Staff Sergeant Arthur J. Anich

Hometown: West Allis, Wisconsin and Greenfield, Wisconsin
Entered Service: September 28, 1951
Unit: 1st Marine Division, 1st Service Battalion, Fleet Marine Force
Rank: Staff Sergeant, U.S. Marine Corps
Cemetery: Section A, Site 601
Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery
Union Grove, Wisconsin

June 25, 1930 - July 26, 2007

RESEARCHED BY MARGARET HOLTGREIVE
Before the War

Arthur (Art) Anich was born to Mary and Samuel Anich in West Allis, Wisconsin, on June 25, 1930. His father immigrated from Croatia in the 1920s. He attended his local public schools and played varsity football and track before graduating from West Allis Central High School in 1948. A gifted athlete, Art earned first team all-state honors for football his senior year and a football scholarship to Marquette University.

After high school, Anich worked for Shlitz Brewing Company as a vehicle loader where he packed freight cars with cases of beer. He took pride in lifting the cases by hand and placed them one by one on top of each other in order to create a compacted load. While working here, he attended Marquette University and studied Business Administration. Somehow he found time to be quite active in Marquette student activities and played football.

When Anich was nine years old, Germany invaded Poland. Milwaukee at this time was a city of immigrants. By 1915, Milwaukee was home to over 100,000 citizens claiming Polish ancestry. During World War II, Anich listened to stories of war and witnessed the celebration of the Allied victory. This deep admiration for the men who served in World War II encouraged him to leave Marquette in 1951 and enlist in the U.S. Marine Corps.

Middle: Marquette University wrestling photograph (Anich is on top), March 26, 1950. Courtesy of Michael Anich.
Right: Arthur Anich’s senior portrait from West Allis Central High School, June 1948. Courtesy of Michael Anich.
Military Experience

After boot camp, Anich trained at Camp Pendleton in Oceanside, California. Anich was assigned to the 1st Marine Division, 1st Service Battalion, Fleet Marine Force.

Anich was trained in transport and received the job of general supply stockman. With the advantage of two years of college, Anich moved up the enlisted ranks quickly and applied for Officer Candidate School (OCS). Anich's application for OCS was approved on February 8, 1952, but rescinded one month later because his time at Marquette did not meet the educational equivalent to a bachelor's degree. By July 1952, Anich found himself on the USS General John Pope headed to Korea.

Sergeant Anich arrived at Inchon, Korea on August 9, 1952. He served in a transportation unit from August 1952 to August 1953, serving 12 months in combat conditions supplying United Nations forces.

Once Anich's year ended, he returned to the U.S. to Naval Station Great Lakes where he was debriefed and prepared to reenter society as a civilian. Anich then served in the 9th Marine Corps Reserve and Recruitment Division as a reservist. While this was an important part of his life, it would no longer be his focus. He did not have romantic memories of his service in Korea. In fact, his son said he described Korea as a “miserable” place. He enjoyed the men he served with, but had no illusions of the grandeur of war.
Veteran Experience

Anich returned to his home in southeastern Wisconsin and returned to school at Marquette University. He graduated in 1957 with a bachelor's degree in Business Administration. As a student he returned to sports and captained the wrestling team.

Eventually, he met Mary Patricia McCabe, a fellow Marquette graduate. They fell in love and were married on June 25, 1960, his thirtieth birthday. He said it was the best birthday present ever that year. Together they had four children: Mary Maureen, Michael, Margaret, and Tricia and attended St. John the Evangelist Church.

In 1983 Anich founded his own business, Milwaukee Hammer. For 25 years the company produced industrial tools for local foundries. According to his son, Anich was a family man. He worked hard, but was home each day by early afternoon to be with and help raise his children. His children and family were the focus of his life.

Once his children were grown, Anich grew more active in his church, where he was a member for 38 years. He helped plan and execute the church’s yearly festival and was a fixture at Saturday’s five o’clock mass. Anich was an active alumni of Marquette University where he and his wife were Marquette men’s basketball season ticket holders. He and Mary Pat loved to travel and explored five continents including four trips to Ireland. Art took pride in his Croatian heritage. He took Croatian language classes for over 30 years and visited Croatia with his wife.
Anich never forgot his time spent in the Marines and of the sacrifice so many gave. He also recognized the unique difficulties some veterans faced once they returned home. Anich became a member of and post commander of New Berlin Hoepner- Horn Brothers VFW Post 5716. He was a lifelong member of the 1st Marine Division Association and served in the Marine Corps League Wisconsin Badger Detachment #348. The Badger Detachment’s mission is to:

“...band together those who are now serving in the United States Marine Corps and those who have been honorably discharged from that service; voluntarily aiding and rendering assistance to all Marines and former Marines and to their widows and orphans, and by perpetuating the history of the United States Marine Corps through fitting acts to observe the anniversaries of historical occasions of particular interest to Marines.”

During the 1990s, Anich volunteered as a member of the Badger Detachment’s Honor Guard and served at the funerals of many veterans. At its peak, Anich served as many as five funerals a week, sometimes two in one day. The Honor Guards’ work was recognized by the Department of Defense and the state of Wisconsin for the invaluable service they provided for grieving families.

Anich also participated in a Korean War Revisit Program with his wife Mary, his brother Rudy, and his sister in law Rose. This program is a joint venture sponsored by the South Korean government and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Commemoration

Eventually, Anich began to feel the effects of age and the failing of his once strong body. According to his son, he was active up until one month before his death. He retired from Milwaukee Hammer on June 25, 2007, his 77th birthday, and died one month later on July 26, 2007. He passed at home, cared for by his three loving daughters, all of whom were trained in nursing. He wore a Marine Corps t-shirt when he died. His wife, Mary Anich, joined him 11 years later on March 8, 2018 and was buried beside him at the Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Union Grove, Wisconsin.
Bibliography

Arthur Anich, Official Military Personnel File, Department of the Navy. U.S. Marine Corps, Record of the U.S. Marine Corps, RG 127, National Archives and Records Administration - St. Louis.


General Records of the Department of the Navy, 1789-1947; General Photographs, 1918-1945 (Prints), Record Group 80 (Box 1719); National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD.


Records of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer; Photographs: Signal Corps Photographs of American Activity, 1900-1981, Record Group 111 (Box 750); National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD.

Records of the United States Marine Corps; Prints: Marine Corps Activities in Korea, 1775-1958, Record Group 127 (Boxes 8-9); National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD.

Records of the United States Marine Corps; Prints: Marine Corps Activities in Korea, 1775-1958, Record Group 127 (Boxes 27-29); National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD.