

Triad

special
issue

Vol. 4, No. 15

Published in the interest of Fort McCoy personnel

September 25, 1987

Over 200 brave rain to attend

Post dedicates Constitution Park

By Monty Gilles
Triad Staff

The U.S. Constitution is widely acknowledged as one of the greatest documents ever written. This living document established freedoms and privileges for the American people on Sept. 17, 1787.

To celebrate the 200th birthday of this great manuscript, Fort McCoy personnel took part in various activities on Wed. Sept. 16, "Citizenship Day."

At 7:45 a.m., employees reflected for 200 seconds on what the Constitution means.

"I felt very thankful that we have the freedoms and rights that we have because of it (the Constitution)," said Brenda Nash, secretary for the Directorate of Personnel and Community Activities (DPCA).

"I thought about what these 200 years and the efforts of many, many generations have made possible—freedom, opportunity, and peace," said Ron Mashak, chief of the Services Division of DPCA.

At 11:15 a.m., Lt. Col. Michael Burke, Fort McCoy judge advocate, read and explained the meaning of the Constitution's Preamble.

Burke stated that the Preamble was written in lofty language reflecting the ideas of the people who wrote it, but it makes clear that this country exists because of the will of the people.

He said that the Constitution was intended to carry out the ideas and statements in the Preamble.

The United States didn't officially exist before the Constitution originated, so the Constitution created the country and the government of the country, according to Burke.

He stressed that the Constitution is worthless unless the people exercise their right to vote.

At 2 p.m., Fort McCoy Garrison Commander Col. Bill Sorenson presented the winners of the Civilian Welfare Fund Council Constitution Essay Contest with \$100 U.S. savings bonds. The entrants were to describe what "We the People" means to them in 250 words or less.

The winner in the 15- to 18-year-old age group was Brian Johnson, 15, from Coon Valley, Wis. His sister Dee, 9, submitted the best essay in the 8- to 11-year-old age group. Fourteen-year-old Sheri Phillips of Sparta wrote the winning essay in the 12- to 14-year-old category.



Garrison Commander Col. Bill Sorenson takes a glance at the Constitution Park monument as others involved in the unveiling ceremony head for shelter from the rain. (Photo by Mike Orrico)

The 3 p.m. Constitution Park dedication ceremony, the last event of the day, brought over 200 people out into the chilling rainfall.

Constitution Park consists of 13 pine trees, which symbolize the original

(Continued on page 4)

Kundert devotes 36 years to food service

By Monty Gilles and Diantha Maticic
Triad Staff

In 1944, when 14-year-old Richard Kundert began work in a Monroe, Wis. bakery, little did he know where this vocation would lead him—to a 36-year career in Food Services with the military.

CWO4 Kundert, stationed at Fort Lewis, Wash., has spent the summer assigned as an augmentee to the Food

Services Office of the Fort McCoy Directorate of Logistics.

As a food service specialist, his job includes issuing rations to incoming Reserve and National Guard troops, aiding them in their ration accountability bookkeeping, and making sure they have whatever dining equipment they need—whether they are eating in the field or in a dining facility.

"Chief Kundert gets up at 4 a.m. every day and visits every one of our din-

ing facilities before he comes into the office at 7:30 a.m.," said Greg Foss, Fort McCoy installation food service advisor.

"He does the same thing every evening. He wants to make sure the troops are getting the best we can offer them."

One of Kundert's accomplishments this summer has been to inventory and review all 122 operational dining facilities on post, making a detailed report on all equipment.

"During my review, I was amazed at how modern and nice all the facilities are at Fort McCoy," Kundert said.

This could be considered high praise from a man who has seen as many dining facilities as Kundert. During his long Army career he has been stationed at installations from Hawaii to the Carolinas and saw overseas duty in Korea and Vietnam.

Kundert's military career didn't start out in food services, but rather in a medical unit of the Wisconsin National Guard.

His unit was de-activated six years after he joined. He then joined the Janesville, Wis. Guard, where his skill as a baker was recognized and the course of his career set.

He received his warrant in the Guard in 1960 and 14 months later was called to active duty during the Berlin Crisis.

After 26 years active duty, Kundert is known in Army circles as one of the best food service advisors ever to serve, according to Foss.

"In 20 years, I've never worked with a more knowledgeable person in a particular field," Foss said. "In our job, it's important to have a good rapport with the units we serve, and he has done an excellent job of this."

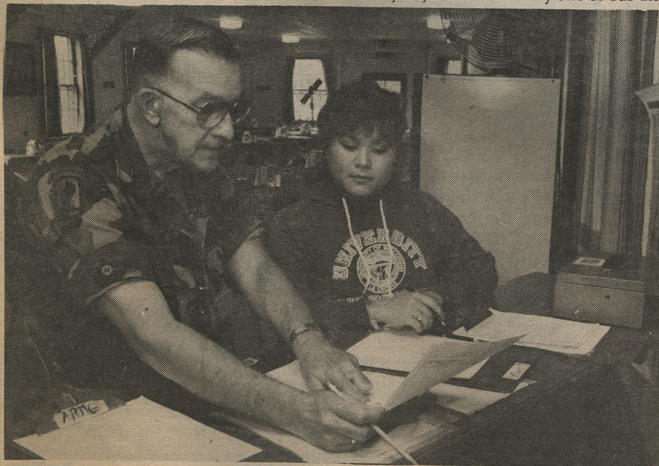
Kundert and his wife of 37 years, Helen, live outside Tacoma, Wash., and have three children: 34-year-old Kathy, 29-year-old Christine, and 25-year-old Kurt.

Scheduled to depart Fort McCoy in October to return to Fort Lewis, Kundert is unsure of the future. He plans to retire in March because of health problems, but seems reluctant to leave military service.

Although uncertain about retirement, he would like to devote more time to his wife and possibly travel and visit relatives.

When asked if he would remain at Fort Lewis until retirement, he speculated on the possibility of returning to Fort McCoy from January to March to once again assist the Food Service Division here.

"I'll do everything I possibly can to ensure that he's back here in January," Foss said. "Working with the Chief has been a real learning experience for me. It has been a great summer."



CWO4 Richard Kundert and Julia McKenzie review the head count sheets for the garrison dining facility. (Photo by Mike Orrico)

opinion

Constitution a nation's vision

FORT MONROE, VA.—The Constitution of the United States is a history of vision, a personal meaning for every American citizen. It is as intimate as the air we breathe. It is our individual declaration of privilege.

As George Washington said, "Interwoven is the love of liberty with every ligament of the heart." It is a trust, and vision is the key. If we fail to grasp that, we fail.

It was a peculiar group that gathered to form the Constitution. Something else was burning in their minds; something not quite of the world they knew stirred in their hearts. They understood some truth they

couldn't yet prove; they reached for a reality that it seemed at times only they recognized.

But they refused to be defeated; they struck out confidently against ridicule and discouragement under an audacious banner of faith: "...one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

And they spelled out that liberty and justice to the people. The vision was meant to materialize—not rest in an ivory tower. It was meant to be a righteousness worked out into practical, everyday life: justice tempered with mercy, peace assured by defense, and equality

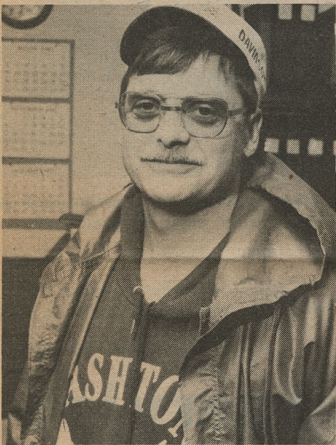
claimed by the sheer right of being common men. The vision was humility, that being men, we share all things. We are one.

But our rights cannot remain without protection. Our prerogatives are not without responsibility. Our immunity did not come without affliction. Patrick Henry, champion of the Constitution's Bill of Rights, cautioned, "If we wish to be free; if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have long been contending...we must fight."

(Training and Doctrine Command Headquarters, TRADOC News Service.)

street talk

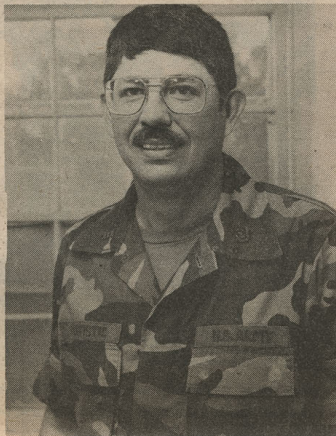
Do you think the Constitution will survive another 200 years?



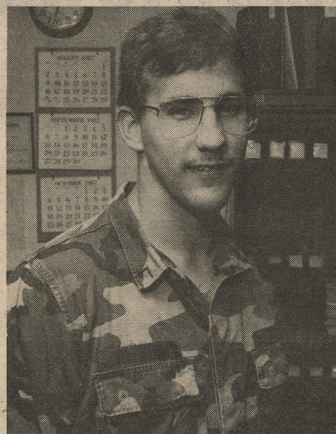
David Ames, ECS—"Most definitely! It will survive because it was well written and there are enough safeguards in the system to make sure that it works."



Sgt. 1st Class Lonnie Guinn, Readiness Group, Fort McCoy—"It'll last 200 years, as long as the country is still here—as long as the military protects it."



CWO2 Art Matistic, ARRTC—"Yes, I think it will survive but, as society changes, it will be modified with amendments as we have amended it in the past."



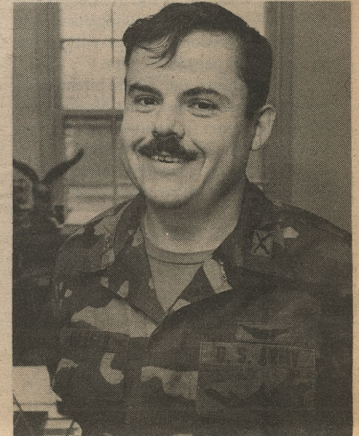
Pvt. 2 Chris Haight, 1/377th Maintenance Co., Fort McCoy—"Sure. The principles are sound and its ideas are clear. It's stretchable—it's able to fit different people and different ways, allowing freedom and equal rights to all."



Jane Schmidt, DOL—"Yes, definitely. Working at Fort McCoy, I've seen the caliber of people that defend the Constitution. There's no doubt in my mind it will survive."



Maj. Mark Mochow, Readiness Group, Fort McCoy—"Yes. It's basically a strong document from the concept and the amendments, because they're hard to get through, and do not radically change the basic fiber of the document."



Maj. Kieth Alleger, ARRTC—"Yes, because of the basic strength and character of the American people. Crises may come and go but America's basic beliefs in the freedoms expounded in the Constitution will always endure."



Staff Sgt. Julie Wilkinson, HQ Co., USAG Fort McCoy—"I certainly hope so because I think the American people need something to insure their freedom that is provided by the document. They need something to believe in."

Triad

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Young writers make big impression



Umbrella in hand, nine-year-old Dee Johnson reads her winning essay to the group assembled for the Constitution Park dedication ceremony. (Photo by Mike Orrico)

By Diantha Maticic
Triad Staff

When I met them I was impressed. I already knew that the winners of the Civilian Welfare Fund "We the People" essay contest could write. What I hadn't expected was that they would be so poised and mature at such a young age.

If 15-year-old Brian Johnson, his nine-year-old sister Dee and 14-year-old Sheri Phillips of Sparta were nervous about the ceremony in their honor, they didn't show it.

The three were presented with \$100 savings bonds Sept. 16 by Garrison Commander Bill Sorenson for writing the best essays in their respective age groups.

The essays, which the winners read during dedication ceremonies at Fort McCoy's new Constitution Park, were written to explain what the words "We the People" meant to them. Selection of the winners was done by a panel of judges composed of Lt. Col. Charles McCarthy, Deputy Garrison Commander; Dea Stratton, Fort McCoy Women's Club president, and Mike Orrico, Public Affairs Clerk.

When the essay contest was publicized, nine-year-old Dee decided to try her hand at writing. "I wanted to enter just for fun," she said, "but that fun turned into something really exciting."

Brian had an entirely different reason for his essay. "I needed some incentive for writing or I wouldn't do as much of it as I should."

Sheri seems not to have entered so much for the writing experience as for the fact that history is an interest of hers—especially that part of history which deals with the Constitution. "People are the same all over," she stated, "it's governments that are different."

Sheri, the daughter of Maj. and Mrs. Stephen Phillips of Sparta, is a ninth grader this year at Sparta Junior High, where she participates in all sports activities. She told me this was her first try at an essay contest. When asked if she was considering a career that involved writing, she firmly declared that her hope is to become a spokesperson about acid rain and that she wants to travel the world making people aware of the problem. Clearly excited about the award presentation, she told me another exciting event in her life was the summer she spent at Science World, having been selected to attend out of a number of applicants.

The oldest of the contest winners, Brian at age 15, is an aspiring actor and writer, who attends West Salem High School. His parents are Mr. and Mrs. Greg Johnson of Coon Valley. Hoping to make the arts his vocation, Brian has appeared in a play at his high school, attended Arts World at the University of Wisconsin—Platteville, plays in the school band and won honorable mention in a LaCrosse Writer's Club poetry contest. When asked about the future, Brian said he hopes to make a career first—then to be an actor and writer.

(Continued on page 4)

October 16, 1987

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Park

(From page 1)

13 colonies, and an inscribed monument made of red granite.

"What we are offering here—the trees, the monument—are merely symbols—of our Constitution," said Sorenson as he wiped the rain off his notes during his opening remarks.

Also during his opening remarks, Sorenson commented that the crowd represented the total Army family—soldiers, government civilian employees, and their families.

Joining Sorenson in the unveiling of the monument were representatives from various groups—Sonya Ellison, Fort McCoy equal employment opportunity officer, represented government civilian employees; Frances Kieltisch, wife of garrison CSM Richard Kieltisch, represented Army families; Col. Rodney Morris, commandant of the Army Reserve Readiness Training Center, represented tenant activities; and Dave Sullivan, chairman of the Monroe County Board of Supervisors, represented local communities.

The keynote speaker for the ceremony was Col. Steve Kelley, commander of Fort McCoy Readiness Group.

In his address, Kelley tied the need of an Army to the Constitution and the

country. "A strong Army secures the blessings of liberty and is a prerequisite to a strong nation," Kelley said.

Kelley added that without a Constitution our sacred rights and freedoms would be ground to dust.

"The Constitution is one of the signs of freedom. In order to have freedom we must have rules for all of us to follow," quoted Dee Johnson as she recited her speech to the crowd.

"In writing the basis of how our government would be run, the people's—all people's—rights and liberties were protected," Phillips told the rain-drenched crowd.

Emphasizing what "We the People" means to him, Brian Johnson said, "Our voices, as small as they may be, can also be echoed by a group to become the voice of the people."

Chaplain, (Col.) Richard Y. Bershon, Fort McCoy's Individual Mobilization Augmentee chaplain, gave the closing prayer.

The ceremony was intended to last an hour, but the rain cut the ceremony's total time in half.

Despite the rain, however, the ceremony was deemed a large success by Sorenson.

Spirit of America alive in hearts, actions of work force

By Lou Ann Mittelstaedt
Triad Staff

Every once in a while an opportunity comes along that's just too good to pass up.

In this issue of the Triad we have the opportunity to show the Fort McCoy community that the spirit of America is indeed alive and well at this installation.

From the coverage of the Constitution Park dedication ceremony and the insight into the youth who participated in the essay contest, to military personnel like CWO4 Richard Kundert and the special section on Japanese-American veterans, we have striven to give even broader meaning to the words, "We the People."

From the military and civilian personnel who reaffirm daily their oath to

defend the Constitution, to the Japanese-American veterans who fought valiantly to defend a country which, at that time, had little faith in them, to the ideals of these youth, we can surmise that the Constitution can endure whatever obstacles the future may bring.

We hope you take the time to read about the spirit of the Army family as it is exemplified by these diverse yet related stories.

Additionally, please feel welcome to honor the boys of Company A, 100th Infantry Battalion at a commemorative tree planting ceremony scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 27 at 2 p.m. at Constitution Park.

(The next issue of the Triad, the Installation Report FY 87 Accomplishments—FY 88 Goals, will be published on Oct. 16. In the Oct. 30 issue we will return to regular news coverage.)

Youth

(From page 3)

A student in the fourth grade at West Salem Middle School, Dee said she had studied the Constitution in school. This was the first time she had entered a writing competition but she indicated that she would like to do more writing from now on. Although I didn't really expect a quick response when I asked what she wants to do when she's out of school, she had one. "I want to work with

horses because I really like them," she replied. "But I also want to write."


Despite the crowd of strangers that filled Constitution Park for the dedication ceremonies that afternoon and the rain that dampened their clothing, these three young people walked to the podium with much composure and read essays that seemed to have come from the heart.

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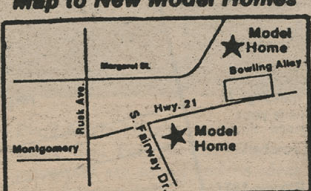


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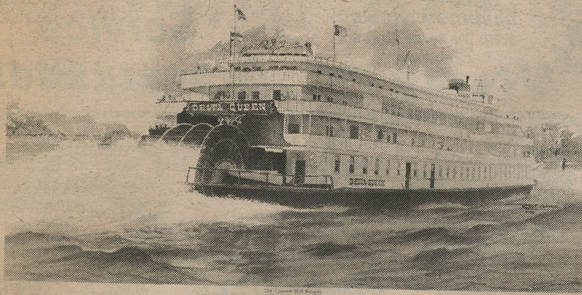
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Warrens gears up for Cranfest

Musical entertainment, contests, cranberry tours and a parade are all part of the 15th Annual Warrens Cranberry Festival scheduled to begin Saturday, Oct. 3, at Warrens, Wis. The festival will run through Sunday, culminating in a parade at 1 p.m. that day.

Saturday's events will include: a cranberry and vegetable contest at 9 a.m.; scarecrow, cranberry recipe and photography contests at 10 a.m.; plant and flower contests at 11 a.m., and a youth arts and crafts contest at 4 p.m. Musical entertainment will be offered at the Warrens School at 2 p.m. and a Gospel Variety Hour will begin at 7 p.m. at the Old Towne Hall. Capping the day's events

will be an 8:30 p.m. dance at the Community Building.

Activities will continue Sunday, Oct. 4, as the Mid Iowa Men of Song perform in the school gym at 10:30 a.m. during a church service officiated by the First Baptist Church. The Cranberry Festival Parade will start at 1 p.m.

Several activities, which will be featured both days of the festival, include an arts and crafts show, antique and flea markets, farmers market, cranberry heritage displays, helicopter rides and a carnival.

More information about the festival may be obtained by calling 608-378-4388.

Post slates Fall Clean-up day

Annual Fall Clean-up day at Fort McCoy has been scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 14.

Clean-up days occur twice a year, during spring and fall, to allow Fort McCoy personnel to enhance their work-

ing area by thoroughly cleaning it.

The entire day is set aside for clean-up, but the amount of time personnel

spend on cleaning is left to the discretion of their supervisor.

activities schedule

Community Recreation

Rumpel Fitness Center: Building 1122; Monday through Friday, 10 a.m.-10 p.m.; Saturday, Sunday and holidays, 11 a.m.-5:30 p.m. The Fitness Center has basketball and racquetball courts, an indoor swimming pool, weight and game rooms with locker rooms with saunas. Athletic equipment, towels and gym shoes are available for sign-out. Locks, award plaques, swimming suits, etc., may be purchased at the Center's retail sales store. Call ext. 2625 for more information.

Recreation Center/Post Library: Building 2000. Recreation Center hours are: Thursday, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Friday-Monday, 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. Library hours are Thursday through Monday 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. Both closed on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and holidays. Movies shown at the Recreation Center on Monday and Thursday nights at 7 p.m. If Monday is a holiday, movies will be shown Sunday at 7 p.m. For more information call the Recreation Center at ext. 3213.

Multicraft Shop: Building 751. Open Thursday through Monday 11 a.m.-6 p.m., closed Tuesday, Wednesday and holidays. Call ext. 2625/4353 for more information.

Woodcraft Shop: Building 1133, open Tuesday from 5-9 p.m. Reservations must be made to use the facility at other times. For more information contact Elise Fare at ext. 3360 or Steve Pederson at ext. 2610.

Autocraft Shop: Building 1764. Open Monday, Thursday and Friday, 1:30-8:30 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 9:30 a.m.-4:30

p.m.; closed Tuesday, Wednesday and holidays.

Rental Center: Building 1121. Monday through Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday, Sunday and holidays, 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Community Operations

Community Club, building 101: Hours of operation: Sunday through Thursday, 4-11:30 p.m.; Friday and Saturday 4 p.m.-midnight. Lunch served 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Snack bar open daily 5-10 p.m. Entertainment: Sunday through Thursday 7:30-11:30 p.m., Friday and Saturday 8 p.m.-midnight.

Officers Club, building 905, has closed for the season.

Senior NCO Lounge, building 1849: Open Monday through Friday 4-11 p.m. Closed Saturday, Sunday, and holidays.

Chapel

Ecumenical Bible Study, prayer and fellowship group meeting, Wednesday, 6:30 a.m., Chapel Center. All are welcome.

Jewish

9 a.m. Saturday, Congregation Sons of Abraham, La. Crosse.

Protestant

10 a.m. Sunday, Chapel #1 (building 2672)

2 p.m. Sunday, gospel fellowship, Chapel #1

Catholic

8 a.m. Sunday, Chapel #1

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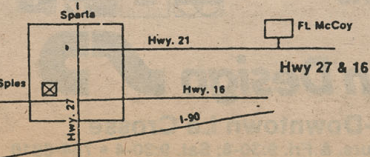
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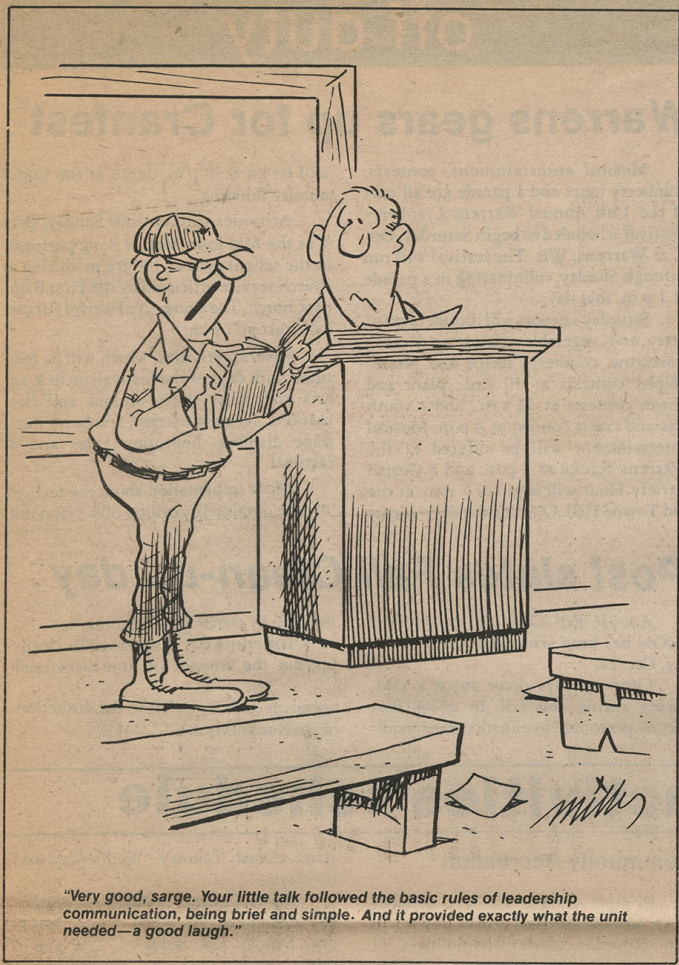
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"I'm not saber rattling! I'm just seeing how much change I have in my pocket."

special

Coming 'home'

Nisei soldiers return to visit Fort McCoy

By John Tsukano
Triad Contributor

It's almost too sad and painful to recount the story of the 100th Infantry Battalion in full.

But sad and painful as it is, the story should never be allowed to die. It should be told as often as possible to insure that what happened to the gallant Japanese American men who comprised the 100th Infantry Battalion will never again be allowed to happen.

But luckily, there is another side to the story of the 100th.

Paradoxical as this may seem, some of what the men experienced in America, especially at Fort (then Camp) McCoy and the surrounding small towns in Wisconsin during their training period, should gladden the hearts and minds of all Americans.

In the heartland of America, here in Wisconsin in the small towns of Tomah, Sparta and La Crosse, the ideals of America, which the men of the 100th read about in the public schools of Hawaii, were reconfirmed and strengthened. The fair treatment these Japanese Americans received here was a pleasant and unexpected treat for the men of the 100th. They were eternally grateful.

Later, when the 100th was transferred to Camp Shelby, Miss., some of the strong-minded wives of the officers and enlisted men traveled thousands of miles from Hawaii and set up housekeeping in Hattiesburg, Miss., to be close to their husbands.

When the sad day of departure for the battlefield came near for the 100th, husbands and wives seriously discussed many important issues.

One of the most important issues was where the wives would relocate and settle down until the day their husbands returned after the war. Would they return to Hawaii, stay in Mississippi, go to New York or Chicago?

Finally, after a great deal of discussion, the wives and husbands unanimously agreed that the best place for the wives for the duration of the war would be in Wisconsin because of the friendly and fair treatment the men had received while training at Camp McCoy.

The story of the extraordinary friendships which developed between these wives and the people of Wisconsin is equally heart-warming and uplifting.

To this day, friendships have endured and only grown more dear for all those involved in this high drama, this experiment in democracy.

Now, 45 years later, the men of the 100th and their wives are returning to Camp McCoy to recapture and relive the dreams and aspirations of their youth. To them, it is indeed like returning "home."

John Tsukano, a 62-year-old Japanese-American, was born on the Island of Maui, Hawaii.

At age 18, following graduation from high school, he volunteered for service in World War II. Tsukano saw action in Italy and France with the 100th Battalion/442nd Infantry Regiment and was wounded in France. Two of his brothers also served with the 442nd during that war.

When World War II ended, Tsukano traveled in the United States and Europe as a reporter for the Honolulu Star-Bulletin. Since 1948, he has written articles for that publication about the community of Bruyeres, France, which was liberated by the 100th Infantry Battalion. He also authored the book "Bridge of Love", the story of the Nisei fighting men in America.

Tsukano was instrumental in providing information and photographs to make this special issue a reality.

Fukuda's heroism reflects 100th's war record

Mitsuyoshi Fukuda was a platoon leader when Company A of the 100th Infantry Battalion trained at Fort (then Camp) McCoy from June 1942 to January 1943. He will be among the 40 veterans and their wives who will visit the installation this weekend.

In a letter to the Fort McCoy Public Affairs Office, Fukuda asked assistance in arranging a reunion visit here in advance of the group's visit to the opening of the Smithsonian Institute's exhibit on the relocation of the Japanese from the West Coast during World War II. "The group is very anxious to revisit Camp McCoy and its neighboring towns," says Fukuda in that letter.

"The formation of the 100th Infantry Battalion in June 1942 was the War Department's solution to their dilemma of what to do with the Japanese American servicemen who were already in the armed forces when the war broke out with Japan, Fukuda said. The question at that time was the loyalty of the Japanese Americans if faced in combat with the Japanese army. The War Department decided to form a separate unit made up of Japanese Americans, send them for training in the interior and see what happened, he explains. The 100th Infantry Battalion was the first unit to train at Camp McCoy's new facilities which were constructed in 1942.

"The six months of training at Camp McCoy were rough, but our social life in Wisconsin was a most pleasant and welcome surprise to all the men of the

100th," Fukuda wrote. "Therefore, there is a feeling of nostalgia, almost homesickness for Camp McCoy and its neighboring towns shared by all men of the 100th."

No mention of the unit's fame, or in particular, Fukuda's fame, is made in the letter. But rather, there is a sense of gratitude for the post and the people who treated these soldiers so well during the time they spent here.

The story of Fukuda, however, is one for the record books. The following story, included in the book "Bridges of Love" by John Tsukano, was written Oct. 29, 1945, by Honolulu Star-Bulletin War Correspondent Lyn Crost. The dateline is Naples, Italy.

"Maj. Mitsuyoshi Fukuda, 28, executive officer of the 442nd Infantry Combat Team, is scheduled to leave by plane from Naples today for America.

"He is the last original member of the 100th Battalion to leave European soil.

"Maj. Fukuda's flight by Army transport command plane has been approved by officials as a special recognition of the 100th Battalion's war record and is a tribute to the major.

"When Maj. Fukuda was appointed commanding officer of the 100th, known as the Purple Heart Battalion, he became the first American of Japanese ancestry to command an infantry battalion in the history of the United States Army.

"Precedent was broken again when he was promoted to his present position

as executive officer of the 442nd. He is the only Nisei combat officer in the United States Army to hold field rank.

"Prior to his departure, Maj. Fukuda had led the 100th Battalion in its last parade when the unit received its Presidential Unit Citation.

"The major has accumulated 126 points toward his discharge since he left his position as a teacher at Kona High School on the Big Island three days after the Pearl Harbor attack to join the Army as a Reserve officer.

"He wears five battle stars on his European theater ribbon and one for Pearl Harbor. He also wears the Silver Star and the Presidential Unit citation with two stars.

"Starting as platoon commander, Maj. Fukuda came up the hard way through company commander to battalion executive, to regimental executive of the 442nd, the second highest position in the regiment.

"He led Company E rifle platoon in the breakout after the Salerno landings and in the crossings of the Volturno and Rapido rivers. He was promoted to captain and given command of Company A in December 1943.

"He participated in the battles of Cassino, Anzio and every important action up the Italian peninsula to Leghorn.

"He was then given leave in the United States and returned to join his outfit in the French Maritime Alps at which time he was made executive of the 100th.



Maj. Mitsuyoshi Fukuda in a 1945 photo.

"When the 442nd returned to Italy for the final campaign, he led a 'Fukuda task force' on a two-day mission through enemy territory and secured the strategic town of Aulla.

"His Silver Star was awarded for leading his company through an enemy mine field during the first Italian campaign."

"Welcome and Aloha 100th Bn."

—the Fort McCoy Community

McCoy experience highlights 100th Battalion's heritage

(The following is condensed and reprinted by permission from the book "Bridge of Love," written by John Tsukano. Mr. Tsukano is among the veterans who will hold a reunion visit at Fort McCoy this weekend. The following article outlines the history of the 100th Battalion, including how the battalion became associated and grew to love what was then Camp McCoy. It is with great pride that the Triad presents this special issue for its readership as well as the members of the 100th Infantry Battalion, Company A.)

On Dec. 7, 1941, several thousands of Hawaii's youth, drafted under the National Selective Service Act of 1940, were already serving in the 298th and 299th Infantry Regiments of the Hawaii National Guard. Out of the several thousands drafted, over 50 percent were Americans of Japanese ancestry (Nisei); therefore, a large part of the Hawaii National Guard was composed of Americans of Japanese ancestry.

At that time, nobody in Hawaii questioned the loyalty of the large number of Japanese Americans in the National Guard. There was no time for that. The enemy could be appearing at any moment. Time was precious. Defenses had to be set up. Every soldier was desperately needed. It was do-or-die time.

At that crucial moment, in one of the greatest crisis America ever faced, the men of 298th and 299th were at the vanguard of the United States Army.

History has recorded it, and the fact remains and will remain forever that men of many different races, born and raised in the Territory of Hawaii, were on the beaches waiting to take on the enemy on Dec. 7, 1941. The fact that the enemy did not invade does not lessen the heroism of the men who waited to confront and stop the enemy on the beaches that fateful day. The men of the 298th and 299th were prepared to lay down their lives for the defense of their homeland.

Days and finally weeks ticked off until the immediate danger of invasion was over. Hawaii's people and the military, cooperating and working together for the common good, kept the faith while reinforcements kept pouring in to make Hawaii safe and invasion-proof. Hawaii's people began to breathe more easily again.

But strange and inexplicable things began to happen after the feeling of safety had returned to the island.

In the wake of Pearl Harbor, no chances could be taken with the huge Japanese population in Hawaii. Too much—the very security of the United States of America—was at stake. The "Japanese problem" in Hawaii was a thorn in the side. To some, solving the problem meant putting them all in concentration camps.

On Feb. 1, 1942, the War Department proposed that all soldiers of Japanese ancestry be released from active duty, discharged or transferred. The War Department was informed that the Nisei in the Territorial Guard had already been discharged. But left intact were over 1,400 Japanese Americans in the 298th and 299th Infantry Regiments of the Hawaii National Guard, plus several hundred others serving in the engineer battalions and other service units.

On Feb. 9, 1942, the War Department ordered the suspension of all ethnic Japanese civilians employed by the Army. Orders from Washington were thwarted with the tactful explanation that "the Japanese were an irreplaceable labor force in Hawaii." The War Department rescinded its order.

The Army seriously considered and wanted all Japanese aliens and Americans of Japanese ancestry to be evacuated to the mainland "where they could do no harm." There was also serious talk of rounding them up and moving them to the island of Molokai.

The blows against the Japanese Americans continued, but the cruelest blow was yet to come.

It came with the announcement by the U.S. government in March of 1942 that Japanese Americans would no longer be eligible for the draft. They were classified as enemy aliens.

In the beginning of May 1942, the people of Honolulu noticed unusual military activities and aircraft movements. Something big was happening or about to happen, they surmised. They were right. The battle of Midway was on.

Japanese Americans in the 298th and 299th were recalled to Schofield Barracks; their weapons were taken away from them and they were separated from their non-Japanese buddies and formed into an all Nisei Hawaii Provincial Battalion in record time. The Nisei soldiers suspected the worst. "What's happening here?" they wanted to know.

At a still critical time when every man was desperately needed to defend the Hawaiian Islands, when the Army was racing against time to bring in as many reinforcements as possible, when Midway was under attack and its outcome still uncertain and unknown, the Nisei soldiers were abruptly told that they were being sent overseas to an unknown destination.

They boarded the troopship Maui. Late that night the Maui left Honolulu harbor. After a week-long, uneventful, zigzag journey, the Maui passed under San Francisco's awesome Golden Gate Bridge and docked in Oakland.

To the men, most of whom had never left the islands before, passing under the Golden Gate Bridge and looking up at the magnificent structure, was one of the greatest thrills of their young lives. In Oakland, the battalion officers learned that the name of the unit would hereafter be the "100th Infantry Battalion (Separate)."

The men were put on three waiting troop trains. Each took a different route to the destination. Five days later one of the trains stopped at a siding in Wisconsin, as if playing out a macabre scene. Across the track stood what looked like an internment camp. There were watch towers, iron fences topped with barbed wire surrounding the camp.

One of the men studied the camp very carefully looking out from the window of the train. He knew that his parents were interned in a camp in Wisconsin. He felt apprehensive and wondered whether the Army brought them here to intern the whole battalion. For all the weird things which had already happened, this was a distinct possibility. He sweated it out for half an hour. The train started to move again and as it put more and more distance away from the camp, smiles returned to the worried men of the 100th. The soldier who thought of his parents later learned they were indeed in the very camp he was looking at through the train's window.

All three trains reached their destination—Camp McCoy, Wis.—safely. A total of 1,432 soldiers disembarked. They were a strange looking lot, to put it mildly, in the middle of white America. They were way below the Army average in height and weight. They were much older than the normal infantry unit. They were cheerful looking and didn't seem to carry the weight of the world on their shoulders. They were friendly, outgoing and they smiled a lot and were eager to please.

If true that they would be sent to Europe to fight the Germans, what chance would these "pint-sized Japs" have against the mighty German army? A betting man who didn't know them certainly would not have bet on them. He probably would have felt pity for them.

And yet, pathetically, it had all come down to this: Upon the shoulders of these young men rested the fate of the entire Japanese population in the United States for generations to come. It was as stark and simple as



A snapshot to remember the "Camp McCoy" taken by a 100th Infantry Battalion soldier in 1942.



Members of the 100th during training in the winter of 1943. For many, this was their first experience with snow.

that. The men of the 100th hoped to turn things around for their people. Only time would tell whether they would succeed or not. The Army was going to use the men of the 100th Infantry Battalion as guinea pigs. They would be watched under a microscope. They would be tested, like no other outfit would be tested. The Army even kept individual dossiers on each and every one of them.

There was one bright spot. Leading the battalion were two Caucasian officers who wholeheartedly and passionately believed in the men and their mission. The officers were Lt. Col. Farrant Turner and Maj. James Lovell, men of impeccable character and credentials. They were Kamaainas (old timers in Hawaii) who could be counted on. They knew the men. They trusted and had faith in them. The men in turn felt the same toward the two officers.

One of the War Department directives which Lt. Col. Turner knew about but kept secret from the men was that no Japanese American would be allowed to command a company. Turner kept it a secret because he had already made up his mind that he would disobey this order when the proper moment came. To Turner's credit, he did just that when the moment came for a Japanese American to take over the command of a company and the Army did not make an issue about it. The "old man" was that kind of a man. He fought for his men, at the risk of being court martialed, when he believed a wrong should be corrected.

Thus began, inauspiciously, the incredible and unbelievable odyssey of the 100th Infantry Battalion.

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Special



taken by a 100th

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In appreciation for the fine treatment accorded the men in the 100th Infantry Battalion, the Japanese community in Honolulu gave a big luau for all servicemen from Wisconsin in 1942.

The 1,432 men of the 100th were also only too aware of the unflattering fact that the only reason they were still in the Army was because they had been drafted before Pearl Harbor, and the federal law which had drafted them said that there would be no discrimination. They knew also that the Army really didn't want them, didn't really trust them and really didn't know what to do with them.

If there was ever an orphan battalion, the 100th Infantry Battalion was it. The designation (separate) spoke volumes.

Webster's definition of separate: to set or keep apart; disconnect; sever; to set aside for a special purpose.

The stark reality that the future integrity of the entire Japanese population in the United States now rested squarely upon their shoulders was ever in their minds. History had appointed these Nisei to carry the load and the torch to prove the patriotism of their people. The men of the 100th rose to the occasion.

Despite criticism from many Americans, the men of the 100th knew that they were loyal Americans—that America could count on them for the ultimate test of patriotism—on the battlefield where lives are at stake. The men of the 100th also knew without a shadow of a doubt that their parents would never do anything to harm the United States. To do so would be like murdering their own sons. But they also knew that no amount of verbal protestations were going to do any good. Words were meaningless. Action was everything.

There is an old Oriental proverb which goes something like this: "A crisis is also an opportunity."

The men of the 100th seized it and claimed it as their own.

The 1,432 men of the 100th saw their travail as a unique opportunity. They knew instinctively what must be done. They must spill their own blood on the battlefield, like other Americans were doing. Nothing less would do. Nothing was too big or too small or too demeaning. Without question, every man in the 100th knew he was on a sacred mission. He could not, would not let his loved ones down. He could not, would not let the people down—the people who boldly spoke up for them and had faith in them.

It was their "enemy" alien parents who foresaw it would come to this, even before Pearl Harbor. The men of the 100th now fully realized what their parents meant when they had admonished them: "Do your duty. America is your country. Go and do your best. Do not bring Shame (haji) to the family."

The men knew that before the United States Army would send them to the front, they would have to prove themselves in training. They had to earn the right to fight! Nothing ever came easy for the men of the 100th. With this in mind, they prepared themselves for combat with a vengeance and zeal seldom seen in an Army camp. Lt. Col. Turner and Maj. Lovell drove them to their absolute limit. They became so outstanding and scored such high marks in training that they attracted the attention of the top Army brass in Washington, D.C.

The 100th would become the most inspected, looked over, the most thoroughly trained unit in the Army. Each man became an expert in several different weapons so that the unit could continue to function in any situation. High Army and civilian officials from all

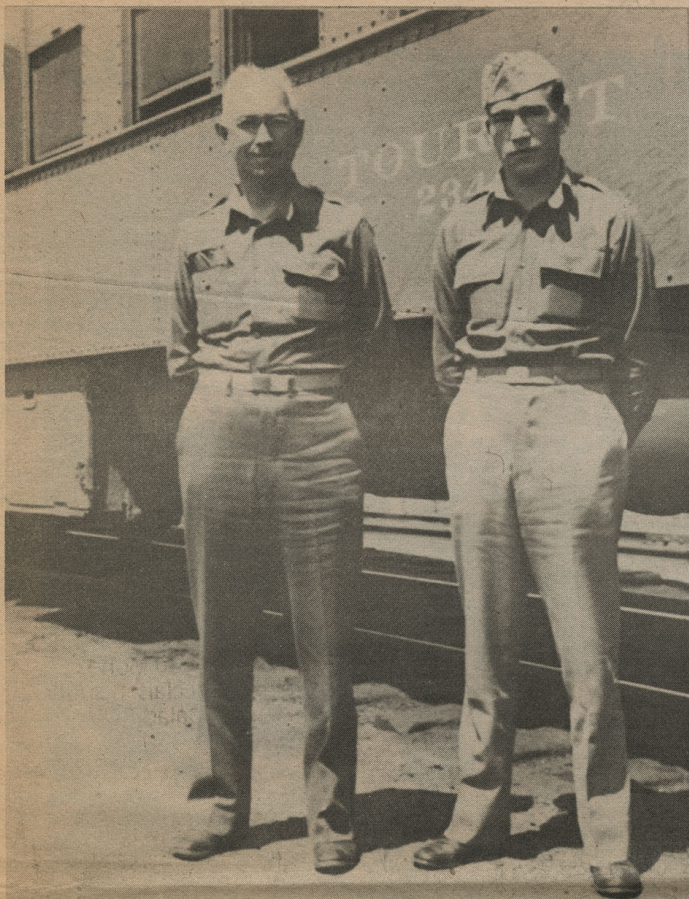
over the country came to Camp McCoy to see for themselves and confirm what they had been hearing about this "crack" battalion. Even in training, the men of the 100th Infantry Battalion became a legend.

Their behavior in and out of Camp McCoy was exemplary. Residents of nearby Sparta and La Crosse loved them. Many families invited the men to their homes for dinners. Lifelong friendships were established. The men wrote home about the splendid hospitality and about the genuine friendliness of the people of these Wisconsin towns. The Japanese community in Hawaii reciprocated by throwing a big luau at the University of Hawaii campus, inviting servicemen from Wisconsin stationed in Oahu. The Varsity Victory Volunteer men provided much of the manpower and the University of Hawaii coeds and the young women in the community acted as hostesses and waitresses. The men from Wisconsin had a great time and were greatly impressed. The Emergency Service Committee coordinated the luau.

Japanese Americans and their alien parents looked up to the men of the 100th Infantry Battalion, admired them, were grateful to them. The 100th became a symbol of hope. The men of the 100th lifted the morale of their people like nothing else could.

(The 100th Infantry Battalion went out of its way to prove loyalty to the United States. The battalion first gained fame with the American Fifth Army in the Italian Campaign. Over 1,400 Purple Heart medals were awarded to members of the battalion. Three Legion of Merit medals, nine Distinguished Service Crosses, 44 Silver Star medals and a Congressional Medal of Honor were awarded to 100th Infantry personnel for brilliant service to their country during World War II.)

special



Men of faith

Lt. Col. Farrant Turner (left), commanding officer for the 100th, and Maj. James Lovell, executive officer for the battalion, had faith and confidence in the Japanese American men they commanded. This photograph was taken in June of 1942 enroute to "Camp" McCoy.

Lineage and Honors

100th BATTALION, 442d INFANTRY

Constituted 4 June 1942 in the Army of the United States as the 100th Infantry Battalion (Separate)

Activated 12 June 1942 at Oakland, California, with personnel of Japanese ancestry from the Hawaiian Provisional Infantry Battalion

Reorganized and redesignated 25 November 1943 as the 100th Infantry Battalion, (Separate)

Reorganized and redesignated 10 August 1944 as the 100th Battalion, 442d Infantry

Inactivated 15 August 1946 at Honolulu, Hawaii

(442d Infantry allotted 27 March 1947 to the Organized Reserves)

Activated 31 July 1947 at Fort DeRussy, Hawaii

(Organized Reserves redesignated 25 March 1948 as the Organized Reserve Corps; redesignated 9 July 1952 as the Army Reserve)

Reorganized and redesignated 29 May 1959 as the 100th Battle Group, 442d Infantry

Reorganized and redesignated 1 May 1964 as the 100th Battalion, 442d Infantry

Ordered into active military service 13 May 1968 at Fort DeRussy, Hawaii; released from active military service 12 December 1969 and reverted to reserve status

HOME AREA: United States Army Western Command

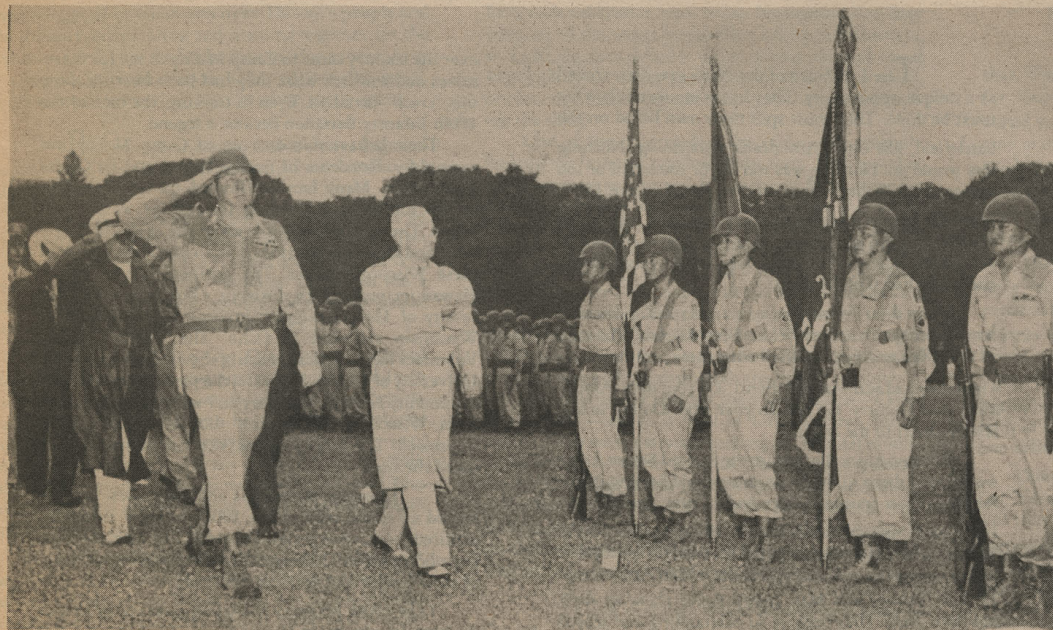
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- Presidential Unit Citation (Army), Streamer embroidered BELVEDERE
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- Presidential Unit Citation (Army), Streamer embroidered GOTHIC LINE



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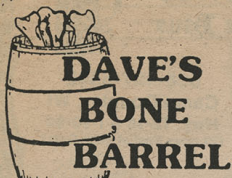
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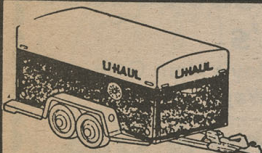
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Miscellaneous

COMMERCIAL BUILDING: w/apartment and large garage. Can be used for store offices, light manufacturing. Existing Foxy Shopper building, appointment only ask for Tom 608-269-5054 RTFN

LOTS FOR SALE: Contact Mastercraft Homes, Sparta, WI 269-7200 or 269-7482. TFN

WAREHOUSE STORAGE: Sizes 5'x5' and up. By the week, month or year. Small items or large. Homeowners or businesses. Located in Sparta's Industrial Park. PH: 269-5054. RTFN

VALUABLES: Protect them, insurance policies, Jewelry, abstracts, contracts, SAFETY AVAILABLE NOW Reserve your safety deposit box, only \$1.25 per month. Stop in for your reservation at Western Federal Savings & Loan, Sparta, Tomah and Mauston. RTFN

Do you have information about any crime committed in Monroe County? You will remain anonymous! Rewards up to \$1000. Call Now! Monroe County Crime Stoppers. 269-7867 or 372-7867. TFN

Be a carrier for the Foxy one day a week. No collecting, must be 12 years of age. Call 269-5054, 637-7530, or 372-3832. TFN

FOR SALE: Utility trailer. Sturdy frame, 12 in. wheels, heavy duty hitch, \$350. 269-6836 after 7:00 p.m. TFN

Fort McCoy Triad Asian American Studies Center
September 25, 1987

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GOVERNMENT JOBS: \$16,040-\$59,230/yr. Now Hiring. Call 805-687-6000 Ext. R-2120 for current federal list. 8

BOLENS 1700: Lawn tractor. 16 hp, hydrostat. Includes 42" mower deck, 42" snowblower, cab, garden tiller, wheel weights and tire chains. Call 372-3608 or 372-4263 after 5:00 p.m. 39

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GOING OUT OF BUSINESS SALE: Link Coulee Tack & Saddlery, Route 1, (Leon) Sparta, 608-269-4480. 20%-50% off everything. 43

For Rent

USE THE FOXXY SHOPPER CLASSIFIEDS: To sell your odd 'n ends. 15 words are just \$4.00/week. Pay for two weeks get the third week FREE! Mail payment with ad to Foxy Shopper, P.O. Box 526, Sparta, WI 54656. RTFN

DO YOU HAVE ODDS 'N ENDS TO SELL? Take out a classified in the Foxy Shopper. It costs just \$4.00 for 15 words. Send ad with payment to: Foxy Shopper We reach over 31,000 home every week. RTFN

Do you have information about any crime committed in Monroe County? You will remain anonymous! Rewards up to \$1000. Call Now! Monroe County Crime Stoppers. 269-7867 or 372-7867 TFN

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FARM HOUSE FOR RENT: 3 bedrooms, oil heat, \$250 per month. \$125 deposit. 5 miles from Cashton, 22 miles from LaCrosse. Call 654-5268 after 4 p.m. 40

3 BEDROOM HOUSE FOR RENT: In Seneca; Security Deposit, \$250 per month. Available immediately. 565-7466. 39

FOR RENT: 2 BR Apartment Downtown Tomah. \$250/month. 372-6049. 39

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FOR RENT: 4 room upstairs apartment. Range & refrigerator furnished. Address 216 1/2 Pine St. Sparta. Phone 788-0869 evenings & weekends. 39

FOR RENT: Four room apartment, remodeled, range & refrigerator furnished. Address 211 1/2 So. Water St., Sparta. Phone 788-0869 evenings or weekends. 39

FOR RENT: 12x60 two bedroom trailer on Hwy. 35, North of DeSoto. 648-3329. 39

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FOR SALE: 12x50 2 bdrm. mobil home. New gas furnace, must be moved. 372-2462. 42

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FOR SALE: 1978 Liberty 14x70, 3 br. mobile home. Offered for sale by Community State Bank, Norwalk. This home may be seen by Steenberg Homes, Sparta. Contact Steenberg Homes for details. Phone 269-6941. TFN

FOR SALE: 1961 2 bdrm. Peacemaker. 10x55 Mobil home with 4x10 Tip Out. Call after 4 p.m. 489-2690. 40

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FOR SALE: Commercial lot, approx. 1/2 acre. Black River Falls. Located on corner lot of busy highway, \$12,000. Farm Urban Realty. 715-284-2193. 39

FOR SALE: 1975 Holly Park Mobil home. 3 bdrm., step-up living rm., built in china hutch. Located Niedfeldts #40. Immediate occupancy. Call after 6:00-any time on weekends. 269-4237. 40

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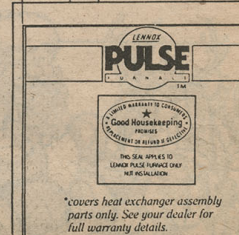
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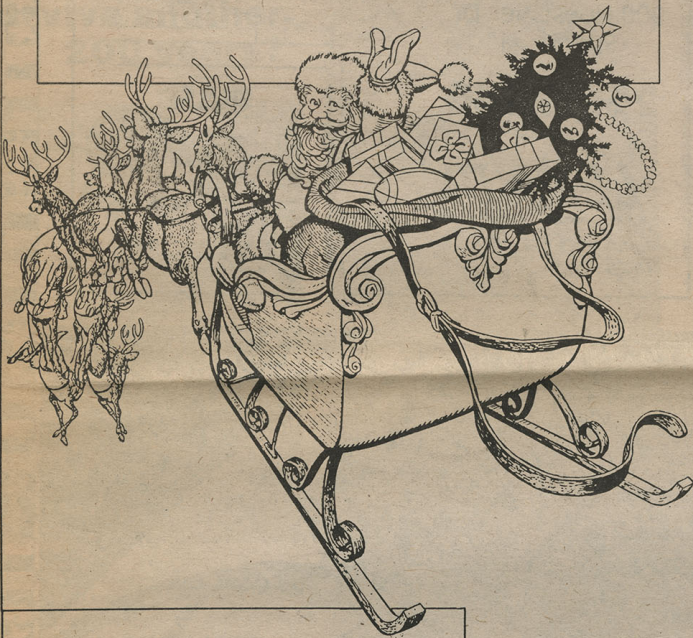
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