in West Hartford, CT. He was honored among other Liberators at the National Executive Committee of the Jewish War Veterans in Washington, DC in 2015.

He expresses his mottos in all of his talks: "No act of kindness, no matter how small is ever wasted," "Save humanity," "Stop hatred and bullying," "You can do it," "Never give up," and, remember, "We all belong to the same race, the human race.”

Ben Cooper’s enduring dedication to sharing his message makes him a very special veteran, humanitarian, father, husband, grandfather, great-grandfather, and friend to so many.

Life has its mysteries. In 1996, at an annual event to remember the Holocaust at the State Capitol in Hartford, Ben was wearing his Eisenhower jacket with the Thunderbird emblem on his sleeve. It was noticed by Leo Scheinerman, a survivor of Dachau attending the event. He told Ben he remembered that he and his wife Anna had been liberated by the 45th Infantry Division. They became friends. In 2006, Ben had open-heart surgery and his surgeon’s name was Dr. Jacob Scheinerman, the son of that couple.

After 65 years of marriage, in 2009, Ben lost his beloved wife, Dorothy. In 2010, he met a Holocaust survivor, Henny Simon from Colchester, CT, who wrote an autobiography about how she survived the Holocaust. Henny had been speaking at schools since 1985. Since then, they had been presenting their talks together and made an unforgettable impact. Sadly, Henny was killed in a car accident in 2017.

His philosophy of life, positive attitude, quick wit, sense of humor, and his many acts of kindness are a wonderful role model and guide for his children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, as well as everyone he meets.

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Post 125 NJ Honors WWII Veterans

By Gerry Levine, Post 125 NJ

JWV Jersey Shore Post 125 celebrated twenty WWII veterans November 12 in a special ceremony at the Ocean, NJ JCC. These former service members were veterans November 12 in a special ceremony at the JWV Jersey Shore Post 125 celebrated twenty WWII veterans in November of 1945, Ben was so traumatized by the wartime service during mobilization in England amidst Nazi bombings, in ground campaigns like the Battle of the Bulge in Europe, in the battle for Leyte and the Philippines in the Pacific, and elsewhere around the world during the 1940s. There were stories of admitted relief knowing that the atomic bomb saved untold numbers of American lives as the war with Japan came to an end.

Accompanied by friends and family members, the honorees rose, some with difficulty, but all proudly, as their individual service anthems were played and then again to salute fallen comrades and friends as Taps sounded in memory of those no longer here. As noted by event Chairman and Honorary Dept. of NJ Commander, Gerald Levine of Long Branch, honoring WWII vets has been a tradition in Jersey Shore posts, but the ranks of World War II service members are rapidly thinning. Seven potential honorees had passed during the planning for the 2017 event.

WWII is now 72 years behind us yet memories of the war years were still clear to many of the veterans as they recalled their experiences. Among those recollections were those of Bernard Tillis, senior surviving commander of Post 125 who served in the Battle of the Bulge. Milton Ziment, another former Post 125 commander saw the war conclude in Europe and was about to embark with his unit for the Pacific when VJ day arrived. Bernard Weinstein, Commander of Oglesky-Jackson Post 359 in Freehold, NJ was a young radar technician when the war ended. His collection of WWII memorabilia is scheduled for display at Brookdale Community College in Freehold, NJ. David Scheinhardt’s unit was scheduled for a dangerous Japanese mission about which he recalls having really ominous feelings. “I owe my life to Harry Truman’s decision to drop the atomic bombs,” he said, and then went on reflect on the miracle that enabled 16 of his acquaintances from the Bronx who fought in the war to return home safely. Harold Greenspan of Long Branch, NJ was wounded in the Philippines and then again, near mortally, in the battle for Okinawa. He credited his ultimate survival to a change in or...
**JWV IN THE COMMUNITY**

**JWV Michigan Visits Veterans at Battle Creek on Christmas Day**

By Art Fishman, Department Commander of Michigan

It was a chilly, winter morning when 18 comrades of JWV Michigan assembled at 7:30 AM for our rented bus trip to the Battle Creek Veterans hospital. The purpose of this trip is to bring a care package with fruit, candy and warm white socks during the holiday. We distribute them to all who are there. This trip was the 72nd annual trip for the JWV Department of Michigan to the Battle Creek VA.

The Battle Creek VAMC is the hub of mental health care for VA Medical Centers in the lower peninsula of Michigan, and it offers a wide variety of health care services, which includes both inpatient and outpatient care.

After we had lunch and time to visit with veterans at the hospital who do not go home for the holiday or have no home to go to, we played BINGO with them. This year, there were about 170 veterans at Battle Creek Hospital. The prizes we gave out were either donated to JWV or purchased to be given as prizes for winning Bingo games. It was our JWVers job to make sure that no veteran left without prizes that included sweat shirts, athletic printed t-shirts, shorts and athletic pants. As the game progressed, the choice of prizes went from one gift to two, with the winner of the last game given the choice of three items as a prize. The rest were donated to the hospital for them to use as needed.

Senior Vice Commander Art Fishman with Post 135 Commander Ted Gittleman handled the arrangements for the day long trip, and Jodi Barnes, VA Hospital Staff Director at Battle Creek, coordinated our visit to the hospital. Snoozing was allowed on our trip back because we went through the worst snow storm of the year, so far. We all arrived home without incident though.

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**Profile of Alan Goldberg**

*Continued from page 10*

southern heat to document between 50 and 80 children at barbecues, chess boards, swimming pools, and manure-laden horse pastures.

These days Goldberg looks a bit frail as he enters our trip back because we went through the worst snow hospital. Snoozing was allowed on our visit to the hospital. Snoozing was allowed on our trip back because we went through the worst snow storm of the year, so far. We all arrived home without incident though.

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**Arizona Lights Up Veterans Home**

*Continued from page 8*

the family is a new blue-star family, with their son now in the Marine Corps. Mrs. Sheinbein made sure to provide all the participants with a small Chanukah present accompanying the Jewish Free Loan contact information.

The Post’s lit menorah was a beautiful backdrop to the morning’s entertainment, an 18 member boys choir from one of the local Yeshivas, Torah Day School of Phoenix led by Rabbi Gedaliah Goldstein. While it was the group’s debut, they were very polished and they not only sang several Chanukah melodies, but an additional popular song accompanied by a dance routine. All in all, combining the two events, together with extra publicity, bore fruit with a very well attended and joyful experience for all.

[For more information on how your post members, or any veteran, can be gifted with a Quilt of Valor, go to www.qovf.org.]

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**Wanted: WWI Memorials**

*Continued from page 10*

Commission is awarding up to $2,000 to 100 municipal governments, individuals, or organizations who are refurbishing their WWI monuments. So far 50 cities have applied for and won a grant, and the second batch of 50 will be announced from the second round of applications. The money is provided by many generous sponsors.

Now that you are aware of our hunt for WWI monuments, I issue a challenge. Find all WWI memorials within your cities, big and small. All represent one or more lives that have been lost to keep us free. While this may seem difficult, it is the least we can do as a nation to honor those that fought and especially those that gave the last full measure of devotion on this, the centenary of their sacrifice.

For help and questions with the Volunteer Monument Hunter program, the “100 memorials, 100 cities” program or the Commission in general, please refer to the Commission’s website http://www.world-war1centennial.org/.

For questions not answered by the website, feel free to contact the Jewish War Veterans at jwv@jwv.org.

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**Post 125 NJ Honors WWII Veterans**

*Continued from page 11*

leaders instigated by an Army physician who by remarkable coincidence was a medical school colleague of Greenspan’s brother. Sam Kaye, a board member of Post 125 and the first elected Jewish Freeholder in Hudson County, NJ, was in charge of the Army Pictorial Service repair shop in London and later in Germany. Kaye had two brothers in the Army and a sister in the Navy during the war years. No surprise Kaye pointed out. His father served in WWI and his grandfather was in the Army in the Spanish American War. Henry Lapidus was accepted as an aviation cadet after basic training but found himself transferred back to ground forces as the European campaign heated up. He ended up as a rifleman in the 276th Infantry Regiment that fought its way up through France and then across the Rhine into Germany. Bernard Karasic, a Navy enlistee following high school in Asbury Park, was aboard ship off the coast of Japan when the Pacific war ended. He returned safely and ultimately practiced law in the Shore area for six decades. These were but a few of the experiences shared as the veterans and their guests enjoyed the warm spirit of the event.

Post Commander Dr. Allan Solden delivered welcoming remarks to the assembled crowd of more than 100 and, following the actual recognition ceremonies, Post 125, led by PPC and County Commander Stanley Shapiro, hosted a catered luncheon that was very well received as the good food and warm environment gave guests the opportunity to chat informally and reflect on the service of these veterans to America during a time of great need. Certificates recognizing their service were also given by the State of New Jersey to the veterans being honored and photographic moments of the event are being arranged by Post 125 JVC Sid Marshall.
Here is a sneak peak at the 123rd Annual Convention Schedule:

**Thursday, August 9**
- GI Jews Screening
- Working with JROTC Units

**Friday, August 10**
- Joint Opening Ceremony
- Cigar City Brewery Tour
- National Service Officer Open House

**Saturday, August 11**
- Jewish Warrior Weekend Experiences
- Gold Star Families Experiences
- Creating Connections Between Yom HaZikaron and Memorial Day
- Military Spouse Employment Panel
- JWVA's National President's Banquet

**Sunday, August 12**
- Working with JROTC Units
- Creating Connections With Youth Groups
- Iraq & Afghanistan Committee Meeting
- Gulf War Committee Meeting
- JWVA's Double Chai Luncheon
- Veterans Night Out: Dinner at Cooper Hawk's Winery

**Monday, August 13**
- How Do We Preserve Iraqi Convention Schedule: Joint Opening Ceremony Between Yom HaZikaron and Memorial Day
- Women in the Military at the 123rd Annual Convention for Iraq & Afghanistan
- Creating Connections
- Creating Post Events Committee Meeting National Commander's Banquet • Monday, Aug. 13
- Veterans Night Out at Cooper's Hawk

**Wednesday, August 15**
- JWVA's Double Chai Luncheon • August 12
- Veterans Night Out at Cooper's Hawk

**Thursday, August 16**
- National President's Reception and Banquet • August 11
- National Commander's Banquet • Monday, Aug. 13
- Veterans Night Out at Cooper's Hawk

**Friday, August 17**
- Veterans Night Out at Cooper's Hawk
- Veterans Night Out at Cooper's Hawk

**Saturday, August 18**
- Veterans Night Out at Cooper's Hawk
- Veterans Night Out at Cooper's Hawk

**Sunday, August 19**
- Veterans Night Out at Cooper's Hawk

Hotel Registration deadline is Monday, July 9. A one night ($155/single or double) deposit is required for all hotel registrations. A 3-night minimum stay is required.

Hotel reservations must be made through JWV.

There is a $175 Convention surcharge for JWV members not staying at the hotel. A surcharge will be assessed and attendance at meetings will not be allowed. Local members living within a 50 mile radius are exempt. JWVA events are open to everyone!

Sign and mail this completed form, along with your payment to:
Jewish War Veterans 1811 R Street, NW Washington, DC 20090
Attn: Convention Dept.

**JWV Name:**

**Post #:**

**Ladies Auxiliary Name:**

**Aux. #:**

**Address:**

**Dept.:**

City: ____________________________________________ State: __________ Zipcode: __________

Phone: __________________________________________ Email: ____________________________

Room will be shared with: ____________________________

**Arriving on:** / **Departing on:** / **Total nights:** 

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**JWV Member Convention Registration Fee** $50.00

**Convention Surcharge for those not staying at the Hotel** $175.00 per member

**National Commander's Banquet • Monday, Aug. 13**

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**Double Chai Club Luncheon • August 12**

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**National President's Reception and Banquet • August 11**

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**Ladies Auxiliary to attend our Double Chai Luncheon. Everyone is welcome! All will have a good time!**

**Raffle Tickets**

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**Total**

**All events must be pre-paid in full**

**Amount paying now:**

I am paying by: [ ] Check [ ] American Express [ ] Visa [ ] Mastercard [ ] Discover

Card No. Exp. /

Signature

**Veterans Night Out at Cooper’s Hawk**

**Sunday, August 12 • 6:00 - 8:00 PM**

$45.00 Per Person (includes tax and tip)

Food • Fun • Friends • Everyone is welcome!

Contact Jerry Alperstein at 212-477-3131 for details.

**Make a Difference!** We challenge you to make a difference in JWV's future by identifying key issues affecting our Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan, and female veterans. Writing a resolution is a great way to become involved in JWV on a national scale. Resolutions approved at convention become part of the National agenda when JWV's National Commander testifies before Congress every year.

Need help writing a resolution? Go to: www.jwv.org/communications/national_resolutions

Mention of any company and/or product does not indicate JWV endorsement, but is provided as a service to our members and the community.

www.jwv.org
Volume 72 • Number 1 • 2018
The Jewish Veteran
JWV Confronts the “Big Lie”

American Jews “never send their children to fight for their country.”

My name is David L. Magidson, and I am a Past National Commander of the Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America (JWV) and a member of its Coordinating Committee.

The JWV was founded in 1896 because American anti-Semites were saying that Jews did not fight in the Civil War. In fact, we fought in significant numbers. JWV is the oldest active veterans’ organization in the U.S.A., (Chartered by Congress), and is recognized as such with honors by all the other veterans’ organizations and our government.

I have tried all my adult life to teach both Jews and non-Jews about the honorable, and often heroic, service of our brethren in the Armed Forces of the United States. Thus, hopefully, you can understand the depth of my hurt when the Deputy Foreign Minister of Israel - our own State of Israel - said that American Jews “never send their children to fight for their country.” What slander! What ignorance.

How do I assuage the hurt of my son, Captain Ben D. Magidson who served in combat in Afghanistan for 15 months and for his service to his country received a Bronze Star - re: The Deputy Foreign Minister’s comments?

How do I assuage the hurt caused to the fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, children and other family members of the almost sixty known Jewish K.I.A.’s of Iraq and Afghanistan? (Please see the attached documents: “Fallen Heroes” and “Evening Honoring Gold Star Families,” and most especially Jewish Gold Star Families).

How do I assuage the stain to the memories and families of the numerous Jewish-American recipients of the Medal of Honor and to JWV member, and Medal of Honor recipient, Jack Jacobs, who prior to commencing his heroic actions, recited a refrain from Hillel, which he learned in Hebrew School?

What do I say to the many thousands of Jews now serving in the U.S. military- men and women, generals, admirals, privates and sergeants? In the past twenty years Jews have served as Chief of Staff of the Air Force (General Norton Schwartz and currently General David Lee Goldfein); Head of our National Guard (Yeshiva Bochar General Steven Blum); Commander of our Special Forces (General Sidney Shachnow); and Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps (General Robert Magnus). They all had fathers! They all fought in combat for the United States.

(I believe that today we represent a greater percentage of the U.S. Military than our portion of the American population).

The hurt, the stain, the slander, the lies can be assuaged in part with a written apology from Deputy Foreign Minister Tzipi Hotovely and the Government of Israel - to be communicated to all through the Jewish War Veterans Publication - “The Jewish Veteran.” This is our request.

Please provide us with the written apologies by Tuesday, February 6, 2018. On Wednesday, February 7, and Thursday, February 8, JWV goes to Capitol Hill to lobby our Congress people about veteran's issues, military affairs, and of course Israel - we are the Jewish War Veterans! (Over the years we have assisted in garnering billions of dollars in aid for Israel).

Absent the apologies my group will bring up the matter with the JWV Florida Delegation. A trickle will have started and you will have to respond. Absent a written response we will try to enlist all of the JWV Organizations to protest to all of their Congressional Delegations. A flow of upset will now have occurred.

Further silence and we will go to our press and the internet and then to the U.S. Government. (We Jews are now studying and have learned this tactic from the Book of Exodus 12:28 and it has served us well).

Please provide us with the apologies. The last thing we want to do is hurt our beloved Israel; but we need to assuage this “Shanda.”

David L. Magidson, Past National Commander
Norman Rosenstein, Chairman
Dr. Robert Pickard, Past National Commander

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
M.K. Tzipi Hotovely

12 Shvat 5778
January 28, 2018

To the Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America,

I would like to take the opportunity to right a wrong that was made during an interview I gave to channel I24 last November, where I misspoke by insinuating American Jews do not serve in the military.

My words were shortsighted and not reflective of my beliefs, and I deeply apologize. I in no way meant to imply that Jewish Americans do not serve their country, especially when I am aware of the thousands who do so proudly. There is no room to question the loyalty of American Jews towards their country, nor the bravery they display in defending America’s values. I regret that my words were unsettling and caused any upset.

I hold Jewish members of the US Armed Forces in the highest regard. They have continuously put their country first when making the noble decision to enlist, and have served proudly as Jews alongside other Americans in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, The Gulf War, Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as other Wars and Operations dating back to the very founding of America itself. These brave Americans know what it is to make the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

I would like to issue an additional word of apology to injured Veterans, and to those Jewish Gold Star Families who have regrettably learned the pain of losing a fallen hero. To those Jewish American Veterans who have fought bravely for our shared democratic values of peace, freedom, and justice, and to the families of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice—I express my deepest regret if my words caused you further pain.

I appreciate the work and significance of the Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America, and the organizations role throughout America’s history. The impact the organization has made, alongside the irreplaceable contributions of Jewish American Veterans and active Service members is profound and dignified. As both the organization and its members have been an intrinsic part of America’s history, they will continue to be a vital part of America’s future.

Sincerely,

Tzipi Hotovely
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

If you wish to assist the Jewish War Veterans in carrying out our mission of combating anti-Semitism, whatever its source, please consider the following:

• Join our Posts as a member (if qualified) or as a Patron by visiting our website at www.jwv.org/membership/types or call the JWV Membership Department at 202-265-6280.

• Make a generous donation to support JWV. Please contact us at 202-265-6280. You may also make a donation online by visiting www.jwv.org/donations/donation.php.

• Leave a legacy gift to JWV in your will, trust or life insurance policy. To arrange this, please contact us at 202-265-6282 or by email at gbyrne@jwv.org.

Thank you for your support. New veterans are created everyday, and your support continues to be vital to our ongoing mission - to be the voice of the veteran in the Jewish Community and to be the Jewish voice in the veteran community. Please remember that while we care for all Veterans, only JWV specifically speaks to the service and memory of the Jewish-American Veteran, his/her family and friends. If we don't, who will?
Creating Connections Between Yom HaZikaron and Memorial Day

By Liat Lisha, Shlicha of Northern Virginia

In July 2017, I began my training in Jerusalem in preparation for my role as the Shlicha (Hebrew meaning “Emissary”) at the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia. As part of my training, I was told that my goal was to engage the Northern Virginia community in learning about Israel and to share my personal story. It was equally as important that upon returning to Israel, that I take the knowledge gained about American Jewry and share it with my community back home.

For the past few months, I have been producing a documentary that connects bereaved military families from Israel and bereaved military families from the United States (Virginia, Maryland, and Florida). These families lost sons and daughters in the IDF and in the U.S. Military. Filming took place in both countries so I could use the project as a way of bridging the two countries through their shared experiences. While this has been a powerful experience for the families, it has had a tremendous impact on me. I was fortunate to meet these amazing people who showed me the true meaning of bravery.

What led me to make this documentary? At the beginning of my shlichut, I developed a list of programs, celebrations, and remembrance days that I wanted to share with my new community. One that I was very interested in sharing was the Israeli Memorial Day that takes place this year on April 17th called Yom Hazikaron (Hebrew meaning “Memorial Day”). A National Remembrance Day observed in Israel for all Israeli military personnel who lost their lives in the struggle that led to the establishment of the State of Israel, and for those who have been killed subsequently while on active duty in Israel’s armed forces. As of Yom Hazikaron in 2017, that number was 23,544 and it includes the fallen soldiers of Israel and victims of terrorism.

Yom Hazikaron is a national day of mourning with flags flying at half-mast, restaurants and stores closed for the day, and most Israelis spending the evening at home listening to somber music played on the radio or watching TV broadcasts. A blaring siren can be heard all over Israel at 8 pm and again at 11 am the next morning. Every Israeli knows this sound all too well, having learned about and heard it since they were a child in school – a siren that all of us wished we didn’t need.

To provide a better understanding of Yom Hazikaron and relay the importance of this remembrance day in Israel, I wanted to create personal connections between the families by sharing their stories with our community. Since bringing the families together for filming was challenging and the idea of doing a live chat not being a viable option due to time differences, I decided to make a movie. Having no experience in filmmaking, I reached out to a group of young people in Israel who agreed to volunteer and help me make the movie. Elad Gitelmaker, Shay Nechamia, and Hodaya Shofblat are three young Israelis who chose to give their time while going to high-school or serving in the IDF.

When I was looking for Jewish military families to be a part of the movie, I didn’t know what to expect. I knew there were Jews who served in the military but I didn’t know how to get to them. When I was introduced to the National Museum of American Jewish Military History, I was surprised to learn that not only is there an organization focused on Jewish Americans who served in the armed forces, but they are also in touch with bereaved families, creating a sense of community, reminding me of similar types of communities in Israel. After meeting these families and listening to their stories, I was left speechless and even more convinced that these connections between Israeli and American military families needed to be made.

I invite you to join us for Yom Hazikaron on Tuesday, April 17th at the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia for the screening of this documentary. The movie will also be screened in Israel, showing that while 5,000 miles separate these families, their stories, shared experiences of grief and bravery are not that far apart. Someone once said – “life is 10% of what happens to you and 90% of how you react to it.” These courageous families showed me that life is 100% how you react and the way you deal with adversity is everything.

Bridging the Divide: American and Israeli Veterans

By LTC Lance Allen Wang, Editor

I have always felt comfortable in the company of fellow Jews, and likewise, I have felt equally comfortable in the company of fellow veterans. Each time, it is much like a family reunion where I don’t necessarily know anyone, but feel the kinship and know I am among my own. However, to be in the company of Jewish veterans is a place that is particularly special to me – a minority subgroup of a minority subgroup. Indeed, it is why I find myself an active, participating member of Jewish War Veterans of the United States. It is a sense of purpose. We both serve democracies, yet the presence of being near somewhere significant to our roots.

In Ken Burns’ recent “Vietnam” PBS mini-series, he showed interaction between former American and North Vietnamese adversaries, and again, the reconciliation seemed almost therapeutic. The fact is, as the war veteran feels out of place in what might be called “polite society” due to his unique experiences, it is often with those who shared the battlefield with him, friend or foe, that he finds understanding.

Finally, in CBS reporter John Laurence’s book “The Cat from Hue,” a recollection of his many years reporting from the field in Vietnam, he describes an unusually close relationship that a Marine First Sergeant, a World War II Pacific veteran, develops with Laurence’s Japanese cameraman, who turns out to have been a former adversary of the Marine’s. Close combat can be indescribable to anyone but the participants – however, that also can forge bonds between those that endure it, even sworn enemies.

So where does that leave Jewish American veterans? Jewish veterans have dealt with the intensity of combat since the dawn of recorded history. However, is there anything distinct about the experience of Jewish combatants? Of course there is. For instance, many Jews I met in the military had concerns about how they would be treated as a Jew if captured – whether by Nazis during World War II or Islamic extremist today. Sometimes the experience of maintaining their religious obligations in the field was a point of discussion. And of course – any Jew who has served in Southwest Asia must have sensed the presence of being near somewhere significant to their roots.

So how can relating to Israel’s veterans benefit America’s Jewish veterans? To start with – there is the sense of kinship – we can consider Israeli vets “family which we’ve not yet met.” Secondly, there is a sense of being able to share that which cannot be shared with the uninstructed civilian. Most importantly, there is a sense of purpose. We both serve democracies, yet we both serve democracies who find themselves enmeshed in controversy, politically and diplomatically. These are turbulent times, both within and without our countries. It is so often the fighting man who pays for these controversies – be it in their relationship with civil society, constraints such as excessively tight rules of engagement based upon political considerations, and because the services in the United States and Israel are often made up of a high percentage of non-careerists and citizen-soldiers, social rifts that take place in the society at large find their way into the uniformed services.

Continued on page 17
COMMITTEE REPORTS

JWV Scouting Committee
By COL Barry Schneider, Ph.D.

The Scouting committee continues to strive to have more Posts become involved in various aspects of the scouting movement. As you may be aware, at their June National Meeting, the Boy Scouts of America voted to include girls in the program. Starting in January 2018 girls will be allowed to enroll as Cub Scouts and earn the same awards as the boys. Keep in mind that Boy Scout Units are owned by the sponsoring organization and each organization can choose to admit girls or not.

This presents an unprecedented opportunity for JWV. We now have more choices to become involved in the Scouting program within our various Synagogues, Temples, Federations, Chabad’s, as well as our own JWV Posts and Departments.

Some of the continuing needs JWV could assist with or facilitate are Merit Badge Counselors, Unit Committee members and as liaison between the Sponsoring Organization and the Scouting Unit. There is often a need to interact with the Local Boy Scout Council as Chairman of a local Jewish committee on Scouting or just to be a member of that committee.

PLEASE do not forget our JWV Eagle Scout Achievement Award Program. This award should be presented to any scout, Jewish or not, male or female (when the time comes) who achieves this prestigious honor. As you present this award wearing your JWV cap at the youth’s Court of Honor, you will be showing the best side of JWV to the public. Remember Scouting serves the Jewish Community and we as JWV members can benefit by increasing public awareness of our good works. Who knows, you might even recruit a new member for your post. What could be bad?

The personalized award can be obtained by calling JWV National.

Vietnam Veterans Committee
By PDC Bob Jacobs, Vice-Chairman

Looking for Vietnam Veterans…Are You? Several years ago, as Vice Chairman of our Vietnam Veterans Committee, I took on the task of gathering the military stories of Jewish veterans who served during the Vietnam Era (defined by Congress as 1959-1975). It didn’t matter if you were “boots on the ground” or wherever you were sent by Uncle Sam to serve our great nation.

By last summer, the project seemed to have lost steam. All previously submitted stories were reviewed by me, edited by Jerry Alperstein and then submitted to the National Museum of American Jewish Military History for inclusion in a computer program that can be accessed by visitors to the museum. At the suggestion of PNC Mike Berman (a fellow member of the Vietnam Veterans of America), I contacted that organization to see if we could bring in more stories through advertising in their publication. My request was enthusiastically received and I received the first contribution from a Jewish member of their staff just three days later!

When the ad appeared in their September-October issue, the response was fantastic. While I was on a cruise in early October, I received about 20 more responses, either stories or inquiries, most of which eventually became submissions. As it turns out (and we know this), Jews served! The responses are still coming in and we look forward to publishing our effort sometime in 2019. Any profits made will go directly to the NMAJMH. Along the way, I received stories from Jewish Vietnam Veterans who were not members of JWV. I gave them information on how to join and, hopefully, they did.

So, if you served in our military anywhere in the world during the years 1959-1975, please contact me on how to have your legacy preserved. I can be reached at jww@jwv.org.

Review Call of Duty: WWII

By Ben Kane, JWV Programs Assistant

Like its competitor Battlefield 1, the immersive video game Call of Duty: WWII takes a step back from the exoskeletons and drones of future warfare, and marks the first game since 2008s World At War to take place during World War II. The game is not without its flaws, but where it makes a misstep in one area, it makes up for it in another.

As American GI “PFC Daniels” of the 1st Infantry Division, you trek through the well-known battlefields of Europe, fighting alongside soldiers who, while occasionally interesting, are ruined somewhat by being generic, stereotypical depictions of American soldiers. The game begins just before the Normandy landings, and the naïve feelings of the soldiers who announce that everything is going to be just fine and everyone will be ok quickly dissipate once the horrors of war become apparent.

Call of Duty: WWII tries to act like Battlefield 1 in another way, and shares a poigniant brutality in the early portions of the game. These moments are well done and necessary, but are frustratingly few and far between, as you then promptly continue fighting through Europe largely as a one man army. I say largely because, in a departure from previous games, health is only restored through “health packs” obtained on the battlefield and from teammates, which makes them slightly above completely useless. Of course there are many moments where it feels like you can take on Nazi Germany on your own, but the game does feature the occasionally difficult moment that forces you to rely on your squad to an extent. However, I couldn’t help but think of how strange it was that often the last act of a German soldier who has been shot is to throw a health pack onto the ground for his enemies to use.

Infrequently, one is put in the driver’s seats of a fighter plane or a tank. The tank section was far more interesting to play than the dogfight, as the destructible environments and need to fire at the weaker sections of the tank provided more interesting game play than the fairly bland aerial combat section.

The graphics are as decent as other installments, and the artificial intelligence (AI) is definitely nothing to write home about, as computer-controlled enemies often just stood over the bodies of their comrades in one of the several forced stealth sections, not alerting their fellow soldiers that one of their own has been killed. It would have been the mark of an evolving studio to have taken steps to improve the graphics and the AI, and make the player feel like an actual part of the world and not an outsider solely in existence to kill. As I’m sprint-hopping from tent to tent at the command points between missions, a soldier making a passing quip about my strange behavior would have been a nice touch.

Call of Duty: WWII is, not unexpected, not very historically accurate. However, there are several instances of historical accuracy that makes me think at least one writer did some homework. The members of the French Forces of the Interior, the French resistance group led by General and future president of France Charles De Gaulle, had armbands featuring the actual insignia of the FFI. There is also a cut scene and a segment that takes place in the largely and sadly unknown Berga concentration camp, where several hundred G.I.s were imprisoned and many were worked to death or shot. The cut scene portrayed camp commandant Erwin Metz, as well as a brief dialogue exchange that is known to have occurred at the camp. There certainly could and should have been more poignant and historically accurate moments, but the few they have are much appreciated.

Multiplayer gaming is business as usual for the series, with maps that favor players who run around with machine guns blindly and without strategy. It’s not great multiplayer, especially when compared with the terrific multiplayer of Battlefield 1, but it’s not overly unpleasant to play. However, the dropping of loot boxes onto Omaha Beach so other players can see you opening them is in immensely poor taste, the idea definitely should have been shot down during development.

Despite the clichés and issues that have been prevalent in the series since the beginning, Call of Duty: WWII is a solid installment in the series. The game isn’t revolutionary, and it largely fails to live up to the potential that the time period provides, but it’s worth checking out, especially if you can get it at a good price.

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being best, I rate this game at a 7.75.
My wife Sandra and I attended the National Executive Committee (NEC) Meeting in February at the Crystal City Marriott in Washington, D.C. I was especially proud to be the Officer of the Day. I can say that I performed by duties to the best of my abilities, and I think it went pretty well considering that the NEC meeting went on pretty smoothly.

However, the NEC did start out on a sad note when Past National President and JWVA National Convention Co-Chairperson, Rita Panitz, passed away. I cannot express how much Rita has done for the JWVA and JWV. Her presence will be sincerely missed. Nevertheless, the Ladies Auxiliary went on with their meetings as Rita would have wanted them too.

As far as the JWV meetings, it was business as usual. Both Sandra and I attended Friday night and Saturday morning services which were very inspirational and enjoyable for those who attended. Rabbi Harold Robinson, Rabbi Irv Elson and Cantor Jerry Farris did a wonderful job keeping everyone spirits high. MAJ Charles Halverson came to the Policy Committee to tell us what changes we could expect from the military today. Elizabeth Goldstein from the Greater Washington Jewish Federation came to speak about talking to our members and donors about giving to the organization. One of the most important takeaways was that asking was the most crucial step.

The highlight of the convention for us was on the last day when we attended the museum meeting, when we saw the short film that wasn’t quite finished but will be soon. The film was a guided museum tour that was produced by the JWV Department of New York and the museum.

The other highlight from that day was two panel discussions by our Iraq and Afghanistan committee. The first panel discussion concerned young Jewish people in the military and the issues they face. One of the panelists was a newly commissioned Officer who happens to be from the Dallas area and a member of our Post #256, 2LT Dan Rosenfield. Everyone from Post 256 at the convention made sure that we got a picture with 2LT Rosenfield before he had to go back to the field for training.

Also on the panel was a female Chaplain, CPT Heather Borshof, the wife of an active duty serviceman, Shari Berger, and a JAG Officer transitioning out of the military, CPT Matt Bernstein. The next panel discussion was facilitated by Lance Wang, which included more seasoned military officers that discussed their promotions and rise in their departments as well as their experiences with antisemitism. It was a wonderful and informative ending to a successful NEC.

Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans lead the way on the NEC Leadership Shabbaton

By LTC Lance Wang, Editor

In a first event of its kind, Jewish War Veterans of the USA (JWV) hosted a Shabbaton in Crystal City, VA, spending the Saturday afternoon hosting a presentation and panel discussions. The idea was crafted by the Iraq and Afghanistan committee on one way to engage new members – especially during NEC and Convention.

“I really have to give credit to our Iraq and Afghanistan service members and veterans that were the main driving force behind this change. They wanted something different from what we had done before, and by allowing them to take the lead and finding the right people, it really made the event a success,” said Anna Selman, the Programs and Public Relations Coordinator for JWV.

The first presentation by Colonel Richard Goldenberg, Public Affairs Officer for the New York Army National Guard, was about the importance of storytelling to share the proud history and ongoing accomplishments of our Jewish service members. He pointed out that as Jews, we have a proud history of storytelling and cited a number of examples where stories can be shared as programming opportunities for JWV posts.

“This generation’s mission is to remind America that Jews do serve and to remind the Jewish community that service is valued,” said COL Rich Goldenberg. COL Goldenberg also came up with the slogan “A Jewish Voice for Veterans, A Veterans Voice for Jews” to be used by JWV from now on.

The next presentation was a panel hosted by Marc Wolf, and it focused on the current generation of Jewish military members, and also included a current active duty spouse. 2LT Dan Rosenfeld, Matt Bernstein, Chaplain Heather Borshof and Shari Berger represented these groups.

“The panel discussion provided a valuable insight of ‘items that matter’ to Junior Service Member. It proved to be educational for our JWV Members in attendance. Collectively, we were able to successfully recruit and sign-up new Members to join our Organization. A real win/win for our team,” said Membership Chairman Barry Lischinsky.

The final event was a panel hosted by Jewish Veteran editor and retired Army Lieutenant Colonel Lance Allen Wang, and was focused on issues currently facing the United States military. The panel, which consisted of LTC Naomi Mercer from the Pentagon, COL Richard Goldenberg, and COL Herb Rosenbleeth of JWV and the president of the Military Coalition. The panel covered a number of different areas – the impact of millennials, diversity, cyber warfare, and the need to focus on emerging threats in addition to counterinsurgency.

“That was the most outstanding class in membership we ever had,” said Past National Commander Maxwell Colon.

In each Shabbaton event, there was a great deal of interest and participation from the audience, consisting of members of JWV National, state leadership, and the auxiliary. One thing was very clear – the program was a success and we should look for ongoing opportunities for attendees to engage directly on topics that are core concerns to our proud organization. If you did not get a chance to attend the event, you can go onto the JWV Facebook page where all the panels are uploaded. I highly suggest you take the time to look at them if you can. If not, I hope to see you at Convention where we will have some great and intriguing panels brought to you by the Iraq and Afghanistan committee.

Bridging the Divide

Continued from page 15

Some initial projects to explore the therapeutic value of having Israeli and American veterans meet have been successful. In 2015, the American Heroes to Heroes Foundation and the Israeli Zahal Disabled Veterans Organization sponsored a 10-day meeting in Israel between American and Israeli veterans suffering both psychological and physical wounds from their battlefield experiences ranging from Vietnam to the West Bank, from Iraq to Lebanon, from Afghanistan to Gaza. The Jerusalem Post reported one comment from a participant: “Seeing them gives me strength... These are people who have gotten married, have jobs and children. We have the same thoughts. We only need to look into each other’s eyes to know that we already know everything. I am sure I will keep in touch with them. When I hear them talk about what happened to them, I feel like they are telling my story.” The comments were from a battle scarred Israeli veteran, but could just as easily come from an American participant.

In a time where many in the diaspora find themselves at odds with political decisions made in Israel, increasing a rift between parts of our small American Jewish community and our equally small homeland, perhaps veterans reaching out as a means of salving their own souls can help bridge the divide.
Dear Sisters,

This NEC (National Executive Committee) meeting in February was planned with much positive anticipation but, unfortunately, was confronted with great sorrow – the untimely death at our meeting of our dear Sister, PNP Rita A. Panitz. Words fail to express our shock and deep sorrow at Rita’s passing. She was such an integral part of JWVA and took on so much responsibility – we are proud to have been called her Sisters. She loved JWVA so much and believed we were very distinguished as a Jewish veteran service organization. However, it was with a heavy heart that we needed to continue our NEC program.

Much has been written in this issue of The Veteran regarding JWV’s position in response to Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Tzipi Hotovely and her criticism of American Jewry regarding our military service. JWV’s response is stated within the pages of this newspaper and I urge you to read them. This insult was discussed at length by JWVA at our NEC meeting. It was our opinion that JWV’s position was valid as was their right to have an opinion. However, it was with a heavy heart that we needed to continue our NEC program.

As I reflect upon these recent events, some thoughts come to mind that I want to share with you all. Firstly, I agree with and to stand side by side with JWV. I am of the belief that it’s what you do, not when you do it.

JWV’s response is stated within the pages of this newspaper – a novel new program -a new approach to an old problem -a unique idea -a new program never before attempted

I want you to remember that you are never too young or too old if you have talent or a desire to contribute. Let’s recognize that age has little to do with ability.

Finally, if you are a person who lacks compassion or initiative, waits for others to act for you, speak for you, think for you, your time on this earth will not be remembered. But, if you are an individual who has compassion for others, is committed to your fellow Americans and Jews the world over, entertains hope for a better tomorrow and is willing to actively strive toward that end, your work is not done. Join your Sisters in JWVA who believe as you do: OUR WORK IS NOT DONE.

**Gelda Meir was 41 when she became Prime Minister of Israel.**

**William Pitt II was only 24 when he became Prime Minister of Great Britain.**

**George Bernard Shaw was 94 when one of his plays was first produced.**

**Mozart was only 7 when his first composition was published.**

**Benjamin Franklin was a newspaper columnist at 16 and a framer of the U.S. Constitution at 81.**

I want you to remember that you are never too young or too old if you have talent or a desire to contribute. Let’s recognize that age has little to do with ability.

Finally, if you are a person who lacks compassion or initiative, waits for others to act for you, speak for you, think for you, your time on this earth will not be remembered. But, if you are an individual who has compassion for others, is committed to your fellow Americans and Jews the world over, entertains hope for a better tomorrow and is willing to actively strive toward that end, your work is not done. Join your Sisters in JWVA who believe as you do: OUR WORK IS NOT DONE.

**THANK YOU**

PNP Charlotte Steinberg would like to express her appreciation and say thank you to all the Sisters of JWVA who sent her good wishes and donations during her recent illness. She is happy to report she is doing much better.

IN MEMORIAM

JWVA regrets to inform you that PNP Rita A. Panitz has passed away.

Rita was born in St. Louis, Mo. into a JWV family. One of her earliest memories was marching with her father, himself an active member, in a local parade.

As an adult, Rita was a member of Auxiliary 346 in St. Louis and eventually became its President. She led this Auxiliary for many years until she relocated to the east coast of the U.S. in 2013, when she transferred her membership to Auxiliary 742, Department of NY.

Rita was National President from 1997-1998 and was instrumental in bringing the Teddy Bear program to the attention of JWVA, which subsequently became a very rewarding segment of every National Convention. In honor and in memory of Rita, JWVA has named this program the “PNP Rita A. Panitz Memorial Teddy Bear Program.”

JWVA will always remember Rita, our Sister who never said “No” to any responsibility and who always “stepped up to the plate” when the need arose. Rita was the leader whom we all wanted to emulate.

The passing of PNP Rita A. Panitz at our NEC meeting in February was a terrible shock to all of JWVA. Our sorrow is deep but she left us with some wonderful memories; we will always miss her. But, as Rita would say, “there’s always tomorrow and things will look brighter.”
**Rhea Sahl Memorial Baby Shower**

We’re holding a baby shower for our pregnant military women during our National Convention in Tampa, Florida on Friday, August 10, 2018. It is one way that we can say "Thank You" to these women for serving our country.

We would like to fill baskets for each pregnant mom-to-be with items needed for a new born, such as: Diapers, bath towels, wash clothes, bibs, onesies, bottles, baby lotion, pacifiers, burp clothes, crib sheets, receiving blankets, night clothes, etc. Each basket averages at least $100.00 and we plan on presenting 12. If you would like to purchase these items yourself you may do so.

If you would like to make a donation for the baby shower, send your check to PNP Elaine Bernstein to purchase any items for the Rhea Sahl Memorial Baby Shower Program. Make your checks payable to: Elaine Bernstein, PNP, 9 Dogwood Court, Sayreville, NJ 08872.

You can send your items and donations for the Baby Shower and/or the Teddy Bear Program directly to the hotel, between August 4 and August 7, 2018. Address packages to: Hilton Tampa Airport Westshore Hotel, 2225 N Lois Ave., Tampa, Florida 33607-2355. Attention: Elaine Bernstein, PNP, Convention Chairman JWVA.

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**Come Join Us in Tampa, Florida!**

**90th Annual National Convention • August 9 – 14, 2018**

Take an adventure back in time and unlock some of Tampa’s rich history and hidden gems. As the nation’s 54th largest city, Tampa offers a unique and exciting experience for everyone.

Tampa has an enormous variety of attractions and activities for visitors. Waterside cafes, Busch Gardens, the Florida Aquarium, Channelside shopping, and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Devil Rays, and Lightning are just a few of the biggest attractions. Then there’s Ybor City, where visitors can find hand-rolled cigars and Cuban sandwiches. Don’t forget the ocean and the white sand beaches which offers people the chance to participate in jet skiing, parasailing, sport fishing, boating, sunning and relaxation.

The Hilton Tampa Airport Westshore Hotel is a perfect place to stay while you experience Tampa. Easy access to area attractions makes this hotel a popular choice for visitors. The hotel offers shuttle service within a three mile radius, which includes two lovely malls with a multitude of restaurants.

We look forward to getting together once again to find ways of increasing our membership, exchanging ideas on how to best service the veteran, his family, the serviceman, the child in need, the community at large and keeping the National Ladies Auxiliary function in a most successful manner.

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**Let’s do it again!**

Our Pounds Auction at the last convention was surely something to talk about! Everyone had such a great time, we are going to do it again. Please bring a pound of anything, and put it in a brown lunch bag. If you don’t have a brown bag, we’ll have extras.

Start looking now! Examples are candy, erasers, popcorn, etc. Use your imagination. As long as it weighs a pound. You won’t know what you are bidding on. Follow the clues of the Auctioneer.

Admission is $2 • Snacks will be served • Come down for an evening of fun and laughter!

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**Rita Panitz Memorial Teddy Bear Program**

**Bears here, bears there, big ones, small ones! Bears bring big smiles and happy faces!**

Think of all the smiles on the faces of the children as they cuddle one of the bears you have donated. Now is the time to start collecting bears. Every bear can be a friend to a child in need. Let's make it our number one priority to bring happiness to the children who are our future.

On Friday, August 10th we have made arrangements to donate the bears to the Fire Department, Police Department, Children’s Hospital, and the Ronald McDonald House. Think of the thanks we will receive when the residents in the Tampa area notice the label attached to each bear that reads, “National Ladies Auxiliary, Jewish War Veterans.”

Let's aim high! Bring or mail your bears to convention. We hope that each Auxiliary will send one, that every sister will bring one. Please ask your Posts to help with this wonderful program.

If you would like to make a donation for the Bear Program, send your check to Elaine Bernstein, PNP, 9 Dogwood Court, Sayreville, NJ 08872.

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**JWVA National President’s Banquet**

**honoring**

**National President Iris Goldwasser**

Saturday, August 11

6:00pm Reception • 7:00pm Dinner

There will be great food and wonderful entertainment! Everyone is welcome!

You will have a SUPER evening!

$45 / $50 at the door

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**DOUBLE CHAI CLUB**

**JOIN US FOR LUNCH!**

**August 12 • $36**

The Double Chai Club has a special meaning for all of us. We redeedicate ourselves annually to our purpose -- service to the veteran and his/her family.

Become a member of our “Double Chai Circle”. Join us at an outstanding luncheon.

This luncheon is open to everyone. We look forward to seeing you there!

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**Partners Club**

By Esther Rosenshein, PAP, Partners Chairman

Please join us at the Convention on Friday, August 10th at 5:30 pm for a wine & cheese get together.

The purpose of this program is to help our administration function. The funds collected help keep our Washington office operating. Remember, anyone can be a partner member. If you know people who would like to support our cause, please ask them to join.

The cost is $50.00 to join, and $25.00 to renew every year after the first year. I hope all the members who originally joined will renew and continue to help our National Ladies Auxiliary.

Please make your checks payable to JWVA and send to the office and earmark Partners.

Sisters, if you have any questions, email me at estherruth519@gmail.com or call me at 971-404-6264.

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**HELPING HANDS BRING SMILES**
MUSEUM NEWS

By Mike Rugel • Program and Content Coordinator

What the Museum has been up to this Winter

It was a pleasure to have two visits from the Embassy of Israel in January at the National Museum of American Jewish Military History. The first was a small group, Minister for Public Diplomacy Yaron Gamburg and National Outreach Director Molly Tobin. Gamburg and Tobin toured the museum and asked many questions about Jewish participation in the American military, both historical and today.

When discussing Abraham Krotoshinsky, the World War One hero of The Lost Battalion, Gamburg expressed particular interest. Krotoshinsky, like many other Jewish immigrants, had left the Russian Empire specifically to escape military service, but served proudly in the U.S. Army. Years later, he would write “As I look back at it now, it all seems strange. I ran away from Russia and came to America to escape military service. I hated Russia, its people, its government, in particular its cruel and inhuman treatment of Jews. Such a Government I refused to serve.” Gamburg’s own personal story mirrored Krotoshinsky’s. Gamburg was born and raised in Soviet Ukraine, his family also left to avoid military service. Gamburg immigrated to Israel where he served in the IDF. Krotoshinsky also spent time in Eretz Yisrael after World War I. 1921, he moved to Palestine as part of the National Farm School program. He worked there on a farm, married and had children. In 1926, he and his family returned to the U.S.

Gamburg and Tobin came back with their staff several weeks later. The staff proved inquisitive and interested visitors with questions about each phase of American history and the historic connection between the two countries. We shared some of these stories connecting the two lands. As far back as the Civil War, Isaac N. Cohen served from 1862 – 1865 with the 14th New Hampshire Infantry. Cohen was an immigrant born in Jerusalem. His discharge paper issued at the end of the war in Savannah on July 8, 1865 lists his birthplace as Jerusalem, Syria.

When discussing American Jewish prisoners of war in World War II that are included in the museum’s exhibits, Embassy Spokesman Itai Bardov discussed the embassy’s efforts to honor Master Sergeant Roddie Edmonds. Edmonds was recognized as one of The Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem. He was the Christian who refused to identify Jews at Stalag IXA when ordered to do so by the Germans. Edmonds ordered all POWs—Jews and non-Jews alike—to stand together. When the German officer in charge saw that all the camp’s inmates had reported in front of their barracks, he said: “they cannot all be Jews”. Edmonds retorted: “We are all Jews.” Included in the embassy’s ceremony honoring Edmonds was Jewish WWII veteran Paul Stern who was imprisoned in Stalag IXA and celebrated his 92nd birthday the night of the ceremony.

Other recent programs at the museum included our annual Hanukkah party on December 14th. It was another fun crowd who came to enjoy latkes and hear about the way American Jews in the military have continued the traditions of the Maccabees. It’s become one of our busiest days of the year and it’s great to see both returning and new faces at the party each year.

On February 7th, we had author Ronit Stahl speak at the museum with a panel of Jewish chaplains. Stahl’s new book Enlisting Faith focuses on how the military chaplaincy influenced American religion as a whole. She discussed the World War I creation of the modern military chaplaincy and the role of the first Jewish chaplains in uniform. She was joined by U.S. Army Chaplain Heather Borshof and Reserve Air Force Chaplain Steven Rein. Chaplain Borshof is the current Jewish chaplain at Fort Belvoir. Chaplain Rein is the Jewish chaplain at Arlington National Cemetery.

Shin-DC Annual Mimouna Brunch

From left: National Outreach Director for the Embassy of Israel, Molly Tobin, NMAJMH Programs and Content Coordinator, Mike Rugel, Minister for Public Diplomacy, Yaron Gamburg, JWV National Commander Paul Warner, JWV National Executive Director Herb Rosenbleeth, and JWV Programs and Public Relations Coordinator Anna Selman, after a recent visit by Embassy of Israel staff’s visit to the museum.

Coming Up

April 15, 2018 • 1:00 pm
SHIN-DC Annual Mimouna Brunch

In partnership with Sephardic Heritage in D.C., we’ll be hosting a Mimouna celebration on the afternoon of April 15th. Mimouna is a traditional Moroccan celebration held the day after Passover when a restriction on leavened products for Jews is lifted: Jewish and Muslim neighbors gather together to welcome spring at that time, in hopes of a season of health and good fortune.

May 6, 2018 • 8:30 pm
GI Jews Post Screening Meet and Greet

GI Jews post-screening meet and greet at NMAJMH.

Join us after the documentary film screens at the Washington Jewish Film Festival to tour the National Museum of American Jewish Military and meet GI Jews director Lisa Ades, interview subjects from the film, and World War II veterans.

May 25, 2018
Annual Memorial Day Shabbat Service at Sixth and I Historic Synagogue

600 I Street, NW, Washington, DC

The Annual National Shabbat Service honoring the Jewish Fallen Heroes of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Check Sixthandi.org for tickets and more information.
William Lichtman: Flying for Israel

William Lichtman was born in New York City. He grew up poor on Delancey Street on the Lower East Side, always conscious that he was a Jew. When the Second World War began in 1939, he went to Canada so that he could train to fly with the British. He did it “because [he] was Jewish and [the British] were the only ones fighting Hitler.” He flew Spitfires from Biggin Hill in London during the Battle of Britain. After two years of deadly combat from the cockpit of a British fighter plane, the United States entered the war and he was transferred to the U.S. Army Air Corps and assigned to fly B-25 bombers.

While serving in World War II, he flew missions over Europe and China. After the war, he went to college on the GI Bill. With the end of the war, he thought that the plight of the Jews was over. Liberation of the concentration camps, however, meant that hundreds of thousands of Jews were living in limbo in displaced persons camps. Very few countries wanted to provide them with a home. To Lichtman, it seemed the only solution was for the Jews to have a land of their own.

In November of 1947 the United Nations voted on the Partition Plan for Palestine – a plan to give Jews a homeland. The resolution recommended the creation of independent Arab and Jewish states, which was greeted with overwhelming support in Jewish communities and widespread outrage in the Arab world. In Palestine, violence erupted almost immediately, feeding into a spiral of reprisals and counter-reprisals. The British refrained from intervening as tensions boiled over and quickly escalated into civil war. On 14 May 1948, David Ben-Gurion declared the establishment of the State of Israel and the civil war became a war between nations with the intervention of the Arab state armies.

For Lichtman, this war was an extension of World War II. Not until Israel was settled, not until the Holocaust survivors and refugees had a place to go, would the war be over. And so, when he was contacted and asked whether he would be willing to help the cause in Palestine and fly for the fledgling Israeli Air Force, he said yes. He volunteered and soon arrived in Israel in a war-surplus B-17 bomber that began its flight in Miami, refueled along the way in the Azores and was loaded in Czechoslovakia with bombs that were dropped on Cairo. He landed near Tel Aviv. It was, as he calculated, the longest bombing mission in history: 6000 miles and 36 hours flying time.

He found himself smuggling guns, trying to get refugees into Israel, flying in supplies, and traveling all over the world to pick up surplus arms. As a pilot in Israel’s air force, he bombed Cairo and Damascus, which stopped the enemy bombing of Tel Aviv and Haifa. Most of the Israeli Air Force—as much as 90%—was made up of foreign volunteers, veterans of World War II. Of the 32 members of his squad, 11 died despite having survived similar battles in World War II. Obsolete and sometime faulty equipment and inadequate medical care were often behind these deaths. Following the war in Israel, Lichtman returned to the United States and embarked on a speaking tour organized by the United Jewish Appeal. He pointed out that tragedies such as those previously mentioned could be remedied by better funding.

In 2000, Lichtman, along with several other residents of Chicago, was honored by the State of Illinois House of Representatives with a resolution recognizing their contributions and sacrifices “on behalf of the Jewish People for Israel’s War of Independence in 1948-49.”

We Remember and Honor

Program from the Annual Memorial Services of the Hebrew Veterans of the Wars of the Republic on May 18, 1919 at Temple Emanu-El in New York.

We’re proud to continue this tradition at our Annual Memorial Day Shabbat Service at Sixth & I Historic Synagogue.

Donate $180 to add a photo of your hero to "Our Hero’s Kiosk"

The “Our Heroes Kiosk” is a hexagon-shaped unit, on display in our museum, that holds photos of our American veterans and others.

Each 4”x6” picture of your hero, preferably in uniform if at all possible, will have a plaque underneath it with name and rank, the conflict in which they served, branch of service, years in service, and JWV Post and Department if applicable.

Contact Mike Rugel at mrugel@nmajmh.org to learn more.
It started out slowly but ended with a flourish – the visit of National Commander Paul Warner to the Department of Florida Winter Quarterly meeting in Delray Beach.

Commander Warner and his wife, Norma, departed home in time to board their flight from New York to West Palm Beach, FL, scheduled to arrive about 2:30 in the afternoon. That would have given them sufficient time to relax at their hotel in Boca Raton before his scheduled appearance at Temple Beth Kodesh, home of Boynton Beach Post 440. “PNC Irv Steinberg” Post 440 had arranged for an elaborate Oneg to honor the National Commander and post members planned to join with congregants to welcome Commander and Mrs. Warner.

But, as they say, “the best plans of mice and men…” First, the plane scheduled to depart NY at about 12:00 noon was delayed until about 2:00 PM; then again to about 3:30 PM, at which time Post 440 Junior Vice Commander Michael Corbett, PDC, was prepared to cancel the event for that evening. Sure enough, the plane departed and arrived in Florida in time for the shul to close for the evening at 9:00 PM; PDC Corbett drove NC Warner to the hotel where he would continue his visit the following morning with Department Commander Alan Paley and a visit to Temple Beth David in Miami.

The visit to Miami completed, the next event was dinner at the famous “Ben’s Kosher Deli” in Boca Raton, where a contingent of 20 Department officers, Florida Auxiliary members and Auxiliary National President, Iris Goldwasser gathered to enjoy a somewhat hamishe repast.

Sunday morning both the JWV and JWVA gathered at the beautiful Delray Beach Golf and Country Club for the Department Quarterly meeting. Following the ritual opening and reports of the officers, National Commander Warner addressed the attendees representing the forty JWV Posts from around the state.

Department Commander Alan Paley, Post 606, then recognized six Past National Commanders in attendance: PNC Jerome Blum, PNC Warren Dolny, PNC Ainslee Ferdie, PNC Edwin Goldwasser, PNC David Magidson, and PNC Robert Pickard. He then introduced Commander Warner who spoke of the extraordinary efforts of the Florida members in volunteering at VA facilities around the State of Florida and encouraged participation in the NEC and Legislative conferences scheduled for February in our nation’s capital.

Following the business meeting, the members and guests present then attended the Auxiliary luncheon honoring President Iris Goldwasser and National Commander Warner. Both were presented with tokens of appreciation by Department of Florida JWVA President Verna Rosenzweig and Department Commander Alan Paley.

We regret the error
We regret that Mr. Jack Tate of Post 502 FL was incorrectly listed in Taps in the last issue of The Jewish Veteran. We are delighted that he can be counted as an active member of his Post. We apologize for the error.

Our Newest National Service Officer, Gerald Rennert
Gerald Rennert, also fondly known as Jerry, is JWV’s newest National Service Officer. Our National Service Officers provide assistance and advice to veterans in need. From filling out forms to aiding in securing benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs, or just being available to answer questions, our National Service Officers are there to offer support to any veteran in need.

Some benefits that JWV National Service Officers can help you attain (if you meet the criteria) are:
- Burial and Death Pension
- Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPA)
- Dependency Indemnity Compensation
- Disability Compensation and Pension
- Education
- Home Loan Guaranty
- Life Insurance
- Medical Care
- Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment

Jerry is available to any veteran across the country, but he is the main point of contact for any veteran in Florida. He is available during normal business hours, and he is available by phone for emergencies as well.

He can be reached by phone at 954-415-4050 or by email at geraldrennert2@aol.com.
I SERVED FOR tomorrow

Boost your portfolio with our Flexible Retirement Annuity, and earn an extra 3% bonus match1 on your first year’s contributions, for a limited time. Contact a USAA Advisor today and learn more about how to make your retirement even more comfortable.

PLAN MY PORTFOLIO.
CALL 800-292-8JWV (8598) OR VISIT USAA.COM/JJV

Investments/Insurance: Not FDIC Insured • Not Bank Issued, Guaranteed or Underwritten • May Lose Value

1 Not available in New York. Premium bonus (boost) offer is limited to the purchase of a new USAA Flexible Retirement Annuity only. The advertised rate shown is the rate currently in effect and is subject to change without notice. Premium bonus amount will never be less than 1% of your first-year premiums. Premium bonus (when offered) is locked for 45 days after it is quoted. If contract is not funded within 45 days, bonus rate could change. An annuity is a long-term insurance contract sold by an insurance company and designed to provide an income, usually after retirement, that cannot be outlived. There are fees, expenses and surrender charges that may apply. Money not previously taxed is taxed as income when withdrawn. Withdrawals before age 59½ may be subject to a 10% federal tax penalty. Annuities are generally suitable for long-term investing, particularly retirement savings. You may wish to seek independent legal or financial advice before selling or liquidating any assets and prior to the purchase of any life or annuity products. Flexible Retirement Annuity: RGA33846ST 03-99 (varies by state); in NY, NRA8317NY 05-00. Call for details on specific costs, benefits, limitations and availability in your state. Annuities provided by USAA Life Insurance Company, San Antonio, TX, and in New York by USAA Life Insurance Company of New York, Highland Falls, NY. All insurance products are subject to state availability, issue restrictions, and contractual terms and conditions. Each company has sole financial responsibility for its own products. Jewish War Veterans of the United States receives financial support from USAA for this sponsorship. © 2018 USAA. 248445-0318
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