

Clarence Peeters

My name is Clarence Peeters, Clar, for short. I was born May 18, 1907 to Leonard and Nettie (Hammen) Peeters in Little Chute. I am the middle son of the three boys: Frank, myself and Orville. I also have four sisters: Rose, Anna, Rena, and Jo.

I attended school at St. John's and went on to work at Kimberly Clark mill in Kimberly until 1972. I retired then at the age of 65. I was fortunate to be in the Kimberly Clark 50 Year Retirement Group.

I married Emma Weyenberg, daughter of Duce and Minnie (Peeters) Weyenberg. I lived upstairs at Duce's Bar on Main Street my entire married life. Emma cleaned the bar in the morning and tended bar during the day while I worked at the mill. Although Emma and I were never blessed with children, Orv's sons, Carl, Tom and son-in-law, Mike Bevers were like sons to me especially during many hunting and fishing excursions.

Music has always been an important part of my life and has colored most of my pages. It began for me at the age of 15. My brothers and I joined the Little Chute Community Band. Orville played the clarinet, Frank the trombone, I the trumpet, and my dad, Leonard played the bass drum. For 50 years Orv and I played with the Little Chute Band. We walked many miles in July 4th parades, played many band concerts at local nursing homes, and enjoyed the camaraderie during our evening practices.

In the early 1940's at the start of WWII, I was asked by the local Legion members to play TAPS at the funerals of the boys killed in service. It was an honor for me to do this simple task. It also allowed me to give back to those who fought for me. I was never able to be drafted as I was labeled "4F". Little did I know that

playing TAPS for fallen soldiers and later at funerals would span 45 years of my life. Although I saw this as a privilege, the American Legion recognized my dedication to the job and made me an honorary Legion member.

In 1944 my brother, Orville, and I started a six piece band called LeRoy's Dutch Boys. We started playing in the band to entertain the guys and gals who were home during the war. When the war ended and the boys started coming back, we then would play for weddings and bridal showers. Before we knew it, we had full time jobs on the weekend and play together until 1964.

In 1964, the American Legion approached me to start the Little Chute Girls Drum and Bugle Corp. Now, I know about music, but I didn't know anything about starting a Drum and Bugle Corp, especially with young kids. But I was assured that the parents would help me out and the Dutch Girls Drum and Bugle Corp was started. We competed in parades around the state and went to Holland, MI several times to perform for the Tulip Festival. We were fortunate to win awards and trophies in the All-Girls category with competitions held in Madison, Milwaukee, Eau Claire, and Green Bay. I was so proud to be the one and only director until it disbanded somewhere around 1974.

As music was important in my live, so was my faith and family. I was a life long member of St. John's Parish. I was a volunteer fireman for 30 years, and served on several village committees.

In 1980 when I died, I was given a full military service. As was fitting, a recording of me playing TAPS was played as I was laid to rest at St. John's Cemetery.

Little Chute Historical Society Cemetery Walk 2008