



THE NEWSLETTER
KOREAN WAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION
DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA
FALL 2009



Photo By T. Thiel

From the President

The Department officers thank each of you who attended the September Council Meeting. We had good attendance, good food and great fellowship. Thank you, Chapter 173.

I had the pleasure of attending the Association [National] Convention in Dallas, Texas. Both the Directors' meeting and the General Membership meeting were interesting. The new Bylaws passed by a 2/3 majority and will become effective January 1, 2010. SO, Chapter Presidents read and review carefully, the changes in the Graybeards as National has put the burden on Chapters to enforce the new rules. The primary focus of the Bylaws amendments was on National dues. Also, membership has changed. Watch out for the fine print.

Department Officers are working on a new format for the Chapter Officer orientation workshop to be presented at the opening of the January Council meeting. (More information on the mail out notice.)

If you have something you would like to include in our January meeting, this may be done by sending the information to the Department Secretary at least 90 days before the meeting so it can be placed on the agenda. Looking forward to seeing you all in Gainesville!

Jim

The Winning Eddie Ko Submittal 2009

Inadvertently the reading of the winning Veteran of the Year (Eddie Ko Award) submittal was missed at the September and Convention meetings. Here it is!

"CSM Paul Specsia has been the spark plug of KWVA Chapter 210 ever since the Chapter's formation in 2001. He was responsible for forming, equipping, training and leading the Chapter 210 Color Guard in its many outstanding appearances throughout Central Florida for the past seven years. Early on he was chosen by acclamation to be our Chapter President and has held various additional positions within the Chapter, to include 1st Vice President and Chapter Quartermaster (in this latter position he led our purchasing of uniforms and equipment necessary for Chapter members to buy both our Class "a" dress uniform and our Class "b" duty uniform). Once our Chapter became operational, Specsia has given outstanding performance in a series of important positions:

- Member of Brevard Veterans Council, to include appointment to the Board of Directors
- Leader of the Chapter Speakers Committee, providing presentations in the local high schools covering our country's participation in the Korean War (1950-1953)
- Member of the Chapter's Fund Raising Committee, raising \$15,000 to erect a Korean War Memorial (Completed in 2008)
- Member of the Chapter's Recruiting Committee.
- Member of the Chapter Scholarship Committee, selecting and awarding scholarships to the most deserving Florida college students

Specsia Continued

-Member of the Emory Bennett Committee working with Cocoa to place a statue at River Front Park to honor Emory Bennett., local Medal of Honor recipient.

-Chairman of our Chapter Committee to recruit Chapter members to be the Manager on Duty every Thursday at the Brevard Veterans Center.

CSM Paul Specsia has, in fact, participated in every Chapter undertaking since the Chapter's first efforts in 2001. He is an inspiration to everyone with his positive attitude, his ability to achieve whatever requirements that Chapter 210 has been asked to accomplish, always with a great sense of humor that invariably gets results. A natural leader, he is a perfect candidate for the Eddie Ko Award.

Chapter Reports (Fall Council Meeting)

The reports by the Chapter Presidents and representatives from the September meeting at Altamonte Springs are reproduced below. Some of the reports were a bit sketchy but all reflect strong Chapter activity and are shown here so that all Chapters can gain from the information.

Chapter 14 – Suncoast Chapter

Clarence Dadswell, President

Our activities, beginning with the Honor Guard are as follows: From May to September we provided 25 funeral services, primarily at Bay Pines National Ceremony and generated 315 man-hours reported through the VA volunteer services.

Scholarships were awarded in the amount of \$1500 with \$500 left to carry over to 2010 for students of Pinellas Park.

For the 4th of July, members of the Chapter were invited to Dunwoodie, Georgia for a special parade. We were surprised to find our hotel rooms paid for and a large welcoming sign in the lobby welcoming Korean War Veterans. We were second in the line of march with Boy Scouts carrying a banner stating our identity and were well received throughout the 2 ½ mile parade.

We initiated a flag folding effort for the hospice at Bay Pines Medical Center and managed to get the student volunteers into the program (See September *Graybeards*) The VA also published our article in the VA Newsletter (The Eagle) which is distributed throughout the VA System.

The Honor Guard also presented the flag (twice) at the Tampa Bay Rays home games.

Finally, we hosted two ROTC students we sponsored to the Youth League meetings at our meeting. These are directed by a retired Colonel who is an honorary member of our Chapter.

Chapter 16 – Col. Alice Gritsavage

Robert Schloss, President (Notes presented by J. Feaster)

The Chapter is modifying its meeting to start earlier in the day and providing refreshments. The membership is still holding together.

The primary task at this time is support to the Ocala Marion County Veterans' Park.

Chapter 153 – Central Florida

John Horrocks, President (Notes presented by Charles Carafano)

The Chapter only has 38 members but does quite a bit in support of Veterans'.

The Chapter serves the Deltona Beach (Orange City) VA Medical Clinic coffee and cake on a monthly basis.

We participated in the 4th of July parade at Lake Helen and will also take part in their November 11 Veterans Day parade.

In addition to donations to the Wounded Warriors, we participate in the Veterans' Park in Deltona. If you are ever in Deltona, visit the museum at the Veterans' Park which covers all wars. We have donated \$800 to provide a display cabinet for Korean War memorabilia.

We have an annual fund raiser for these efforts. We also host memorials for the KWVA June 25-and July 27 to remember our lost comrades.

Chapter 158 – W.R. Charette MOH

Bill McCraney, President

Chapter 158 had a quiet summer. We met in June and August and took a recess for the month of July. Actually, compared to previous summers we had good attendance at our meetings.

We had no projects over the summer other than planning for the fall schedule.

Chapter 158 - Continued

We have a full day Rose of Sharon fundraiser scheduled for October 31 at Sam's Club in Lakeland. We are planning on having two teams, one from 10 A.M. until 1 P.M. and one from 1 P.M. until 4 P.M. We usually do very well at Sam's, especially if we are there on or near any kind of holiday. We hope Halloween will work for us.

We will be awarding a scholarship to The College of Nursing at Florida Southern College later in the month and we are busy making plans for our annual Veterans Day celebration and parade with the Veterans Council of Polk County in November.

Chapter elections are planned for November.

Chapter 169 – Lake County

Tom J. Thiel

Chapter membership has increased by nine or about 15 percent for this year to 62.

Our Chapter has increased Association [National] membership by 21 this year.

Unfortunately, Joseph J. Martin of Silver Springs passed away this month [ed. Sep 09]

Art Canale has had a series of operations for lung cancer and a serious infection; fortunately the most recent reports say he is clear of both.

Secretary/Treasurer Ted Moford is moving back to his home in Nashville. Ted Jansen has been appointed Treasurer, but we do not, as yet, have a Secretary.

Don Lynch spent \$170 of his own money to launch a 'Coffee Clutch' membership drive effort. One former member pledged to renew, one Korean vet said he will join, and the Commander of the local AmVets invited us to join with him in launching veteran's awareness effort in the Leesburg area. Another 'Clutch' is planned for October 27.

Ted Jansen initiated a laptop computer drawing/fund raising project, which will be at our December 2009 meeting. We are asking a donation of \$5.00/ticket; I would like your support of our Chapter-please see Jeff, Harold or me.

The Veterans Memorial at Fountain Park, Leesburg [originated by Chapter 169] plans to break ground tentatively on November 6.

We will be conducting our very first Tell America program next week. Harold Siever's Adopt Kid/Adopt Vet.

Our Chapter's Color Guard participated in six events at the Veterans Memorial Park in The Villages, Florida. Ted Morford has been placing flags at these ceremonies; Charlie White will do it now.

We attended the funeral services in Clermont for Spec. Alexander Miller who was KIA in Afghanistan on July 31, 2009.

Insurance remains an issue. Publix, one of our mainstays for fund raising events has placed unreasonable coverage demands. We would like President Bradford to write to them asking them to explain their policy and to express our hurt because of it, and 2) another letter to the Association thanking them for their insurance study and request them to quickly come up with a blanket plan under which all Chapters could obtain good, low-cost liability insurance.

While the current Association directory effort may be a laudable undertaking, we wish to have access to membership information of all members in a near-real time online secure mode that is useful to members, chapters and departments. Mr. President, we request DoF's support of this initiative.

Chapter 173 – Mid Florida

Charles Travers, Commander (Notes presented by Cathy Alessandri)

In May 2009 we [Chapter 173] completed a year of regular meetings

On June 25th 2009 we held a Memorial Program in conjunction with Orlando American Legion Post 19 and Orange County VFW Post 2093 Community Band in the American Legion William Beardall Memorial Hall.

We had our memorial service commemorating the start of the Korean War on June 25th at the American Legion Post 19. We had a great turnout with over 100 people attending. There were three

Chapter 173 Continued

KWVA chapters in attendance (173, 188 and 210), American Legion Post 19 and 112 and VFW Post 2093, and TREA Chapter 124. Also attending were the Korean Senior Citizens. The Koreans brought fried rice, Korean fried chicken, spicy beef, and, of course, Kimchee. After the band played, we honored all Korean War Veterans. Then I asked the South Korean soldiers who served alongside us, to stand and be recognized. Then I announced each one, stating their rank and the unit they served with. Each one then received one of our challenge coins. After the program, we had the usual cake-cutting ceremony.

Our July 27th event was held at Casselberry Veterans Club with them and the American Legion Caretakers Motorcycle Club assisting in the meal. We gave the Casselberry Veterans a Certificate of Appreciation. Our first Vice, Tim McKenna, fresh from a trip to Korea was the MC. Cathy Alessandri, our Third Vice led the singing of the Korean and American National anthems. She also spoke about her re-visit trip to Korea with her son.

On September 26th, we hosted the Department of Florida KWVA Fall council meeting. Several members were involved and given a big 'Thank You' from the Department officers. Cathy Alessandri will be attending the 2009 KWVA National [Association] Convention in Dallas.

Chapter 175 – Lt. Bartolomeo Lopez MOH
Fred Gossett, President (Notes presented by Murdoch Ford)

The Chapter has been very busy this summer planning and executing the dedication of the new memorial at Hillsborough High School. Its was expensive and cost approximately \$6000. A separate cabinet in the entry hall of the high school was donated and the ceremony included dignitaries from Tampa as well as members of the Department of Florida, the Lopez family members and the Hillsborough High School marching band. Lt. Lopez was a graduate of Hillsborough High.

Chapter 188 South Lake County
Maxine Parker, Commander

Seven members attended the Department of Florida Convention at Crystal River May 8 – 10, 2009.

Our membership now stands at 39 with three as non-voting members. This represents an increase of 8 members since the first of the year. However, several of our members are not able to attend meetings and even fewer are participating due to health reasons. Louie Murado, our telephone caller, passed way in June. Joe Madeline is in Hope Lodge and undergoing surgery.

Several of our members attended the Memorial Day Concert at the Gray Middle School in Clermont. We presented them with a large American flag and a check in the amount of \$500 which they will use toward new instruments. We also presented awards and ribbons to the ROTC at South Lake High School.

Our Scholarship Committee did an excellent job in that we were able to award a total of eight \$500 scholarhips (four to East Ridge and four to South Lake High schools) Funds for these scholarships come from our Veterans Day Celebration and Car Show as well as the Rose of Sharon Committee. Both committees are hard at work ro raise money for the 2010 scholarships.

On July 4th, we participated in a Flag-raising ceremony at Groveland. Our Honor Guard gave a rifle salute and Taps was played (followed by the telling of the story of Taps).

The new public library in Clermont has asked our KWVA members to call for an appointment for the purpose of interviewing them and making an historical record of their participation in the Korean War.

We are now preparing for our 10th Annual Veteran's Day Celebration and Car Show to be held at the Citrus Tower in Clermont of Sunday, November 8. This is a free event to the public and Chapter 188 us hereby extending a very special invitation to all KWVA members. Bob Balzer, I hope to see you there again this year on your motorcycle.

Chapter 192 – Citrus County
Hank Butler, Commander

June, 2009 – The Chapter Color Guard participated in Flag Day Ceremonies at Inverness Government Center on June 14th.

The Chapter conducted a Rose of Sharon fund raiser on June 27th. Work began to revise our

Chapter 192 Continued

Bylaws. Chapter 192 serves coffee, fruit, drinks and pastries at the Lecanto VA Clinic on the first Monday of each month.

July 27 – Chapter 192 conducted a Memorial service at the Historic Court House in Inverness recognizing the signing of the Armistice in Korea in July 27, 1953. Two proclamations; one from Citrus County Board of Commissioners and one from the City of Inverness proclaiming July 27, 2009 as “Anniversary of Armistice Day on the Korean Peninsula” were read by the respective government officers. A wreath was placed at our Korean War Monument. Also, 26 names were read and a bell tolled after each name. Approximately 75-85 citizens attended the ceremony.

September 1st, we had our first meeting after the summer break. Checks were approved and written for: (1) a golf hole sponsorship (\$100) for the Citrus County Veterans Foundation Golf fund raiser, (2) A golf hole sponsorship (\$100) for VFW 10087 Golf Outing as a fund raiser for Hospice of Citrus County, and (3) A check (\$300) to the Citrus County Veterans Foundation as funds for the Veterans' Service Officer to help needy veterans.

We are planning for some of our Chapter members to assist in the 'Veterans in Classrooms' which is conducted the first two weeks in November. Also, we have tickets available for KWVA 192's Military Ball to be held December 5, 2009.

Officers for 2010 will be elected in December and will take office in January 2010. Our annual picnic is October 21st from 10 AM until 2 PM at VFW Post 10087,, Beverly Hills

Chapter 199 – Manasota

Thomas G. “Skip” Hannon, Commander

Since many of our members are snowbirds, like other Chapters we experience a slow period of activity during the mid-summer months. However, we did manage to sign up two new members and had several guests who indicated they may join our Chapter. Even during this slow period we publish and mail to all our members and sponsors our monthly newsletter, The Viewpoint. Some samples are here for any to view.

We also participate in the Manasota County

Veterans Council which encompasses the various veterans groups [American Legion, VFW, Etc] . The monthly meeting is also attended by area politicians and useful information is exchanged.

In June, some of our members attended a dinner and show event to honor Korean War Veterans presented [annually] by the Korean Presbyterian Church of Pinellas Park.

As some of you know, Chapter 199 will be hosting the Department of State Convention in May of 2010. In June, a considerable amount of time and effort was spent in visiting several hotels in the area to determine which one of them is able to best suit our needs. Prices were obtained and the ambiance of the various facilities were compared relative to their prices.

In July, after we had narrowed down the choices for our Convention, DOF Officer; President Jim Bradford' signed a contract with Courtyard by Marriott, Bradenton. The Convention will take place on May 7-8-9. The DOF will keep us advised of future details.

In July,, we qualified to be “in compliance” with the Association regulations. We obtained our password that enabled us to use the database completely. “In compliance” enabled us to have our members “Tell America” photos appear in te “Graybeards”. (We had presented our program to Manatee Community College students.)

At our August meeting, we had a good turnout to hear Eddie Ko relate his experiences as a youth in Korea aiding U.S. Forces. He was invited by DoF 3rd Vice Commander, Gene Gillette. Second Vice Commander, Murdoch Ford also attended.

Also, during August we obtained bids from printing companies for the Convention journal and formed committees who are willing to work to obtain ads and work at the Convention.

Chapter 200 – North East Florida

Henry Moreland, President

Two very significant events occurred during the period.

I talked to a reunion group of Air Force Fighter Wing pilots who served in WWII and Korean. There were about 30 in attendance plus their wives and others

to about 75 in all. My part was to explain the mission of our KWVA Chapters. This was at the Amelia Island Museum of History. Many of those present had never heard of the KWVA.

In July, a Jacksonville soldier, who was killed in Korea and buried in Pensacola (the only place who would take a black for burial at the time) in 1952 had his remains returned to the new Jacksonville National Cemetery.

I also represented Chapter 200 at a program to support more than 40 Wounded Warriors.

Chapter 210 – Brevard County

T.J. Snyder, President

First, we don't have a written report inasmuch as I have not had a Secretary for many months. I am serving as President past our term limits

Our Chapter meets at the Brevard Veterans Center and our Chapter does a lot with the Brevard Veterans Council.

Our color guard has been very active, particularly in representing us at ceremonies for the last Naval battle of the Civil War at Cape Canaveral

We have a good "Tell America" program with four of us going as a group to local schools.

Recruitment is difficult and I would like more support from the Association and the Department of Florida in providing recruitment aids and lists. We need some of the young blood that have had to stand on the DMZ and are there still.

Chapter 267 General Van Fleet Chapter

Dick Davis, President

The report from Chapter 267 was four pages, single-spaced and is more than I have space for. Below, find a precis of the activities of the Chapters for the period. (Ed.)

Donations:

\$500 to Wounded Warrior at the local VA. In honor of Capt Jonathan Pruden USA 5/6/09
 \$200 donated Young Marines Detachment for annual trip to Parris Island 7/1/09
 \$4200 donated via the Sears Heroes at Home fund raiser for returning Wounded Warriors 7/6/09

\$447 raised for the Annual Bikers on Parade Fundraiser Party via 50/50 and gift basket raffles.

9/20/09

Donations Received:

Received \$1350 from Bikers on Parade for the USA, group who are very active in the Gainesville area. A suitable plaque was awarded the organizers from the Chapter. 6/3/09

Received a plaque from the Veterans Memorial Park Committee for maintenance activities at the Park for eight years. 7/1/09

Fund Raisers:

Held an annual 'Rose of Sharon' fundraiser generating \$2384 5/16/09

Dedication Ceremonies:

Attended the dedication of a new monument to all services and to Gen Van Fleet at the University of Florida 5/22/09

Six of our members attended a dedication ceremony renaming Ft. Clarke Blvd to Marine PFC Donald Wayne Vincent Blvd. This was followed by a 9/11 ceremony at the Santa Fe College where this Marine was honored 9/11/09

Other Ceremonies and Events:

Prepared and set up yellow ribbons two days before the Memorial Day weekend 5/23/09

Attended the Memorial Day Ceremonies at Forest Meadows Garden of Honor Cemetery honoring WASPs [Women Service Pilots] 5/25/09

Attended annual Night of Celebration at the Korean Baptist Church. Eddie Ko was the featured speaker. 6/7/09

Two of our women took part in a color guard at the VA hospital for the annual Women in Service Recognition Day 8/14/09

A joint KWVA and American Legion 'roast' was held to feed a pork roast dinner to Don Sherry as he sat on the 'hot' seat. 8/22/09

Six of our members did color guard and Pledge of Allegiance duty for the annual POW/MIA day at the VA hospital 9/18/09

Twenty of our members marched in the annual Micanopy 4th of July parade. 7/04/09

Funerals:

Bob Dowling, Master Sergeant USAF, founding member of the Chapter 7/11/09

Donald Wayne Vincent, PFC USMC killed in Afghanistan 8/26/09