Friends and supporters:

The Museum's year ended with a bang, or more accurately with song, dancing and humor.

The Ernie Pyle World War II Museum marked Veterans' Day with a World War II USO show held in Dana. Approximately 200 people crowded into the Helt Township Fire Department building to watch the show.

The event raised more than $3,100 in donations and sponsorships to help the museum. More importantly, it illustrated the community's support of Ernie Pyle's legacy as the country's most revered World War II correspondent.

The talent was mostly home-grown with the slate of acts put together by volunteer Marilyn Fisher. Delicious desserts were made and served by members of the Community Bible Church, Dana Baptist Church, Bono United Methodist Church and Dana United Methodist Church.

It speaks to the impact Ernie Pyle had on Americans and others around the globe, when his hometown offers such support 73 years after his tragic death on a tiny Pacific island while covering the island-hopping march to Japan in 1945.

The entertaining USO show was one of several ways Ernie Pyle's legacy was recognized in 2018.

Both Congress and the Indiana General Assembly recognized Aug. 3 as National Ernie Pyle Day and Indiana's Ernie Pyle Day – marking the anniversary of his birthdate in 1900. A ceremony was held in Bloomington at Franklin Hall on the campus of Indiana University, which is the home of the university's Media School and the site where a sculpture of Ernie Pyle resides outside the building. An additional celebration was held in Dana during the town's annual firefighters' festival.

Indiana's American Legion State Commander Rodney Strong, who the Friends of Ernie Pyle are proud to call a board member, selected the museum as his personal project for the organization. His goal is to collect thousands of dollars from the state's legion posts to help us replace the siding on the old farmstead home where Ernie was born.

As a private 501(c)(3) foundation, the Friends of Ernie Pyle do not receive state funds to maintain Ernie's birthplace and accompanying museum grounds. The funds to keep the museum open come from donations from devotees of Ernie Pyle, such as yourself, and grants from organizations or other foundations. We've also been honored to receive several grants from Helt Township under the leadership of township trustee Kevin Wickens.

The Friends, thus far, have been fortunate each year to operate the museum in the black. But there's so much more we need to do and can do with the generosity of those interested in perpetuating Ernie's legacy and that of the generation he wrote about – that "greatest" generation that survived the Great Depression and then honorably contributed to victory in World War II.

As mentioned above, the birthplace needs the wooden lap siding replaced. The wood is so old that paint will not adequately adhere to it. The estimated price tag is $90,000, which is nearly double the yearly budget for the volunteer Friends of Ernie Pyle to operate the museum for a year.

There are also projects that the Friends of Ernie Pyle would like to initiate to further the legacy of this Indiana hero. Funding to create a high school educational unit focused on Ernie's writing style and a fourth-grade educational unit, when Indiana students study their state's history, would be wonderful.

It all comes back to money, whether it's yearly operational costs, extraordinary maintenance costs, or new program costs.

In the new year, please consider making a tax-deductible donation to the museum.

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Ernie Pyle World War II Museum. You may want to consider your monetary support as a means to honor your family members who either served in World War II or in the armed forces since that conflict.

You can make a donation through the mail to Friends of Ernie Pyle, Box 345, Dana, IN 47847 or click the Donate button on our website at www.erniepyle.org and submit your donation electronically. Our federal tax ID number is 35-1866228.

Thank you for your support and we hope to see you at the museum in 2019.

— Steve Key,
President of the Board of the Friends of Ernie Pyle Development Fund

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**ERNIE PYLE ENSHRINED IN IND**

The Indiana Military Veterans Hall of Fame inducted Pulitzer Prize-winning World War II correspondent Ernie Pyle as part of the 2018 class of 21 new members.

The class of 2018 was enshrined Nov. 9 during a ceremony at the National Guard Armory in Lawrence.

The organization, which was launched five years ago, cut the ribbon in April on a new building at Fort Benjamin Harrison in Marion County.

Pyle became a bridge between the soldiers and sailors serving in World War II and their families at home. His columns focused on their lives in the armed forces, not grand strategy or military tactics.

He was so beloved that when he died from a Japanese machine gun bullet on the Pacific isle of Ie Shima that the announcement of his death was made by President Harry Truman.

Pyle was nominated for the Indiana Military Hall of Fame by Loogootee-born Kenny Greenwell. A Navy veteran, Greenwell said he became interested in World War II and the bravery of the greatest generation during his travels in the Navy. Greenwell read about Ernie Pyle,
Pyle’s books translated for world’s readers

Twelve years ago I participated in an academic conference in Prague. I have been going there for 50 years. As I often have done, I walked into a used book store in 2006 to look through books on Czech and Slovak history.

I’m not quite sure how, but I noticed on one of the shelves three books by Ernie Pyle, based on his World War II columns, “Here is Your War,” “Brave Men,” and “Last Chapter.” They weren’t, however, in English. No, they had been translated in Czech. They had been published in 1947 and 1948. They had been published in editions of 3000-5000 copies each. They must have all been published shortly before the communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in February 1948.

That Pyle’s books had been published in Czech amazed me. I am not aware of any connections that Pyle had with Czechs. Perhaps the U.S. Embassy had something to do with it. A historian friend of mine at Boston University, who has written a book on the U.S. Embassy in Prague, 1945–48, told me that the embassy would not have had the personnel or time to do that.

A few months ago, I finally came up with a reasonable explanation. When the Nazis took over Czechoslovakia in 1939, a number of Czech pilots escaped and joined the Royal Air Force in England where they flew with distinction. I suspect that one of them later underwrote the translation of Pyle’s books and their publication.

I skimmed through the books to see how good the translations were (I am fluent in Czech). They are workmanlike, but they lack the sparkle of Pyle’s writing. That’s because Pyle, although his sentences weren’t that complicated, could be very creative with the English language. That’s impossible to translate.

Even more amazing is that the Pyle books were republished in the Czech Republic in the 1990s, after the fall of communism. Did the same person or persons support their publication? I don’t know.

In fact, Pyle’s World War II writings have been published in a surprising number of languages. A special edition, called G.I. Joe, was published in French at the end of the war in Europe to provide reading material for French people until their country could get back on its feet. A complete series of Pyle’s books was published in Dutch. Over the years there have been publications in Italian (La Storia del Solidato Joe), Spanish, Chinese and even Japanese. I suspect many of them did not get copyright approval.

This should remind us of how Pyle’s writings have been presumed to be of interest to many audiences, not only in the United States, but around the world.

We also should remember that while we most remember Pyle’s writings about World War II, he also reported internationally. In the 1930s, he visited Canada on two occasions. His stories included a series of stories on the famous Dionne quintuplets. He interviewed a Canadian prime minister as they strode through the capital in Ottawa. He traveled through Mexico, as well as countries in South America and Central America.

In 1941 he was planning to visit Japan, a visit that was only called off after the attack on Pearl Harbor. He wanted to go on to India.

One has to admire Pyle when he traveled to Asia with the IU baseball team in spring 1922. He even persuaded three of his fellow students to go along with him. He unexpectedly wound up going not only to Yokohama, Japan, but also to Shanghai, Hong Kong and the Philippines. Few students traveled abroad in those days, and almost nobody strayed outside Europe.

Pyle was handicapped in his international reporting because he lacked the knowledge of languages. His columns from Latin America, for instance, reported mostly on Americans abroad, or on people who spoke English. Pyle studied Latin in high school, and then took French classes at IU. He and his wife Jerry always wanted to learn Spanish, but they didn’t get very far.

The most important thing to remember is that Pyle wrote wonderful columns about life in the United States, but was curious about the world beyond the U.S. That was remarkable in the 1920s and 1930s, especially for someone who grew up in a small town in Indiana.

— Owen Johnson, associate professor emeritus of Journalism at Indiana University and author of, “At Home with Ernie Pyle.”

IANA MILITARY VETERANS HALL OF FAME

visited various memorials in his honor and was quite impressed with all the facilities and organizations that existed in honor of, or were formed in tribute to, Ernie Pyle.

He also noticed that Andy Rooney of 60 Minutes often mentioned Ernie Pyle, so he read some books by Ernie and others about Ernie. When in West Lafayette, Greenwell helped get veterans housed in the Ernie Pyle Wing of the Indiana Veterans Home to the auditorium for mass on Saturday evenings.

Greenwell has served on the Board of Directors of Crane Credit Union for 40 years. When Crane, the Finance Center and other Credit Unions decided to support the creation of the Indiana Military Veterans Hall of Fame (IMHOF), Greenwell became an instant proponent. He noticed after three years Ernie Pyle had not been nominated so he went to work. He visited Dana, Pyle’s birthplace, which now is a part of the Ernie Pyle World War II Museum operated by the Friends of Ernie Pyle. He also visited Ernie’s grave in Hawaii as part of his research for the nomination.

Navy veteran Kenny Greenwell and President of the World War II Roundtable Ernie Pyle Chapter Paul Cauley Nov. 9 in Lawrence, Indiana.
Friends of Ernie Pyle Board President Steve Key and Vice-President Phil Hess were guests at a reception at Byron Cox Post 72 in Crawfordsville to honor the National American Legion Commander and the Commander of the American Legion Department of Indiana.

National Legion Commander Brett P. Reistad is an articulate spokesman for the Legion, both in Washington and as he continually travels all across the country. His military service was in the Presidential Salute Battery of the Old Guard. The Third Infantry is a regular infantry regiment with additional responsibility as military honor guard for the Washington, D.C., area. The duty included providing a sentry guard for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier for every minute of every single day since July 1, 1937.

Reistad retired from his first civilian career as a lieutenant in the Fairfax (VA) Police Department and started another in the regional Organized Crime Information Center. He lives in Manassas, VA.

Commander of the Indiana Legion is Rodney Strong, who earned the position through 28 years of exceptional service and dedication. Strong served at sea in the Navy aboard an LSD – amphibious dock landing ship. He is also the first to be elected Commander of both the Indiana American Legion and the Sons of the American Legion. He is employed by Crawfordsville Electric Power & Light and lives in Veedersberg.

We are proud and fortunate that Strong also serves on the Board of Directors for the Ernie Pyle WWII Museum. He has chosen the museum for this year’s Indiana Legion fund-raising effort with a goal of $30,000 to replace siding on the birthplace of Ernie Pyle.

At the event, Strong was presented with a check for $1,000 toward that goal.

The American Legion has over 12,800 posts across the United States whose members served in the armed forces during conflict, and continue to serve their country, their communities, fellow veterans and patriotic causes. This is the centennial anniversary year for the Legion, formed in 1919.