



The American Legion

Bruckenthal-Cann Post 385 Newsletter

Serving Weston, Pembroke Pines, Miramar, Davie, Southwest Ranches & Sunrise



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Commanders's Report

Sleep more, eat less

Getting enough sleep helps keep you thin. That's right – and it doesn't mean you have to sleep through meal time to keep off extra pounds.

Here are the facts:

When you don't get the seven or eight hours of sleep needed to rejuvenate your body, your neurons don't secrete the normal amounts of serotonin or dopamine. Serotonin is a "feel good" hormone, and dopamine is the brain's fun house – a pleasure-and-reward system that's sensitive to addictions and helps keep you from feeling pain.

When you're short on sleep, your body looks for ways to compensate for those missing hormones. It typically does this by craving sugary foods that give you a "rush." In other words, lack of sleep throws off your entire system by decreasing your metabolism and increasing your appetite.

Can't make up for lost sleep

Over a two-week period, missing out on the recommended eight hours of nightly sleep adds up to two full nights' sleep debt, one study found. If you're averaging only four hours of sleep a night, your brain reacts as though you haven't slept at all for three consecutive nights. And the amount of sleep you need increases if you've been deprived of sleep. People don't seem to adapt to getting less sleep than they need.

"There's recent evidence showing – in men and women in several countries – that chronic sleep deprivation increases risk of early death," said Dr. Carl Hunt. "Studies are showing that people who get less sleep are at greater risk for heart disease and heart attacks. And perhaps the hottest area of research has shown a link between chronic sleep deprivation and risk of overweight and obesity. These studies articulate the price society pays in not getting a good night's sleep."

To make matters worse, lack of sleep can become a larger factor as you age. When you're older, your brain produces less of a necessary sleep hormone, resulting in a craving for carbohydrates.

Experts say the most worrisome part is that many people are too tired to realize how sleep-deprived they are. Sleep deprived people have slower reaction time, weaker memory, and other thinking impairments. So the issue is much bigger than obesity alone. We aren't losing enough sleep about losing sleep.

The good news is ... this is good news!

Don't get me wrong. You can't "sleep" yourself thin. But you can help prevent obesity by getting the refreshing, rejuvenating shut-eye you need.

So the key message here is, "Get enough sleep!" Now, how often does a doctor encourage you to indulge in something you love?

Of course, it's easier to talk about getting more sleep than to do it. Long hours at work and endless "to-do" lists at home, coupled with the trials, tribulations, joys, and responsibilities of parenting, can leave little time for what has become the luxury of sleep. But remember, it isn't a luxury. It's a necessity.

Sleep is simply your body's way of resting and restoring its energy levels. It's good for your health – body, mind, and spirit. It can be a wonderful way to solve problems, dream dreams, or recover from an illness. Make it a priority to get your Z's. Your body is counting on you.

Bottom line:

Get your seven or eight hours of sleep each night – and you'll help yourself to a healthier, thinner life.

OUR MEETINGS FOR THE NEXT 4 MONTH:

FEBRUARY 5th, 2008

MARCH 4th, 2008

APRIL 1st, 2008

MAY 6th, 2008

Our Post meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm

at the Pembroke Falls Aquatic Center

Please check our website for the map or call me for information on each month's meeting.

954-441-8735 or 954-559-3202.

SAVE OUR HOMES PORTABILITY UPDATE.

In one month and a day from today, citizens of Florida will have the opportunity to vote for a tax reform plan which includes portability. The vote gives Floridians an opportunity to keep money in their pockets rather than allow government to make buying decisions on their behalf.

For the amendment to pass, it must have 60% approval. Up to now signs are very encouraging. Governor Crist has raised several million dollars and is campaigning aggressively. The Florida Association of Realtors, the Florida Chamber of Commerce and many other influential groups are emphasizing the economic impact of revitalizing the housing market.

I have given many speeches urging support and encouraging people to make sure they vote for the property tax reform. Not surprisingly opponents have resorted to the usual scare tactics stating that vital local services will suffer. Without going into detail, my constituents say they have not noticed a decline in services subsequent to statutory relief legislated earlier this year. In addition those who oppose this legislation, fail to understand that increased economic activity creates greater revenue flow for the government.

Some confusion exists as to whether the 3% cap will be retained if this amendment passes. The answer is yes, the 3% cap will stay and I will continue to fight and protect the citizens' initiative which resulted in Save Our Homes. Another argument of those who oppose this legislation is that it does not go far enough. We cannot allow the perfect to be the enemy of the good.

If this amendment passes it could be the precursor of a more realistic tax system. If it fails, big government advocates will gain enthusiasm and argue that the citizens voted for a higher level of government spending. It has taken a long time to get this far. Early polling indicates 55% for the amendment, and 20% against and 25% undecided. If the undecided split then we will be over the needed 60%. The key is to urge all the supporters to vote.

We can see the finish line, let us not let up now. Please contact my office if you have any questions. Tel. (561) 625-5176

Rep. Carl J. Domino

FOUR CHAPLAINS CEREMONIES

Our District 9 Chaplains will conduct a "A Salute to the 4 Chaplains and the 672 Heroes of the Dorchester" presentation

Sunday, February 3, 2008, 2 pm at the U.S. Coast Guard Station, John Lloyd Park, Dania Beach, Florida

When the USAT DORCHESTER carrying 902 troops and crew was hit by a torpedo and sinking on February 3, 1943 off the Coast of Greenland, the 4 Chaplains aboard, all of different faiths, gave their life vests to members of the crew. They stayed aboard the ship and were seen holding hands and praying as the ship went under. A brave and inspiring act of faith and love. 672 brave young men also were lost, we call them Heroes, too. We will also pay tribute to the crews of the US Coast Guard Cutters Escanaba and Comanche who rescued 229 survivors of the Dorchester from the freezing water that tragic morning. On the 65th anniversary of this event, February 3, 2008, our District 9 presentation commemorates the sacrifice of them all.

For the story of the Four Chaplains, go to <http://www.fourchaplains.org/>

Sunday, February 10, 2008 at 2:00pm

In honor of the gallantry of these four Armed Forces Chaplains

On February 3rd, 1943 four American chaplains of different faiths - Protestant, Jewish, and Catholic - each gave away their life preservers and their chances for survival when their ship, the USS Dorchester was mortally struck. The four chaplains went down together with the ship. This is their story.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF FORT LAUDERDALE 301 East Broward Blvd Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301 We have been working with Veterans in Christ, at the First Baptist Church, to commemorate the heroic acts of four army chaplains who gave up their lives when the troop ship Dorchester was torpedoed in the North Atlantic on February 3rd, 1943, and to recognize and honor Veterans of the Armed Forces for their patriotic service, dedication and sacrifice in the name of freedom.

Let's make 2008 the biggest and best Four Chaplains Memorial Service ever.

Chaplain's Corner

**Purple Heart Anniversary Dedication
By Chaplain Bob Nagle**

Although George Washington established the Badge of Military Merit by general order at his Newburgh, NY, headquarters in the house of the late COL Hasbrouck, on **7 August 1782, the 225th Anniversary** of the establishment of the military award that later became the Purple Heart was celebrated at the newly-dedicated (10 November 2006) National Purple Heart Hall of Honor on Temple Hill Road in nearby Vails Gate, NY.

The major event of the day was the dedication of a monument at the flag park in front of the Hall of Honor at 1:30 pm by members of The Military Order of the Purple Heart. Celebrating its 75th anniversary, The Military Order was holding a convention in Tarrytown, just over an hour away, and bused a large contingent to the dedication. Tom Poulter, national commander, was the keynote speaker. Senator Hillary Clinton spoke, as did U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey, State Senator Bill Larkin, and Newburgh postmaster Tom McGuire. Larkin, a retired lieutenant colonel with 23 years of active service, was a member of the "Genesis Committee" for the Hall of Honor that included *Cornwall Sentinel* publisher Everett Smith, WWII veteran Joe Farina, and retired Air Force LTG James D. Hughes, who also spoke at the dedication.

A resolution sponsored by Senators Clinton and Nagel (R-Nebraska) calling for a permanent National Purple Heart Recognition Day was mentioned by Senator Clinton. The national vice commander, Henry Cook, a Viet Nam veteran, called for all recipients to write their elected representatives and ask that the Purple Heart stamp be made into a "forever" stamp, just prior to the unveiling of the redennominated 41-cent Purple Heart Stamp by Postmaster McGuire.

Later in the afternoon, The Old Guard Fife & Drum Corps performed and George Washington arrived, on horseback, escorted by re-enactors portraying Sheldon's Horse (the 2d Light Dragoons of Connecticut) and the Philadelphia 1st City Cavalry Troop. Washington spoke of the difficulties his army faced throughout the war in getting promised support from Congress; how negotiations with Great Britain continued to drag on after the victory at Yorktown, further exacerbating the situation; and how back pay and promised pensions for his soldiers and officers were forgotten by delegates from colonies themselves almost bankrupted by the war.

Then he told of how he stopped an incipient mutiny in a building no more than a hundred yards from where his audience now sat. "Gentlemen, a fellow soldier begs your leave to address you." As he finished his planned remarks, he sensed that all was not going well. He then reached into his pocket to retrieve a supportive letter he just had received from a member of Congress, but he had difficulty seeing the words clearly. When he said, "Gentlemen, you will permit me to put on my spectacles, for I have not only grown gray but almost blind in the service of my country," however, he sensed the tide had turned. Many in the audience had tears in their eyes.

Following Washington, other speakers offered appropriate remarks, and a 1940s-era, Andrews Sisters-style trio from the USO, The Liberty Belles, augmented by a male baritone, sang patriotic songs, but another very well received performance was yet to come. James McEachin, himself a recipient of both the Purple Heart and the Silver Star (Korean War) and an accomplished TV actor, performed a dramatic monologue in the persona of an old veteran limping with a cane into his twilight years. It ended with these words: **"No veterans; no democracy. No democracy; no America!"**

There have been an estimated 1.5 to 1.8 million Purple Heart Medals awarded, and approximately 550,000 of the recipients are still living. To graphically demonstrate this reality, a re-enactor in a World War I uniform (the first conflict for which the current Purple Heart was awarded) was joined by actual recipients from World War II, Korea, Desert Storm, Iraq and Afghanistan. It is estimated that 22 Purple Hearts are now awarded each day due to wounds, or death, resulting from combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. To underscore these statistics, the Adjutant General of the State of New York awarded the Purple Heart to three soldiers at the ceremony.

GET YOUR H.S. DIPLOMA

To provide special recognition for the service military veterans of WWII, Korea (also Vietnam did get theirs) PUBLIC ACT 181 of 2001 as amended authorizes the veteran to be awarded his/her HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA.

The veteran must meet the following requirements:

1. age or deceased request according to each state;
2. before graduation enlisted in or was drafted;
3. at time of enlistment or draft, veteran was enrolled in HS of district which application is made;
4. veteran did not subsequently graduate from a HS;
5. veteran served under honorable conditions.

Applications can be completed by veteran, or spouse on his behalf, child.

Application requires copy of DD214 showing Honorable Discharge. Applicant signature certifies submitted application. Need a replacement, send request to or you can print a form at:

www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs/index.html.

For Public Schools, Applicants should contact the Board of Education of their school district and/or the school they attended and speak to the Guidance Counselor. Schools are aware of this law they will issue the diploma after verifying dates of veteran's enrollment from their records.

For Parochial Schools you need to contact the Archdiocese and advise what school you attended and year of graduation. They will issue a diploma from that school and probably send you a congratulation letter and thanks for your service to the Country.

An Early Christmas Train Ride

From Chaplain Bob Nagle

Best Christmas Story You Ever Heard-

Here's a 'today' Yule story that occurred several weeks ago ~ AND NOW, after the holidays, I bring you the best Christmas story you never heard.

It started last Christmas, when Bennett and Vivian Levin were overwhelmed by sadness while listening to radio reports of injured American troops. "We have to let them know we care," Vivian told Bennett. So they organized a trip to bring soldiers from Walter Reed Army Medical Center and Bethesda Naval Hospital to the annual Army-Navy football game in Philly, on Dec. 3.

The cool part is, they created their own train line to do it. Yes, there are people in this country who actually own real trains. Bennett Levin - native Philly guy, self-made millionaire and irascible former L&I commish - is one of them. He has three luxury rail cars. Think mahogany paneling, plush seating and white-linen dining areas. He also has two locomotives, which he stores at his Juniata Park train yard. One car, the elegant Pennsylvania, carried John F. Kennedy to the Army-Navy game in 1961 and '62. Later, it carried his brother Bobby's body to D. C. for burial. "That's a lot of history for one car," says Bennett.

He and Vivian wanted to revive a tradition that endured from 1936 to 1975, during which trains carried Army-Navy spectators from around the country directly to the stadium where the annual game is played. The Levins could think of no better passengers to reinstate the ceremonial ride than the wounded men and women recovering at Walter Reed in D. C. and Bethesda, in Maryland.

"We wanted to give them a first-class experience," says Bennett. "Gourmet meals on board, private transportation from the train to the stadium, perfect seats - real hero treatment."

Through the Army War College Foundation, of which he is a trustee, Bennett met with Walter Reed's commanding general, who loved the idea. But Bennett had some ground rules first, all designed to keep the focus on the troops alone:

No press on the trip, lest the soldiers' day of pampering devolve into a media circus. No politicians either, because, says Bennett, "I didn't want some idiot making this trip into a campaign photo op."

And no Pentagon suits on board; otherwise the soldiers would be too busy saluting superiors to relax. The general agreed to the conditions, and Bennett realized he had a problem on his hands. "I had to actually make this thing happen," he laughs.

Over the next months, he recruited owners of 15 other sumptuous rail cars from around the country - these people tend to know each other - into lending their vehicles for the day.

The name of their temporary train? The Liberty Limited.

Amtrak volunteered to transport the cars to D. C. - where they'd be coupled together for the round-trip ride to Philly - then back to their owners later.

Conrail offered to service the Liberty while it was in Philly. And SEPTA drivers would bus the disabled soldiers 200 yards from the train to Lincoln Financial Field, for the game

A benefactor from the War College ponied up 100 seats to the game - on the 50-yard line - and lunch in a hospitality suite. And corporate donors filled, for free and without asking for publicity, goodie bags for attendees:

From Woolrich, stadium blankets. From Wal-Mart, digital cameras. From Nikon, field glasses. From GEAR, down jackets.

There was booty not just for the soldiers, but for their guests, too, since each was allowed to bring a friend or family member.

Bennett's an emotional guy, so he was worried about how he'd react to meeting the 88 troops and guests at D.C.'s Union Station, where the trip originated. Some GIs were missing limbs. Others were wheelchair-bound or accompanied by medical personnel for the day. "They made it easy to be with them," he says. "They were all smiles on the ride to Philly. Not an ounce of self-pity from any of them. They're so full of life and determination."

At the stadium, the troops reveled in the game, recalls Bennett. Not even Army's lopsided loss to Navy could deflate the group's rollicking mood. Afterward, it was back to the train and yet another gourmet meal - heroes get hungry, says Levin - before returning to Walter Reed and Bethesda.

"The day was spectacular," says Levin. "It was all about these kids. It was awesome to be part of it."

The most poignant moment for the Levins was when 11 Marines hugged them goodbye, then sang them the Marine Hymn on the platform at Union Station.

"One of the guys was blind, but he said, 'I can't see you, but man, you must be f---ing beautiful!'" says Bennett. "I got a lump so big in my throat, I couldn't even answer him."

It's been three weeks, but the Levins and their guests are still feeling the day's love. "My Christmas came early," says Levin, who is Jewish and who loves the Christmas season. "I can't describe the feeling in the air."

Maybe it was hope. As one guest wrote in a thank-you note to Bennett and Vivian, "The fond memories generated last Saturday will sustain us all - whatever the future may bring."

God bless the troops, every one.



THE MCDONALD TEAM

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Department Commander Warren Post presents Post 385 with the 100% certificate and ribbon to Adjutant Joe Motes during the District Ball.

