

# Couples trade war stories in unique vets' club

By DIANE ABRAMS



Cannon's wartime duties included babysitting for her commanding officer.

Female war veterans are probably harder to find than male war veterans, but even more obscure are married couples who are both veterans.

Such couples do exist and a unique branch of the American Veterans (AMVETS), a national organization, provides proof.

There are 15 couples that comprise Post One, the only married couples/veterans club in the country. Now approaching its 30th anniversary, the group's membership requirements remain intact.

"In order for a couple to qualify for membership, both the husband and wife have to be war veterans," said Jack Ruland, a lifetime member of AMVETS. "Most of the veterans are from World War II and the Korean war. We don't have any members who go back prior to the second World War."

Post One includes members from Birmingham as well as surrounding communities. Meetings are held once a month on a rotating basis at the members' homes.

No other AMVETS post is comprised solely of married veterans. In fact, most of the posts don't involve women at all.

"Men in the other organizations haven't totally accepted the idea of women in posts," said Francis McEvoy, a Birmingham veteran. "However, the other AMVETS groups know we're here."

Post One members say the post originated mainly because women had been

excluded from veterans groups for so long. The post started in Detroit in 1956 before moving to Oakland County.

"Women want to be recognized for their service, and this group gives them the chance," said Peppy Farmer, who, with her husband Curley, founded Post One. "Our group is symptomatic of a changing society."

The Farmers originally belonged to a different AMVETS post where Mrs. Farmer was the only member. Her experiences there triggered the idea for a married veterans post.

"I think my presence might have made some of the men uncomfortable at times," said Mrs. Farmer about Post Seven, where she first became an AMVETS member. "If someone told a dirty joke or used foul language before realizing I was in the room, they would immediately shut up."

Post One started with three WW II veteran couples. Since its inception, there have been four female post commanders as well as a variety of offices that have been held by women.

Two women from Post One currently hold offices. Doris Wilde is AMVETS's state finance director and Dee Sever is commander of district three. There are seven AMVETS districts in Michigan.

Like the other AMVETS posts, the group is involved in a number of community services. They have presented flags to various schools, scouting groups and organizations.

However, AMVETS also acts as a service group to all veterans on a national as well as a local basis. The organization doesn't require membership from those who they service.

"A lot of people don't know what rights and services are available to veterans," said Ruland. "If we can't provide them with the information they need, we can refer them to an AMVETS service officer downtown."

Aside from delegating a state commander, AMVETS also has a national commander in Washington, D.C.

"In the sense that we have representation to protect our interests, we are a pressure group," said Ruland. "We're not looking for handouts, but we do want to protect ourselves against legislation that might be against veterans."

Most of the men in Post One are Army veterans, but the husbands represent all branches of service.

The women are from the WACS, WAVES, Marines and Nurse corps.

As might be expected, the unique aspect of Post One restricts membership and makes it difficult for the group to attract new members.

"Very few of the younger veterans from Vietnam would qualify to join our post because of the requirement that they also be married to a veteran," said Ruland. "That's part of the reason that most of our members are from WW II and the Korean War."

Members of Post One have varying reasons why fewer women volunteered their services in the Vietnam War than in other wars. The most common belief is that society's attitudes were different in previous wars.

"The feeling of everybody in the country was different during WW II," said Ruland's wife Lee. "Women felt they had to do something for their country."

"I was very patriotic," said Thelma Cannon, whose services included babysitting for her commanding officer. "Women had the same basic training as men, we had to dig trenches just like the guys. I wanted to serve the country in any way I could."

"Kids today are not as proud of being a veteran as we were," said Ruland. "Maybe that's why they wouldn't be as likely to join a group like this."

War is over, though, and instead of re-hashing old battle stories, the members of Post One have other common interests that serve to unite them. The group stages a variety of social activities and more often than not the conversations center around homes, children and jobs.

"It's just recently that we're finding out what each other used to do in the war," said McEvoy. "We rarely sit around and tell war stories."

One member of Post One has another reason for not discussing her duties as a WAVE. Up until a year ago, Lee Ruland's job was considered classified information.

"I was a radio operator intercepting Japanese codes," she said. "I always had a special interest in radios and, before I joined the service, I went to Cass Tech to study them. I later became part of a specially selected group by the FBI."

Society's attitudes were reflected in Mrs. Ruland's efforts to persuade her two daughters to join the service. Although one of her two sons served in the Vietnam war, none of her other children are very much interested in the military.

## Got a summer job? Get working papers first

By BARBARA UNDERWOOD

Working papers — who needs them? With few exceptions, everyone under 18 who is planning to work needs working papers.

Acquiring them is easy but not always painless, according to Sena Haroutunian, an operational assistant with the Birmingham Schools in the pupil personnel office.

Without discrediting mothers, Miss Haroutunian says most of the frustrations involved with issuing working papers come from mothers who "don't understand" what is required.

Students applying for working papers must appear in person. They cannot send a parent for the papers. And the only identification that will be accepted is a birth certificate, driver's li-

cence or passport.

"A HOSPITAL record is not a birth certificate," Miss Haroutunian said. "Most parents think a hospital record with a gold seal is the real thing."

"Sometimes they come without identification and the mother will say, 'I know he was born.' We cannot accept that."

Irene Sipols, a secretary in the pupil personnel office, recalled one student and his mother who came to apply for working papers but had no identification.

"The mother said she didn't know where the birth certificate was but they came back with the child's baby book. It was very hard to refuse that as proof that the child had been born."

But when Mrs. Sipols turned a page, the legitimate birth certificate was pasted in the book.

"I asked the mother why it was there, and she said so she would know where it was," Mrs. Sipols said.

OFTEN PARENTS who come without their children offer all kinds of excuses why the child cannot come in person, Miss Haroutunian said.

"They say the child can't ever come or he has track after school or some other thing. It makes us wonder when he will have time to work."

"It's the same as the bank," she added. "You go to the bank when it is open."

All youngsters between the ages of 14 and 18 need working papers, Miss Haroutunian explained. Those who are

going to caddy need them beyond age 11.

Anyone 17 years old who has graduated from high school does not need working papers.

"THAT IS the law but a lot of people don't realize it," Miss Haroutunian said. "It is to protect children so employers can't exploit them. They are only allowed to work 48 hours a week including school time."

Regardless of what school they attend, students should apply for working papers through their local public school district offices. The Birmingham office is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday in the administration building, 550 W. Merrill.

Students must have an offer of employment in writing before they can be

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given working papers, Miss Haroutunian said.

Between 1,000 and 1,100 students apply for working papers annually, she said. The holiday season and spring are the busiest times of the year.

And students who work both times at different jobs must get working papers for each job.

STUDENTS IN the schools' work co-

op program are not required to have working papers. Neither are babysitters, those who deliver newspapers and those who mow lawns unless they work for an employer. They also don't need working papers if they work for a parent.

Some work is prohibited for students at certain ages. Those under 18 cannot be hired to drive a car, work with chemicals, in a saw mill or weld, for example.

### THE INSIDE \* ANGLE

**IT'S CLASS REUNION TIME for 1959 graduates of North Farmington High School.** Their ten-year reunion will be conducted on Oct. 27, at Behnan Hall, Southfield. Graduates can contact Laurie Shoemaker Gillard at 538-9015 or Denise Therasse Moll at 477-5960 for more information.

**NOT TO BE LEFT OUT OF** reunion action is the Dominican High School Alumnae Association. Its annual spring meeting will be conducted on June 5. At 7 p.m., there will be a Mass on Rosary Field. At 8 p.m., a general meeting will be conducted in the school cafeteria and a dessert reception will conclude the evening. DHS graduates are encouraged to come. Call the Alumnae Office at 832-8500 for reservations and more information.

**OWNERS OF SMALL BUSINESSES** damaged by April's storm are eligible for relief, according to Raymond L. Haskins, district director of the Small Business Administration. Oakland County has been declared a disaster area from damage caused by freezing rain and wind which occurred on April 8.

Under the SBA disaster program, persons who own homes or businesses which were damaged or destroyed by the storm and persons who suffered personal property losses may apply for direct low-interest, physical disaster loans to restore their properties to pre-disaster condition.

Businesses that have suffered economic injury as a direct result of the disaster may apply for an economic injury disaster loan. Such businesses are required to submit documentation showing that the economic injury suffered was directly attributable to the disaster. Funds received from these loans may be used to provide working capital and to meet financial obligations that otherwise would have been met had the disaster not occurred. For economic disaster loans, this program requires a business to look at its own assets first or credit from the private sector if available, at reasonable rates to meet its financial obligations.

The physical disaster loan applications must be filed on or before July 16, and the economic injury loan applications must be filed on or before February 18, 1980. No applications can be accepted after these dates.

The SBA disaster branch office is located on the mezzanine of the McNamara Federal Building, 477 Michigan, Detroit 48226. For further information call, 226-4030.

**SCRITCH, SCRITCH, SCRITCH** is the sound 40 members of the Nardineers made on May 30 in Nardin Park Methodist Church. The occasion for such strange noises was an effort to address 2,800 envelopes for the Michigan Cancer Association's Association for Progress promotion campaign. That averages out to be about 65 envelopes per senior citizen volunteer. IA wishes it could recommend a cure for writer's cramp.

**THE JUNE MEETING** of the Detroit Society for Genealogical Research will

### Cool cash savings on Wilson warm-ups sale 8.99 to 22.99

Acrylic knit sporting separates by Wilson have soft brushed backing, resist shrinking, retain their color washing after washing. Shown: Snap-front jacket has rib-knit collar, striped cuffs and waistband. Accent stripes on sleeves. 30 units, **sale 22.99.** Shorts have contrast edging and side stripes, comfortable elastic waist. 35 units, **sale 8.99.** Pants have elastic waist, rear patch pockets. 30 units, **sale 15.99.** In grey, green, or navy with contrasting trim. Sizes S-M-L-XL. In Hudson's Pro Spot, all stores.

\*Total units available at Metropolitan Detroit Hudson's stores while quantities last.

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