Memorial Day

Memorial Day is celebrated each year on the last Monday in May. This year it is the 28th. Like many federal holidays the name has been changed from Decoration Day to Memorial Day. Decoration Day was held to honor the Union and the Confederate soldiers who died during the American Civil War. By the 1900s it had become a day to celebrate all American soldiers who died while serving in the military. In 1967 the name was legally changed to Memorial Day and in 1971 became a federal holiday.

In 2000 President Clinton signed a law that requires all Americans to stop what they are doing at 3pm on Memorial Day to remember and to honor those who have died serving the United States.

It's common for volunteers to place the American flag on graves in the national cemeteries.

Did you know that USAFA does this every year? If you are interested in volunteering for this event, keep an eye out for an email from Janet Edwards at Mortuary Affairs.

Asian-American Pacific Islander Month Honoring Japanese-Americans

By Constance A. Leonard

After Pearl Harbor, 110,000 Japanese residents and citizens were sent to relocation camps and those of military age were classified as 4-C, enemy aliens forbidden to serve. However, in 1943, under pressure from Asian propaganda against these internments, President Roosevelt authorized Japanese-American men to enlist in the US Armed Forces. The 442nd Regiment of Japanese-Americans would go on to be one the most decorated units in US history. In total, about 14,000 men served, earning 9,486 Purple Hearts. 600 made the ultimate sacrifice. Not only did they fight in Europe, but in the Pacific they served as interpreters, translators, and intercepted communication for the Military Intelligence Service.

On Memorial Day, we honor all of the brave men and women who served in the military in World War II. As it is Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, we also honor the Japanese-Americans who like Senator Daniel Inouye of Hawaii enlisted because as he said, “I was angered to realize that my government felt that I was disloyal and part of the enemy, an enemy alien…and I wanted to be able to demonstrate, not only to my government, but to my neighbors that I was a good American.”
UPCOMING EVENTS

May 1
May Day

May 4
Intergalactic Star Wars Day
(May the 4th Be With You)

May 5
Cinco de Mayo

May 5-6
Dean’s Weekend

May 7
Library Hours 0700-1700

May 8
Victory in Europe (VE) Day

May 11
Eat What You Want Day

May 12
Library Hours 0700-2300

May 13
Library Hours 0700-1700

May 13
Blame Someone Else Day/
Mother’s Day

May 14
Summer Hours Begin

May 16
Biographer’s Day

May 21
Armed Forces Day

May 23
USAFA Graduation

May 28
Memorial Day

May 28
Library Closed

Catherine’s Culture Column

Asian American Pacific Islander
Heritage Month, May 2018

Please keep an eye out for e-mail notices about our upcoming observations.

Cinco de mayo

Cinco de mayo (Spanish for "fifth of May") is a holiday celebrating Mexican heritage and pride, and is held on May 5. It is celebrated in the United States and in some parts of Mexico, mostly in the state of Puebla. Cinco de mayo is not Mexico’s Independence Day. In the Mexican state of Puebla, Cinco de mayo is celebrated because the Mexican army won the Battle of Puebla from the French army on May 5, 1862, which was a surprising victory.

Source: http://www.mexonline.com/cinco-de-mayo.htm

AUTHENTIC CINCO DE MAYO RECIPES

Since this “holiday” especially centers around food and drink, here’s a little something for your Cinco de mayo celebration! Enjoy! (Click links or photos for details)

Enchiladas Verdes paired with a simple green salad, with tomatoes, olives, garlic and green onions, with your favorite dressing, and you have yourself a great meal! Top it off with a margarita, and you’re in full party mode!

Black Bean and Salsa Soup recipe is very simple to make, and you can create your own version of it as you go—add a little red chili, cumin, garlic, onions, tomatoes, tomatillos, lime, avocado, cilantro, sherry or tequila.

Famous Margaritas. Speaking of tequila...I thought I’d add this, to top off your food fun. Sounds like a pretty authentic-tasting recipe, and sure looks refreshing!!

Try them with:

Guacamole
MAY BOOK REVIEW
By Constance A. Leonard, Reading Enhancement, Academic Success

When the Emperor was Divine by Julie Otsuka (2002)

May marks Asian-American Pacific Islander Month and what better book to read than Julie Otsuka’s debut novel, When the Emperor was Divine.

Inspired by her own family’s experience, Otsuka gives an affecting portrait of an upper middle class American family comprised of a mother, father, daughter, and son, with one exception. They are Japanese American and it opens in 1942 during the aftermath of Pearl Harbor. The characters remain nameless throughout this short novel as we see their identity stripped from them.

We are introduced to the stoical mother who makes all the necessary preparations to be evacuated to an internment camp after seeing the “relocation” notices. “The sign had appeared overnight. On billboards and trees and the backs of the bus-stop benches. It hung in the window of Woolworth’s. It hung by the entrance to the YMCA…” She carefully packs their belongings and destroys any ties to Japan, burning photos and kimonos, smashing her tea set, and instructing her children to say they are Chinese. “Chink or Jap?” the other children query. Gone are the rice balls for lunch and in their place are peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. But to no avail. From Berkley, California their final destination for the next three years would be the Topaz, Utah internment camp.

Today, this is the site of the Topaz Museum. On their website they assert: “The internment of Americans of Japanese ancestry during WWII was one of the worst violations of civil rights against citizens in the history of the United States. The government and the US Army, falsely citing “military necessity,” locked up over 110,000 men, women and children in ten remote camps controlled by the War Relocation Administration and four male-only camps controlled by the Justice Department. These Americans were never convicted or even charged with any crime, yet were incarcerated for up to four years in prison camps surrounded by barbed wire and armed guards.” After years of lobbying, Japanese Americans were issued an apology and restitution by President Reagan in 1988 who signed the Civil Liberties Act.

In the novel, the children’s father had been taken in the middle of the night, in his pajamas and slippers, to a male only internment camp. “They had come for him just after midnight three men in suits and ties and black fedoras with FBI badges under their coats.” The children are constantly asking about their father who had once been full of laughter and games. He is only allowed to send heavily censored letters to them assuring them that he is perfectly fine. The family is finally reunited after four years of separation and captivity destined to feel this inexorable injustice for the rest of their lives.

If you enjoyed this novel, try reading her second novel, The Buddha in the Attic, about Japanese picture brides brought to San Francisco a century ago.

Both novels can be found on the sixth floor of McDermott Library.

Memorial Day: Remembering All Who Have Served, Including Military Dogs

As World War I veterans returned, Memorial Day grew to be a day to remember all of our military, no matter what war they served in. While there have been other changes in the holiday over time, the successful raid on Osama Bin Laden also brought a detail to public attention of something else that has changed. Today military honor — in survival and in death — now includes canine members of the military.

Several years ago at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden met with the units that carried out the raid on Osama Bin Laden’s compound in Pakistan, it was noted by the press that Cairo, the military dog who participated in the raid, was also present.

Dogs have not always come home and been so honored. While dogs have almost certainly followed along with military units knowing they might find men who would pet them and slip them a bite to eat now and then, there was no official program to train and use dogs in the military until World War II.

William W. Putney, a Marine Corps officer, who had just earned a degree in veterinary science when he went into officers’ training school at Quantico, Virginia, was instrumental to beginning such a program for the marines. Putney was asked to organize a newly established war dog training program that was to be based at what is now Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.
Today’s dogs are raised to be in the military, but when Putney began the program, dogs were pets recruited from families. The dogs then had to be conditioned not to react to gunfire and other loud noises; they needed to learn to signal danger to their handlers via body stance or ear movement, not barking. They were also trained to sniff out land mines and trip wires and carry messages.

After the invasion of Guam, Putney and a unit of men with their dogs were sent to the South Pacific where the use of the animals was credited with saving many lives, including Putney’s.

Captain Putney was leading a patrol of men with three of the dogs to flush out Japanese soldiers hiding in caves on one of the surrounding islands. A Doberman named Cappy was out in front of the unit when a shot rang out; Cappy was killed, but the men were alerted to the danger. Had Cappy not been in the lead, Putney would have been ahead of his men, and he likely would have been shot instead.

As the war ended and the men and dogs started being sent home, Putney came home to learn that as the dogs came back, the plan was to euthanize them; those in the States assumed that dogs who had been trained to fight and protect could not be returned to lives with families. Putney felt otherwise, and Putney convinced the officers at Camp LeJeune, to permit him to start a program to desensitize the dogs — a multi-step process.

The dogs had been trained to answer to a single person, so they had to become accustomed to several handlers (male and female). They had to acclimate to normal street sounds and movement, and many other aspects of daily life. An ultimate test was whether a dog could be taken for a walk in the community; would the dog be all right if someone walked past quickly, or if a person approached to pet him or her? Each of these milestones had to be reached very gradually.

Of the 559 dogs who were in the Marine Corps at the end of World War II, 540 were discharged to civilian life. Of the 19 who had to be euthanized, 15 were because of health reasons. Only four could not adapt to civilian life.

In his book, Always Faithful, Putney noted that because the canine corps was not maintained in the years immediately following World War II, some of the lessons they had learned about working with the animals had to be re-learned by those working with the next generation of animals. Unfortunately, one of the lessons — that the dogs could be desensitized — was never passed on, and from 1949-2000, euthanasia for former military animals was the law of the land.

Though Captain Putney returned to civilian life and had become a veterinarian in Los Angeles, he continued to advocate for change to the system, and three years before he died — sixty years since he had trained the dogs in the first canine unit, the Senate pass as house bill that permits handlers to detrain and adopt their dogs when their military usefulness has ended (October 24, 2000).

Today all branches of our Armed Forces use trained military dogs to patrol air bases, military compounds, ammunition depots and military checkpoints. There are approximately 600-700 of these canines in the Middle East in such places as Kuwait, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia and Iraq. They continue to guard and protect our military personnel as they were trained to do, with courage, loyalty and honor.

While our hearts go out to the families of the men and women of the military who have lost their lives in service to our country, we should also include gratitude for the men and women who have trained the canine team members — and the dogs themselves — whose efforts have helped reduce the toll on human life in the many conflicts where these animals have served.

Reprint permission granted by Kate Kelly.

Kate Kelly is a renowned historian, author and lecturer whose books, articles and speeches celebrate the American cultural experience. With an emphasis on American presidential elections, Kelly also shares classic and untold stories of American history, culture, and people through the decades, bringing a fresh and informative perspective and a renewed relevance of history to baby boomers, history lovers, and pop culture enthusiasts across America.

A contributor to the “Politics” section of The Huffington Post, Ms. Kelly is a veteran of both local and national talk and news programs, including “Good Morning America” and “The Early Show.” Ms. Kelly is also the successful author of over 30 books, ranging from the bestselling title Organize Yourself! to Living Safe in an Unsafe World.

Kelly is also a published author of history and science texts, including Election Day: An American Holiday; An American History; and That’s Not In My Science Book. A graduate of Smith College, Ms. Kelly has recently served on the board of trustees for The Westchester (New York) County Historical Society and the Larchmont Historical Society. She is also on the board of the Friends of Smith College Libraries. To learn more about Kate Kelly and to read more interesting stories, please visit: https://americacomesalive.com/
What has your career path been up until this point? How did you get to the position you have now?

I enlisted in the AF when I was 18 – way back when. I got out after close to 8 years and began working towards my bachelor degree. By then I was a military spouse and worked at the Misawa AFB Library and San Antonio Community College Library. Just after I got my Bachelor’s degree from Southwest Texas State University, my husband got transferred to Hickam AFB, Hawaii. While working at the Hickam AFB Library, I was accepted into the University of Hawaii MLIS program.

Before graduating with the MLIS, I started working at the Hawaii Public Library System as a travelling reference librarian substitute around the island of Oahu. Once I graduated, I was hired to manage the Hawaii State Video Library for the Hawaii Department of Education. Unfortunately, I was rifed and transferred to the Hawaii Public Library System, Hawaii Kai branch as the Children’s Librarian.

After 7 ½ years in Hawaii, the AF transferred us to Maryland – I was hired to do cataloging for a contractor at a variety of libraries around D.C. One short year later, in 1998, the AF moved us to Colorado Springs. At that time, all of the AF Space Command general libraries were in the process of being contracted out. I was hired by the contractor in March 1999 as the Reference Librarian for the Peterson AFB General Library. By October 1999, I had become the Library Director. I left there to become the Acquisitions librarian here at USAFA in October 2016.

I’d say that working in the many different AF libraries, public libraries, and San Antonio Community College library gave me an extremely broad view of library requirements and needs. Managing the Peterson AFB library for 17 years gave me the experience of supervising others, managing (and staying within) a budget, and learning the ways and means of AF procurement.

It must be tough working with the library budget. What is something we can do to make your job a little easier?

It’s not really tough – just learning to be really oriented to the academic side and becoming extremely meticulous in noting deadlines. My biggest task right now is creating an annual calendar that everyone can use so that they can assist everyone in Acquisitions by providing information on a timely basis so that deadlines can be met.

Where did you grow up? How long have you been in Colorado?

I am an AF brat. My dad served for 23 years and in that time my family managed to live in Kansas, Texas, North Carolina, Germany, Massachusetts, Kansas, and Texas. When I enlisted, we were living in Oregon.

My husband was transferred here in June 1998.

I know you like to craft. What are you making in your spare time?

I am currently in the process of cross-stitching a design for my father – pair of hands clasping each other – partly as a memorial for my mother – the line “together forever”.