

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution



Patriot of the Month

June 2016



Paul Laughlin

Sponsored by:

White Aloe Chapter



Paul Laughlin was born in Pomona, California on July 14, 1923. After his father died at the age of 12, Paul began to work as much as he could while still attending school. His main moneymaking activity was as a groom and exercise boy. He galloped runners and currying thoroughbreds, harnessed horses, and showed ponies at state fairs.

Paul was inducted into the Army in Moscow, Idaho in 1943 and then sent to Utah for basic training. He received additional training at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana, and at Fort Custer, Michigan. Eventually, he landed in Arizona where he worked at a German Prisoner of War labor camp. He also spent time in Seattle, Washington working in the CID, the Criminal Investigation Division.

In 1945 he was sent to a replacement depot and reclassified. Because of his extensive experience with horses, he was reassigned to the 6742nd Remount Division, to work with some of the 7500 Missouri mules that were sent overseas during the war. This deployed Paul to Caserta, Italy. The teams were responsible for transporting ammunition, food, and supplies through the mountains of Italy. These large mules were capable of traveling the rough mountain terrain that mechanical vehicles could never handle. Paul cared for these mules as a veterinarian technician. He cut their vocal cords, branded them with a "US", and removed shrapnel from their bodies. "If one of them died on the operating table, we'd have fresh meat to eat. Mule meat was a good change from C and D rations." Upon his return home he said that he endured a bit of razzing from people because he didn't wear the typical Army uniform. Instead, his was a Cavalry-type with riding britches, boots, and spurs. He received a Good Conduct Medal, a WWII Victory Medal, Sharpshooter Badge, and the American Campaign of the European, African, and Middle Eastern Campaign Medal. He was discharged in March of 1946 with the rank of TSgt.

Paul completed his college education when he returned from war, attending UCLA. He then earned a commission in the Air Force Reserves and served from 1950-1958. He was discharged with the rank of first lieutenant.

Paul's auspicious civilian career included becoming a Vice President of the National Biscuit Corporation. He retired from there in 1984 and then started working part time as a consultant with the FISA Division of IFC. Paul only stopped working entirely in 2014, at the age of 91.

Paul and his wife Helen will celebrate their 70th wedding anniversary in December of this year. Currently, they volunteer at the Hillcrest Hope Thrift Store in Liberty, MO. The thrift store supports the transformation happening every day at Hillcrest Hope. All proceeds from the thrift store exclusively support Hillcrest Hope, raising funds for families in Clay County. Store donations contribute to the practical needs of the families during their stay in the 90-day program, a program whose goal is to end the cycle of homelessness.

Their wonderful family consists of two sons and two daughters, two grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.

The Daughters of the White Alloe Chapter DAR are proud to nominate Paul Laughlin as Patriot of the Month and extend their gratitude for his patriotic service and commitment to our great nation.