

Pearl Harbor Day Commemorative Committee

Henderson County, NC

Mission Statement-Pearl Harbor day

Essay Contest and Patriotic Program

The basic mission of the Committee is to commemorate, as an annual tradition, December 7th as Pearl Harbor Day in form of the Historic Courthouse on Main Street, Hendersonville, NC.

A second mission is to educate and make the young people in our schools and the public aware of the magnitude of the effect that day had on all Americans. We will concentrate on the young people in our schools as a means to achieve this goal.

A historical pamphlet has been prepared to circulate to relevant students at the schools during September, October and November. It is reasonably short and shows how the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7th, 1941, plunged the United States into World War II. It explains that the loss of life in that sneak attack was 2,334 (about the same as it was in the terrorist attack on 9/11). It points out that our country was totally unprepared for war, and with much of our existing sea power destroyed at Pearl Harbor, the sleeping giant was awakened.

We want to illustrate to the students that the country banded together and stayed together to form the largest and best fighting force known to man. That fighting force numbered 16 million Americans who served in World War II. Over one million Americans shed their blood for our freedom in this war (almost 406,000 Americans were killed and over 671,000 were wounded). We highlight the sacrifices in personal pleasures and some freedoms that our people endured and how that spirit of unity brought us to victory in WWII. U.S. industry went from building 100 planes a year before the war to one every five minutes by March 1944. WWII saved the world, but the costs in lives, sacrifice and resources were great. America was at the forefront and Pearl Harbor, as disastrous as it was, got us together! The nation as a whole sacrificed to preserve our precious freedom – which now we often times treat as a right and privilege.

We shall have Teams of Veterans, WWII veterans if possible, as well as veterans that served in combat in later wars to go to each school from September to November to distribute the historical pamphlet and to describe the events of the times to edify and motivate the students to enter the essay contest that we are offering. These veterans will emphasize the hardships at the front as well as at home that Americans sacrificially and willingly endured to preserve freedom for all of us. We ultimately want to get the story of **“What is The Significance of Pearl Harbor?”** annually to all

students through classroom education, discussion and essays; and to a large gathering of students and the public at the Historic Courthouse on December 7th.

The Superintendent of Henderson County Public Schools has agreed to high school participation on a voluntary basis. Other schools with classes at the high school level invited to participate in this essay contest are the Fletcher Academy, Hendersonville Christian School, Heritage Hall, Veritas Christian Academy and home schoolers. At least \$150.00 will be awarded for the best essay at each school, and at least \$100.00 for the runner-up at each school. An additional \$150.00 for the county overall best essay and at least \$100.00 for the best runner-up will also be awarded.

In accordance with our contest rules, we must have at least three qualified essays for a student of each school to receive an award. We plan to have **radio, television and/or newspaper coverage for the top winners at each school**. The county winner will present his or her essay at the commemoration service on December 7th. We urge representation from each high school to attend the December 7th event.

Essay rules will be presented to public and private high school principals before school starts. High school officials will be consulted to arrange for Teams of Veterans to visit the schools during September, October and early November.

a patriotic commemorative program observing Pear Harbor Day will be held each year on December 7th at the Historic Courthouse on Main Street, beginning at 11:00am and concluding at 12:00 noon. Veterans are encouraged to attend and to wear their military or veteran uniforms.

COL William T. Stanley, USAF-Ret., Chairman PHDCC