

Putnam Veterans SITREP

Volume 12 Issue 13

PEARL HARBOR REMEMBRANCE DAY



An E-Mail **SITUATION REPORT (SITREP)** OF THE **POTNAM COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY**

Why do we remember Pearl Harbor? I believe it can be found in the fourth and final verse of the "Star-Spangled Banner:

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



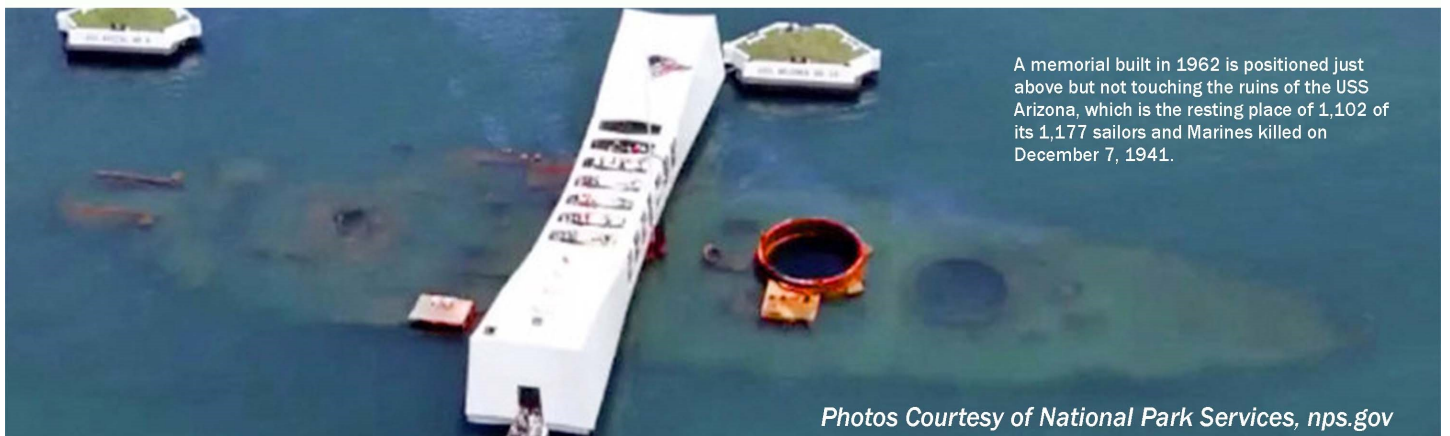
USS Arizona: Maiden Voyage (NOV 10, 1916)



After it has been bombed (DEC 7, 1941)



After fire has been extinguished (DEC 10, 1941)



A memorial built in 1962 is positioned just above but not touching the ruins of the USS Arizona, which is the resting place of 1,102 of its 1,177 sailors and Marines killed on December 7, 1941.

Photos Courtesy of National Park Services, nps.gov

PUTNAM COUNTY'S
ROW OF HONOR

Once more our extraordinary Row of Honor has been retired for the winter. We ask you to please support the Row of Honor help to keep it flying. Stop by and enjoy it when it is up like the Fox family did just before it was retired. Make your memory with a loved one with the Row of Honor.

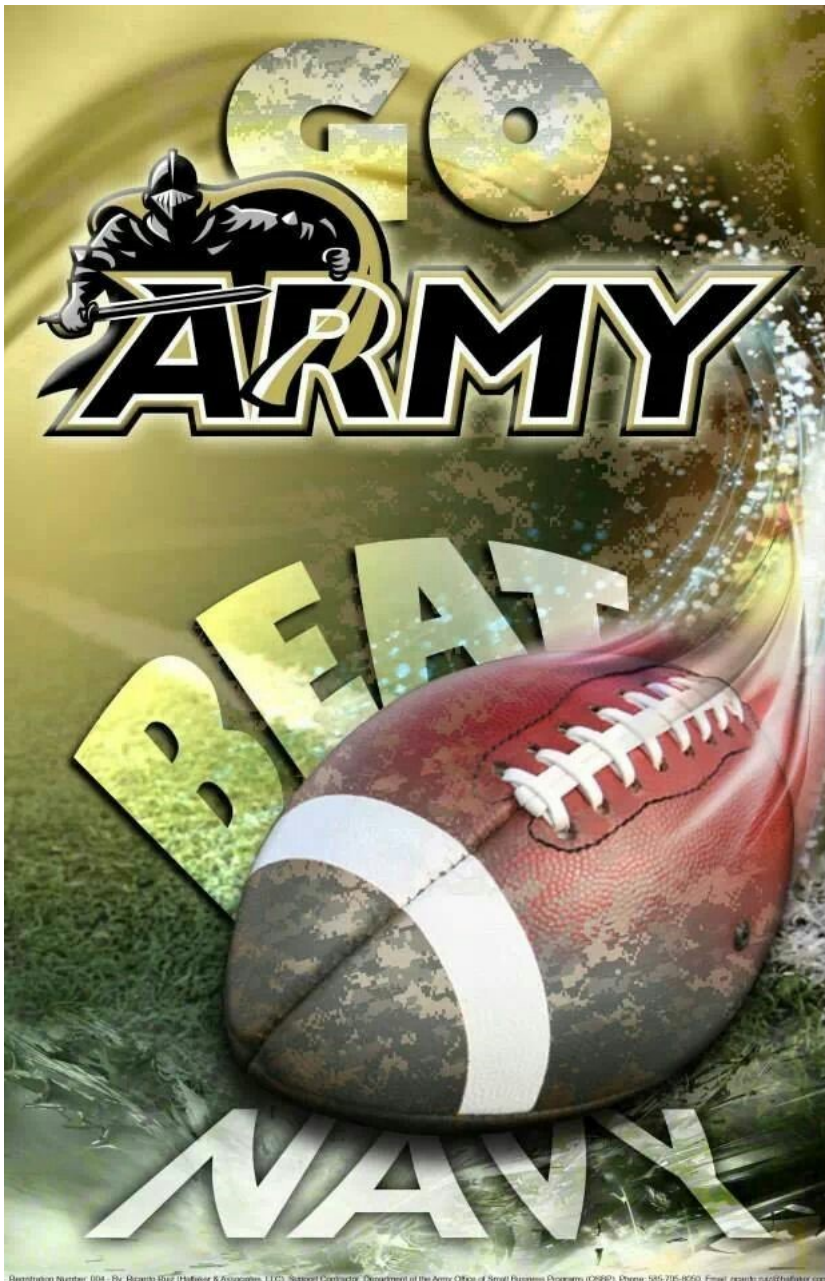
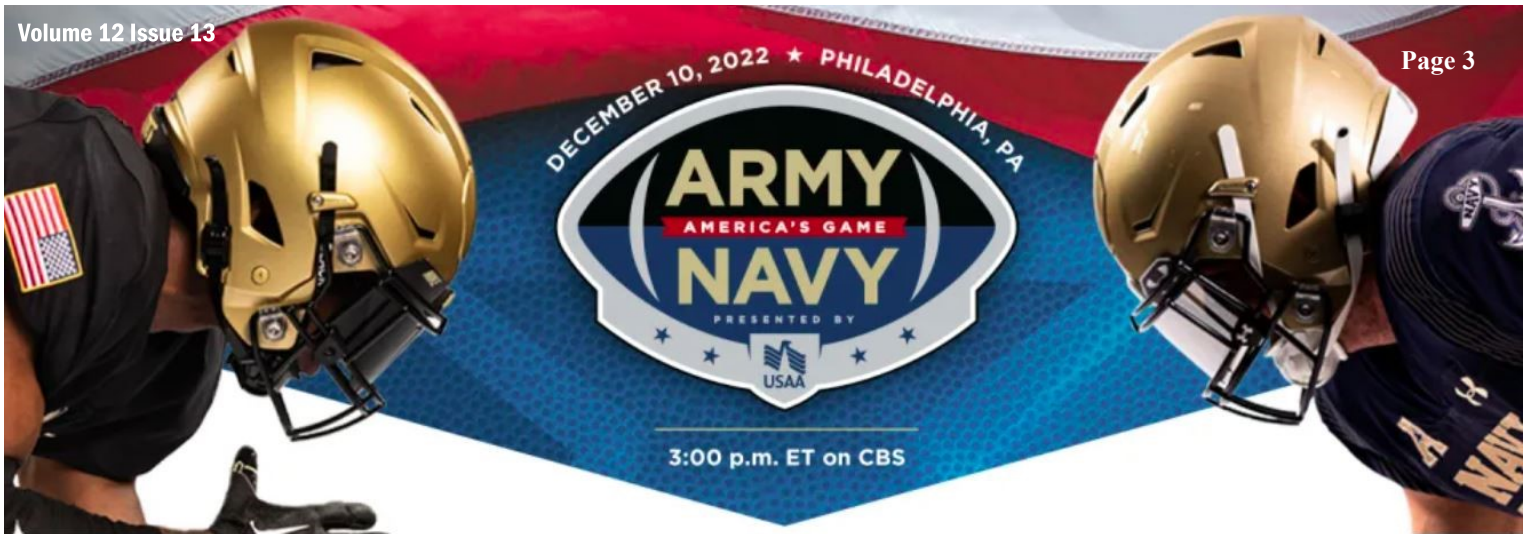
Karl



Lest we forget



DONALD B. SMITH GOVERNMENT CAMPUS
110 OLD ROUTE 6, BLDG. #3
CARMEL NY 10512
MONDAY-FRIDAY 9-5
CALL FOR APPOINTMENT EITHER LOCATION
845-808-1620
TUESDAY EVENINGS 5-8PM
2505 CARMEL AVE. (RT 6) SUITE 212
BREWSTER, NY 10509
KARL ROHDE, DIRECTOR
ART HANLEY, DEPUTY DIRECTOR



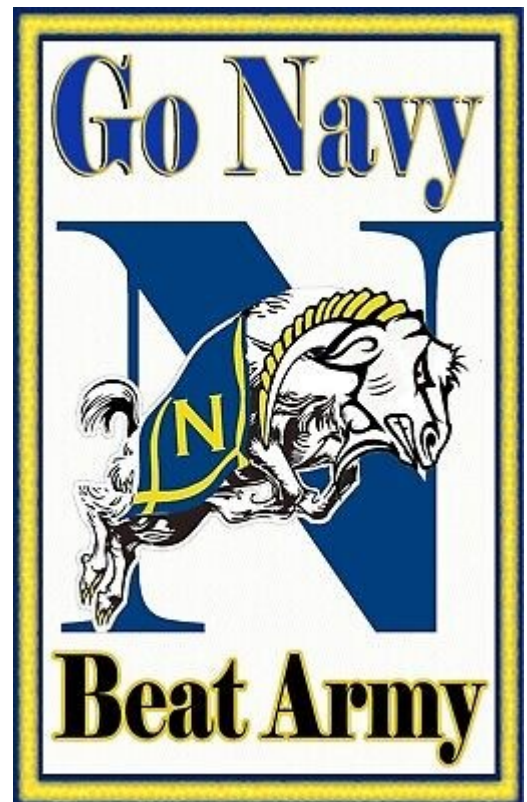
Registration Number: 604 - By: Ricardis Hinz (TheFisher & Associates, LLC), Support Contractor, Department of the Army Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP), Phone: 505-725-8553, Email: rccardis.hiaz@thefisher.com

We always



Both

Teams!





54th Massachusetts Regiment mural



FO Myers
Milltown Cemetery

Sometimes even historians get a key fact wrong.

Sometimes even historians get a key fact wrong. Last fall, Brewster High School student Ellen Cassidy found just such a mistake while researching a project.

She realized that a black military hero, long believed to come from Paterson, New Jersey, was in fact born in Patterson, New York, and later lived in the Town of Southeast.

Every day on her way to school, Cassidy passes the Milltown Rural Cemetery. It is there that Pvt. Francis Oliver Myers, aka Frank Myers, is buried.

“I was curious about him because he was one of the few black soldiers from Putnam County that fought in the Civil War,” said Cassidy.

Here is what else Cassidy learned about Frank Myers in her research:

Following Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, Myers joined the Union Army. He enlisted with the 54th Massachusetts Colored Volunteers. The 54th consisted of black enlisted men, including two sons of Frederick Douglass and a grandson of abolitionist Sojourner Truth. The 54th took a boat to Hilton Head. Under the command of Col. Robert Shaw, they attacked Fort Wager and immediately came under fire.

As Colonel Shaw led on “gaining the rampart, he stood there for a moment with an uplifted sword, shouting ‘Forward Fifty-fourth!’ and then fell

dead, shot through the heart...” Colonel Shaw would perish with far too many of his men. According to a Port Royal correspondent for the New York Post, “Frank Myers, whose arm was badly shattered by a shell, said, ‘Oh! I thank God so much for the privilege: I went in to live or die, as he please.’ He stood right under the uplifted sword of their brave Colonel Shaw, on the very top of the parapet, as he cried, ‘Forward, Fifty-fourth!’ and then suddenly fell, quickly followed by Myers himself.”

Private Myers suffered grievous wounds including loss of his arm, injuries to his head and back. He was in the hospital for months. He was promoted to corporal and discharged on February 3, 1864 and came home to Southeast. Two years later, The Putnam County Courier ran a brief obituary which stated that Oliver Meyers, aged “about 30 years,” had died on May 19th, 1866, in Southeast. Here is where the historical record falters. The official history books, compiled from a military roster incorrectly list Francis Myers, a soldier from the same unit and with the same dates of enlistment and discharge, as having come from Paterson, New Jersey. This single false detail, probably inserted by a bored or exhausted army clerk – New Jersey instead of New York – was picked up and repeated in articles and books until it took on the sheen of fact. Cassidy noticed the mistake with surprise.

“Wait!” She told herself. “That’s not right!”

She said, “I reached out to American historian and the first woman

president of Harvard University, Dr. Drew Gilpin Faust directed me to Dr. Elyssa Tardiff and Kate Melchior of the Massachusetts Historical Society who then connected me with Dr. Donald Yacovone, of Harvard’s Hutchins Center for African & African American Research. Dr. Faust and Dr. Yacovone both emphasized the importance of getting the word out and publishing to set Myers record straight.”

Cassidy recently published her findings on New York Almanack and to date, The National Park Service has corrected the record in its online exhibit, Faces of the 54th. The National Gallery of Art has corrected it in its online roster of The 54th Massachusetts Regiment. The open-source website, Find-A-Grave, has been updated with a comprehensive write up about his service and his burial place and headstone located in Milltown Cemetery, right here in Brewster.

To make sure Brewster, Town of Southeast, and Town of Patterson citizens properly remember Myers, she contacted local veteran Jack Duncan, of the Bob Palmer Project. On Memorial Day they will place a flag next to Meyers military headstone.



She said, “I’m actually hoping to get a historical marker created in his memory as his family actually lived near the Brewster CSD campus, near the intersection of Farm to Market and Route 312 and their family home can be found on historic maps. To me, that’s an exciting idea.”

BIOGRAPHY:

Ellen Cassidy is currently a high school senior and resident of Putnam County, New York. She is interested in pursuing history, law and film studies in college and most recently earned her Girl Scout Gold Award

for her profile of Sgt. Clinton J. Peterson, a mixed race soldier from Kent Cliffs, NY, who served with the 369th Infantry, Harlem Hell-fighters. Her project included one of the earliest Black History markers in Putnam County now installed in Veterans Memorial Park.

We are all so proud of Ellen for her interest and passion for the history of our Veterans. Karl

The
Bulletin Board

Rotary 

**BREWSTER ROTARY'S
COMMUNITY
PANCAKE
BREAKFAST**

Join us for a delicious breakfast and some holiday fun!

**SATURDAY
DECEMBER 17
08:00AM - 10:00AM
(LAST SEATING AT 9:45)**

Ticket Info:
**BREAKFAST IS FREE!
WE JUST ASK YOU RSVP
USING THE LINK BELOW**
RSVP by 12/15/22

[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/BREWSTERROTARYPANCAKES](https://tinyurl.com/BrewsterRotaryPancakes)