

VFW AUXILIARY, DEPT. of CONNECTICUT

Bulletin 4

In March of 1959, a high school Junior named Robert Heft was given a history assignment. He designed a new American flag with 50 stars on it. Alaska had recently been added and Hawaii was soon to be added. He sewed rows of 5 and 6 alternately on a blue background and attached it to an older flag's stripes of his grandparent's flag. He received a B- grade. When he protested the lower grade, his teacher, Stanley Pratt, told him if he wanted a better grade it should be approved in Washington.

Heft's next move was to send his flag to Michael DiSalle, the governor of Ohio where he lived. DiSalle displayed it at the state Capital and the Governor's Mansion. Heft then brought it to his congressman, Walter H. Moeller who lived in Lancaster. He told Moeller he could file it in a cabinet or closet until there was a contest or a need for a 50 star flag.

Heft graduated and went to work as a draftsman at Diamond Power Specialty. They made parts for boilers. One morning, he received a call from President Dwight D. Eisenhower! Many coworkers listened in as he was told his design was chosen for the next flag.

He was told that thousands of designs had been submitted. Eisenhower chose his. He was invited to the White House for the unveiling ceremony. On July 4, 1960, he was seated between President Eisenhower and Congressman Moeller to watch the flag be raised. He drove home that night and later contacted his history teacher, who changed his grade to A.

Sadly, Robert Heft died in 2009 at the age of 67. He will be remembered as the designer of our 50-star flag.

"From our roots to our branches, extending service to our Veterans"- National President's motto

"Never forget the difference you make"- Department President's motto

*Susan Dubay Dept. Americanism Chairman
bluesue1952@gmail.com (860)417-9259
1091 Buckingham St. Apt. 29 Watertown, CT 06795*