MEMORIAL DAY

special section to Southern Dutchess News



BEACON FREE PRESS

American Military Cemeteries: The fallen are never forgotten



Rows of crosses and Stars of David at the immaculately groomed Normandy American Military Cemetery and Memorial in France honors the fallen in perpetual dignity. Photo by Jim Donick

by Jim Donick

The responsibility for American soldiers buried in National Cemeteries overseas belongs to the American Battle Monuments Commissions (ABMC). They manage 26 cemeteries around the world. The most often visited is the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial, located on a bluff above Omaha Beach, the site of the bloodiest action during D-day in June of 1944.

The Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial has 9,387 burials. There are also 1,557 Missing in Action - many from the troop ship Leopoldville (over 750 souls lost) - listed on the wall of the missing in a memorial garden.

Of those 9,387 burials, there are 307 unknowns, four women, 45 sets of brothers, and one example of a father and son. The cemetery's grounds are perfectly maintained and the stories of the people buried there are constantly being documented. It's been said that "one can't visit this place without feeling the need to stand a bit straighter as one departs." There is much truth in that saying.





Elizabeth Ann Richardson

There are only four women buried in the Normandy American Cemetery. One of them is Elizabeth Ann (Liz) Richardson. She wasn't a soldier, she was with the American Red Cross and died after the hostilities had ended.

Not a draftee, or even a soldier, Liz Reed didn't have to be in Europe.

She was born in Akron, Ohio in 1919 and grew up in Mishawaka, Indiana. She was always an active young woman with a broad range of interests and talents.

She entered Milwaukee-Downer College in the autumn of 1936, majoring in art and English. While there, she was active in sports, both rowing on the crew and playing field hockey. She was also actively writing for several of the school's publications and had even created a cartoon character, "Beulah," a caricature of herself and her fellow coeds, right down to their all-but-obligatory saddle shoes. Beulah brought satire to a new level on campus.

She graduated in 1940 with, among her honors, the Joseph E. Davies prize for best work by a student enrolled in a Wisconsin art school at the 1939 Wisconsin Salon of Art, in Madison.

She also wrote stories and poems.

After graduation, she went through a number of jobs, starting with the Boston Store and Gimbels in Milwaukee, ultimately landing a position in the advertising department at Schuster's Department Store. Her retail career ended the day she entered Red Cross service.

As the war dragged on, Richardson had a lot of friends in uniform and she worried about them. She wanted to do something.

In early 1944, with two women she had known in college, she joined the American Red Cross. She was not a nurse but went to be a part of the American Red Cross that was improving morale among the troops.

By 1944 there were thousands of American soldiers in Great Britain. They were training and preparing for the liberation of the continent. Many of them were also bored and homesick. A high percentage of these GIs had never been more than 30 or40 miles from home. A lot of them hadn't even finished high school. Cathedrals and British culture didn't really fit their experience or interest. Even the local beer was warm.

The American Red Cross had responsibility for lifting the morale and spirit of these homesick GIs, primarily by operating recreation clubs in the large cities. This was rather like the USO.

By 1944, however, GIs were stationed all over the British Isles, most at a distance from cities with clubs. Thus, the Red Cross had to find a way to take the club functions to them. The answer was something they called a "clubmobile."

It was a single-decker bus fitted with coffee and doughnut-making equipment. It also carried chewing gum, cigarettes, magazines, newspapers, a phonograph, and records. A British driver piloted the large vehicle and it was manned by three American women. Wearing lipstick and a smile, they brought a touch of home to thousands of young soldiers. Liz Richardson was one of the so-called "clubmobile girls." Later, when much of France was liberated and the war was winding down, she and her colleagues took their morale-building work to France. By the close of hostilities they were already planning to move into Germany to help support the soldiers of the Army of Occupation.

In July of 1945, several months after the armistice was declared, Elizabeth Richardson was at a site on the north coast of France, near Honfleur. She was helping with the planning for the move to Germany and was called to a meeting in Paris. Today the drive from Honfleur to Paris is a pleasant couple of hours. In the summer of '45 it would have been the better part of a day. A friendly sergeant volunteered to fly her to Paris in a small plane, an artillery spotters' aircraft called an "L-4 Grasshopper."

The L-4 was a two-seater known to the rest of us as a Piper Cub. The grasshopper had a larger set of windows. It's a simple plane with no radar or avionics and flew very low. That 25th of July, 1945, the two of them took off from Honfleur for a short hop to Paris. The adventurous Liz probably found it exciting to be flying across France at a very low altitude. Near Rouen, they ran into fog in the valley of the Seine and the airplane crashed. Both Liz and the pilot were killed. Elizabeth Ann Richardson was 26 years old.

continued on page 4



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MEMORIAL DAY

a special section to

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Sheriff's Office sets Memorial Day observation

the annual Dutchess County Sheriff's Office memorial service will be held at the Law Enforcement Center on Parker Ave in Poughkeepsie on Thursday May 25, at 10 a.m. Because of the logistics involved with the ceremony, on May 25 the Sheriff's Office lobby will be closed to the public until noon.

Members

Sheriff Kirk Imperati announced that Enforcement and Corrections Divisions will be in full dress uniform for the ceremony, and local dignitaries will be recognized as well. During the ceremony fallen law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice, former Sheriff's Office members who have passed away, and the brave men and women who keep our nation safe will all be honored.

Check our newspapers for a listing of Memorial Day-related events taking place throughout Dutchess County.





American Military Cemeteries: The fallen are never forgotten

continued from cover

Upon her death, fellow students at Milwaukee-Downer College and her family members established the Elizabeth Richardson Prize, given to a woman student excelling in studio art. The prize is still given today.

The Reeds



Ollie Reed, Jr.

There is but one example of a father and son buried in the Normandy American Cemetery. The father and son buried side by side are Col. Ollie W. Reed and 1st Lt. Ollie W. Reed, Jr.

The younger Reed had followed his father's career path. His dad had served in World War I and was in the service throughout the young man's youth. It was no surprise when the son chose to attend West Point, where he graduated with honors in the class of 1942.

When the war in Europe was raging, Lieutenant Ollie Reed, Jr. was serving in the 363rd Infantry Regiment of the 91st Infantry Division in Italy. He entered combat with his unit on the 4th of July, 1944. He was killed only two days later, on July 6th of 1944 near Lajatico, Pisa Provice, Tuscany Region, Italy. This was only a month after D-Day in France. Ollie Reed, Jr. was 25 years old. The elder Reed, Colonel Ollie William Reed, a career soldier, served in the 29th Infantry Division. They were known as "the Blue and Gray Division" because the personnel were from both the north and the south of the United States.

The 29th came ashore on Omaha Beach, during the D-Day invasion of Normandy. Ollie Reed took command of the 175th Regiment on the 23rd of June, just two weeks after D-day. He was killed only a month later. It's not known if he had even yet heard of his son's death in Italy. Colonel Reed was 48 years old.

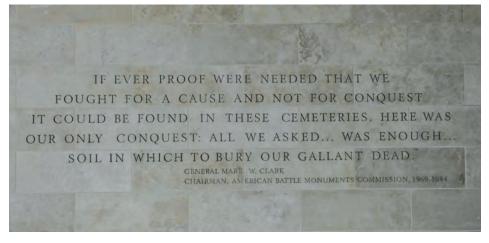
Col. Ollie William Reed was awarded the Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster. His son 1st Lt. Ollie W. Reed, Jr. was awarded the Purple Heart.

Their bodies were reunited at the end of the war at the request of the family.

The Roosevelt Brothers

Of the 45 sets of brothers buried in Normandy, the best known are likely Lt. Quentin Roosevelt and his older brother, General Theodore Roosevelt, Jr.

Quentin Roosevelt is the only WW I casualty buried here. He was the youngest son of President Theodore Roosevelt and he went to the First World War as a pilot in the 95th Aero Squadron.



The words of General Mark Clark make clear the role the United States has always played when engaging in a European war. *Photo by Jim Donick*

He was shot down on Bastille Day, July 14th, 1918, at the commencement of the second battle of the Marne. Earlier, on July 10th, he had been credited with shooting down a German aircraft. The legendary WWI pilot, Eddie Rickenbacker, wrote of Quentin Roosevelt, "His bravery was so notorious that we all knew he would either achieve some great spectacular success or be killed in the attempt." The latter proved to be the case.

Lt. Quentin Roosevelt was just shy of his 21st birthday.

When Quentin Roosevelt went down he was quickly identified by the Germans, who buried him with full military honors in a small cemetery behind the lines - in Chamery, a hamlet of Coulonges-en-Tardenois. He rested there until the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial was dedicated in 1956. As his brother, General Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., was to be buried there the family asked the United States Government to reunite their sons at the cemetery.

General Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. is buried next to his younger brother. Ted Roosevelt was the only general to go ashore in the first wave on D-day. Eisenhower tried to convince the 56-year-old Roosevelt not to go but, ever a son of his illustrious father, Ted felt the need to be with his troops.

During the landings, on Utah Beach, Roosevelt not only took control of his own troops, sending them forward to

continued on page 5







continued from page 4



Above: A haunting display at the cemetery reminds onlookers how most of the soldiers had been quickly buried during the hostilities. Even then, though, there was a certain dignity given to their heroism. Opposite page: Elizabeth Richardson rests under this simple cross among all of the other heroes in the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial. *Photos by Jim Donick*



The Hyde Park Education Foundation (HPEF) is sponsoring its Fourth Field of Honor® on Memorial Day weekend, May 27-29, on the lawn in front of the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site, on Route 9 in Hyde Park. The Field of Honor® is a display of 200+

American flags, 3' x 5', mounted on 8'

Individuals and businesses have purchased flags that are labeled in memory or in honor of a veteran, a fallen soldier, or anyone the buyer wishes to remember.

Proceeds from this event will benefit the Hyde Park Education Foundation.

The Hyde Park Field of Honor® opening ceremony will take place on Saturday, May 27, at 10 a.m. (Rain date is Sunday, May 28) There will be live, local enter-

tainment on the Main Stage, and a kids' tent for activities, crafts and games on Saturday, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. At 4 p.m., FDR High School Music alumni will perform a concert on the Main Stage.

All events at the Field of Honor® are free to the public, and open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Hyde Park Education Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit group, whose mission is to provide financial resources to individual schools and district-wide programs and activities that encourage and enhance the educational opportunities and well-being of the students of the Hyde Park Central School District. Visit https://www.hydeparkeducationfoundation.org/ for more information.





Quentin Roosevelt



Ted Roosevelt

secure the area, but he stayed on the beach and directed activity there under heavy fire. For this action he was later awarded the Medal of Honor, America's highest military award.

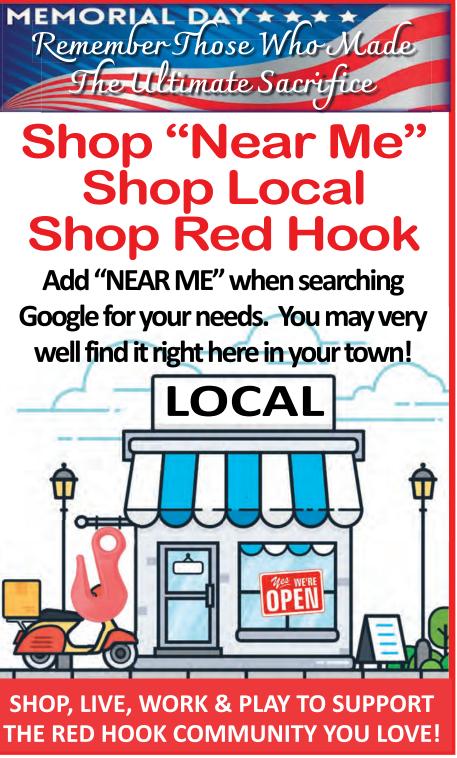
General Omar Bradley, thought of as the "soldier's soldier," was once asked about the bravest thing he had ever witnessed in his career. "That's easy," he replied. "It was Ted Roosevelt on Utah Beach."

Ted Roosevelt died of a heart attack just over a month after D-Day on July 12th, 1944. He was 56 years old.

The Unknowns

The 307 unknown soldiers are buried here under either a Latin Cross or a Star of David. The choice of headstone is simply dictated by the percentages of casualties that would require one or the other. On the headstone is the simple inscription: "Here rests in honored glory a comrade in arms known but to God." Modern DNA techniques have offered the hope that some of them may yet be identified. At least one already has been.





Pleasant Valley ceremony recalls role of Dutchess County in Civil War

by Jim Donick

In preparation for Memorial Day, Pleasant Valley residents and representatives of Dutchess County, including County Historian Will Tatum and his staff member Georgia Heering, recently gathered in the Pleasant Valley Cemetery to honor the grave of a civil war veteran, Private Edward Horton, by placing a Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) symbol with flag on his grave.

The ceremony was conducted by members of the 150th Regiment Society, who are Civil War re-enactors maintain-



ing the memory of the Dutchess County Regiment. The men were in Civil War uniforms of the period. They presented the traditional GAR memorial ceremony.

Memorial Day observances have their origin in the period right after the American Civil War. That conflict was the first in our history to mobilize such a large percentage of our population. The massive number of men and women involved came from every city, town, and village in the United States, both in the north and in the south.

Those men and women finished the war either as veterans or as casualties. In neither case were they ever to be forgotten.

Rising from the ashes of that great war was an organization dedicated to the memory of the casualties and to supporting the veterans who returned home. The Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), as it was called, became the first national veterans organization in the United States. It was later superseded by both the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) among others.

The GAR became among the first organized advocacy groups in American politics, supporting voting rights for black veterans, promoting patriotic education, helping to make Memorial Day a national holiday, lobbying Congress to establish regular veterans' pensions, and supporting political candidates. Its peak membership, at 410,000, was in 1890.

continued on page 7



Georgia Heering (center) of the County Historian's Office had just laid flowers on the grave of Private Edward Horton, a Civil War soldier who is buried in Pleasant Valley Cemetery. Behind her are (from left) Former State Sen. Sue Serino, Pete Bedrossian, Mike Peets, Michael Bussa, Tim Gordon, Brian Hold, Mark Russell, and Pleasant Valley Town Supervisor John DelVecchio. Left: A close-up of Private Horton's grave, which has finally received its Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) memorial symbol. *Photos by Jim Donick*

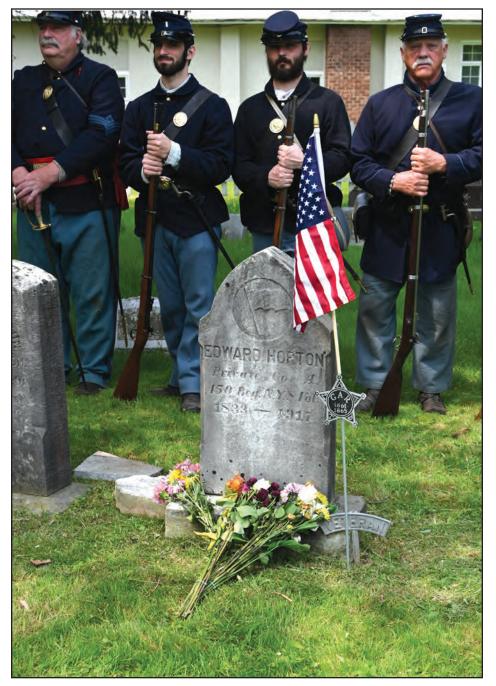


Some of the men of the 150th never came home. Thankfully, most of them did.

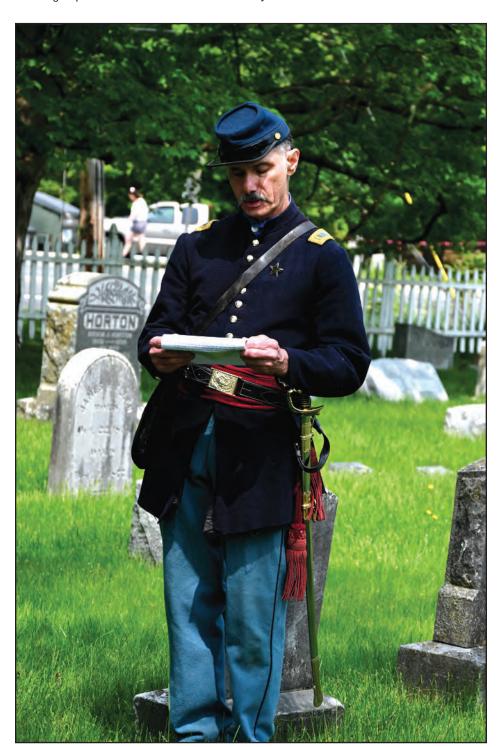








The members of the 50th Regiment re-enactors stand behind the recently decorated head stone of Private Edward Horton. Below: The Lieutenant of the group, Peter Bedrossian, reads for the group's GAR memorial service. *Photos by Jim Donick*





The [GAR] also worked at healing the wounds of the Civil War and bringing their former foes back into a constructive membership in American society.

This celebration of Memorial Day as a national holiday can be credited to the GAR's efforts.

One of the first orders issued by General John A. Logan as Commander in Chief of the GAR put Memorial Day on the calendar nationally.

In his General Order No. 11, dated May 5, 1868, first GAR Commander-in-Chief General John A. Logan declared May 30 to be Memorial Day (also referred to for many years as "Decoration Day"), calling upon the GAR membership to make the May 30 observance an annual occurrence. Although not the first time war graves had been decorated, Logan's order effectively established "Memorial Day" as the day upon which Americans now pay tribute to all their war casualties, missing-in-action, and deceased veterans. For many years General Logan's Order, as it was called, was often read aloud at community Memorial Day Ceremonies along with Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.

The organization also worked at healing the wounds of the Civil War and bringing their former foes back into a constructive membership in American society.

A high point of this activity took place in 1913 at the reunion for the 50th anniversary of the Battle at Gettysburg. President Woodrow Wilson's July 4 reunion address summarized the spirit: "We have found one another again as brothers and comrades in arms, enemies no longer, generous friends rather, our battles long past, the quarrel forgotten except that we shall not forget the splendid valor."

The last member of the Grand Army of the Republic, one Albert Woolson, died in 1956 at 109 years of age. He was the sole officially listed survivor of the approximately three million men who had served in the armed forces of the Union.

While the grave of Private Edward Horton was the center of the ceremony, the intent was to honor the memory of all of the civil war veterans of Pleasant Valley and of the county.

In opening remarks, a local resident commented:

"Thank you for joining us here today to remember a son of Pleasant Valley, Private Edward Horton, of the 150th NY Infantry, the Dutchess County Regiment. In a broader sense I think we are also honoring all of the young men of Dutchess County who went with him.

"In 1862, when they enlisted, the United States was engaged in an existential struggle. At Gettysburg, Mr. Lincoln noted that the United States was 'a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are cre-

continued on page 8



Pleasant Valley ceremony recalls role of Dutchess County in Civil War

continued from page 7

ated equal.' We all know that project is an ongoing one but that the idea, the ideal, must still be held sacred.

"These men of Dutchess County understood that they were called to test, again as Mr. Lincoln said, 'whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure.'

"Some of the men of the 150th never came home. Thankfully, most of them did.

"Edward Horton enlisted when he was 34 yrs old and he fought through the war. He came home and lived out a long life here in Dutchess County."

Who was Horton and who were the 150th?

On October 10th or 11th in 1862, the records indicate Edward Horton was 34 years of age. He was a bit older recruit than was normal. He mustered into the 150 NY Infantry Regiment with a large number of other boys and men from Pleasant Valley and the surrounding communities. Shortly afterwards, and maybe that same day, they were put on a train and went south to Baltimore to help guard that city and to keep down the confederate sympathizers who made up a percentage of the Baltimore population.

At the beginning of July in 1863 Edward Horton and his comrades were assigned to a more active role in the war and ordered to join the 12th Corps and to move north.

North? It may have been an unexpected direction. It seems that about that time General Robert E. Lee and his Army of Northern Virginia were on the move. The boys from Pleasant Valley and Dutchess

County, along with thousands of others, met up with them near a little town in central Pennsylvania called Gettysburg. The 150th lost seven men there, most on the third day of the battle when they were on the Union right flank while George Pickett's brave southerners made their legendary charge. The 150th was far enough to the right of the line that they didn't have to face the brunt of Pickett's charge, but the day was brutal for all concerned.

The Battle of Gettysburg was July 1-4 (though pretty much over at the end of the 3rd) in 1863 and when it was over Lee and his army headed south. The 150th followed until others took over the task and they then moved west to liberate Tennessee and ultimately swung south with Sherman, taking part in his bloody "March to the Sea." At the end of the war they marched to Washington and took part in the grand victory review as part of the Grand Army of the Republic.

Horton served in Company A, of the 150th, which was mostly men from Pleasant Valley, Poughkeepsie, Amenia, and Washington Hollow.

One of their Colonels was Colonel John H. Ketcham, a name well known in Southern Dutchess County today. Company A, though, was made up of lots of men from the central part of the county. The company's second Lieutenant was young James Mabbet. His family has a hamlet named for them just a few miles from Pleasant Valley. It was actually named for his father, a very successful auctioneer who had established himself



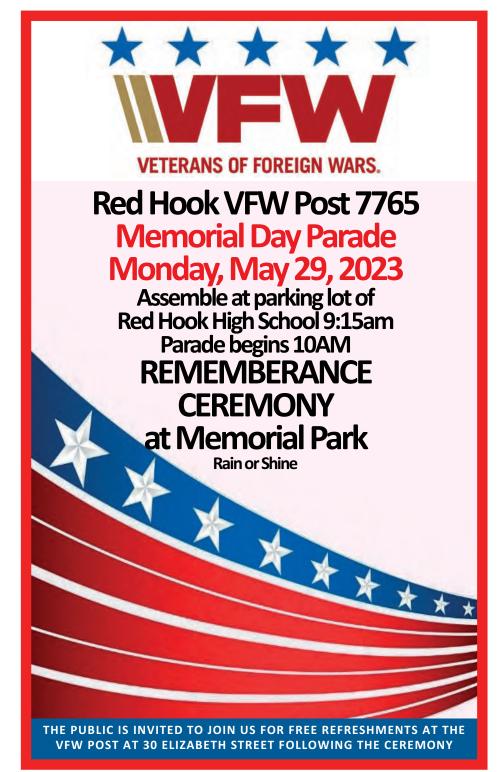
Above:The memorial squad of re-enactors from the 150th NY Volunteers march to the gravesite of Private Horton. Below: The men of the 150th conduct a moving GAR Memorial Ceremony for Horton. County Historian Will Tatum speaks with re-enactors Pete Bedrossian and Mike Peets. *Photos by Jim Donick*

there earlier in the 19th century.

When the 150th came home, the Reverend Benjamin Franklin Wile, of the First Presbyterian Church of Pleasant Valley, was at the ceremony in Poughkeepsie when the boys were mustered out. His son, William, had lied about his age and enlisted when only 15 yrs old. The Reverend Wile was so relieved and grateful that his son and so many of the local boys had survived that

he made them all an offer on the spot. When any one of them decided to get married they could come to his church and he would perform the ceremony for free. Many were said to have taken him up on the offer.

It's a pretty good bet that most of these men had known each other all their lives, and this county was likely never the same for the ones who came home. At least a few of them could get married for free.







Businesses listed below participate in Dutchess County's Return the Favor program & provide discounts to military Veterans. For more information: Contact the Dutchess County Clerk's office at 845-486-2120 or visit the website at: http://www.co.dutchess.ny.us/CountyGov/Departments/CountyClerk/19651.htm

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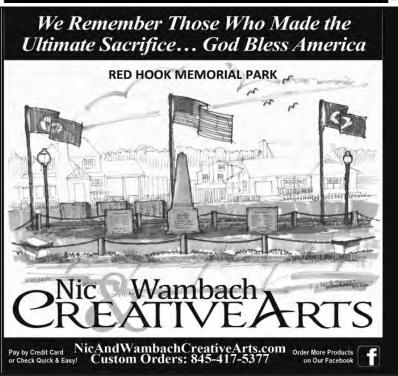
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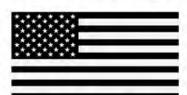
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