

# St. Juvin Post

## 1336

*Mustered in March 21, 1925*



**Veterans of Foreign Wars  
of the  
United States**

2017 marked the 100th anniversary of the US entry into WWI. March 21, 2025 will mark the 100th anniversary of the founding of St. Juvin Post 1336 Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

St. Juvin Post has an especially strong connection to WWI because the charter members were, with one exception, all WWI veterans.

The VFW began life in 1899 as several organizations, The American Veterans of Foreign Service, based in Columbus, Ohio, The Colorado Society of the Army of the Philippines, based in Denver, Colorado, and another society also known as the American Veterans of Foreign Service but based in Altoona, Pennsylvania that advocated for Spanish-American War, Philippine Insurrection and Boxer Rebellion veteran's medical treatment and the welfare of their wives, widows, children and orphans. In 1914 these organizations merged to form the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

Prior to 1898 the United States had not been involved in a war with a foreign power since the war with Mexico in 1846. After the conclusion of the Spanish-American War the United States became involved in the occupation of former Spanish possessions such as Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Philippines and the Boxer Rebellion in China. This required the stationing of U.S. servicemen outside the United States to act a stabilizing force and to restore and maintain order.

Some Posts are named for local veterans, many of whom made the ultimate sacrifice; our post was named for St. Juvin a small village located in northeastern France on the edge of the Ardennes forest near the Belgian border.

Between October 8 and 18, 1918 during the Meuse-Argonne Offensive the road between St. Juvin and the village of Landres-et-St. Georges about 3 miles northeast became a battleground between the advancing U.S. 82nd and 77th Infantry Divisions and the retreating German Army which with artillery support was holding St. Juvin. On October 14 the 82nd Division's 326th Infantry Regiment crossed the Arie River and attacked the village

from the southeast while the 325th Regiment attacked from the south west and after a pitched battle, which nearly flattened the town, they forced the Germans out and captured 540 prisoners.

Fighting continued around St. Juvin gradually diminishing in intensity until October 18th. To say that the engagements near St. Juvin were a “meat grinder” is an understatement. On October 11th 1918 the 326th Infantry Regiment had a total of 3,373 officers and enlisted on its muster roll. When they were pulled off the line on October 23rd they had 536 effectives, 2,837 or 84% were killed, wounded or missing in action.

Since there were several U.S. Infantry divisions operating as I Corps in the general area of St. Juvin and information regarding the charter members actual units is scarce, it is difficult to determine exactly which members served in or near St. Juvin or were involved in numerous small unit encounters/ firefights up and down the St. Juvin-St. Georges road. Apparently there were enough St. Juvin veterans among the founding members that they were able to select the name that we still carry today.

The name of the Post's first Commander John Herron does not appear on the WWI plaque on our Community Veterans Memorial because he served in the Spanish-American War.

Born in Braidwood in 1872 he entered the coal mines in about 1887. In May of 1898 Herron was working as a coal miner in a mine owned by the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy railroad in Cambria WY and when the Spanish-American War broke out he enlisted in Company “C” 1st Wyoming Infantry Battalion at Buffalo WY.

Herron served 1 year in the Philippines returning to the Presidio of San Francisco in September of 1899. He returned to Coal City, married and raised his family.

When he died in 1942 three of his six pall bears were charter members of Post 1336. John Herron is buried at the Braceville-Gardner Cemetery and in 2016 his name was added to the Community Veteran's Memorial.

Part of the VFW mission is to recognize the service of our veterans, sometimes it takes a while, but we truly believe that “Veterans never forget what they have done for our country.... neither will we”.

Today the village of St. Juvin, named for a canonized medieval hermit sheppard, like so many other places around the world that once were the scene of violent conflict and bloodshed sits quietly at a rural crossroad. Its population in 2007 was 111 souls.

One of the Post members once said he wished there was no Veterans of Foreign Wars, not that he wasn't proud to be a member, and proud of his service to his country, but because he wished we didn't have to fight foreign wars.

Take a few moments today to visit our Community Veterans Memorial, read the names, you will be surprised at the number, over 1100, and this is just a small town. The Memorial is the jewel of this community.

The plaque commemorating participants in the “War to end all Wars” has by my count the names of 240 who served and 9 who made the ultimate sacrifice. The plaque also gives honor to four women who served as Nurses and one that was a representative of the YMCA which through their charity provide essential personal items and other help to those who served. Despite conventional wisdom and prejudice, women were recognized for their service. The memorial also features bronze plaques honoring WWII, Korean and Vietnam War veterans.

The Memorial was rebuilt twice and the second time with black granite facing being added and opened for the etching of names of local community veterans who honorably served in the Armed Forces.





Map of St. Juvin



**View of St. Juvín from a ridge south of the village, the same view that members of the 82nd Division's 326th Infantry Regiment had October 14, 1918 before they pushed off for the attack.**

*Silvan Arber photo September 2014*



**Road sign at the entrance to St. Juvín.**

*Silvan Arber photo September 2014*



This WWI monument stands near the center of St. Juvin and like many European memorials features a statue. The U.S. soldier was nicknamed “Doughboy” while the French soldier like the one on the St. Juvin memorial were called “Poilu” (Poy-Loo) which translated literally to “Hairy One” or what we would call “tough guy”.

*Silvan Arber photo September 2014*



The fortified church of Saint-Juvin was built between 1615 and 1624 in times troubled by religious wars. During the Meuse-Argonne offensive in October 1918, the American army attacked a line fortified by the Germans on the ridges of Saint-Juvin. The bombardments that followed destroyed part of the village and its church. St. Juvin was rebuilt between 1931 and 1935 and it houses a beautiful stained glass window showing Juvin the Shepherd, local saint and patron saint of the church. The road sign in foreground pointing to the right marks the way to Landres-et-St Georges.

*Silvan Arber photo September 2014*



Sgt. Chas. E. Mace of the U.S. Army Signal Corps, taking pictures in St. Juvin. This picture was taken the day that the Americans renewed their offensive.

*Photographer: Lt. Stone, S.C. St. Juvin, Ardennes, France October 1918.*



The Memorial traces its origins to 1927 with the bronze plaque honoring those who served in WWI which was placed in the hallway leading to the newly built gymnasium in what was then Coal City Township High School. The north facing portion of the school was built in 1917 and it served as a hospital during the Spanish Flu pandemic in 1918.

In 1948 St. Juvin Post 1336 Veterans

of Foreign Wars and Coal City American Legion Post 796 with local citizens under the leadership of Joe Phillips raised funds to construct a memorial on the northeast corner of the school property. The WWI plaque was joined by a similar plaque recognizing the community's WWII vets on the new concrete outdoor memorial unveiled on Memorial Day 1949.

In 1983 the monument was surface stucco plastered to repair weathering that had occurred over the previous 35 years and new bronze tablets recognizing Korean and Vietnam War service members were added.

In 2007 the monument received an extensive renovation with the surface being covered with black granite and establishment of a policy for adding the names of veterans from the community etched into the granite surface.

Veterans who have honorably served in the U.S. Armed Forces whose residence at time of entering service was in the Coal City Community School District Unit#1, graduated from or attended Coal City High School, or those who have continuously lived within the school district for at least five years are eligible to submit an application and proof of service such as a DD214 or other acceptable documents to have their names placed on the Memorial. There will be no charge to have the name of a qualifying veteran etched on the memorial.

*Applications for name placement are available at the Coal City, Diamond and Carbon Hill village offices or at the Coal City Public Library District 85 N Garfield St.*



*Megan Leleniewski photo September 2018*

**CHARTER MEMBERS OF ST. JUVIN POST 1336**  
**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES**  
*MUSTERED IN MARCH 21, 1925*

NAMES LISTED IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE ON CHARTER

<b>Name</b>	<b>Died</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Occupation/Employer</b>
Thomas F. Wharrie	1956	68	Postmaster
Mike S. Tenn	1966	70	Appliance Dealer
John A. Rogers	1973	81	IL Clay Products
James Pavlis	1966	73	Coal Miner
James Vasek	1980	86	IL Clay Products
Walter G. Yates	1951	60	Public Service Lineman
William J. Morrison	1959		Prairie States Paper Mill
Joseph Planeta	1964	68	Carpenter
Frank Planeta	1956	61	Cement Mason
John Davis	1944	55	Machinist
Felix Gomora	1968	73	Tavern Operator
Louis Hejda	1967	72	Western Electric
Steven Deluckie	1952	65	IL Clay Products
Anton Savant	1960	67	Tavern Operator
James McLuckie	1969	76	Towerman, EJ&E RR
Henry Kessler	1969	75	Coal Miner
John Herron, Jr.*	1942	69	Coal Miner
James Wesley	1973	73	Coal Miner
Arco Guizzetti	1970	75	Auto Dealer
Charles Peretti	1953	58	Cement Mason
Frank J. Facinelli	1998	105	IL Clay Products
B. J. Campbell	1963	66	Joliet Arsenal
Anton Vota	1936	44	Coal Miner
Benjamin De Pratt	1953	61	Painter, EJ&E RR
Frank Roback	1979	89	Joliet Arsenal
Emil Dite	1967	71	IL Clay Products
Joseph Hejda	1949	62	Farmer

*\*JOHN HERRON, JR, St. Juvins first Commander, was a Spanish American War Veteran*

The above information provided through the courtesy of the Coal City Public Library District, Irene Shepkowski, Head Reference Librarian. For those wanting more detail about the charter members and their lives and family the Coal City Public Library maintains a portfolio of this information in the Reference Department.

The first charter member to pass was Anton Vota, 44, who was killed in 1936 by a runaway string of coal cars at the Northern Illinois Coal Co's tippel located 3 miles west of Wilmington which was located in the vicinity of the present day Cinder Ridge Golf Course.

The longest living charter member was Frank J. Facinelli who died of natural causes at Denver CO. in 1998 at the age of 105.

The last surviving U.S. WWI serviceman was Frank W. Buckles who died of natural causes at Charles Town, WV in 2011 at the age of 110 he is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.



**NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.**

***ST. JUVIN POST 1336***

***Serving Veterans and Local Community Through:***

Participating member of the Grundy County  
Veterans Assistance Commission

High School / Veteran Scholarship Program

Middle School Patriot's Pen Program

Veteran Military Blanket Program

Veteran Burial Assistance

Patriotic Citizens Award

Providing Military History to Area Schools

Community Veterans Memorial

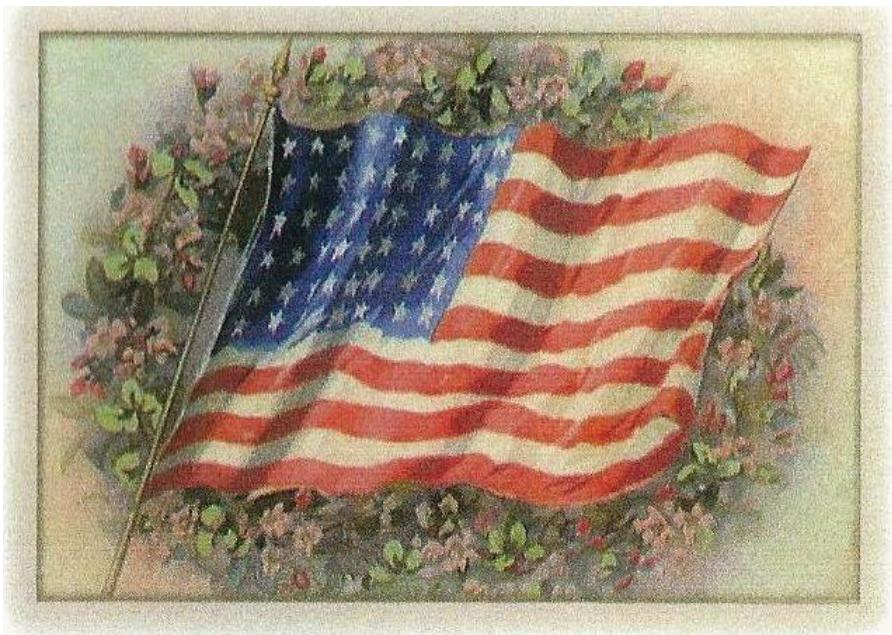
Cards for Veterans Program

USA/POW/MIA Flag Program

Community Honor Guard & Parade Participation

Carbon Hill Homecoming Activities  
& Parade Participation

Participation in Senator Sue Rezin's  
Veterans Advisory Committee



*Our veterans will never forget what they've  
done for our country . . .  
Neither will we.*

**St. Jovin Post 1336  
Veterans of Foreign Wars  
of the United States  
P.O. Box 191  
Coal City, Illinois 60416**