

## **Drafted Into the Navy**

While at my granddaughter's birthday party, I talked to the girl's great grandfather who served in the US Navy in the 1950s. He received his draft notice and reported to the induction center in Fargo expecting to go into the Army. However, the Navy was short of men and a few of the draftees were sent to the Navy. He was one of them and went to basic training in San Diego, CA and then to advanced training learning how to create and fill Oxygen tanks for the pilots. He was assigned to an aircraft carrier and spent the remainder of his two year obligation in and around Japan on the Bon Homme Richard. Since his home port was in Yokosuka, Japan and a few years later my home base was Misawa, Japan, we had a great conversation. Being drafted into a branch other than the Army only occurred when not enough people enlisted. While I was in the Air Force, one of my friends told me about a draftee at the induction center being told that he was going to the Marine Corps. This did not happen often, however. In my research, I found several well-known people were drafted during the 1950s including, of course, Elvis Presley who served in Germany a few years after my older brother Bob served in the Army in Germany. Also drafted were baseball players Willie Mays, Ernie Banks, Don Newcombe. Actors Clint Eastwood, Kris Kristofferson and singer Johnny Cash also served.

Going back further in history, we will be seeing an important celebration in November. On Veterans Day, originally called Armistice Day, 2018, we will celebrate and remember the end of World War I, also known as the War to End All Wars. It obviously was not. It was also called The Great War. The war left about nine million soldiers dead and another 21 million wounded. Many regard the start of the war occurred when Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sofie were shot and killed by an assassin. However, many other factors played a role in the conflict, including the expansion actions of Austro-Hungary, Germany and Russia. The Russian Revolution happened in 1917, during the war, with Russian involvement in the war dropping significantly. Russia was our ally during the early years of the war. The Moorhead Library and the Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County in the Hjemkomst Center both have presentations and displays on WWI.

As most of us know, the American Legion was formed in Europe at the end of WWI. The Legion had its annual convention in Minneapolis this summer, 100 years after the end of the War and the creation of the Legion.

November 6 is Election Day. Please learn about our candidates and vote for those who represent your views and beliefs. It is not only our right as citizens but also our responsibility.