

Merry Christmas

from Post 90

December 2021 Edited by Amy Ostler



Pearl Harbor Commemorate Program

Tonaquint Cemetery, December 7th, 2021 at 10:48 AM

Arrive by 10:00am - all 7 flags need to be a half mass

Assemble/ Formation by 10:30 AM
7 flags behind monument with 3-man team to Raise flags -
Members of Marine Corps League, American Legion, VFW and
any other VSO's

Full details on page 16

Christmas Party Time

Wednesday, December 22nd

Meeting and dinner @ 6:00 pm
(245 N 200 W) Ham will be provided by the American Legion

IDEAS when RSVP let me know what you are bringing

A - G: Vegetables (potatoes/gravy, cheesy potatoes, yams, corn, Carrots, beans)

H - M: Deserts

N - S: Salads (fruit, jello, cranberry)

T - Z: bread, rolls, butter

RSVP by December 11th, by phone or email.

Marti 435-668-5770

martibigbie@gmail.com

Bring a food item for the donation box for Switch Point (Cans or boxed items)

See full details on page 15

All food must be there 5:45 PM Santa Clause will be attending so come in your favorite holiday dress.
There are 90 seats available for the Christmas Party so when RSVP need to know number of Adults and Children



Commander's Column

Marti Bigbie

For the members who have not renewed your 2022 American Legion membership there is still time until 12-31-2021 as the 2021 membership expires. Your membership can be reinstated after 1-1-22 for the 2022 membership year. IF you are in need of help with membership please Give me a call. If you have moved or NOT planning on renewing also please let me know so that National can be notified so renewal notices will not continue to come to you.

From the responses of the survey that was sent to the membership concerning the future of the monthly dinner meetings it was voted on by your Executive Board that for the rest of the 2022 membership year The monthly meetings will be December (Christmas), February and May (Installation of Officers and Awards). For the 2023 membership year (7-1- 22 to 6-30-23) the meetings will be September (welcome members back), December (Christmas) and May (Installation of Officers and Awards). These changes will be made to the Constitution and By-Laws. Copies will be available upon request when completed.

For the 2022-2023 Election of Officers ballot will be included in the January issue of our newsletter. If you are interested in running for office please let the Nomination committee know of your desire to put your name forward. Must be able to be in the area 12 months of the year and have a working computer - as all news/event notices will be electronic.

BUDDY CHECK is ongoing. Be sure to check in with members and any Veteran/family in your area to see if you can give assistance or help them by visiting or telephone - just to check on their Welfare. Also, since your time is important to the American Legion we need you to report monthly the number of individuals contacted, time and money spent to Marti as these numbers are important when the National Commander goes before Congress.

FOR DECEMBER we have a couple events that are open to the members and families and the public. Starting with December 7th. The Pearl Harbor Commemorate will be held at Tonaquint Cemetery at 10:48am. It is silent except for the Chaplain and last about 12 minutes. All VSO's have indicated that they will be joining the American Legion this year.

On December 18th Wreaths Across of America - looking for volunteers to go to the local cemetery to help pass out the wreaths for the Veterans in the Cemetery (identified by little red flags).

The Christmas packages that the Auxiliary has put together (all 400 of them) will be delivered December 17-20 to Southern Utah Veterans Home, Assisted living homes, Veterans of WWII, Korea, Vietnam and Auxiliary members. Special thanks you's to the Ritual Team for their continuous support for our departed Veterans at their Military Funerals.

Area 4 Commander's Column

Marti Bigbie

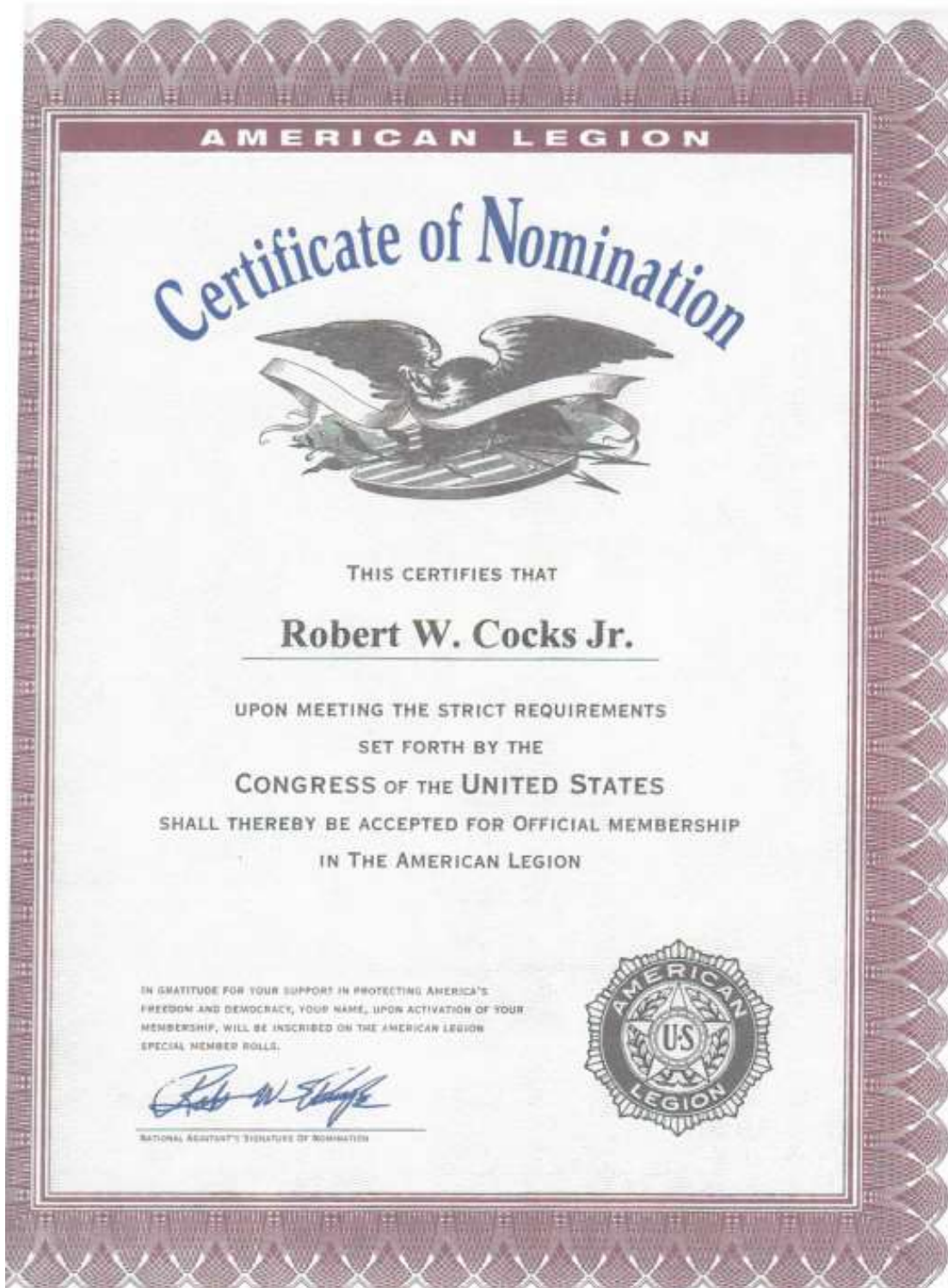
We still are looking for the renewals of the membership of members for the 2022 membership year prior to 12-31-2021. If you know of any deceased member, not joining or moved Please let me know so that information can be sent to Department and National to prevent renewal notices from being mailed to the members.

Thanks to all Adjutants and Commanders in District 6 and District 7 for the help in making Area 4 shine.



Bombing Squadron 11
US Naval Air Forces
United States Pacific Fleet

Hurriedly cast in his first role as landing signal officer, Lt. Robert W.J. Cocks, Morenci Arizona, veteran Navy dive bomber pilot, successfully guided 27 aircraft to safe landings on a battered advanced airstrip while invasion artillery thundered round him and enemy bombers roared overhead. The date was October 25th. The time, early evening. The place, Tacloban Airfield, seized from the Nipponese only that morning. The occasion, the first day of the long-awaited invasion of the Philippines. FULL STORY BELOW:



NATIONAL FLIGHT LOG ENTRY

[Previous](#) | [Next](#) | [Browse](#)



CDR ROBERT W J COCKS, USN/USNR FLIGHT LOG ID: 4077

Service Date In:	05/20/1942
Service Date Out:	04/29/1981
Date of Birth:	04/29/1921
Date of Death:	05/04/2017
Aviation Designation:	Naval Aviator
State/College:	Northern Arizona U / U Southern California
City, State:	Los Angeles, CA

Highest Personal Decoration or Award

Legion of Merit (w/Combat V)

Theaters/Campaigns

Pacific Theater - Assigned with Air Group 11 (VB-11) on both Guadalcanal and the USS Hornet (CV-12) for a total of 30 months.

38 combat missions: Hong Kong Harbor, Formosa (Taiwan), Luzon, Okinawa, French Indo China, China Sea, Bataan Peninsula, Yap Island, Pescadores Islands, Manila Bay, Agarrí, Munda Airfield, Shipping off Kahili, (New Guinea), Samar and the Battle of Leyte Gulf (Second battle of the Philippine Sea).

Aircraft

TBM
F6F
SBD
SBCZ (The "Beast")

Ship/Units/Deployments

VB-11

Guadalcanal

USS *Hornet* (CV-12)

Associations/Service Organizations

Masonic Temple

Military Officers Association

American Legion

Veterans of Foreign Wars

American Judicature Society

Retired Federal Employees Association

Significant Achievements

330 flight hours, 38 combat missions, he was on beach and witnessed Gen McArthur come ashore at Leyte Gulf. Ancient Order of the Deep (Trusty Shellback), Economics of National Security Certificate, Beach Intelligence Certificate, Combat Staff Techniques/Operational Planning Certificate. PhD in Public Administration from USC. Division Chief, Los Angeles County Probation Dept. Deputy Chief United States Federal Probation Dept. Helped create a non-profit organization- Industry Corrections Interface, that assists parolees getting back into the workforce and re-entering society.

Commander, US Nav Res, Deputy Chief US Probation.

Air Medal (w/Gold Star) in lieu of a second medal, Presidential Unit Citation.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

Additional Photos



United States Pacific Fleet

COMMANDER SECOND CARRIER TASK FORCE.

PACIFIC FLEET



In the name of the President of the United States, the Commander Second Carrier Task Force, United States Pacific Fleet, presents the LEGION OF MERIT to

LIEUTENANT ROBERT WILLIAM JOHN COCKS
UNITED STATES NAVAL RESERVE

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION

"For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service at an advanced field during amphibious assault operations. After a long and hazardous mission, involving a major fleet engagement, he landed on the beach and, at the request of Army authorities, assumed the direction of aircraft landing operations on a partially serviceable strip. He was instrumental in improvising an emergency lighting system and in the face of intermittent air attack, personally directed the landing by night of some 25 aircraft without a single casualty. He had no previous experience as landing signal officer. This exemplary action prevented destruction of many aircraft and injury to personnel involved, and further had the effect of keeping the field clear for full use the next day for air support missions, which assisted materially in preventing general destruction of the area by Japanese air attack. His skill, courage, and untiring perseverance were a source of inspiration to all hands. At all times his conduct was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."



J. S. McCAIN
Vice Admiral, U. S. Navy

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS to

LIEUTENANT ROBERT WILLIAM JOHN COCKS
UNITED STATES NAVAL RESERVE

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For heroism and extraordinary achievement in aerial flight as Pilot of a Dive Bomber in Bombing Squadron ELEVEN, attached to the U.S.S. HORNET, in action against enemy Japanese forces during the Battle off Samar on October 25, 1944. Participating in a strike against enemy Fleet units, Lieutenant Cocks pressed home an attack in the face of intense and accurate enemy antiaircraft fire and aided his flight in scoring damaging hits on a heavy and light hostile cruiser. His airmanship and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

For the President,

James Forrestal

Secretary of the Navy



BOMBING SQUADRON ELEVEN
U. S. Naval Air Forces
United States Pacific Fleet

(PUBLICITY RELEASE--LT. COCKS)

Hurriedly cast in his first role as landing signal officer, Lt. Robert W. J. Cocks, Morenci, Arizona, veteran Navy dive bomber pilot, successfully guided 27 aircraft to safe landings on a battered advanced airstrip while invasion artillery thundered round him and enemy bombers roared overhead. The date was October 25. The time, early evening. The place, Tacloban Airfield, seized from the Japanese only that morning. The occasion, the first day of the long-awaited invasion of the Philippines.

The planes he landed had participated in the day-long series of strikes against the Japanese Fleet off the coast of Samar Island--the same fleet that earlier in the day had wreaked such havoc among the "jeep" carriers (baby flattops) providing air support for General MacArthur's troops in their victorious return to the Philippines. Two of the little carriers had been sunk. Several more had their flight decks so blasted as to make it impossible for planes to land aboard. These planes turned to the only available landing place, the newly-won airstrip at Tacloban in the northeast corner of Leyte Island. Here too came planes from the fast carriers of Admiral John McCain's task force, planes with far too little fuel left to see them back to their still-distant parent ships.

Hits Jap Fleet

Lt. Cocks himself had taken part in the strike against the Jap Fleet. That noon he had lifted his big "Helldiver" from the deck of a huge Essex-class carrier far to the East for a long-range strike against the battleships and cruisers harassing Vice Admiral T. C. Kinkaid's gallant little flattops. Diving through a veritable curtain of anti-aircraft fire thrown up by the embattled Jap Fleet, he and his teammates from Bombing Squadron Eleven had scored many damaging hits and near-hits on the big ships. Then, perilously short of fuel, seven of the dive bombers elected to land at Tacloban rather than hazard the long return flight to their ship.

Dangerous Landings

Only one quarter of the field's small area was usable and that was pocked with holes and soft spots left by enemy bombs. It called for flying of the highest order to get a plane safely in and many had not made it. Mute testimony to this were the numerous wrecked planes which fringed the landing area. As Cock's group came in, smoke from several of the more recent crashes cloaked the field. To the west thundered the big guns of General MacArthur's units battling beyond Tacloban town. Hardly had Lt. Cocks's "Beast"

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(Navy slang for the Curtiss Helldiver) rolled to a stop on the edge of the field before the Army officer in charge requested one of the Navy pilots to act as a landing signal officer, in an effort to decrease the alarming number of planes wrecked on landing. Several more flights were due in soon. Lt. Cocks volunteered.

Improvised Equipment

Seizing two pieces of wood and affixing strips of cloth, Cocks hurried to the end of the strip with his makeshift landing "paddles" and jockeyed several planes down to a safe landing. His chief concern was to line the planes up so as to land on a firm spot on the strip and to kill their airspeed to prevent their rolling down the strip too far into the soft dirt at the farther end. Employing approximately the same signals as the landing officer of a carrier, and with a few simple improvisations of his own he was able to get his instructions across to the pilots.

Darkness Complicated Matters

As the early tropical dusk began to close in, Lt. Cocks saw that the Army engineers, working feverishly to set up boundary lights, would not be able to complete their work in time. He had a number of trucks lined up on both sides of the strip with their headlights directed down it. He also commandeered a small battery of floodlights, used for night construction work, and stood in front of them, stripped to his skivvy shirt so he could be seen more clearly. He was ready to bring the tired pilots in.

Not a Man Lost

One by one the carrier aircraft droned out of the gathering darkness, spotted the illuminated strip, and circled for their landing. Next thing they saw as they slid into the "groove" at the far end of the field was a welcome white-clad figure, paddles in hand, giving them familiar signals. More than one weary pilot heaved a sigh of relief when he realized he would not have to negotiate such a dangerous landing unaided. One after another the planes came in, slowed down on signal, and rolled to a safe stop short of the treacherous soft ground. Only sporadic raids by enemy bombers interrupted the orderly landing procession. Despite Cocks's best efforts, one of the planes turned over on landing. Another lost a wingtip in a collision with a fighter plane parked along the strip. But not a single pilot or aircrewman was so much as injured in the hazardous operation. By 9 P.M., Cocks had landed 27 fighters and bombers. His work was done. Shortly after, Japanese bombers came back for another raid, and Cocks and the other Navy pilots dug for cover and a well-earned rest.

Praise Where Due

Next morning, while Lt. Cocks and his aircrewman, M. J. Kufeldt of Merced, California, sought shade from the blazing sun under the wing of their plane, a jeep pulled up beside them and an Army officer got out. Introducing himself, he congratulated Cocks on his brilliant performance of the evening before and chatted with him at some length. The officer pointed out that Cocks untiring efforts had not only saved many lives and much valuable equipment. It had also kept the vital airfield free for further operations, for the flights that even as he spoke were taking off to attack the remnants of the Jap fleet, now retreating westward. Only after the officer had driven off did Cocks realize that his visitor had been none other than Lieut. General H. H. Sutherland, Chief of Staff to General MacArthur.

Veteran Pilot

Though only 23, Lt. Cocks is already a veteran aviator. He was with his present squadron, Bombing Eleven, on its last tour of Pacific duty from March to July, 1943. From historic Henderson Field on battle-scarred Guadalcanal, he flew many missions against enemy shipping and ground installations in the Solomons and wears the Air Medal. A former engineering student at Arizona State College, he makes his home, when he can, with his parents Mr. and Mrs. Jack H. Cocks in Morenci, Arizona.

"Eleven" the Movie, a documentary made about Air Group 11, my Father was a pilot in that Air Group, he was part of VB11, the 3 parts were VF11 (fighter planes), VT11 (torpedo bombers) and VB11 (dive bombers)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YfMhcK9gcqM>

12 Jap Ships, 49 Planes, Destroyed

192 American Planes In Crushing Raid At Kahili

(Editors note: Last Saturday morning United States Army, Navy and marine air forces in the South Pacific's greatest coordinated aerial attack up to that time, struck in wave after wave on the air-dromes and anchorages of Kahili, a prime Japanese base in the Solomon Islands. In this delayed dispatch from U. S. air headquarters for the Solomons, war correspondent Leif Erickson reports in fresh detail how the raid smashed the Japanese anchorage.)

By LEIF ERICKSON

GUADALCANAL, July 17. —(Delayed)—(AP)—Nine Japanese ships including a light cruiser and three destroyers were blasted and sunk off Kahili today in a raid by 192 United States planes smashing at the key Japanese base in the Solomon Islands with the heaviest air stroke yet delivered in this area.

(Both a communique issued the day after the raid and stories from South Pacific headquarters listed only seven ships sunk and an eighth probably beached.)

The United States air command in the Solomons reported that 49 Japanese fighter planes were shot down in futile attempts at interception and that our losses were only five planes—three fighters, a dive bomber and a torpedo plane.

Enthusiastic and excited pilots returning from the attack said the enemy's anchorage at Jakohina Mission, midway between Buin and Kahili on southern Bougainville Island, was filled with flaming, smoking wrecks.

Numerous Direct Hits

In addition to the warships destroyed, three small cargo vessels and two tankers were sent to the bottom.

The light cruiser was blown apart by a direct hit amidships. One of the tankers also was shattered down to the stern by direct hits and resultant explosions.

"If we could give the Japanese the business like this every day, he'd soon have his fingernails bitten off to his elbow," the air headquarters spokesman said.

The scanty anti-aircraft fire indicated the enemy was surprised almost completely. Dive-bomber pilots reported the ships were barely under way when the planes started their runs over the targets.

After Lieutenants (j.g.) George Ford, 24, Orosi, Calif., and Robert Cocks, Morenci, Ariz., pulled out of their bombing dives, they sighted a Japanese barge straggling

The rear admiral commanding the combined Navy, marine and Army air units over the Solomons smiled with satisfaction, saying:

"We've been waiting for a strike like this. Those kids did a perfect job. I'm very happy that our losses were so amazingly low. I expected they'd be more."

The Japanese retaliated tonight with a few nuisance bombers over

Pinch Of War To Be Felt Still More As Inventories Run Out

WASHINGTON, July 23 (AP)—The war production board's civilian requirements chief, Arthur Whiteside, warned civilians today that they are just entering the tightening-up-the-belt period and from now on the real pinch of war will be felt on the home front.

He said in an interview that the decision to allow manufacture of household articles such as metal pot-scoopers, carpet sweepers, etc., should not arouse false hopes among civilians or industries.

"The consumer should definitely understand that there will be less instead of more—with no qualifications," he said.

"So far the consumer has been getting by comfortably because of accumulated inventories, but from now on the going will be tough. Even in cases where limited supplies of materials become available, the manpower problem is sure to raise its ugly head."

Weather

Forecast for Tucson and vicinity: Little change in temperature tonight and tomorrow with possible scattered showers.

Highest temp. yesterday	103
Highest temp. a year ago	100
Highest temp. on this date	100
Lowest temp. yesterday	73
Lowest temp. year ago	71
Lowest temp. this date	73
Mean temp. yesterday	86
Mean temp. year ago	87
Normal temp. for yesterday	84
Normal temp. for yesterday	77

Time of sunset today 8:23. Time of sunrise tomorrow 6:54.

	Min.	Max.	Precip.
Albuquerque	100	60	
Atlanta	98	74	
Boston	82	68	.0
Buffalo	76	62	.3
Chicago	75	66	
Cleveland	72	66	
Denver	80	59	.0
El Paso	83	67	
Fort Worth	104	77	
Kansas City	88	71	
Miami, Fla.	89	73	1.0
Minneapolis	84	69	
New Orleans	94	79	
New York	83	66	.0
Phoenix	108	66	
Pittsburgh	77	68	
St. Louis	88	74	
San Antonio	97	69	
Tucson	103	70	
Washington	81	75	

Precipitation less than 0.10 inch.

E. P. NORWOOD,
Official in Charge.

'FLEET' IS STOLEN

LOS ANGELES, Calif. (AP)—Robert Brandt has reported to the police the theft of three ocean liners and an equal number of transport steamers. He admits they were miniature, but cost \$500, and wants them back.

In Crushing Raid At Kahili

(Editors note: Last Saturday morning United States Army, Navy and marine air forces in the South Pacific's greatest coordinated aerial attack up to that time, struck in wave after wave on the air-dromes and anchorages of Kahili, a prime Japanese base in the Solomon Islands. In this delayed dispatch from U. S. air headquarters for the Solomons, war correspondent Leif Erickson reports in fresh detail how the raid smashed the Japanese anchorage.)

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"We've been waiting for a strike like this. Those kids did a perfect job. I'm very happy that our losses were so amazingly low. I expected they'd be more."

The Japanese retaliated tonight with a few nuisance bombers over Guadalcanal.

Following the dive bombers came the torpedo planes, also carrying bombs. The precisely-timed operation took little more than 20 minutes.

The bombers were guarded by an almost impenetrable cover of fighter planes.

POST 90 CHRISTMAS PARTY

**Wednesday, December 22nd
Meeting and dinner @ 6:00pm
(245 N 200 W)
Ham will be provided by the American Legion**

IDEAS when RSVP let me know what you are bringing

A- G Vegetables (potatoes/gravy, cheesy potatoes, yams, corn, carrots, beans)

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N – S: Salads (fruit, jello, cranberry)

T - Z: bread, rolls, butter

All food must be there 5:45 pm

Santa Clause will be attending

Come in your favorite holiday attire

There are 90 seats available for the Christmas Party so when RSVP need to know number of Adults and Children

**Bring a food item for the donation box for Switch Point
(Cans or boxed items)**

**RSVP by December 11th, by phone or email.
Marti 435-668-5770 martibigbie@gmail.com**

Pearl Harbor Commemorate Program

Tonaquint Cemetery

December 7th, 2021

10:48 am

Arrive by 10:00am - all 7 flags need to be a half mass

**Assemble/
Formation** **by 10:30am**
7 flags behind monument with 3 man team to
Raise flags - members of Marine Corps League,
American Legion, VFW and any other VSO's

American Legion Ritual Team & Bugler

Pearl Harbor Wreath held/place by
Marine -
Navy - Ron Lewis
Army/Air Corp- Ridge Bemis
Army – Terry Dunne
Air Force - Don Parker
Coast Guard - Richard Edington

Program Starts **10:48am Chaplain Don Oborn Post 90**

Commander Ritual Team Calvin Jensen orders
Flags raised to full staff when “TO THE COLORS” is
Played
at the Conclusion of “To the Colors”
Fires one round
Wreath is placed in front of Monument
Bugler plays “TAPS” on conclusion - flags are
lowered to half mass until sunset

Dismissed **by Commander Calvin Jensen. American Legion Color Guard**