



CIVICS SUMMIT AGENDA

Nassau Community College CCB Multi Purpose Room

- 8:30 Arrival & Registration
- 8:50 Welcome and Introductions: Cathy Soref, Margaret Marchand, Lauren Themis of Operation Democracy
- 9:00 National Anthem: performed by Holy Child Academy Select Choir
- 9:10 Opening Speaker: David Spinnato, East Meadow Union. Free School District - Flags for Freedom
- 9:20 Film Presentation: Sixth of June
- 9:35 Keynote Speaker: Helen Patton, The Life and Legacy of the Most Famous General, General George S. Patton

During the breakout sessions, Teachers, Administrators and Superintendents kindly report to Lounge Room 210 for the Seal of Civic Readiness Presentation

- 10:25 Breakout Session 1: (30 minutes)
- 11:00 Breakout Session 2: (30 minutes)
- 11:45 Break for Lunch
- 12:15 Film Trailer: Mother of Normandy
- 12:30 Keynote Speakers: Jean Quetier, Maurice Renaud, Doug Stebleton, Jeff Stoffer
- 1:00 Moderated Q&A Panel: Cold Spring Harbor Students & Superintendent
- 1:30 Farewell & Departure

Breakout Session 1

Jeff Stoffer - American Legion and YOU!!! Legacy, Leadership, and the Future of Civic Engagement

In this compelling breakout session, Jeff Stoffer, American Legion Director of Communications and author of *Mother of Normandy*, explores the deep historical roots and modern mission of the American Legion.

Drawing powerful connections between the organization's founding and Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt Jr., a key leader in the D-Day invasion at Normandy, Jeff highlights how the Legion's legacy of service continues to shape generations of Americans.

The session will also showcase the Legion's youth programs and initiatives that inspire civic leadership, honor veterans, and strengthen communities. Jeff will discuss the future of the American Legion—how young veterans and emerging leaders can carry forward its enduring mission of patriotism, service, and citizenship.

Room: CCB 210

**Colonel Andy Anderson & Cathy Soref,
Operation Democracy President Emeritus -
Tag, You're It: Carrying the message of
Service and Memory to the Next Generation**

A 30-minute keynote featuring Cathy and Col. Anderson, sharing their personal callings to serve—Cathy through civic education and honoring veterans, and Col. Anderson through his military service and return to Normandy. Together, they reflect on their partnership, the friendships built with French citizens and WWII veterans, and their work preserving history through monuments erected by Operation Democracy and the French Resistance. Their message to students: this is your legacy to continue—tag, you're it.

Room: CCB 251

Breakout Session 3

Helen Patton Liberty Torch - Passing the Torch: Building Peace Through Connection

Passing the Torch to the NEXT Greatest Generation. Building upon the legacy of Liberty, Freedom, and Reconciliation.

At each of the sacred places along the Liberty Road, forged by her grandfather and his soldiers, Helen Patton never ceases to demonstrate a powerful approach to peace-building by cultivating personal, inter-cultural and international connections.

In this session, Helen shares highlights of her 2024 trans-Atlantic journey on the Queen Mary 2 ocean liner. Sailing across the Atlantic with 34 French young adults, they became guardians of The Flame of Liberty. This blazing light of liberation was kindled from The Arc de Triumph in Paris, protected along its journey to The United Kingdom, and supported all the way to The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington. Va.

It's a light that should never allowed to fade- A symbol of Remembrance and Fidelity between countries that once sacrificed a generation of young lives to overcome an evil contagion. Helen will explore the project's origins, its evolving impact, and its future direction bringing together youth in Normandy.

Room: CCB Multi Purpose Room

Breakout Session 4

Doug Stebleton Documentary Filmmaker - Mother of Normandy: A Woman, A War, A Life of Gratitude through the Perspective of a Documentarist

In this powerful breakout session, Doug Stebleton, filmmaker of the acclaimed documentary *Mother of Normandy*, shares his remarkable personal journey of discovery and inspiration. Doug recounts a chance meeting with Maurice Renaud, the son of Simone Renaud, during a trip that forever changed his life. That encounter ignited his deep passion for the history of Normandy and the stories of the American soldiers who liberated France. Inspired by Maurice's memories and his mother's legacy, Doug set out to tell the extraordinary story of Simone Renaud, known as the "Mother of Normandy."

Renaud, a French woman who devoted her life to honoring the American soldiers who freed her town of Sainte-Mère-Église, became the heart of Doug's film and a symbol of gratitude and remembrance. Through years of research, travel, and filmmaking, Doug's journey evolved into a lifelong mission—to preserve the stories of courage, sacrifice, and enduring friendship between nations. This session offers an intimate look at how one filmmaker's unexpected encounter blossomed into a legacy of storytelling that continues to bridge generations and keep history alive.

Room: CCB 252

Breakout Session 5

Glenn Ivers, Author of *Angels of Bastogne*

Join author Glenn Ivers for an inspiring and thought-provoking conversation about the creation of his acclaimed book *Angels of Bastogne: A Remembrance of World War II*. In this 30-minute session, Ivers will take attendees behind the scenes of his years-long research into the real-life heroes of Bastogne — U.S. Army doctor Jack Prior and Belgian nurses Renée Lemaire and Augusta Chiwy — whose courage and compassion shone amid one of the most desperate battles of World War II.

Through vivid storytelling and historical insight, Ivers will discuss how he transformed archival research, interviews, and on-site visits in Belgium into a moving work of narrative nonfiction. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of the creative process behind blending fact and storytelling, the ethical challenges of writing about real people, and the enduring lessons of humanity in times of war.

This session is ideal for readers, history enthusiasts, educators, and anyone interested in how personal stories preserve the moral and emotional truths of history.

Room: CCB 253

Breakout Session 6

Maurice Renaud, Jean Quetier & Andgie Demoncy - AVA What is the AVA French Connection

The French Connection: AVA, Amis du Veterans d’America, How a Country never has forgotten the Sacrifices of our American Soldiers and Leaders.

In this moving session, Ava Amis du Veterans d’America, Maurice Renaud, and former Mayor, Jean Quetier of Sainte Mere Eglise, offer a deeply personal perspective from the French side of history.

Through the eyes of Maurice—son of Simone Renaud, the “Mother of Normandy”—and the voices of a new generation, this session shares what it meant to witness the D-Day invasion, its aftermath, and the lasting impact on the people of Normandy. The presenters reflect on the purpose passed down through Simone: to honor the American soldiers who fought and died for freedom in a land not their own. They explore how Sainte-Mère-Église became a sacred place of return for veterans and their families—visited time and again by General Eisenhower and countless soldiers who found healing, remembrance, and gratitude on its soil.

This session is a powerful tribute to the enduring bond between the people of France and the American liberators—and a call to the next generation to never forget the price paid for freedom.

Room: CCB 254

Administrator Breakout Sessions

Joe Monastero - Superintendent Cold Spring Harbor Schools - Administrator Information Session on Hosting and Implementing the Normandy Curriculum

Join Superintendent Joe Monastero, Principal Dan Danbusky and Chairperson of Humanities Megan Gieser and students from CSH as they share Cold Spring Harbor's powerful journey integrating the Flags for Freedom ceremony, the full Normandy Curriculum, and the Remembrance Bowl into their school community. Learn how these initiatives culminated in a transformative experience, as 13 students and 3 staff traveled to Normandy for a 10 trip to honor the 81st anniversary of D-Day.

This session will offer practical insights on how your school district can adopt all or select components of the curriculum—bringing history to life, deepening civic understanding, and inspiring the next generation of engaged citizens. The session will share videos and their first hand account of their visit to Normandy and what they came away with from the experience. Questions will be taken from the audience.

Room: CCB Glass Atrium in Corridor - next to Starbucks