



NEWSLETTER OF THE WISCONSIN VETERANS MUSEUM FOUNDATION

Frontline

# IN HONOR OF A SOLDIER

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Articles in this newsletter regularly tell readers stories of heroes; soldiers who have traveled, fought, and died sometimes for our country. Our family is honored to provide readers with a story about our hero—a young man at the beginning of his military service.

PV2 Christopher James Gillette, our son, signed on with the Army National Guard as a junior in high school at career day in January 2007. From that day forward, he committed his life to the Guard. His dedication opened the eyes of his friends and family, although some harbored doubts about his ability to stay focused. Upon graduation from the 9-week boot camp in Ft. Knox, he proved to all of us that he was worthy of being labeled as a soldier of the Wisconsin Army National Guard. Christopher became a member of the E Company 1-147TH Aviation Regiment. He held his head high, expressed what he learned—to be a strong, caring individual,



**PV2 Christopher James Gillette**

and to strive for what he believed in.

As parents, the proudest day of our lives was to join Christopher and his fellow PVT's at the Ft. Knox graduation, a challenge that had tested his strength and knowledge. He arrived home in late August to finish his education at Verona High School. He spoke highly of the military, how life had changed for the better, and how much he looked forward to the future.

Tragically, his dreams were cut short. We lost our soldier, our hero, in a car accident on September 24, 2007. The Wisconsin National Guard assigned a Captain to our family to help guide us through the grieving process. Keeping in mind that Christopher had just finished the 9-week boot camp, and had not had an opportunity to earn honors or significant medals; the Wisconsin Army National Guard, nevertheless,

treated us as part of their family.

In our son's honor, we have acknowledged Wisconsin's citizen soldiers by donating generously to the Wisconsin Veterans Museum. By doing so, we hope to keep our soldier in everyone's memory.

**By The family of PV2 Christopher James Gillette**

Courtesy Gillette Family

# The Bugle

The purpose of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum is to commemorate, acknowledge, and affirm the role of Wisconsin veterans in America's military past by means of instructive exhibits and other educational programs.

The Bugle is a publication of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum Foundation, which serves to further the museum's mission by providing funds for the acquisition of artifacts, exhibit production, and development of educational programs.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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WISCONSIN  
VETERANS  
MUSEUM  
30 W. Mifflin St.,  
Madison, WI 53703  
- On the Capitol Square

HOURS  
Mon. - Sat.  
9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Sunday Noon - 4 p.m.  
(April-September)

www.wvmfoundation.com

## Director's Corner

# LATINO HISTORY PROJECT

Wisconsin Veterans Museum is working on a Latino history project in partnership with the Wisconsin American G.I. Forum. In October 2008, WVM intends to mount a photographic exhibit highlighting Latino veterans during Hispanic Heritage Month. Members of Wisconsin American G.I. Forum will solicit and collect photographs from the Latino community of the state. The photographs will be used for exhibit purposes and will also be incorporated into a publication being developed by the Wisconsin American G.I. Forum. In addition, the Wisconsin American G.I. Forum is working on a Latino veterans traveling photographic history project. Photographs used in the exhibit will be featured in the forthcoming publication with histories of the veterans.

The Wisconsin American G.I. Forum's traveling pictorial exhibit will be displayed at festivals, veterans stand downs, libraries, schools, and other public places to raise awareness of the role of Latino veterans in Wisconsin's military history. The Wisconsin American G.I. Forum will also be asking Latino veterans for letters, documents, and artifacts as well as photographs. The Wisconsin American G.I. Forum seeks assistance from people with information about, and points of contact with, Latino veterans in Wisconsin.

Mr. Juan Alvarez, Past Commander of the Wisconsin American G.I. Forum, is leading the drive to obtain historical photos and other materials. Alvarez encourages potential



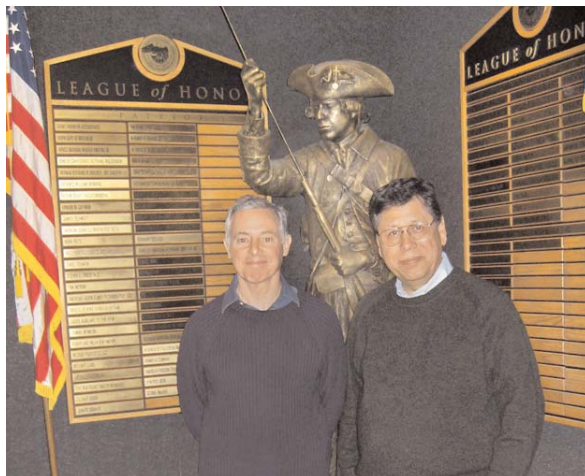
Courtesy Juan Alvarez

**Photo of Apolonio H. Alvarez, taken in 1943**

contributors to contact him directly. Alvarez can be reached by phone at 414-858-9871, e-mail at rach.kien.67-68@earthlink.net, or by writing to him at Wisconsin American G.I. Forum, P.O. Box 105, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201.

The Latino veterans project represents a statewide endeavor. *Bugle* readers are asked to pass the word about the project. We look forward to a great exhibit and a great new relationship.

By Richard H. Zeitlin



Courtesy Juan Alvarez

**Dr. Richard H. Zeitlin and Juan Alvarez, during a recent visit to the Wisconsin Veterans Museum.**



# SPRING 2008 PROGRAMS

Tuesday, March 25, 2008 – 7pm

## Echoes from Vietnam - The Literature of War

Alfredo Vea, author & W.D. Ehrhart, poet  
Reading and discussion

Join Alfredo Vea, author of the critically-acclaimed *Gods Go Begging*, and W.D. Ehrhart, award-winning poet, as they discuss their service in Vietnam and how it has impacted their prose and poetry. Both writers will read selections from their catalog and discuss their craft with the audience.

*Presented in partnership with the University of Wisconsin-Madison Integrated Liberal Studies Program.*

Friday, April 4, 2008 – Noon

## The Return of the Shiloh Cannon – A Dedication

Lance Herdegen, Civil War historian  
Lecture and discussion

In 2007, the Wisconsin Veterans Museum became home to a cannon that previously resided in the GAR Memorial Park at Camp Randall. Hear the story of the cannon, captured by the 14<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin at the Battle of Shiloh in 1862, how the cannon was installed at the museum, and a brief history of the 14<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin and its role in the Civil War.

Tuesday, April 8, 2008 – Noon

## Four Flags over the Capitol Square

WVM Curatorial Staff  
Artifact lecture and discussion

Join WVM curatorial staff as they showcase four rarely seen battle flags from Wisconsin Civil War regiments. Featured flags include the national flags of the 21<sup>st</sup>, 36<sup>th</sup>, and 37<sup>th</sup> Volunteer Infantries, and a special company flag from Wisconsin's Irish regiment, the 17<sup>th</sup> Volunteer Infantry. Staff will highlight the flag conservation process and well as share other items from the archival and object collections.

Friday, April 11, 2008 – Noon

## What This Cruel War Was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War

Chandra Manning, Professor of History,  
Georgetown University  
Lecture and book signing

Utilizing research from letters, diaries, and regimental newspapers from both the Union and Confederacy, Georgetown Professor Chandra Manning concludes that slavery and

emancipation was plainly identified as the root cause of the Civil War by soldiers on both sides. Join Dr. Manning as she discusses this impressively researched and vast social history of the Civil War.

Friday, April 18, 2008 – Noon

## Incident at Post #30: Confederates, Union Guards, and Corporal Punishment at Camp Randall

Richard Zevitz, Professor of Criminology and Law Studies,  
Marquette University  
Lecture and discussion

Corporal G.W. Spears of Alabama lies buried in Madison's Forest Hill Cemetery among 132 other Confederate prisoners of war who died at Camp Randall during the Civil War. Unlike most of his comrades who died from disease, Spears was shot and killed by a sixteen year old Union sentinel from the 19<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin. Join Dr. Zevitz as he discusses the events leading up to Spears' shooting death, the proceedings of the military board of inquiry that investigated the matter, and sheds light on a little known chapter in Wisconsin military history.

Tuesday, April 22, 2008 – Noon

## The Italian Navy in World War II

Robert Mallett, Professor of History,  
University of Birmingham  
Lecture and discussion

Mussolini and Italian fascism believed from the onset of their period in power that Italy's natural sphere of influence lay within the Mediterranean and Red Sea littorals. From its very first days in power the fascist regime therefore increasingly prioritised development of the Regia Marina, the Royal Italian Navy, in order to prepare if for its titanic clash with Great Britain and France, the region's other predominant powers. This lecture will examine the latter stages of that preparation process in the context of international politics between 1938 and 1940, the date of Italian entry into the Second World War.

*Additional programs are listed on pages 4, 5 and 6 in the sidebars. All programs are free of charge, and hosted in the Wisconsin Veterans Museum's 2nd Floor Education Center. When book signings are listed, the books will be available for purchase in the museum's gift shop. For more information, call (608) 261-0541 or visit [www.wvmfoundation.com](http://www.wvmfoundation.com).*

## Museum Staff

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## Spring 2008 Programs *continued*

Friday, April 25, 2008 –  
2 p.m.

**A Slave No More: Two Men  
Who Escaped to Freedom**

David Blight, Class of 1954  
Professor of American  
History, Yale University  
Lecture and book signing

Using two recently uncovered slave narratives, Frederick Douglass Prize winner David Blight has reconstructed the lives of two escaped slaves, Wallace Turnage and John Washington. Using genealogical information, Blight addresses their childhoods, their escape, their service as cooks and camp hands for Union troops, and their post-war rise to middle class status in the North. Powerful and poignant, *A Slave No More* uncovers the story of two ordinary men whose stories represent the rise of over four million from slavery to freedom.

*A 2008 Distinguished  
Lecture Series Event  
Presented in partnership  
with the University of  
Wisconsin-Madison  
Department of History and  
the Center for World Affairs  
and the Global Economy  
(WAGE).*

### Curator's Chronicles

# THE MANY LIVES OF OUR MUSEUM HUEY



William J. Rettenmund, Jr. Papers, WWM

**157 in 1969 after an emergency landing caused by enemy fire. The distinctive Shark mouth of the 174th AHC is evident.**

When Bill Rettenmund of Verona approached me following a talk on the Vietnam War last summer, I never could have imagined where the conversation would lead. Bill had been a crewchief with the 162nd Air Assault Company (Copperheads) flying on a UH-1 (Huey) helicopter in Vietnam during 1966-1967. After a discussion of his service, he asked if I could find out the entire tail number for our helicopter on display in the museum gallery. As painted, the number 4-14157 is incomplete. The first 4 is actually the last digit of the production year. In theory it should be, really only could be 64. Through museum records, we quickly verified that our Huey is 64-14157. Promising to get back to me soon, Mr. Rettenmund went off to do some research on 157, as her crew would know her.

The next day I received a call from a very excited Bill Rettenmund. Our helicopter had not only flown in Southeast Asia, she had flown with Bill's unit, the 162nd AHC! The 162nd had taken our Huey to Vietnam by ship in early 1966 and she had served as a gunship supporting their landings, (Bill flew on troop carrier Huey's known as

"slicks".) As he relates it, "I have been looking at a museum helicopter that I walked around, while parked in her Phuoc Vinh revetment. She covered many of my combat assaults 41 years ago!" If that was not enough, Bill had seen the initial call put out by the museum for assistance in configuring the helicopter when it came to us from the Iowa National Guard. By the time he contacted the museum, members of the 1st Air Cavalry had volunteered to set up the helicopter, and at that time without any knowledge of its history, they proceeded.

64-14157 served with two units in Vietnam, logging 778 flight hours with the Copperheads from February 1966 to June 1967, and another 957 hours with the Sharks of the 174th AHC. She received damage from enemy fire on seven missions with crewmembers wounded on four of those occasions. The most prominent feature of 157 during her service in Vietnam was the nose mounted



William J. Rettenmund, Jr. Papers, WWM

**"She covered many of my combat assaults 41 years ago!" Bill Rettenmund in Vietnam, October 1966.**

## Continued- Curator's Chronicles



William J. Rettenmund, Jr. Papers, WVM

**The earliest known photo of 157, Vietnam, 1966.**

40mm grenade launcher M5 armament Subsystem. While the grenade launcher is long since removed, the mounting plate indented to accommodate the weapons pod and the reinforcing rods required to support the extra weight are still present and visible. Further armament would include an M-60 machine gun in each passenger door and side rocket pods. Another distinguishing element for the helicopter is the unit paint schemes applied in Vietnam. When serving with the 162nd, she had the unit nickname, "Copperheads" painted on the rocket pods and a stylized snakehead applied to the grenade launcher. Upon joining the 174th, company

members would add an ominous open shark mouth reflecting their nickname.

The Veterans Museum would like to thank Bill Rettenmund for doing the research that brought the history of 157 to light. Mr. Rettenmund graciously donated archival materials and objects relating to his service with the 162nd AHC. It is through the support and efforts of such veterans and their families that our museum continues to grow.

**By William Brewster**

<http://www.174ahc.org/>

**A photo of 157 in the museum gallery showing where the M5 weapons subsystem attached to the nose.**

## Spring 2008 Programs *continued*

Tuesday, April 29, 2008 –  
7pm

**General Lee's Army: From  
Victory to Collapse**

Joseph Glatthaar,  
Stephenson Distinguished  
Professor of History,  
University of North Carolina  
Lecture and book signing

Despite nearly 150 years of scholarship about the Army of Northern Virginia, Joseph Glatthaar, using an impressive range of primary sources and statistical databases, has rewritten and reconsidered the story of the Civil War's most important army. From Manassas to Appomattox, Glatthaar examines how Lee's army almost led to the South to victory, and, conversely, why it lost.

*A 2008 Distinguished  
Lecture Series Event  
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with the University of  
Wisconsin-Madison  
Department of History and  
the Center for World Affairs  
and the Global Economy  
(WAGE).*

## Spring 2008 Programs *continued*

Friday, May 2, 2008 – Noon

Cadwallader Washburn's  
War Behind the Lines

Kerck Kelsey, historian  
Lecture and discussion

Discover the remarkable story of Major General Cadwallader C. Washburn, the commanding officer of the Second Wisconsin Cavalry during the Civil War. Washburn served in the West, seeing action at Vicksburg, Helena, and Pea Ridge, and later became Commander of the Military District of Western Tennessee. In this capacity, Washburn battled with cotton speculators and crooked Treasury agents, and was even chased down a Memphis street by Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest's cavalrymen! After the war, Washburn became a two-term Congressman and Governor of Wisconsin, and made millions as one of the founders of General Mills in Minneapolis.

### From the Archives

# PETS IN THE MILITARY

Looking through manuscript collections in the Wisconsin Veterans Museum Research Center, one starts to notice certain things pop up in many collections. Some of these things, like photos from home and souvenir



Old Abe Collection, WVM

**Above: Old Abe  
Right: 101st Division Patch,  
featuring Old Abe**

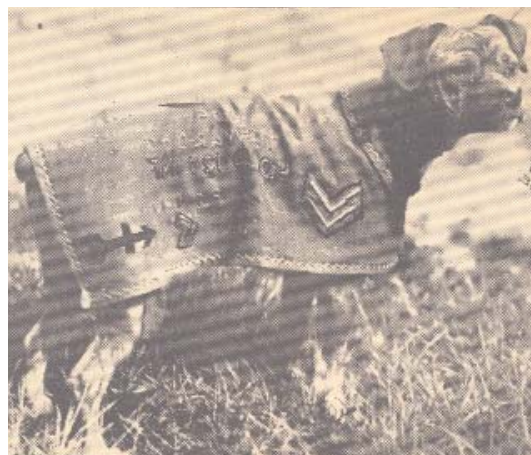
postcards, are expected, while others initially catch you by surprise. Military pets and mascots were one of these unexpected finds.



KrisZickuhr

Military pets and mascots have been a part of Wisconsin's military experience since the Civil War. The men of the Eau Claire Badgers (later Company C, 8th Wisconsin) were responsible for one of the most famous military mascots of all time, Old Abe. The eagle left northwestern Wisconsin with the men and traveled south with the regiment. Old Abe was carried in 37 battles, wounded at Holly Springs, and nicknamed "the Yankee Buzzard" by Confederate soldiers.

After the war, Old Abe returned to Wisconsin and lived in the state capitol building and his fame continued to grow. Stories of Abe's wartime exploits were told in Northern and Southern



**Joe served with the 127th Infantry Regiment**

newspapers and in several children's readers. Old Abe also attended veteran parades and helped raise funds for soldier's aid. Old Abe's picture here was "autographed" by the eagle for the 1876 Centennial celebration in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Old Abe continues to inspire the military today; his likeness is found on the 101st Airborne Division's patch.

Old Abe was the most famous of Wisconsin's Civil War mascots, but not the only mascot state soldiers brought to the war. Company E of the 12th Wisconsin's mascot was a tame bear. Bruin was brought to Madison by Stephen Squires, the bear lived at Camp Randall in a dry goods box and traveled by train to Chicago where he marched in a parade with his regiment. The bear stayed with the regiment until they reached Leavenworth, Kansas where he was left behind to spare him the unit's next long march.

Company B of the 28th had a dog named Calamity and the 26th Wisconsin had a badger mascot. Two other Wisconsin units had bird mascots, the 30th a rooster and the 49th Wisconsin a golden eagle named Timothy. Timothy, whose name was later changed to Phil Sheridan and Andy Johnson, also lived in the capitol building. Unlike Old Abe, Andy Johnson was not trained and therefore didn't attend rallies or parades. The two eagles were rivals and fought constantly.



August Hildebrand Collection, WVM

**Rochester, member of  
Company G of the 128th  
Infantry, pictured with  
August Hildebrand**

Wisconsin's tradition of animal mascots and pets is not confined to the Civil War. During World War I the 127th Infantry Regiment had a dog named Joe, who had his own uniform and reached the rank of corporal during his service.

Dogs have had an official role in military service. Since the very first conflicts, more than 30,000 dogs have served in roles including sentries, messengers, and scouts. During World War II, Sparky was the dog mascot of the Naval Training Station at University of Wisconsin-Madison. Killed while in service, Sparky posthumously received the rank, "Chow Hound 1st Class." Another dog, Rochester, was with Company G of the 128th Infantry at Camp

Rolf Rosman Collection, WVM

Continued- From the Archives

Henry V. Fisker Collection, WVM



**Sparky, the mascot for the Naval Training Station at UW-Madison**

Beauregard, Louisiana. Rochester was considered the most popular member of Company G and was one of the 32nd Division's most popular mascots.

Wisconsin units have continued to have dog mascots in recent conflicts. During the Persian Gulf War, the 13th Evacuation Hospital adopted a Saluki hound named Coco. One member of the unit adopted Coco and brought the dog to live in the United States. Company G, 2nd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment, a unit out of Madison had dogs Achilles and Hector while serving in Iraq. The dogs earned their names since they fought with one another constantly.

While dogs, and to some extent birds, are common pets both in civilian life and in the military, some units choose more unique animals as mascots. During the Berlin Crisis the 132nd Signal Battalion was stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington. The men of the headquarters company purchased a lion cub from a pet store. Named Leaky, the lion lived in the company day room, was given his own uniform, and was fed the same food as the GIs. The men choose Leaky as their mascot to symbolize their combat readiness.

These pets and mas-

cots all hail from units with specific ties to Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Veterans Museum also has collections including pets and mascots from units without specific Wisconsin ties. These pets will be featured in another edition of the Bugle. Stay tuned to learn about monkeys Jacko and Charlie, dogs Beertender and Babe, and a pet prairie dog.

Although not all of Wisconsin's military pets and mascots were as famous as Old Abe, they all played an important part in the moral of their units. The pets found in WVM collections tell just one part of their unit's story. Visit the WVM research center from Monday to Friday from 9:00 until 3:30 to learn more about these pet and the units with which they served.

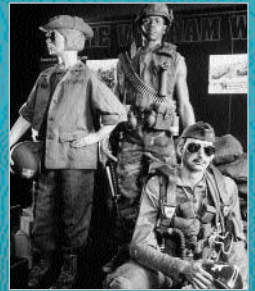
Did you, or your unit, have a pet or a mascot? If so, contact Abbie Norderhaug at 608-267-1790 or [abbie.norderhaug@dva.state.wi.us](mailto:abbie.norderhaug@dva.state.wi.us).

By Abbie Norderhaug



**Leaky was the mascot for the 132nd Signal Battalion**

Ervin J. "Doc" Sartell Collection, WVM



**Commemorate Those Who Served**

Help keep the history of Wisconsin's veterans alive by contributing to the educational programs and exhibits of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum.

**SUPPORT THE WISCONSIN VETERANS MUSEUM FOUNDATION**

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P.O. Box 2657  
Madison, WI  
53701-2657

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State: \_\_\_\_\_

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From the Gift Shop

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\$49.95



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To order, call (608) 267-1799 or visit  
[www.museum.dva.state.wi.us](http://www.museum.dva.state.wi.us)  
and click on "gift shop"



Private Bridgman's Boiler  
\$24.95

# The Bugle

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