

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution



Patriot of the Month

September 2014



Paul Henry Hillis

Sponsored by:

Poplar Bluff Chapter



Paul was twenty years old, when six days after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, he and his older brother Ted joined the Navy. They were sitting in the Pacific waiting to be assigned to a ship, when superior officers came and told them they were going to be assigned to the first Marine Division as a mechanical unit. Later, the units were known as Seabees. A Seabee is a member of the United States Navy Construction Battalion (CB). The word "Seabee" comes from initials "CB."

Paul and his brother spent most of their service time in the Pacific but he spent his last four months doing occupation duty in Japan. At the end of their tour of duty the Hillis boys looked forward to their release and coming home. Paul was released through St. Louis, but his brother did not pass his discharge physical and spent the next six months in a hospital before being released. Paul received the Good Conduct Medal and the Pacific Medal.

In 1945 Paul married Maxine Billiter. They had three children, six grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

After completing his military service, Paul utilized the G.I. bill to get an education. After attending Southeast Missouri State University and the University of Missouri, he earned his Bachelor of Science degree. He received his Masters Degree from the University of Illinois.

He taught high school for sixteen years, and he spent eighteen years in education administration, as Dean of Three Rivers Community College in Poplar Bluff, Missouri; Dean of Kaskaskia Community College in Centralia, Illinois, and Spoon River Community College in Canton, Illinois.

Paul was a member of the Kiwanis and achievement programs in the schools: the "Straight A" program and the "BUG (Bring Up Grades)" program. He served three years on the Poplar Bluff City Council. In 1975 he served as Poplar Bluff's mayor.

The members of the Poplar Bluff Chapter NSDAR wish to extend their sincere gratitude to Paul for his service and continued commitment to our great nation.