



# Steve Carr publishes article on military medal

Five-dollar purchases at a coin show prompted Carr's extensive research into the American Defense Service Medal.

**While Steve Carr** has taught automotive technology for 23 years at JCCC, his "historical need to know" has never been in neutral.

The JCCC automotive technology professor's article, *For Service in the Defense of America: The American Defense Service Medal*, was published in the January-February 2010 Journal of the Orders and Medals Society of America, co-authored by Allen Menke. The comprehensive article details the American Defense Service Medal (often called the Pre-Pearl Harbor medal), which recognizes U.S. military service between Sept. 8, 1939, and Dec. 7, 1941.

Carr's interest in the medal was piqued in his youth, when a friend of his father's wore the distinctive lapel pin representing the uniform medal. A few years ago, Carr, who has a master's degree in history from Purdue University, Ind., located and purchased an American Defense Service Medal for \$5 at a coin show. Then he found another one, and it was slightly different. The medals' variations launched two years of research and writing about the history, design,

manufacturing and regulations for award of the medal.

According to Carr, the American Defense Service Medal was authorized in an executive order signed June 28, 1941, as a way to boost morale for Americans serving in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard during the limited emergency proclaimed by President Franklin Roosevelt on Sept. 8, 1939, a week after World War II began in Europe, or during the unlimited emergency proclaimed on May 27, 1941.

Carr's article includes a fascinating section, Americans in Action, outlining Americans' presence in combat zones prior to the U.S. entry to World War II.

"At least 56 American ships were attacked by the Germans and Japanese during the State of Emergency," Carr said.

Seven of those incidents, three with heavy casualties, are detailed in the journal article, including the attack on the Reuben James and one about 1,000 miles northeast of Hawaii on Dec. 7, 1941, which killed all 35 people on board hours before the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor.

## EXECUTIVE ORDER

### AMERICAN DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL

BY VIRTUE OF THE AUTHORITY VESTED IN ME AS PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, AND AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMY AND NAVY OF THE UNITED STATES, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT THE AMERICAN DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL, INCLUDING SUITABLE APPURTENANCES, BE ESTABLISHED AND THAT THE SAID MEDAL MAY BE AWARDED, UNDER SUCH REGULATIONS AS THE SECRETARY OF WAR, THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY, AND THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY MAY PRESCRIBE, TO PERSONNEL OF THE ARMY, NAVY, MARINE CORPS, AND COAST GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES SERVING DURING THE LIMITED EMERGENCY PROCLAIMED BY ME ON SEPTEMBER 8, 1939, TO EXIST, OR DURING THE UNLIMITED EMERGENCY PROCLAIMED BY ME ON MAY 27, 1941.

FRANKLIN D ROOSEVELT  
THE WHITE HOUSE,  
JUNE 28, 1941

Carr writes about the medal's design by the Institute of the Heraldry, approved in April 1942, and about various manufacturers' deviations in width and thickness.

"This article pretty much covers everything there is to know about the medal; it's pretty esoteric," Carr said.

Controversy surrounding the medal also kindled Carr's interest. There was a 12-year delay in establishing regulations for its award and wear by the Air Force, a four-year Army debate about clasps and stars, massive over-ordering, current attempts to re-open eligibility for the medal and ties with another authorized medal that has not been issued to federal troops.

Carr completed his research while teaching full time and serving as automotive technology chair. Chronologically, Carr earned bachelor's degrees in biology and history from Hanover College, Ind., a master's degree in history from Purdue University, Ind., and a bachelor's in industrial arts from the University of Wyoming. 



An article by Steve Carr, automotive technology professor and chair, was published in the January-February 2010 Journal of the Orders and Medals Society of America.