

For Secondary Students of History

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Joseph Petrowski is currently the CEO of the combined Cumberland Farms-Gulf Oil Group. Petrowski is a member of the Board of South Jersey Industries. Petrowski is also a trustee of Boston College High School as well as a Board member of the Financial Economic Institute of Claremont McKenna College and a Board Member of the Henry Kravis Institute. He has written numerous articles on energy and public policy, regulation and market development, and is a frequent guest on MSNBC, CNBC, Fox Business News and Bloomberg radio. Petrowski graduated with honors from Harvard University with a degree in economics and government.

I was very fortunate to develop a love of history from as early as I can remember. A family friend gave me a book about ancient Greece and Rome when I was barely able to read and I was captivated by the heroic tales and struggles of these ancient warriors and statesman. History

also has a strong oral tradition. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were passed down orally for hundreds of years before they were ever transcribed. As a young boy I would listen to the tales of my father and uncles who discussed the great events of their lives, the depression and World War II. My father's recount of the Normandy landing whetted my appetite to fully understand the grand theatre of that age and all its parts.

In High School I was fortunate to be among the first students selected for an experimental history course that used no textbooks but only newspapers from the period to understand the forces of history. I came to an important realization that history is not the study of great men and extraordinary events but a tapestry of everyday life and ever present forces that are shaped and influenced by leaders. Reading the want ads and classified of a newspaper in 1930 tells you more about the Great Depression than statistics on Gross Domestic Product.

Understanding these trends and forces was the key value in studying history. The dates, individuals, and special events were important mileposts on the road of history, but understanding the route and entire terrain surrounding the watershed events was the core treasure of studying history. Where the river goes and where and when it crests is interesting, but the forces behind that river are the true gems of study.

My early love affair with history had many beneficial by-products. Without traditional textbook training—

and maybe because of it—I was able to score 790 out of a possible 800 on my achievement test. But the real sustaining value is that to this day I must read 3 or 4 newspapers a day, and no book on history escapes at least a cursory look, if not a full read. My friends have commented that I almost never read fiction, but I point out that history has story variance that no fiction writer could ever replicate.

But while as a young man I was mesmerized by the wonder of the story, it is only as an adult that I realized history is not about the past, it is about today and most critically the future.

Anyone who has ever read William Manchester or Barbara Tuchman will understand how the story of eternal struggles and universal and constantly reappearing forces is the essence of understanding life. It is said that history repeats itself, but unfortunately not always in the same fashion. History is not really repeating because in fact it never pauses. If we think events are different this time it is only because we are blinded by the details and do not understand these great underlying forces for good and evil are always with us. The struggle for freedom and for liberty did not begin with ancient Greeks nor end with our founding fathers. Tyranny manifests itself in many forms. Taxation and property rights were as important in the time of King Richard's medieval England as they are today in the Colorado River basin.

continued on page 2

The conflict between Christianity and Islam is not new. Kim Jung Il of North Korea is not the first despot nor will he be the last. The struggle for resources, the tide of immigration, the great issues of war and peace, and the balance of economic development with social justice have never left us.

When my son recently traveled to Vietnam and reported how much the people there loved the United States and wanted better relations (although they fought a decade long war that cost almost 500,000 lives on both sides), I came to an understanding. Only someone who has understood and studied the forces for war and the force for appeasement can be fully equipped to make informed judgments on this most critical issue. When the Gulf of Tonkin incident happened would an understanding of the passions and forces unleashed by the sinking of the Maine that led to the Spanish American War have led us to a better decision? When true evil faces us, would an understanding of Chamberlain like moments of appeasement bring clarity of purpose? What does the Scopes trial tell us about the disagreement on stem cell research?

I still have the first book on the ancient Greeks and Romans. It is still relevant. History is not a series of facts about the past but the ever present ether in which we live. History is really the study of philosophy, economics, sociology, religion, morality, government, and all of the disciplines touching civilization. Understanding history is at the core of what is necessary for an educated citizen to live responsibly, never mind what is necessary for a leader to perform well. I have called on the lessons of history more often in the discharge of my responsibilities as CEO of Cumberland Gulf Oil Group than any other subject. n

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Access to the NHC network, which includes chapters in 43 states and over 11,000 members, is a great benefit of joining the NHC. We encourage you to read about other chapters in your state or across the country, and to contact a fellow Advisor to swap ideas or explore new opportunities! We have provided the e-mail addresses for Advisors at the chapters featured. Also, to explore specific sites click on the bolded text to be redirected to the website.

Abington Junior High School (PA) recently attended the **Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire** in Manheim, PA. The students enjoyed a wonderful afternoon learning about life during the 16th century. They witnessed the sport of falconry, a human chess match and a medieval joust to name a few of the available period activities. The members also toured one of the most historic cemeteries in the country, **Laurel Hill** in Philadelphia, PA. While on this tour the students learned about life during the 18th century and the architecture of the time, as well as information on important historical figures who are buried there such as General George Meade of the American Civil War...Contact: **Shaun Little** (ShaunLittle@Abington.k12.pa.us)

Adams Central (IN) hosted its annual Veterans Day program, in which over four hundred people were in attendance, in addition to the student body. Their composite oral history binders were once again presented to veterans interviewed the prior year; veterans have told the club that they cherish these binders. New this year was the addition of sound bites from last year's veteran interviews; these were interspersed with the media presentation that included a scroll of all names of veterans submitted to them, and pictures gleaned from last year's interviews. This makes the presentation truly reflect Adams County history...Contact: **Carolyn McCammon** (McCammoc@accs.k12.in.us)



Members of the Newton Community High School (IL) History Club traveled to Lawrence County, Illinois, on the banks of the Wabash River to participate in an archaeological dig. The Central Wabash Archaeological Chapter is excavating 3,100-year old Riverton Indian Culture site, and History Club students were shown artifacts recently excavated (including Native musical instruments made from bone and pottery from European settlements in the 19th century).

The **Alexander Central History Club (NC)** has had an active autumn. They led their school in celebrating Constitution Day by reading an age-appropriate book to preschoolers about the Preamble. They are also planning a trip to the **Biltmore House** in Asheville, NC to attend their annual Candlelight Christmas Tour. Biltmore was the residence of George Vanderbilt, and officially opened to friends and family on Christmas Eve in 1895. It encompasses 125,000 acres, designed by Fredrich Law Olmstead, and a home with four acres of floor space, designed by famous architect Richard Morris Hunt... Contact: **Natasha Haas** (nhaas@alexander.k12.nc.us)

Barnegat High School (NJ) had an interesting and exciting experience on Veterans Day. Students gathered at Barnegat's famed gazebo, located downtown, for an honorarium and memorial for all Barnegat veterans. An appearance was made by the mayor, and actual war heroes from Barnegat led the morning with prayers and kind words. Concluding the service was the traditional trumpet solo of 'Taps' to commemorate the veterans, with rifles shots toward the sky.

Afterward, the VFW offered members to join them for a luncheon with the veterans. Once settled, the club had the chance to talk with the veterans and get accounts on a personal level...Contact: **Lesley-Ann Thomson** (lthomson@mail.bts.k12.nj.us)

Chanute High School (KS) has participated in a couple of activities this fall. In October they attended a lecture by journalist Elizabeth Kolbert on global warming at The University of Kansas. Also during that month, they traveled to the **Greater Kansas City Japan Festival**, an event that featured music, martial arts performances, food, and lots of other cultural presentations...Contact: **Mike Bruner** (brunerm@usd413.org)

Clayton A. Bouton's Club (NY) had the opportunity to take part in a National Mock Election. There were 100 participants (from grades 9-12) who took a brief moment out of their lunch period to take part in this mock election that was occurring all over the state and country. Laptops were set up in the Commons and students could vote voluntarily for a NYS Governor, members of Senate, and the House of Representatives. The group reports that it was a great opportunity for students to start to take positive action as emerging citizens. For more information on this program please visit: www.nationalmockelection.org...Contact: **Jeanne Young** (jyoung@vcsdk12.org)

Fargo North High School (ND) began their year during the first week of October, braving the North Dakota weather at the local "Bonanzaville". Rather than spend a day learning in their traditional classrooms, students shared their knowledge and passion for the past through Bonanzaville's History Days, a time when area schools are invited on a tour of the facilities. Bonanzaville is an outdoor collection of 24 historic buildings-turned-museums, such as the church (where weddings still can take place), the bank, and the fire house. Each building is bursting with artifacts and stories—these stories are brought to local youth through the History Days, during

which the Club helps lead tours. The tours last about two hours, and each group goes to at least eight buildings. ...Contact: **Colin Kloster** (klostec@fargo.k12.nd.us)

Hastings High School (NE) conducted a historical tour of prominent and interesting figures' grave sites at Parkview Cemetery in Hastings on Halloween day. In preparation for the tour, students went to downtown Hastings to see historic plaques on buildings, and researched information about early inhabitants. The tour was well attended by members of the community, with some announcing they would be back for the Second Annual Cemetery Tour in 2011.... Contact: **Robert Kerr** (rkerr@esu9.org)

Hopewell's Junior Historians (TX) are

trying to get the State, Local and County members this year to push forward on getting improvements to their adopted cemetery, Union Hill Cemetery (UHC). They are hoping to get quality fencing, gates, a cemetery entrance gate and a historical marker. The reason for the urgency is that with road expansion and developers moving in the UHC is in need of protection to preserve its historical significance

to the area...Contact: **Ron Goins** (charles_goins@roundrockisd.org)

Lakeview Junior High School (MA) has been organizing its annual Washington D.C. trip. The trip to the nation's capital will be next April 2011. They also decided to have a second trip this year and will be traveling to **Gettysburg** and Amish country over Memorial Day weekend. They also continue to have their monthly field



Fargo North (ND) students leading 4th graders and their teachers around Bonanzaville.

trips as well. Their first trip into Boston was on Saturday, October 23rd. The group visited the **John F. Kennedy Museum** and had lunch at the Hard Rock Cafe. The November trip was to the **Institute of Contemporary Art**, which is a new destination for the History Club... Contact: Rebecca Duda (rduda@dracutpublicschools.net)

The **Merion Mercy Academy History Club** (PA) has held three meetings this school year. The direction of the club is to discuss major events that have shaped the culture of the United States. The first formal meeting focused on "Rock and Roll" and the influence that music has on morals. Meeting #2 examined the Scopes Trial and the conflict between science and religion. The third meeting was a business meeting to discuss **National History Day** topics and procedures, as they get ready to compete in NHD. During their next meeting they are planning on discussing weapons of war, and how the world can work together to limit proliferation... Contact: Sally Condart (scondart@hotmail.com)

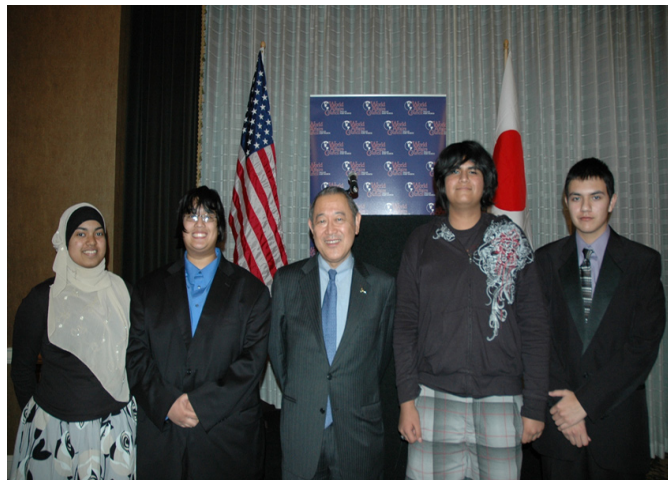
Mexico Senior High School (MO) paid a visit in November to the **National World War I Memorial** in Kansas City. At the memorial they were able to learn more about the war, and were able to see the impressive collection of artifacts on exhibit. Additionally, the club has five students entering the Winston Churchill essay contest this year. This contest is sponsored by the **Winston Churchill Memorial and Library**, and ask students to write a five-page essay on whether they consider Churchill a Renaissance man... Contact: **Clark Winslow** (cwinslow@mexico.k12.mo.us)

Millbrook High School's (NC) *Bridges Newsletter* Club has completed its first issue of the school year. This unique Newsletter focuses on several different subjects concerning the lessons of the Vietnam War and

recent international relations. Topics include: "Learning the Lessons of Vietnam", "End of Combat? End of Mission?", and "A Window into the Life of a Pakistani Teenager". You can view the Newsletter on their website: <http://mhs.wcpss.net/academics/poling/index.htm...> Contact: Lindy Poling (lgpoling@juno.com)

Montville Township High School (NJ) has been engaged in two activities. To raise money to fund field trips and the trip to go to the National History Day national competition, students have been selling discount cards to those living in their town. These cards allow people in the community to get reduced prices at local stores. They have already generated \$4,000 in revenue! As an attempt to increase publicity for the club in their school, they constantly change their History Club bulletin board to notify members of upcoming meetings

and events. The board also displays historical events that happened during a specific month or movement. By being able to catch the attention of students—especially underclassmen—they have been able to increase membership from last year... Contact: **Peter Porter** (pporter@montville.net)



Nimitz High School (TX) students meeting Japanese Ambassador to the U.S., Ichiro Fujisaki, during his lecture in Fort Worth. From L-R: Nabila Alam, Minh Le, Andres Hernandez, and Maricio Valdevinos.

Ransom High School (FL) recognized veterans during Veterans Day week with a case display of

pictures and memorabilia of their teachers who have served in the military. In addition, they are participating in **Wreaths Across America**. This organization works with groups across America to promote the purchase of Christmas wreaths for the graves of veterans. The Club organized a school-wide sale of these wreaths to be placed on graves at **Barrancas National Cemetery** in Pensacola. The goal is 140, which would be roughly 10% of the student population, and members will help place the wreaths on veterans' graves on December 11th... Contact: **Jan Enfinger** (jenfinger@escambia.k12.fl.us)

CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT: HENRY CLAY HIGH SCHOOL, KENTUCKY

In 2005 I created the Henry Clay History Lab as a resource to help tactile learners appreciate the social, economic and technological aspects of history. Five years later we have accumulated over one thousand artifacts, primary sources and historical reproductions that are used daily in the classroom as teaching tools. During the course of collecting artifacts for our Lab we were honored to accept two Japanese combat flags captured during WWII from a local veteran here in Lexington, Kentucky. These flags were covered in handwritten missives from the families of the Japanese soldiers who fought under these ragged, war torn banners. The moment I saw them I knew the Henry Clay History Lab had a new project; somehow we would translate the writing and attempt to find the surviving members of each family who added their own personal farewells to these fascinating WWII relics.

In the last two months we have successfully translated the first of the two flags in our collection. Our next step is to contact the surviving family members of the soldiers who received these messages and exchange information regarding the soldiers who received these personal and sometimes jingoistic missives from home. Of the 21 individual messages we have translated most demand the recipient be faithful in their service to Japan. "You must die gracefully," is scrawled between "Do not think to return alive" and "Establish the great country." However, there are also notes of sadness. One family member proclaims "damn me, but I'll do it," while another simply comments that they trust their loved

one to return alive. All of the messages reveal an aspect of WWII era Japan that is often lost in textbooks and educational videos. These are very personal and heartfelt proclamations; even the demands for dedication to Japan contain a tone of finality and loss that speaks to the nobility, reserve and ultimate humanity of our former enemy.

Our librarian, **Amanda Hurley**, has been helping us develop contacts in and around Tokyo in an effort

to proliferate the messages and names we have discovered during the translation phase of our project. It is our hope that one day the Henry Clay History Club can video conference with the surviving family members of the people who wrote these messages, or at least discover more information about the men who carried



these flags into battle. As the project continues we will pass along newly discovered information and share our findings with our fellow National History Club members. If you believe you can help us in our efforts please contact me, as any assistance would be greatly appreciated.

* For more information contact: Advisor **Chris Snow** at **Christopher.snow@fayette.kyschools.us**

CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT: FORT COLLINS HIGH SCHOOL, COLORADO

Dr. Amani Whitfield Lecture Reflection by **Tu-Ann Rose**, History Club Member. Fort Collins' Club traveled to Colorado State to hear Dr. Whitfield speak on freed and enslaved African-Americans in Nova Scotia.

*** **Harvey Amani Whitfield** is an historian and a CSU graduate. He has focused his studies to learning about not only black loyalists, but loyalist slaves. He also focuses on the Maritimes: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and places in that area of Canada. His lecture was not only informational, but also highly engaging and witty. It seemed like a cross between a comedy show and a historical book reading. He is currently working on a second book called *From Slavery to Slavery*.

Black loyalists were slaves that were offered freedom by the British if they would run away from their masters and fight for the British during the Revolutionary War. Between 1783 and 1792, many black loyalists fled to Nova Scotia and the Maritimes. The catch was that they were free, but not completely. They were highly discriminated against and treated unequally. Many would flee from the Maritimes to Sierra Leone during that time period as well.

Loyalist slaves on the other hand were slaves with British owners. Many of these loyalists would force their slaves to migrate to Nova Scotia. Thomas Peters was a leader of the loyalist slaves. He was born in Africa, sold to North America, forced to flee to Nova Scotia, and fled again to Africa. He petitioned Lord Grenville that the country was "injured by the toleration of slavery." Whitfield said that black migration to Nova Scotia was based on the British, and there was no true emancipation. Blacks were promised the thought of freedom yet they were never truly free. Also, blacks were promised amounts of land if they came to the Maritimes. Most did not receive any land and those that did would only receive one or two acres which was not even enough for subsistence farming.

One big issue that Whitfield explained was an issue of semantics. The difference between a slave and a servant was never made clear and was used by some to

make it seem as if they were good people. Having a slave was much less acceptable than having a servant. The words were ambiguous. *The Book of Negroes* contained a list of all blacks and what they were considered as—free or serving. John Paul Hamus, one of the biggest slave owners, would also list his property under servants even though we can assume that they were slaves. Whitfield made his point that historians deal with limited information and it is difficult to make a whole story out of only a few documents.

Slaves that were sent to Nova Scotia to become "free" also had to deal with another catch—they could be re-enslaved. A man by the name of Jesse Gray re-enslaved a supposedly free black woman named Mary Postal. He also tried to sell her children into slavery for "100 bushels of potatoes." The case was taken to court and Jesse Gray ended up winning despite the evidence that she was a free woman.

Although loyalist slaves had almost nothing, they had racial identity. They had no freedom, and were treated no better than any other blacks even though they were supposed to become free. Dr. Harvey Amani Whitfield is more interested in the bigger picture of slavery in Canada. Many people believe that Canada was a racial utopia, even though much research shows that is not true at all. They claimed that they treated everyone equally and that no one was discriminated against, yet the realities are much different.

This lecture was nothing like what I expected. Dr. Whitfield was an amazing speaker who kept the entire crowd engaged at all times. He was so passionate about what he was talking about that it made me appreciate history so much more. It has never been my favorite subject, but I am just going to come to class with the attitude and excitement that he did and hope that I can learn and find something to be passionate about just like him. It was by far the most interesting lecture I have ever been to. I also loved how he would take notes when someone refuted what he was saying and did not argue, but promised to look further into their issue.

Richard Montgomery's Chapter (MD) is planning to use historical artifacts such as newspapers, magazines, and coins donated to their chapter two years ago to prepare a display for the school's main hallway. The items range from newspapers from the day that the Titanic sank to the last coins of the Soviet Union and British Hong Kong, and old copies of Life magazine to *The Washington Post* from the day *Bush v. Gore* was decided. The chapter has organized, sorted, and cataloged the items, during which they found many objects that would immediately catch the eye of the casual observer walking by....Contact: **Bob Hines** (rphines@aol.com)

Sayreville's History Honor Society (NJ) continues to make its mark on the community. The Honor Society continues to work on the Sayreville Oral History Project with the **Sayreville Historical Society**. The interviews are being preserved and shared on YouTube. The project aims to preserve, through the words of those residents who witnessed it, the story of the profound changes that have taken place in the Borough of Sayreville due to post-war suburbanization. Feel free to explore this project at **Sayreville History**...Contact: **Bob Szabo** (robert.szabo@sayrevillek12.net)

St. John's High School's (MA) officers have broken the year down into a series of topics including "The Vikings", "The Roman Empire", "The Rise and Fall of Communism", "World War II" and "America the Hated Empire". Several students collectively work on each topic, preparing multi-media power point presentations that involve text, graphics, art, poetry, painting, caricatures, genre films and historical documentaries. In addition, with a wonderful template, students prepare a jeopardy competition for each one of the topics as a capstone competition to bring the topic to a close. Their hope is to engage younger students in active learning, presentation and assembling of topical areas of study...Contact: **Carl Wilson** (cwilson@stjohnshigh.org)



Williams Bay's Club (WI) will again travel to Europe this summer for a 13 day, 5 country tour. Previous members have been able to luge down the Swiss Alps, seen Queen Elizabeth, gazed at the Sistine Chapel, and more.

West Harpeth Christian Tutorial (TN) took a Living History Tour at the **Nashville City Cemetery**. The cemetery is said to be the oldest city cemetery in the country that was completely integrated by race or religion. Rich and poor, black and white, if they lived in Nashville, they could be buried there. And this year's tour included a wide variety of those former citizens. Nashville's original settler, Mrs. James Robertson, was there sharing the difficulties she and her family faced in the early frontier days. The first black ordained minister shared about how he went from being a slave to a Baptist preacher. An undertaker explained how he developed a

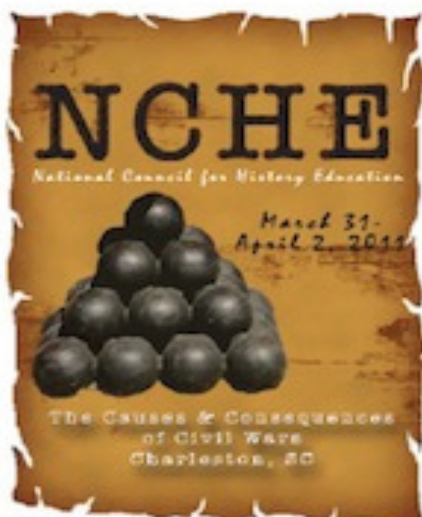
special balming technique so that Civil War soldiers could be preserved for their trip back home. And Mrs. James K. Polk even came to tell her story, including how when her husband died unexpectedly, they had to borrow a plot to bury him...Contact: **Sharon Wilharm** (sharonwilharm@att.net)

West Morris Central High School (NJ) conducted a voter registration drive to stress the importance of civic responsibility in September. Their eighteen year-old students were encouraged to register, which enabled them to vote in the November elections.

On election day, club members visited 2nd and 3rd grade classes in their local elementary

school to teach a lesson on government and the election process. Members selected a book to read aloud to the children and then conducted an activity related to the study of American government. The students enjoyed interacting with the youngsters and having the opportunity to learn what it is like to be a teacher. Students made sample ballots, word search puzzles, and writing assignments to supplement information they shared...**Rosanne Lichatin** ----- (lichatin@wmchs.org)

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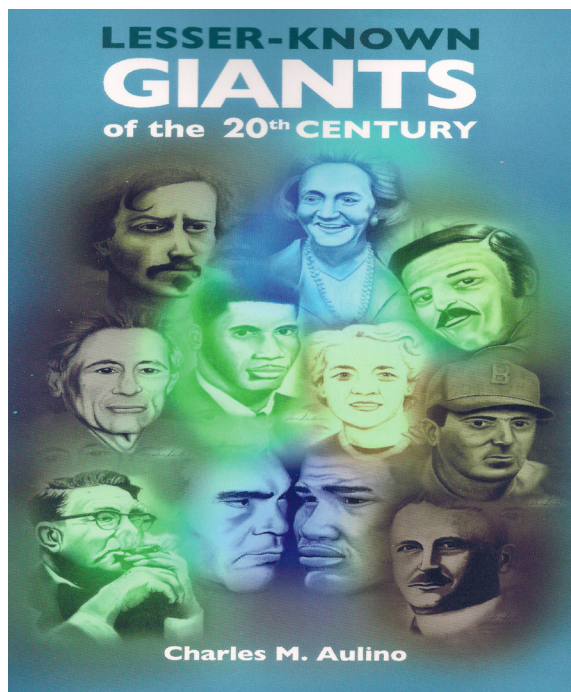
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Parkway West High School (MO) visited two historical cemeteries in St. Louis, and learned about influential people in American History such as Dred Scott, William Tecumseh Sherman, Kate Chopin, and William Clark.



Adams Central High School (IN) hosting their annual Veterans Day program on November 9. On display is a list of all Korean War veterans from their county, to mark the 60th anniversary of the Korean War.



This book sheds light on great men and women of The American Century. Each was famous while living, each used celebrity to do some good in this world, and each is now largely forgotten. These wonderful life stories often fade from the collective memory so that the life lessons and inspiration they offer are lost to future generations.

The individual stories each inspire awe at the breadth of accomplishment that is possible in a single lifetime. The subjects' lives overlapped and spanned the 20th Century, the history of which serves as a fitting backdrop. The people covered in this book include: I.J. Paderewski, A.P. Giannini, Moe Berg, Max Schmeling & Joe Louis, Branch Rickey, Margaret Chase Smith, Medgar Evers, Katharine Graham, Paul Winchell, and Edward W. Said.

If you would like to order a copy of *Lesser-Known Giants of the 20th Century*, you can do so through **Amazon**.



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“...It is also worth thinking about as we consider how to reform our education system. As we’ve known for a long time, factory workers who never saw the completed product and worked on only a small part of it soon became bored and demoralized, But when they were allowed to see the whole process—or better yet become involved in it—productivity and morale improved. Students are no different. When we chop up the work they do into little bits—history facts and vocabulary and grammar rules to be learned—it’s no wonder that they are bored and disengaged. The achievement of *The Concord Review’s* authors offers a different model of learning. Maybe it’s time for us to take it seriously.”

The NHC would like to recognize the following colleges and universities as supporters of our organization. We strongly encourage students who are considering majoring in history in college, and may be applying to one of these schools, to visit the school’s website listed down below to find out more about the history department.



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The National History Club is a 501(c)(3) organization that relies on grants and donations to support efforts. If you are passionate about history and would like to contribute to our mission of promoting history at the secondary level please contact **Robert Nasson** (rnasson@nationalhistoryclub.org).