When one thinks about Veterans Day many words come to mind: remembrance, honor, valor, courage and sacrifice are just a few. Every November 11th in America, no matter what day of the week it falls on, the country comes together to honor and pay tribute to the fearless veterans of our past and current wars.

World War I was a long and bloody conflict that the Allied nations and Central Powers fought ruthlessly. An armistice was finally reached between the Allies and Germany at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918, ending “The Great War.”

Continued on page 4

Viewing veterans’ war photographs, journals, maps, and other documents is now just a click away for those who have internet access. CCSU has begun digitizing all records and photographs of veterans who have been interviewed for the Veterans History Project (VHP). The first step was the design and creation of the VHP web site by undergraduate student Björn Boyer. The photographs and documents of more than 30 of our veterans are now available on the internet, with additional records being added every day. To view your own records or those of other veterans, please follow these simple steps:

Continued on page 2

(Courtesy of Nicholas Lavnikevich)
served in U.S. Navy in WW II

(Courtesy of Robert August)
served in U.S. Navy in WW II

http://www1.va.gov/opa/vetsday/med/
Once you are on the internet...........

1. Type www.ccsu.edu/vhp into your address bar, which will take you to the VHP home page.
2. To view veterans’ photographs and documents, click on “search database.”
3. You can then search by name, war, or branch of service.

Please contact the Center if you have any questions, find any errors in the labeling of your records or you have problems connecting to our site. Please check back regularly as records will be continuously added. As we move forward, our goal is to have all records and all video and audio recordings located on the same web site, making it more convenient to view and search the entire collection of materials for each veteran at one location. Please bear with us as we construct our web site.

Steve Kliger, Executive Director of the CPPSR, commented that, "Congress has determined that in the 21st century, more formal and informal learning must take place through the use of technology. Recognizing this, the Center for Public Policy and Social Research is providing for the digitization of our oral history collections. This will make our archival resources accessible nationwide, via the internet, to students, researchers, veterans and the general public, and anyone who may have difficulty using traditional library services.”
Amy Arsenault and Björn Boyer are the two student assistants presently working on the Veterans History Project. These two outstanding students have the crucial job of scanning and editing all of the materials we receive from our veterans. Amy and Björn are responsible for putting captions on all the photos and documents, and formatting each photo and document for the internet. They have both put in long hours of work, checking and re-checking details, and have processed thousands of photographs and documents.

Amy, an undergraduate student in the Honors Program, is majoring in the Social Sciences and plans to become a Social Studies teacher at the secondary level. Although Amy will be leaving the VHP when she graduates this spring, her future students will benefit from all that she has learned first hand from our many veterans. Amy’s interest in history, meticulous attention to detail and strong work ethic make her a perfect fit for the VHP.

Björn, an international student from Germany, is a sophomore at CCSU majoring in Mathematics. He plans to teach Math at the high school level when he graduates. When he is not working at the Center for Public Policy and Social Research, one can find Björn on the playing-field. He is a member of the men’s soccer team and regularly participates in triathlons to keep in shape. Björn has worked on the VHP since CCSU became an official partner with the Library of Congress last fall. Björn has honed his graphic design skills over the past year and is responsible for our desktop publishing and the professional design and maintenance of the VHP web page.

Evelyn Green, the VHP archivist, is a Masters of Library Science candidate with a concentration in Archives at Simmons College in Holyoke, MA. She graduated Cum Laude from St. Joseph College in West Hartford, CT in May of 2005 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in American Studies with a concentration in Archives and Museum Skills. Evelyn processes and catalogs the personal papers and multimedia materials for all of the veterans in the VHP Collection. Evelyn also works as an Archival Intern for the Episcopal Diocese of CT in Hartford where she processes personal papers and records, and assists with reference services. Evelyn’s internship opportunities with CIGNA Corporation of Bloomfield, CT, and the Connecticut Historical Society of Hartford, provided her with a diverse range of archival experience processing both corporate and manuscript collections.

“Never has there been a good war or bad peace”
~ Benjamin Franklin
In honor of this momentous event, President Wilson made November 11, 1919, the first commemorative Armistice Day, proclaiming: “To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those (WWI veterans) who died in the country’s service with gratitude for the victory.”¹

On May 13th, 1938, an Act (52 Stat. 351; 5 U.S. Code, Sec. 87a) was initiated making November 11th a legal holiday. It was originally deemed “Armistice Day” – a day dedicated to peace and honoring WWI veterans. In the aftermath of WWII and the Korean War, in 1954 the Act was amended and became “Veterans Day,” to honor veterans from all American Wars. Dwight D. Eisenhower became the first President to issue a “Veterans Day Proclamation.”

In 2006 on November 11, there will be many ceremonies taking place locally and across the country for Veterans Day. CCSU’s President Dr. Miller will be leading a Veterans Day Ceremony at our university on Friday, November 10 at 3:00 o’clock. There will also be a Veterans Day National Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery’s Memorial Amphitheater. It is a great day to give back and honor those who have given so much for this country.

Source: ¹ History of Veterans Day, United States Department of Veterans Affairs, 2006

As an archive partner with the Library of Congress, it is our privilege to collect and preserve the personal accounts of the service and sacrifice of our Connecticut heroes.

**WHAT’S NEW & FUTURE PLANS**

- Students in Dr. John Tully’s History 497 will be interviewing a veteran for the VHP collection.
- Katherine Tierney Leahy’s story about her experience in the U.S. Navy Nurse Corps and her service in Guam during WW II is highlighted in the fall issue of the Connecticut History Journal.
- CCSU purchased a new server and software to accommodate the massive audio and video files, and other primary source documents and photos that have been archived. A successful test of streaming video has been run, and video taped interviews will soon be transferred to the server.

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¹ History of Veterans Day, United States Department of Veterans Affairs, 2006