



AHWATUKEE AMERICAN LEGION POST 64

APRIL 2020

<http://www.americanlegionpost64.com/>

CHECK OUT THE POST WEBSITE. INFORMATION INCLUDED:

Photos, Newsletters, Uniforms, Veterans' Benefits, Congressional Contacts, Items of Interest, Links to other Veterans' Websites, Flag Etiquette, and Much More !

AS AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT SUDDENLY EVERYTHING IS DIFFERENT IN THE WORLD, WE HAVE ASKED THE CONTRIBUTORS TO THE POST 64 NEWSLETTER TO SAY SOMETHING POSITIVE OR INSPIRATIONAL ABOUT OUR NEW "LIFESTYLE".

1. COMMANDER'S COMMENTS: (from Commander Pete Meier)

My, what a difference a day makes, or a week, or 2 weeks ! All of a sudden the world is topsy turvy ! And some rules have changed. To put a positive spin on things, I'm going to address the many times I have complained that, "I WISH I HAD MORE TIME". We've all heard it or said it. We still only have 24 hours a day, but our life styles have changed drastically. We have certainly gotten out of our daily ruts and routines. Wallah ! We can do other things to fill our time. Let's start a list of things we have been wanting to do. I have wished I had more time to: call a friend, vet or legionnaire; exercise; take a walk; work on a garden; meditate; pray; start playing an instrument; learn to paint; learn to work on the computer more skillfully; check on neighbors by telephone (same goes for your relatives); read some books I've been accumulating and never gotten around to reading; work on my family tree; practice gratitude every day for the things I have. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list, just enough to get you going and thinking of some positive things. Don't be the person who says, "I could have, would have, should have..." JUST DO IT ! (My apologies to NIKE.) May you and your families all stay safe and sound thru this ordeal. If the American Legion can help you, please call us.

PS THE LATEST INFORMATION FROM THE ARC IS THAT THEY WILL BE SHUT DOWN THRU THE END OF APRIL. WE WILL BE FOLLOWING THEIR RULES AND REGULATIONS AND KEEP YOU APPRISED OF ANY CHANGES.

2. MEMBERSHIP: (from First Vice Commander Bob Smithson)

2020 Totals to date: Roster (229), Paid (195), Expired (36), Transfers in (20), Transfers out (1), New (7), Deceased (7). We are at 94% of our goal of 207 paid members.

For those whose membership has expired (those who have not yet paid dues for 2020) time is running out. To be counted on this year's membership percentage please renew by May 1. Best way to renew is to go online to www.legion.org/renew

3. FROM COLOR GUARD COMMANDER DAVE VONTERSCH:

Since the scheduled events for April 2020 are ALL CANCELED, there will be no calendar this month.

My Positive Spin: For those who wait until the last minute to do their taxes, the deadline has been moved to July 15. (I finished mine in February.)

4. FROM CHAPLAIN REBECCA SCHMIDT:

SYMPATHY

Ed Wilner, a 20 year member of the American Legion, passed on March 3rd. We were blessed to be able to celebrate his 100th Birthday with him on January 7th. He was a WWII veteran of the US Army.

EASTER AND PASSOVER

April is a blessed month. Passover begins April 8. Palm Sunday is on April 5, Good Friday April 10, Easter April 12, and Orthodox Easter April 19. May this be a time of peace, strengthening our relationship with our Lord and each other, and new beginnings!

MEMORIAL SERVICE

Our annual Post Memorial Service, to recognize our departed members of the past year, is still scheduled to be a part of our 20 May monthly meeting. But of course, this depends on the corona virus and if we'll be meeting that day. Otherwise, we will have this service at a later date.

PRAYER FOR APRIL DEAR LORD, we thank you for our many blessings. We ask you to please continue watching over us and our loved ones. Please watch over our military. Please guide our Commander-in-Chief and other elected officials. Please guide us in all we do and say, and to help others in need when we can. AMEN

5. Minutes from the March 11 Executive Committee Meeting: *(The General Membership Meeting scheduled for March 18 was canceled. The Executive Committee (Officers) always meets the week before to set the agenda and discuss what actions need to be taken.)*

10 people attended the Executive Committee meeting.

Changes to the storage area in Building B were discussed. Ideas about displaying US flags outside ARC for holidays and special events were discussed. Many of the previous flag hole mounts were removed during the parking lot work, plus ARC wants us to have at least one member assist any time the flags would be put up. Since construction outside is not finished, this will be a topic that must be discussed with the membership in the future. Anything we do must be approved by ARC.

The "unserviceable flag" dropbox project by an area Girls Scout continues to be in the planning stages. Roddy Charlton volunteered to dispose of some of the unserviceable flags currently in the storage room.

A thank you card and \$50.00 were received from Judy Enns following Bob's Memorial Services. The Executive Committee voted to donate \$100 to the Patriot Riders Motorcycle Group which led the procession to the National Cemetery on Feb. 21 for Bob Enns.

Roddy Charlton would like to speak at a future meeting about his volunteer activities at Falcon Field flying the B-17. Rebecca Schmidt would like to do a Memorial Service for Post 64 members who have entered Post Everlasting since last May.

6. REMEMBER WHEN (The 12th and Final Installment reviewing the first 25 years of Post 64): *Earlier installments are available online in the newsletters of February thru June and October thru December of 2019 and January thru March of 2020.*

JUNE 2016 TO JUNE 2017

Department Commander was Danny Bugh. Post Commander was Ed Mangan. Color Guard Commander was Dave Von Tersch. The Color Guard posted Colors or presented other patriotic programs at: DAR; ARC; Centennial Middle School; Ahwatukee Red, White, and Boom Celebration; Carl Hayden High School; YOPAS; the AZ Run for the Fallen stop at I-10 and Baseline Rd.; the opening ceremony for Paralympics at ASU; Akimel Middle School; Mt. Park Sr. Living Center; Marcos de Niza High School; Pearl Harbor Day Remembrance at Wesley Bolin Plaza; Vietnam Remembrance Day at Wesley Bolin Plaza; and Department Convention. The Honor Guard attended funerals or memorial services for William Keller, Mark Hayball, Herb Mauch, Steve Conder, and Jeannie VonTersch.

Commander Ed Mangan was also active in other veteran's organizations: VVA (Vietnam Veterans of America), MOAA (Military Officers Association of America), and ESGR (Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve). Member John Boyer joined him with ESGR. Member Doug Patterson was active with the Marine Corps League.

July 1 the Color Guard presented Colors before the Ahwatukee fireworks and had a booth at the carnival. July 3 they helped with an Independence Day celebration at ARC. July 30 Roger and Deb Munchbach attended the ALLECA (American Legion Law Enforcement Career Academy) graduation at St. Joseph Youth Camp near Mormon Lake.

Quarterly street clean-ups along Elliot Rd. between 48th St. and Equestrian Trail continued.

The Support the Troops Club and Post 64 sent 150 boxes to deployed service members in November 2016 and another 150 in April 2017. Students from Kyrene Traditional Academy provided letters and socks/t-shirts for the boxes. Students from Akimel Middle School provided socks and t-shirts.

The Post continued with recognition of Ahwatukee schools during American Education Week.

A veteran's family of four was supplied gifts for Christmas through the Save the Family organization. The Post set up a Christmas tree at the VA hospital in Phoenix. January 21, 2017, was the catered Holiday Party.

Members attended a PTSD Town Hall Meeting in Mesa on February 11.

Patriotic Day at Akimel Middle School was held earlier this year, on February 22, 2017.

April 15, 2017, was the Easter Parade, with cadets from Camelback High School JROTC and the East Valley Boys Service Club helping to carry the burial flags of Ahwatukee veterans behind the Post 64 Color Guard leading the parade. Hot dogs and a jazz band concert were enjoyed at ARC afterward.

There were no Boys State citizens this year.

School Awards were presented to Jake Harrison and Michaelangelo Walter (Centennial Middle School), Olivia Thorpe and Bailey Busby (Akimel Middle School), and Clark Lemon and Suttyn Lappin (Altadena Middle School). School Awards with \$100 Charlie Roloff Memorial Scholarships were awarded to Daniel Diaz and Sara Bacon (Mountain Pointe High School) and Braden Gaines and Eryn Holden (Desert Vista High School). The scholarship money was again donated by the Roloff sisters.

May 29, 2017, the Post Color Guard marched in the Parade of Colors and presented a wreath at the AZ National Cemetery in observance of Memorial Day. That evening they participated in a Memorial Day observance at ARC.

June 14, 2017, was the annual Post 64 Flag Retirement Ceremony in the ARC parking lot.

Department Convention was June 22-25, 2017, at the Carefree Resort. The Post 64 Color Guard participated in the Color Guard competition on June 24, 2017, receiving third place. Membership reached 100% in March 2017 and finished the year at 194 of 177 (110%).

JUNE 2017 TO JUNE 2018

Department Commander was Domingo Bonilla. Post Commander was Ed Mangan. Color Guard Commander was Dave VonTersch with Roddy Charlton as the Assistant. The Color Guard presented Colors or other patriotic programs at: ARC; the Ahwatukee Foothills Chamber of Commerce Business Expo; several other Chamber events; Shadow Mountain High School; the National Run for the Fallen both at the I-10 and Baseline Rd. stop and also at Wesley Bolin Plaza; USO Volunteer Recognition Lunch; Mt. Park Senior Living Center; Ahwatukee Sr. Citizens Center; Vietnam Veterans Recognition Day at Wesley Bolin Plaza; the Post 64 Golf Tournament; and Urban Air Park. The Honor Guard attended a memorial service for Martin Barreras.

Quarterly street clean-ups continued.

The Post participated in July 4 festivities at ARC.

During the summer, Post 64 joined the Ahwatukee Foothills Chamber of Commerce and had their official ribbon-cutting on September 19, 2017.

On October 21, 2017, Post 64 and the Support the Troops Club sponsored their first Oktoberfest, which raised funds to send 200 boxes to deployed service members in November 2017. Kyrene Traditional Academy students wrote letters to include in the boxes.

In October 2017 Ed Mangan was inducted in to the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame.

On Veterans Day 2017, members marched with Post and Unit 124 in the Guadalupe Veterans Day Parade.

The Post held a Golf Tournament on December 16, 2017, at the Legacy Golf Course. Co-Chairmen were Pete Meier and Doug Patterson. \$3000.00 was raised. A tree was set up at the Phoenix VA Hospital for Christmas. Four wreaths were purchased for the AZ National Cemetery through Wreaths Across America. Two female veterans with a child each were the Christmas families supported through Save the Family.

January 20, 2018, was the Holiday Party.

February 10, 2018, members were present at an Agent Orange Seminar in Mesa.

February 21, 2018, was Patriotic Day at Akimel Middle School.

The Easter Parade, hot dog picnic, and jazz band concert were on March 31, 2018.

April 23, 2018, a National Run for the Fallen was greeted by the Post Color Guard at their I-10 and Baseline Rd. stop. The Color Guard then proceeded on to Wesley Bolin Plaza, the final stop for the Arizona leg of the run.

Tanner MacDonald from Mountain Pointe High School was a Boys State citizen.

School Awards were presented to Paul Arcieri and Matthew Luoma (Centennial Middle School), Raelynn Brady and Wyatt Ostermeyer (Akimel Middle School), and Riley Kendall and Sophia Siekierski (Altadena Middle School). School Awards and \$200 scholarships were presented to Lauren Everett and Antoine Kepczyk (Mountain Pointe High School) and Karisten King and Nicholas Miller (Desert Vista High School). The Post accepted a challenge from the Roloff sisters to match their yearly scholarship donation of \$400 in memory of Charlie, thus increasing the scholarship money given to each high school student.

May 28, 2018, the Color Guard marched in the Parade of Colors and displayed a wreath at ceremonies at the AZ National Cemetery. The Post 64 delegation attended brunch at Post 107.

The Department Convention was held June 21-24, 2018, at the Sheraton Wild Horse Pass. Membership ended the year at 195 of 196 (99.5%).

7. POST 64 OFFICERS AND CHAIRMEN FOR 2019-2020

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REFRESHMENT CHAIRMAN	ALICE MAYNARD	480-244-6539	amaynard2007@yahoo.com

The Department of Arizona Oratorical Finals were held at Post 26 in Mesa on Sat., March 7. Caleb Doercksen of Verrado High School (District 11) was the first place contestant. Unfortunately, the National Finals in Indianapolis scheduled for April 17-19 have been canceled. Lauren St. Leger, a student from BASIS Ahwatukee and the District 12 representative took fourth place.

National Headquarters has also canceled the 2020 session of Boys Nation and the 2020 Jr. Shooting National Championships.

HERE AT HOME IN AHWATUKEE, THERE WILL BE NO "HARD COPIES" OF THIS NEWSLETTER SENT THROUGH SNAIL MAIL THIS MONTH TO 48 OF OUR MEMBERS. (SOCIAL DISTANCING MEANS STAYING AWAY FROM THE COPIER AT OFFICE MAX.) CURRENTLY THE OFFICERS ARE TAKING 4 OR 5 MEMBERS EACH TO PHONE AND DO A "BUDDY CHECK" AS RECOMMENDED BY NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP WITH THIS, PLEASE CONTACT ROGER AND DEB MUNCHBACH AT THE NUMBER OR EMAIL ABOVE, AND WE WILL SEND YOU SOME NAMES AND PHONE NUMBERS. WE HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO REACH OUT AND SHOW OUR MEMBERS THAT WE ARE THERE FOR THEM IN STRESSFUL TIMES.

A friend of Roger Munchbach's gave him a copy of this article from the national newsletter of the DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution).

NATIONAL DEFENDER

NATIONAL SOCIETY DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Vol 62 No. 2

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March - April 2020

CAMELS IN THE U.S. CAVALRY?

It almost happened...

The United States Camel Corps was a pre-Civil War experiment in using camels as pack animals to build and supply a western wagon route from Texas to California. The Texas Camel Experiment, as it was officially known, tested camels as an alternative to horses and mules, which were dying in great numbers of dehydration in the parched environment of the American Southwest.

Camels had been used by other military forces for centuries to haul baggage and conduct cavalry operations, especially in arid, sandy terrain. As the United States expanded westward after the Mexican-American War (1846-1848), it encountered territory vastly different from the east coast and central states. The Southwest encompassed many desert and arid regions where U.S. soldiers had established forts after the war and the 1845 annexation of Texas.

Though advocates had pushed the idea of the Army's using camels since 1836, the idea languished until 1848, when Maj. Henry C. Wayne of the Quartermaster Corps sought the support of then-Sen. Jefferson Davis of Mississippi, chairman of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs. He convinced



Civil War interpreters portraying the 43rd Mississippi Infantry and their regimental camel, Old Douglas, who died in the line of duty.
National Park Service Photo

Davis, but Davis couldn't persuade Congress to fund the project.

Seven years later, now-Secretary of War Jefferson Davis tried again. It took him two years, but he convinced President Franklin Pierce and Congress of "the advantages to be anticipated from the use of camels

and dromedaries for military and other purposes." On March 3, 1855, Congress appropriated \$30,000 to buy, transport, train and test camels for the new Camel Corps.

Davis sent Wayne to the Middle East where he bought 33 camels – both males and females and different

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Rise and Shine for America!

NATIONAL DEFENSE COMMITTEE, LAURIE PARKER NESBITT, NATIONAL CHAIR

Congress agreed to test Camels in 1855

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breeds – in Turkey, Egypt and Tunisia. He also hired two men to teach the soldiers how to pack and manage the animals.

The camels, with some difficulty, were loaded onto a U.S. Navy ship with part of its deck modified to accommodate the large animals. They were shipped to Texas, where Lt. Edward Fitzgerald Beale took charge of them. Another 44 camels arrived later.

The camels were first stationed at Camp Verde, Texas, where soldiers and civilian drovers were trained to feed and care for the animals, properly pack them, manage the cumbersome camel saddles, and deal with the camels' quirks.

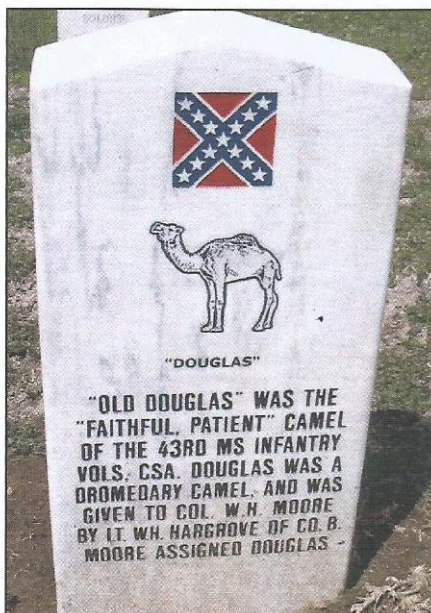
Camels, like cows, chew their cud, and if annoyed, they tend to spit a large, and foul-smelling mass at its detractor. Though docile by nature, if abused or mistreated, they can kick, bite or stomp an antagonist to death.

The combination of the cud chewing and the camels' casual hygiene created a stench that frightened horses and mules unfamiliar with the odor.

When Beale set off on the first western surveying expedition in June 1857, the camels were loaded with 600-800 pounds each and traveled 25-30 miles a day. The idea was that if the animals fared well, a series of Army posts could be set up along the route later to relay mail and supplies across the Southwest.

The camels performed well beyond expectations.

"The harder the test [the camels] are put to, the more fully they seem to justify all that can be said of them," Beale wrote. *"They pack water for days*



Tombstone of Douglas the Confederate Camel at Cedar Hill Cemetery, Vicksburg, Miss. Killed by a sharpshooter, he died in Jefferson Davis's hometown. Photo by Natalie Maynor/CC by 2.0

under a hot sun and never get a drop; they pack heavy burdens of corn and oats for months and never get a grain; and on the bitter greasewood and other worthless shrubs, not only subsist, but keep fat."

The camels actually *preferred* to eat the scrub and prickly plants along the trail. They could travel 30-40 miles a day, go for 8-10 days without water, carry heavier loads than the Army mules and tolerate the hot climate.

Camels also didn't need the shoeing as the horses and mules did. They could climb mountain trails better than the wagons, and they didn't get stuck in the mud as the wagon wheels did. The camels were also adept at finding hidden water holes.

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Lt. Col. Robert E. Lee used them on patrol

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As the expedition approached the Colorado River in October, a critical question arose: Could camels swim? No one knew. The largest camel was carefully led to the river, where he plunged into the water fully loaded and swam across with no difficulty. The other camels also crossed easily, but two horses and 10 mules drowned in the attempt.

Beale led the expedition to Fort Tejon, Calif., about 100 miles north of Los Angeles, for rest and reprovisioning. This first successful journey had lasted nearly four months and covered more than 1,200 miles.

"At times I have thought it impossible they could stand the test to which they have been put, but they seem to have risen equal to every trail and to have come off of every exploration with as much strength as before starting," Beale wrote. *"I believe at this time I may speak for every man in our party, when I say that there is not one of them who would not prefer the most indifferent of our camels to four of our best mules."*

In 1860, then-Lt. Col. Robert E. Lee used camels on a long-range patrol and gave them high praise for their capabilities. Yet despite this positive feedback, the Camel Corps ended as the Civil War began. Early in the war, Confederate forces captured Camp Verde in Texas and the camels there, but they had no use, or particular liking, for the captured animals. The camel caravan at Fort Tejon remained in Union control, but it was transferred to different posts throughout the war

because no one could think of a mission for them.

One camel, Old Douglas, somehow made his way to Mississippi, where he became part of the 43rd Mississippi Infantry, thereafter known as the Camel Regiment, and took part in the Battles of Iuka and Corinth. He was shot by a Union sharpshooter at the siege of Vicksburg, and died in Jefferson Davis's hometown.

Though the camels had proven their worth and could have been valuable assets to the Army in the west following the Civil War, it's likely that the experiment "failed," at least partly, because its major supporters – Davis, Wayne, and Lee – were Confederates, and their views consequently ignored.

Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton considered the camels useless and ordered them to be sold. Some were, but many camels were simply turned loose to fend for themselves in the wild. They were seen afterward for many years, wandering through the deserts and plains of the American Southwest.

Gen. Douglas MacArthur recalled seeing a camel as a young boy of five living at Fort Selden, N.M., in 1885: *"One day a curious and frightening animal with a blobbish head, long and curving neck, and shambling legs moseyed around the garrison... the animal was one of the old army camels."*

The last of the original Army camels, Topsy, reportedly died in April 1934 at Griffith Park, Los Angeles, at the age of 80, but accounts of camel sightings continued for decades. The last confirmed sighting was in 1941. ♦