



THE NEWSLETTER

KOREAN WAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION
DEPARTMENT OF FLORIDA

Spring 2009

Jim Bradford, President
2009-2010



Photo by T. Thiel

From the President

We had a very successful state convention with thanks to Chapter 192 and their Commander Hank Butler.

Bill MacSwain, National Association President and his wife, Barbara were in attendance and from all reports the President was very pleased with the Department of Florida Convention.

My thanks to those Chapters who were represented, sorry that some of you could not make it. We encourage each and every Chapter to attend the council meetings and the Convention.

The Department Officers appreciate what each and every Chapter is doing to try and increase their membership rolls.

We, the Department of Florida have a Code of Ethics. I hope that all members read and study it, as, when followed, a majority of our problems can be solved. Remember, we are all one working together for the good of the KWVA.

Jim Bradford



Photo by T. Thiel

MEET THE EDDIE KO AWARD WINNER

Pictured at the left Paul Spescia our Veteran of the Year looking slightly stunned as he holds onto the cup and the check as the winner of the annual Eddie Ko Award as that Veteran who was judged as having made the most significant contribution to his Chapter.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SPRING CONVENTION

As usual, the honored guests at the convention were the eleven entrants for the Eddie Ko award who were formally introduced at the beginning of the Membership Meeting on Saturday and later again at the Banquet.

Eddie presented each person with a framed certificate (and a \$50 check to help with expenses) The nominees were:

ART CANALE

Chapter 169, Lake County

FRANK COHEE

Chapter 158, W.R. Charette MOH

THOMAS E. CULLERTON

Chapter 173, MidFlorida

THADDEUS "TED" CZERWINSKI

Chapter 199, Manasota

RICHARD "DICK" DAVIS

Chapter 267 General James A. Van Fleet

THOMAS V. DIAZ

Chapter 153, Central Florida

SAM HAYES

Chapter 175, LT Baldomero Lopez MOH

FRED LIGHTELL

Chapter 192, Citrus County

JOE MADELINE*

Chapter 188, South Lake County

RICHARD MELLINGER

Chapter 174, Nature Coast

PAUL SPESCIA

Chapter 210, Brevard County

- Joe Madeline was unable to attend due to imminent surgery.

OPENING CEREMONIES

Mayor Ron Kitchen welcomed the Convention to Crystal River and Mr. J.J. Kenny, Citrus County Veterans Service Officer led us with the singing of the National Anthem.



Photo by C. Becker

Opening our General Membership meeting on Saturday were the Nature Coast Young Marines with Commander Russell Tyler presenting the colors

SECRETARY'S COMMENTARY

Very Good! We couldn't have asked for a nicer compliment. After a day and a half of meetings, those we talked to were full of compliments about the Inn, the grounds, meeting rooms and camaraderie. We had a few glitches, but they were hotel related.

The Council meeting on Friday was all work for the President and the representatives. We approved a change in the eligibility to hold Department of Florida office and we expanded term limits for Department officers to ensure a full slate. Both items were presented to the Membership on Saturday where they were approved without dissent.

The **Quartermaster** items delivered when Dick Garfield left the post will be offered to all Chapters at 'bargain prices' probably at the September Council meeting.

2009-2010 CALENDER ITEMS

September Council

Sept 23, 2009 Altamonte Springs

January Council

Jan 26, 2010 Gainesville

COUNCIL AND CONVENTION 2010

May at Manasota Chapter

SECRETARY'S NOTES CONTINUED



Photo by T. Thiel

Bill MacSwain spoke at both sessions and told us of life as an Association Director, the problems he inherited and a look into the future.

Chapter Presidents or their Representatives gave 3-minute overviews of their Chapter activities. All were very impressive with the number and quality of activities which promote our organization.

Jake Feaster talked about membership and the need to have everyone on board as an **Association** member.

[Bill MacSwain advised that due to the Charter received from Congress, we should be referred to as the 'Association' rather than as 'National']

Here's a tip: If you and your wife are both military and both receiving the *Graybeards*, write and cancel one magazine. Save the Association some money. AND by the way, did you know how the magazine got its name? "Chuck" Dawson of Chapter 14 clarified this question. Dawson was a charter member of the first National Board in 1985. He recalls that in discussing the name, the KWVA founder commented that "We went to Korea before we had a beard and now (1985) we have Gray beards" Hence "**Graybeards**"

We had 88 members and their wives registered for dinner. Prior to a delicious meal, Bill and Barbara MacSwain mingled with some of the guests. Bill later stated that he was impressed with the professionalism, the behavior and friendliness of everyone present. (But we knew that, didn't we?)

The after dinner program was carefully planned. Hank Butler, our host, provided us with Colonel Carl Ebitz, President of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, who spoke on the origin of the Purple Heart medal, noting that it is the oldest military award for all our services. He commended the Department of Florida and its Chapters for honoring the following men:

- 014 Chuck Dawson USA 6/25/50
- 175 Murdoch Ford USMC 12/12/50
- 158 Bill McCraney USA 8/16/50
- 11/27/50
- 5/21/51
- 158 Willis Jackson USA 5/21/51
- 173 Don Smith USMC 2/21/53
- 200 Herb Pearce USN [Chosin] 50
- 267 Sgt. Quinn USA -----

Bob Balzer, our outgoing President, gave a warm hearted farewell talk and thanked everyone for their support over the past two years.

OTHER AWARDS AND PHOTOS

The Korean Medallion was presented to the Guest Speaker, Col. Ebitz and also to Laurie McCraney, Assistant Secretary of the Department of Florida, for her exceptional support over the past year in every aspect of the Secretary's duties.



The Rifle Fund Raiser was won by Ray Tenkku of Chapter 210, Brevard County. A least one member of the audience was willing to buy it, but Mr. Tenkku was not present.

The Lucky Ladies who each collected \$100.00 were Ellen Dorgan and Elaine Sparks

The **Memorial Service** was held in the hospitality room on Sunday morning with the lighting of the 'Peace Candle' by Past President Bob Balzer – Invocation by Harold Sievers, Chaplain. The review of Chapters with the ringing on an authentic Korea Bell by Joan Arcand and Jim Bradford. TAPS was played by Murdoch Ford ending honors to those who gave all. Tom Cullerton finished with a rendition of 'Amazing Grace' on his harmonica. It was for me, a solemn moment.



Photo By T. Thiel

Group Photo in front of the Plantation Inn [For those of you who might want this photo, contact Tom Thiel and ask for his photo number 1638]

Thank you. A farewell and thanks to Hank and Rita Butler who helped stage the Convention and provided a very well stocked hospitality room. It hummed with activity, tiles clicking and lots of chat. We could not have done it without you

Department of Florida
Executive Board

[The remaining pages of the newsletter will be taken up with photos taken at the 2009 Convention.]



Photo By C. Becker

Council gets down to business in the meeting room



Photo By T. Thiel
Eddie Ko and Award Winner Paul Spescia



Photo By C. Becker
Bob Balzer checks audience while the Finance Report is read by R. Arcand



Photo by C. Becker
Ted Morford Weighed Down with Medals



Photo By C. Becker
"Gene" Gillette Just Had to Show His funny Hat



Photo By T. Thiel
Bob Balzer with a Thank You Gift for Chaplain Sievers



Photo By C. Becker
The Domino Pros in the Hospitality Room