

Remembering Pearl Harbor

On Monday, Dec. 8, 1941, the day after the surprise Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Nampa School Superintendent John E. Walsh noticed that Japanese-American children were being persecuted by their classmates. He and other Nampa educators called for tolerance.

"Every Japanese child born here is a citizen of this country; an American in every sense of the word," Walsh maintained. "These little Japanese youngsters who are American citizens are in no way responsible for the thing that has come upon this country. We shall expect our children and the boys and girls in Nampa schools to show the tolerance they have been taught as young Americans."

Pretty Mary Yamada's picture graced newspaper pages on Dec. 10, 1941, under the heading "Typical Japanese-American." A registered nurse who had grown up in Emmett, Mary spoke for Idaho's Nisei community, saying, "We stand in full support with the actions of the American government."

That same day, officers of the Japanese-American Citizens Club of Southern Idaho purchased a \$100 U.S. Defense Bond at the Idaho First National Bank in Nampa. "We are American citizens and unswerving in our loyalty to the United States," they stated.

The attack caught almost every-

Warhawk event

The Warhawk Air Museum will commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Dec. 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor on Friday. The museum will have an exhibit of its December theme, "Homefront Defense 1941-1945," for visitors to view. The Gowen Field Color Guard will present the flags that morning. Coffee and cookies will be available throughout the day. Visitors are encouraged to come and listen, learn and share. The museum will be open from 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Admission is \$3 general, \$2 for seniors and children 9 and younger.

more concerned about the "Bell-Ringer Bargains" in Montgomery Ward's Christmas ads (nighties for \$1.19, double bar Hawthorne bicycle for \$25.95) than they were about the war being fought in Europe and Asia.

Now, suddenly, the world seemed to have changed forever. Headlines in Sunday afternoon papers screamed out that America was on a full war basis. Officials tried to reassure Americans that the country was ready for the trial. Defense plans were adequate, they said. California called 10,000 troops to guard the coast. Idaho issued 800 rifles and bayonets to men charged with protecting bridges, dams and power plants.

nation's ability to "whip Japan." Government actions against suspected enemies were swift and summary. Japanese banks were seized. Foreign nationals who "might be politically dangerous" were quickly arrested. Congressmen demanded court-martial for those responsible for the debacle at Pearl Harbor.

Behind the glaring headlines, however, life went on with surprising normalcy. One Dec. 8, 1941, report cited a recent study showing that the average family did not drink enough milk. Many Idahoans went to see Humphrey Bogart in "The Maltese Falcon" or Abbott and Costello in "Keep 'em Flying" at local theaters. Regional headlines announced that Christmas parties would go on as planned. Brookover's and CC Anderson's Christmas sale advertisements kept running.

This Dec. 7 marks the 60th anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack. The haunting similarities between those difficult days in 1941 and our own struggles since the Sept. 11 attacks remind us how close our generations truly are. The triumphs and mistakes of the World War II generation, carefully documented and freely shared, serve as guideposts for us as we today strive to act with courage, integrity and honor.