



*An E-mail Newsletter of the Putnam County Veterans Service Agency*



### **VFW Post 672, Brewster-**

Parade from Brewster Fire House to Electrozone Field (step off 10:30 AM)

11:00 AM Ceremony at Electrozone Field

Refreshments to follow at post home

### **VFW Post 2362 and American Legion Post 275 Cold Spring-**

Parade Main Street to Cold Spring Cemetery (step off 9:00 AM)

Ceremony at Cold Spring Cemetery at conclusion of parade

Refreshments to follow (location to be announced)

### **VFW Post 5491 Mahopac & American Legion Post 1080-**

Parade from Clarke Place to Veterans Memorial Park on East Lake Blvd. (step off 10:30AM)

Ceremony to follow at Monument

American Legion Post 1080 Ceremony following VFW Ceremony at 333 Buckshollow Road

Refreshments to follow at Post home 154 East Lake Blvd

### **VFW Post 9257, Putnam Lake-**

Parade from Castle Restaurant to Veterans Monument on Haviland Road (step off 10:00 AM)

Ceremony to follow parade at monument

Refreshments to follow at Post Home on 4 Fairfield Drive

### **VFW Post 8013, Somers-**

Annual Memorial Day Parade and Remembrance Ceremony. Step off 10:00 AM from Somers Middle School to Ivandell Cemetery. Refreshments at Somers Town House following the ceremony.

*(Somers has been added to the list of Memorial Day events because the Somers VFW has recently joined Putnam County Council VFW)*

### **Thursday May 30, 2013:**

#### **Putnam County Joint Veterans Council-**

7:00 PM Traditional Memorial Day at Putnam County Veterans Memorial Park



### **Memorial Day Events in Putnam**

#### **Friday, Saturday and Sunday:**

#### **Putnam County Joint Veterans Council-**

John Morris Memorial Watchfire Vigil, each night 6 PM-6AM

Opening Ceremony Friday 7:00 PM

Also flag retirement all night

#### **Sunday May 26, 2013:**

#### **VFW Post 1374, Carmel & American Legion Post 270-**

9:00 AM Ceremony at monument on Terryhill Road, Kent

11:30 AM Ceremony at Post Home 32 Gleneida Ave, Carmel

Refreshments to follow 11:30 Ceremony

#### **VFW Post 2362 and American Legion Post 275-**

11:00 AM memorial presentation at Parrott Gun Memorial by Cold Spring water front

#### **Monday May 27, 2013:**

#### **VFW Post 391, Putnam Valley-**

11:00 AM Ceremony Putnam Valley Town Hall

11:45 Ceremony Lake Peekskill Monument (Chester Place)

12:30 PM Ceremony Post Home 153 Oscawanna Lake Road

Refreshments to follow 1:00 PM ceremony at Post Home

2:00PM Start of "Round of Honor". Visiting grave sites, cemeteries, and monuments in vicinity, including Lakeland High School, Bill Mangero Park

## The True Story of Taps



By Jari Villanueva

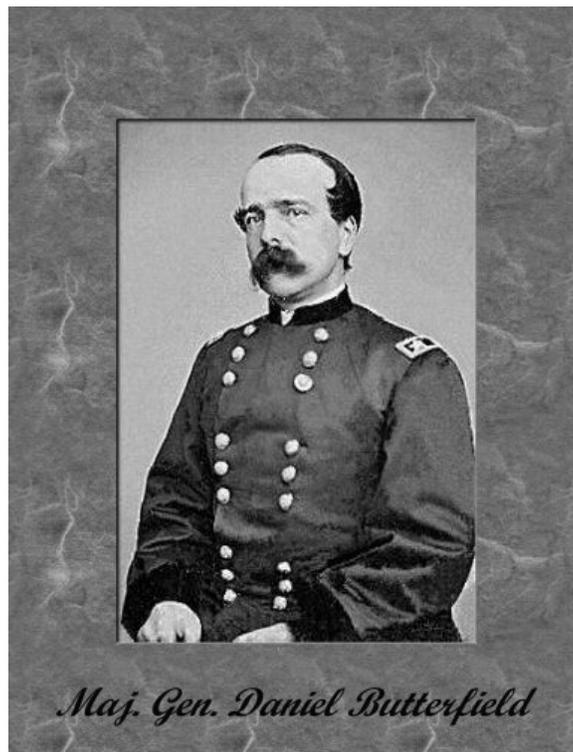
Of all the military bugle calls, none is so easily recognized or more apt to evoke emotion than the call Taps. The melody is both eloquent and haunting and the history of its origin is interesting and somewhat clouded in controversy. In the British Army, a similar type call known as Last Post has been sounded over soldiers' graves since 1885, but the use of Taps is unique to the United States military, since the call is sounded at funerals, wreath-laying and memorial services.

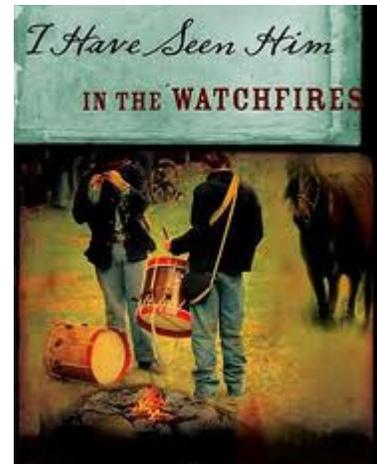
Taps began as a revision for the signal of Extinguish Lights (Lights Out) at the end of the day. Up until the Civil War, the infantry call for Extinguish Lights was the printed in Silas Casey's (1801-1882) Infantry Tactics and other manuals, the music which had been borrowed from the French. The music for Taps was adapted by Union General Daniel Butterfield for his brigade (Third Brigade, First Division, Fifth Army Corps, Army of the Potomac) in July, 1862.

Daniel Adams Butterfield (1831-1901) was born in Utica, New York and graduated from Union College at Schenectady. He was the eastern superintendent of the American Express Company in New York when the Civil War broke out. A Colonel in the 12th Regiment of the New York State Militia, he was promoted to Brigadier General and given command of a brigade of the 5th Corps of the Army of the Potomac. He settled in Cold Spring, New York after the war.

During the Peninsular Campaign Butterfield distinguished himself when, during the Battle of Gaines Mill and despite an injury, he seized the colors of the 83rd Pennsylvania and rallied the regiment at a critical time in the battle. He was awarded the Medal of Honor for that act of heroism.

As the story goes, General Butterfield was not pleased with the call for Extinguish Lights, feeling that the call was too formal to signal the days end, and with the help of the brigade bugler, Oliver Willcox Norton (1839-1920), wrote Taps to honor his men while in camp at Harrison's





**PLEASE JOIN US AT THE  
8TH ANNUAL JOHN MORRIS  
MEMORIAL WATCHFIRES**

**MAY 24,25, 26 2013  
6:00 PM TO 6:00 AM (EACH DAY)**

**JOIN VETERANS OF PUTNAM COUNTY STANDING VIGIL OVER  
PUTNAM COUNTY'S HALLOWED MONUMENTS  
AT  
PUTNAM COUNTY VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK**

**OPENING CEREMONY  
MAY 24, 2013 AT 7:00 PM**

**CONTINUOUS FLAG RETIREMENT CEREMONIES  
THROUGH OUT NIGHT  
(EACH DAY)**





## The John Morris Memorial Watchfire Vigil

On the eve of Memorial Day 2005 under the shroud of darkness a coward desecrated the Putnam County Veterans Memorial. We believe that it was done to make us alter our Memorial Day Ceremonies. It did not alter anything it steeled our resolve to carry on and honor our fallen comrades. What we were concerned with was what we should do in the future to protect our monuments. At the suggestion of Chief Gerald Schramek, Putnam County Sheriffs Office, we decided to guard the monuments during the evening hours of the 3 days leading up to Memorial Day. Thus the vigil was started the following year.

That year we also borrowed a theme from a recent event that is run by the Rockland chapter of the Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA). They hold watchfires along the banks of the Hudson River. These watchfires are based on a Civil War tradition that is expressed in the Battle Hymn of the Republic by Julia War Howe.

"I have seen him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps.

The watchfires at the Park are simply 55 gallon drums."

## Memorial Day Thoughts

When I was a child **Memorial Day** was not a three day weekend. If May 30 fell on Friday or Monday we had a three day weekend. Always, it was **Memorial Day**, a day to pause and remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our great Nation and our allies. Unfortunately, when Congress made Memorial day into a mandatory three-day weekend in with the National Holiday Act of 1971 (P.L. 90 - 363), it made it all the easier for us to be distracted from the spirit and meaning of the day. It has become the weekend get-away to celebrate the beginning of summer; the "Memorial Day Weekend Sales Event"; the mega-barbecue, opening of the pool for the season, let's outdo the neighbors bash.

"If it is considered a holiday, why is it so? I consider it to be a national day of mourning. This is how we observe this day in our

home. Because of what that day represents the rest of the days of the year are our holidays." -- FL Lloyd West Chester, Pa USA - February 26, 2000  
*"Changing the date merely to create three-day weekends has undermined the very meaning of the day. No doubt, this has contributed greatly to the general public's nonchalant observance of Memorial Day." -- VFW 2002 Memorial Day address*

On 17 of March 1989 Senator Inouye [HI] introduced a bill to the Senate which called for the restoration of the traditional day of observance of Memorial Day back to May 30th. Every new Congress since then (every two years), Mr. Inouye has faithfully re-introduced the bill. Several times a companion bill was introduced to the House. As movingly stated by Mr. Inouye in his introductory

Now that we had fires we decided to use them for more than heat and light. We began that 1st year to retire tattered American Flags. This has been an overwhelming success. Each year we have retired over 3000 Flags with honor and dignity.

Then a few years ago a good friend and fellow veterans died much too early. Marine John Morris clocked more hours at the vigils than almost any one else. With his untimely death we officially re-named the event the **JOHN MORRIS MEMORIAL WATCHFIRE VIGIL**.

The event is hosted by the Putnam County Joint Veterans Council (JVC). At

the opening ceremony on Friday May 24th at 7:00 PM will start a special event you will all want to see.

Out of a despicable act of cowardice something truly wonderful has been created. Please stop by and visit with the only true heroes that our country has- **THE VETERANS OF THE ARMED FORCES!!!!!!**

*Harold Rohde,*

Director



remarks to the bill he introduced in 1999:

"Mr. President, in our effort to accommodate many Americans by making the last Monday in May, Memorial Day, we have lost sight of the significance of this day to our nation. Instead of using Memorial Day as a time to honor and reflect on the sacrifices made by Americans in combat, many Americans use the day as a celebration of the beginning of summer. My bill would restore Memorial Day to May 30 and authorize our flag to fly at half-mast on that day. In addition, this legislation would authorize the President to issue a proclamation designating Memorial Day and Veterans Day as days for prayer and ceremonies honoring American veterans. This legislation would help restore the recognition our veterans deserve for the sacrifices they have made on behalf of our nation." (1999 Congressional Record, page S621)  
 It is time to turn back the clock and to remember what Memorial Day is all about, remembering and honoring those who died in service to the United States of America.

I urge you to call your Congressional Representative and Senators and ask them to not only vote in favor of the bills to restore Memorial Day to May 30 but to sign on as cosponsor as well. You can also go to <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/6/restore-the-traditional-day-of-observance-for-memorial-day/> and sign the online petition in support of the legislation.

Art Hanley,  
Deputy Director



## Odell, Antoci Take HV Honor Flight to

Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell accompanied 87-year-old Carmel resident Mario Antoci, a World War II Army veteran and former POW, on a Hudson Valley Honor Flight (HVHF) to Washington, DC on Saturday, April 20. The pair joined approximately 88 other vets along with their guardians and several HVHF staff members.

“It was a long day but went so fast and was so well organized. It went like clockwork,” said Odell.

The day was one Antoci will never forget.

“I can never repay MaryEllen for choosing me for the Hudson Valley Honor Flight to Washington, DC,” said Antoci. “I have never

accompanied the buses to Stewart International Airport.

There a welcoming reception was held for the members of the Greatest Generation and onlookers cheered for and thanked their hero veterans.

Sharply at 10 a.m. the US Airways Charter Flight took off headed for Reagan National Airport.

The veterans’ day-long trip included stops at the WWII Memorial, the Iwo Jima Memorial, and Arlington National Cemetery where they watched the Changing of the Guard ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown

*“This was one of the best days of my life”*

**Mario Antoci Carmel**

the 7<sup>th</sup> Army’s 63<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division and spent his final five months in the military as a prisoner of war in Germany, was asked by a young visitor to the WWII Memorial how he was captured and came to be a POW.

“Well, we were overrun by the Germans,” he replied.

In 2006, Antoci wrote an account of his war-time experiences in a journal he titled, “Hey Dad, What Were You

Doing on Your 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday?” In it, he recounted being captured along with two other soldiers, interrogated briefly and then “loaded in cattle cars” and “packed so tight that if you tried to fall you couldn’t; you stayed in a standing position.”

Odell said many of the veterans were willing to speak of their war experiences that day.



“Perhaps they spoke of their experiences because they were among each other and more relaxed but I also think they realized it had to be. They had to tell their story because they were taking ownership of the fact that they are part of our history and it was okay to talk about what they had done. I think they were at peace that day.”

The trip was the second flight sponsored by HVHF, a local chapter of the National Honor Flight Network. The group raised approximately \$50,000 necessary to cover the costs of air and ground transportation as well as food for the travelers. Each veteran was accompanied by a guardian who paid his or her own way at a cost of approximately \$400.

“We have to do more of these flights and we have to do them quickly,” said Odell. “We lost two veterans who were scheduled to be on this flight just two weeks before we took off. I think that was why Mario and I were able to get on this flight.”

The next HVHF is scheduled to take place in September.  
-Marty Collins

experienced anything like it. This was the one of the best days of my life.”

The day started bright and early as the travelers checked in at 7 a.m. and boarded Leprechaun buses in Montgomery, NY. A convoy of police and motorcyclists

Soldier. Odell said everywhere they went the veterans, who wore military caps designating their military branch or WWII status, were greeted by the public who were also visiting the historic sites.

Antoci, who served from 1944 to 1946 as a member of



# ROW OF HONOR

## MAY 24, 2013



**CELEBRATE OUR VETERANS ON THE SHORELINE OF LAKE GLENEIDA**

MEMORIAL DAY, MAY 24, 2013 - JUNE 12, 2013  
PUTNAM COUNTY'S 201<sup>ST</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
SPONSOR A FLAG TO HONOR OUR HEROES

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#### Lakeside Flags Set to Honor Vets

Imagine the grassy shores of beautiful Lake Gleneida in downtown Carmel lined with colorful American flags in time for this year's Memorial Day remembrances. The public is invited to celebrate all generations of veterans by sponsoring an American made flag which will stand in a Row of Honor from May 24 through June 12. Join in the program to salute our veterans and remember those who have gone before us. Sponsorship is \$100. To order a flag, e-mail: [rowofhonor@putnamcountyny.gov](mailto:rowofhonor@putnamcountyny.gov) or call Mimi at (845) 808-1620.