

## APRIL - This Month in Military History

The month of April, like every month of the year has its notable events that occurred in our military history. On April 18, 1942, the first U.S. raid on Japan occurred. Lt. Col. James "Jimmy" Doolittle led the famous "Doolittle Raid" on Tokyo and the Japanese Islands, with orders not to bomb the Imperial Palace. Sixteen B-25 Mitchell bombers took off from the carrier Hornet about 800 miles from Japan. Many of the raiders died, some spent the war in Japanese prison camps. Doolittle was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions.

Also in April of 1942, U.S. and Philippine forces on Bataan surrendered to the Japanese. Despite orders from MacArthur to mount a desperation counterattack, General King decided to surrender and save his men. Gen. Jonathan Wainwright, King's predecessor on the Luzon Force, commented that he was happy to see that "He (King) realized that he had either to surrender or see his people killed piecemeal".

The surrender of Bataan was followed by the infamous Death March during which 75,000 Filipino and 2,500 Americans perished. The 65 mile, ten day trek, in sweltering heat, from Marireles to San Fernando saw many atrocities, including beatings, tortures and executions, committed against the prisoners. During the seemingly endless march, the prisoners were given neither food nor water by the Japanese. When asked why it is difficult to forgive and forget, consider this atrocity.

There was another death march in World War 2, a journey that stretched hundreds of miles and lasted nearly three months. Stalag Luft IV in eastern Prussia, now Poland held 10,000 POW's. When the front approached, the mostly enlisted and non-commissioned officers were forced to march during one of Europe's worst winters. The POW's were broken up in groups of 250 to 300 men and traveled different routes. Food and water were lacking but the prisoners were herded west, then south towards Germany. The trip was fraught with sickness, death and atrocities. Although experienced by thousands of Americans, it has been forgotten by history.

We skip to April 1, 1945 and the invasion of Okinawa. The Tenth Army, under Major General Simon Bolivar Buckner, began the invasion of Okinawa, which became the biggest battle of the Pacific, involving 548,000 Americans. It was also the last island hopping operation of the war. The initial April Fools Day landing on the Hagushi beaches met with little opposition and became known as "Love Day" to the troops who easily established a beachhead eight miles wide and ten miles deep.

The big news on April 18th, 1945 was that the man who traveled to the frontlines to chronicle the hopes and dreams and fears of GI's and shared their stories with the folks back home was no more. Off the coast of Okinawa, on a tiny island of Ie Shima, Ernie Pyle died.

In Europe on April 25, 1945 American and Russian troops met at Torgua on the Elbe River. This initial contact between the two armies set the groundwork for the separate occupations of Germany after the war.

Also in April of 1945, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt died, and Harry Truman is sworn in as President of the United States. On the 28th of that same month, Mussolini was executed by Partisans, and Hitler committed suicide on the 30th of the month. And 33,000 inmates of Dachau were freed by American troops on the final day of April, 1945.

In 1951, the first United Nations cemetery was dedicated at Pusan, Korea. The ceremony took place as flags of 15 participating nations were raised over the cemetery.

On the 11th of April, 1951, President Truman removed General MacArthur from all his Far East Commands, replacing him with Gen. Matthew Ridgeway, Commander of the Eighth Army. This was done because MacArthur failed to clear all policy announcements with the Defense Department. MacArthur wanted to drive the Chinese back to Manchuria and he threatened Communist China with Naval and Air attacks.

On the 22nd of April, 1951, Chinese and North Korean troops, 700,000 strong, launched an attack on the United Nations Command force under the command of John Van Fleet. The attack lasted eight days.

Also in April 1951, Operation "Little Switch" began as the North Korean forces accepted Gen. Mark Clark's proposal to exchange sick and wounded prisoners. The United Nations returned 6,670 enemy prisoners in exchange for 684 ailing United Nations troops, 149 who were American.

The Bay of Pigs invasion occurred on April 17, 1961. Brigade 2506, a covert counter-revolutionary force recruited by the CIA began an abortive U.S. planned night amphibious landing to liberate Cuba from Communist control. President Kennedy took the heat for not committing U.S. airpower to protect the beleaguered invasion force, but the fault for the failure lies squarely on the CIA for poor planning, poor intelligence information and poor communications with partisans in Cuba.

On April 11, 1970, NASA launched Apollo XIII from Cape Kennedy headed by Commander James Lovell Jr., USN, who to date held the record for time spent in space. Fred Haise Jr. and John L Swigert were also on board. An explosion in the service module destroyed most of the command module "Odyssey's" oxygen and power supplies while still 205,000 miles from earth. The astronauts abandoned the moon landing and returned to earth in the "Aquarius" lunar landing module, in a truly miraculous recovery with the help of Houston Space Center. The astronauts re-entered the Odyssey prior to splashdown and dived into the Pacific only four miles from the recovery ship, Iwo Jima.

In April 1967 near Khe Sanh, the 12-day Battle of the Hills began. During the 12-day battle, two battalions of the 3rd Marine Regt, lost 160 KIA and 746 WIA. U.S. troop strength peaked in Vietnam on April 30, 1969, when 543,482 troops in country.

In the Southeast Asian War during April 1970, President Nixon announced the drive into Cambodia. More than 50,000 troops, half American, penetrated Cambodia to wipe out Vietcong and North Vietnamese bases, thus stepping up Vietnamization and U.S. withdrawal from South Vietnam.

*Continued on page 6*

*Continued from page 5*

In April of 1973, the last POW was returned. Army Capt. Robert White, held by the Vietcong in the Mekong Delta and not known by U.S. authorities to be alive was returned.

On April 4, 1975, a C-5A Galaxy lifted off Tan Son Nhut runway with more than 250 Vietnamese orphans in the first flight of "Operation Babylift". Twelve minutes after takeoff the plane crashed into a rice paddy. Ninety-eight children, 46 escorts and 11 crewmembers died in the crash. The more than 150 children and 26 adults who survived credit the flying skills of pilot Bud Traynor.

And finally on April 5, 1973, South Vietnam swore never to ask for the return of U.S. troops. Responding to a question after a speech at the National Press Club, President Nguyen Van Thieu said: "I am very confident our army and people are very capable of defending themselves. I can assure you of one thing. Never will I ask the American troops to come back to Vietnam."

*Editor's note: This listing was reproduced from the desk of Bob Hogan, Former Director, Burlington, MA Veteran's Services from the following web site: [http://www.burlington.org/community\\_development/april.php](http://www.burlington.org/community_development/april.php)*

## Opinion

*Opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of The American Legion Department of Oregon or Hillsboro Post No. 6. While we reserve the right to edit content which is not compatible with the policies of The American Legion National Organization, we are protectors of the Constitution of The United States of America and we agree with Evelyn Beatrice Hall, who wrote, "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it".*

### Americanism?

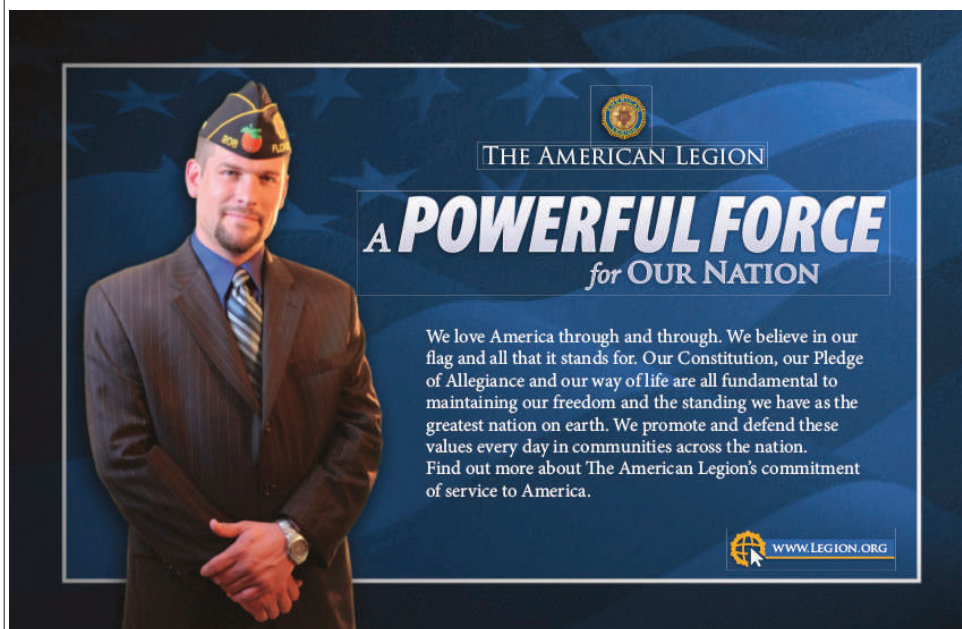
I don't know about you, but I'm a little sick of the media hype and the constant drone of the talk show world on the subject of Contravirus 2019. This is getting ridiculous. And now, our politicians step in to "help."

It seems to me that common sense is out the window. What's wrong with staying home if you're sick or if you know you have been exposed to someone else who is sick, STAY HOME! But what I'm seeing now sickens me more than COVID-19. Our government, either out of ignorance or because they just feel the need to push us around, are destroying our economy! Why? For what? This disease will take lives, just like traffic accidents, plane crashes, food poisoning or any of a thousand other reasons, but we don't curtail activities leading up to those fatalities. Why is it all of a sudden necessary for government to tell businesses to shut their doors. Has America become a communist dictatorship over night? The Chinese communists must be laughing their butts off at us right now. They turned us without firing a shot! This is not acceptable in a free society.

Be responsonable and be safe with your health and that of your family and community without ruining the strongest economy in the world. Shuttering businesses to keep people from congregating is a really bad idea, you politicians. Are you paying attention?

Politicians are bad at just about everything they do. Allowing them to dictate our future is not a good idea. How's your investments and 401K doing? And talk about saving lives, how about those kids, the ones yet to be born?

Think! Act! Vote! -Ed.



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for OUR NATION

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Don Brown, Lynn Hamm,  
John C. Stephens, Clyde E. Pursell,  
David J. Connolly,  
Jerry and Dorothy Hrabal

### Also

We thank Veteran Friendly businesses, Izzy's Pizza, Lowes and Ace Hardware for their Veterans Discounts  
Thanks for your Support!

# Activities

## Events Schedule for April

**ALL EVENTS HAVE BEEN CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

*We hope all of you stay well. Pray for those afflicted and for the safety and health of our membership.*

*If any of you have needs, don't hesitate to contact Post leadership. Contact information is listed below.*

*We continue to serve.*

*God Bless America!*

## Your Articles Are Needed!

Please help us publish an informative and interesting newsletter by submitting articles of interest and photos to the Post e-mail address by the 18th of the month. Anything you feel is relevant to veterans and our community is welcome. Opinion pieces too. Everybody has one, let's hear yours! Thank you for your support! This is your newsletter. You make it great!

## District 1 Raffle

District 1 is raffling a framed lithographic print of "Legacy & Vision" to be awarded at the 2020 Department Convention. This print also has an American Legion silver commemorative coin included in the frame. Tickets are available at the Post. \$5.00 per ticket or 5 for \$20.00. See Adjutant Bogner for tickets.



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# Post Events (Subject to COVID-19)

April 2020

May 2020

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29	30	31	1 ☾ 1st Quarter	2	3	4 • H & H+Bingo 18:00
5	6	7 ☽ Full Moon • E-Board 18:00	8	9 Passover (first day) • Men's AA 19:00	10 • Good Friday (Many regions)	11 • Men's AA 07:30
12 Easter Sunday	13 Easter Monday • Money Monday 18:00	14 ☾ 3rd Quarter • Meetings 19:30 • Pot Luck 18:30	15 Tax Day	16 Last Day of Passover • Steak/Sal. 18:00	17	18 • Quilting - All Day
19	20	21	22 ☽ New Moon	23 • Salad Bar 18:00	24	25
26	27	28	29	30 ☽ 1st Quarter • Tacos 18:00	1	2