

**AUGUST, 2009 POST NEWSLETTER****COMMANDER'S MESSAGE**

One of the Marine Corps legends of our generation, Col. Van D. "Ding Dong" Bell and my Commanding Officer both in Vietnam, for a short period of time, and Marine Barracks, Guantanamo Bay , Cuba passed away at the age of 90 on Wednesday, June 3, 2009. Col. Bell enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1936 at the age of 17 and served his Corps and Country for over 39 years. He served with the 4th Marines during the Sino-Japanese War and spent several years in China. Col. Bell was a Master Sergeant during WWII participating in the battles of Guadalcanal, Bougainville, Guam and Okinawa. He served in the Korean War as a 1stLt and later as a LtCol with the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines in Vietnam for two tours. His distinguished and highly decorated service to his Country and his Corps made him among the most decorated and respected Marine, next to Chesty Puller, of all times. His decorations included 2 Navy Crosses (the nations second highest decoration), 2 Silver Stars, Legion of Merit with Combat V, Bronze Star with Combat V, 5 Purple Hearts, Combat Action Ribbon, 4 Presidential Unit Citations, 4 Navy Unit Citations, Good Conduct Medal with 2 Stars, Yangtze Service Medal, China Service Medal with Bronze Star, National Defense Service Medal with 3 Bronze Stars, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with 2 Gold Palms and 1 Gold Star among others. Col. Bell, as are all Marines, myself included, who rise from the enlisted ranks to the officer ranks, was affectingly known as a "Mustang Officer". He was interred at Arlington National Cemetery along side other heroes.

Throughout my 23 plus years of service to my Country and my Corps Col. Bell was my senior officer, my mentor and my friend when I needed one. I would follow him to hell and back in combat but he was miserable to work with in garrison. He thrived on the challenges of warfare but was bored and unhappy if he had to sit on his but and shuffle paper work. At times, while serving with him at Guantanamo, he did make my life impossible. However, no matter how unhappy he may have been at times he loved all his Marines and always looked out for them and their families.

I wanted you to know the history of this Marine legend because it is not often any of us get the opportunity or privilege of serving and learning from such a military Icon. His guide throughout his military career was one of honor, duty and service to his country and his beloved Corps.

Bill Duke, Commander

In the July Newsletter Commander Duke indicated that Senior Vice Commander Rich Barbato would be assuming the responsibilities of Post Commander as may become necessary due to his absence related to medical problems. Jr. Vice Robert Metz will move up to Sr. Vice and the Commander appointed Ted Lemieux as temporary Jr. Vice. All of this is in accordance with VFW Policy and Procedures. The Commander says he will function "behind the scenes" through the Sr Vice Commander, "as best and as long as I can to support the Post."

For additional reading of the service and exploits of Col. Bell go to <http://mcldet1220.mcldeptms.org/colvanbell.htm>. The Second Sino-Japanese War can be dated from 7/7/1937 to 9-9-1945). Our “old timers” may remember from December, 1937 events such as the Japanese attack on the USS *Panay* and the Nanking Massacre, events which swung public opinion in the West sharply against Japan’s invasion of China which increased their fear of Japanese expansion. This prompted the United States, the United Kingdom, and France to provide loans and other assistance for war supply contracts to the Republic of China such as:



Flying Tigers was the popular name of the 1st **American Volunteer Group (AVG)** of the Chinese Air Force in 1941-1942. Arguably, the group was a private military contractor.. They were mostly former United States Army (USAAF), Navy (USN), and Marine Corps (USMC) pilots and ground crew, recruited under Presidential sanction and commanded by Claire Lee Chennault. The group consisted of three fighter squadrons with about 20 aircraft

FROM THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 9th POST MEETING

The meeting was called to order by Sr. Vice Commander Rich Barbato, Commander Duke being hospitalized and excused. With 19 members present Jr. Vice Commander Robert Metz was acting Sr. Vice with Ted LeMieux as acting Jr. Vice and Jake Burrige acting Chaplain, Chaplain Bill Hurley absent/excused. There were no pending applications acted upon at this time because of incomplete paperwork. Questions were raised concerning the submission of membership and transfer applications, securing the required documentation and efforts to assure that applications were handled in a timely manner. Following discussion it was unanimously voted that Richard Weagle, Brent W. Long, Christos Stathopoulos, Scott Stone and Frank Beier who have submitted applications be accepted for membership in the Post upon receipt of appropriate documentation of their compliance with service requirements. No Chaplains report was available but it was reported that Commander Duke was recovering from surgery. It was also reported that Comrade William Gallant had died and that there would be military honors by the Post.

A thank you note was received from the family of Joseph F. Burns for the post's funeral assistance. A thank you note was received from scholarship winner Colleen Josephson. The Ipswich Rotary Club sent a thank you letter for use of the post quarters. The only committee report was by Rich Barbato who spoke concerning the 13 June Iraq/Afghanistan Vets Convention. He noted that although attendance was light it was unquestionably a successful post effort and there was agreement that a similar event should be held next year. Comrade Barbato stated he had already spoken with potential noteworthy speakers and asked post members for volunteers now to assist with planning already under way. Additionally Comrade Barbato said he would like the post to have another "Veterans Memories" event and he was also looking for volunteers to assist in planning. There was discussion of post participation in the Ipswich anniversary parade to be held August 9th with the post providing a color guard and leading the first division and the need for volunteers. It was voted to approve securing replacement grave markers, flags. It was voted unanimously to cover costs related to the 13 June Veterans Convention. In answer to a question concerning thanking the outside participants in the Convention Comrade Barbato said that he had already written to the participants thanking them for their participation and had included a certificate noting their participation.

AUGUST 6, 1945 64 YEARS AGO

Japan was preparing the bloodiest reception ever for the Allies if they should invade Honshu, the southernmost island in Japan. Meanwhile, the 504th Composite Group was ready to fly from Tinian to Japan and deliver its multimillion-dollar payload, an atomic bomb. From the list of targets that had been preserved for the test, the primary target of Hiroshima was selected. The B-29, "Enola Gay," piloted by the squadron commander, Col. Paul Tibbets, flew to Japan and dropped the bomb on **August 6, 1945**. The bomb was nicknamed "Little Boy" and used U-238 as its nuclear core. At 8:15 AM, the line from Hiroshima to Tokyo went dead. Reports started coming in that Hiroshima had been obliterated by air attack. The Japanese did not respond to the Allied unconditional surrender calls of August 6 and 7, 1945. On August 9, 1945, the B-29 "Bock's Car" dropped the "Fat Man" Plutonium bomb on Nagasaki, the tertiary target. **On August 15, 1945, the Emperor announced the surrender of Japanese forces. The Second World War was over.**

THE BEGINNING:

At 6:00 a.m. on 7 December 1941, six Japanese carriers launched a first wave of 181 planes composed of torpedo bombers, dive bombers, horizontal bombers and fighters. The Japanese aircrews achieved complete surprise when they hit American ships and military installations on Oahu shortly before 8:00 a.m. They attacked military airfields at the same time they hit the fleet anchored in Pearl Harbor. When the attack ended shortly before 10:00 a.m., less than two hours after it began, the American forces had paid a fearful price. Twenty-one ships of the U.S. Pacific Fleet were sunk or damaged. Aircraft losses were 188 destroyed and 159 damaged, the majority hit before they had a chance to take off. American dead numbered 2,403. That figure included 68 civilians, most of them

killed by improperly fused anti-aircraft shells landing in Honolulu. There were 1,178 military and civilian wounded. Japanese losses were comparatively light. Twenty-nine planes, less than 10 percent of the attacking force, failed to return to their carriers.

The Japanese success was overwhelming, but it was not complete. They failed to damage any American aircraft carriers, which by a stroke of luck, had been absent from the harbor. - **Source:** Dept. of Defense. 50th Anniversary of World War II Commemorative Committee.) Also see: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/pearlharbor/>

We can note with pride the commemorative display at the post for Col. Paul Tibbetts and the plaque presented to Comrade Julian Kaszuba, an Ipswich resident who survived the attack on Pearl Harbor.

MEMBERSHIP – THE PROCEDURE

At recent Post meetings questions have arisen relative to the proper and appropriate procedures to be followed when a new member has been proposed or a member of another post requests a transfer to this post. The following excerpts from the Manual of Procedure should be followed. This will assure an orderly procedure, provide the Quartermaster with the information he needs, permit prompt action on applications and it should be noted that the procedure for eligible veterans provides for fast-track acceptance of qualifying military service. We need new comrades, we have received a number of recent applications and now is the time for a win-win situation for recruiting new members for our Post. You might want to cut out the following and post it on your refrigerator.

FROM THE MANUAL OF PROCEDURE - NEW MEMBERS & TRANSFERS

SEC 102 – APPLICATIONS-AFFILIATIONS OF NEW MEMBERS.

Every application for membership must be submitted on an approved, signed application outlining the applicant's honorable service, citizenship, eligibility and other pertinent information. Proof of service to establish eligibility for membership rests with the applicant. The Post is responsible for assuring the eligibility of every member accepted for membership.

With respect to active duty military personnel currently performing service qualifying for membership, applications may be submitted on their behalf by a member who shall certify the requisite qualifications for membership based on personal knowledge concerning the applicant and shall be acted upon in accordance with the provisions of Section 103. Active duty military personnel admitted to membership under such procedure shall, within a reasonable time, sign the application, personally certifying eligibility and subscribing to the obligation of membership.

The application shall bear the name and the ID number of the member recommending the applicant and the recommendation of the Post Reviewing Committee.

ELECTION-SEC-103

Applications: After the applicant has filled out the application card, it should be provided to the Post Adjutant or Quartermaster, together with the dues. A receipt should be given to the applicant.

An applicant may be recommended after eligibility has been fully determined by the Post Reviewing Committee.

The original application of every member will be retained on the file with the Adjutant.

Balloting on Application: Before voting on the application during a Post meeting, the Commander shall allow the members present an opportunity to state their objections if any, to the admission of the applicant. Unless one member present shall request a written ballot, a vote shall be taken and a majority of the votes cast shall decide acceptance or rejection of the application

Notification: The member shall be notified of his acceptance and that he is in good standing, subject to the By-Laws governing the organization. The member shall receive a membership card and will be eligible to receive a lapel pin.

TRANSFERS-SEC-107

A member may transfer from one Post to another Post provided the following conditions are met:

- 1) completion of the application as prescribed in Section 102 of the Manual of Procedure
- 2) signing a Member Declaration
- 3) acceptance by the post

FEDERAL BENEFITS FOR VETERANS

The 2009 edition of the VA book *Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors* is now available. While they are in limited supply this year (we can thank Comrade Bill Pfaller for getting a copy for us) we do have a copy available in the second floor lounge. It is an informative book and easy to browse if you want to check on the



availability of a program, your eligibility or you may want to just see what is available. Please do not remove the book. Leave it for the next vet who has a question. We should also repeat that the web site

Military.com has much information relative to veterans rights, benefits and events. If you have a computer you should definitely visit this site.

VFW TALK RADIO



VFW's premiere talk radio show, *The National Defense*, found at www.thenationaldefense.com is the only nationally syndicated talk radio show that focuses exclusively on topics concerning today's active-duty military, veterans and those who support them. If you have a computer this is an interesting site that is well worth the visit. For example, there is currently an interview with author Richard Botkin, author of *Ride the Thunder*. (7/31/2009) [Ride the Thunder](#) recounts the amazing exploits of U.S. Marine Captain John Ripley and South Vietnamese Major Le Ba Binh. It recasts Vietnam's tainted image, and tells the inspiring story of American heroism and the South Vietnamese relentless fight for freedom. Botkin talks about dispelling the notion that the military situation in Vietnam was lost. An interesting review of interest to all Vietnam veterans.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Recently asked questions and official answers: Do you have a question? Let us know.

Question: Does the recitation of Section 3 of the Congressional Charter need to be recited during the opening of a Post meeting? **Answer:** Yes. Section 1004 of the Manual of Procedure provides for the recitation of the purposes of the VFW, Section 3 of the Congressional Charter be read as part of the order of business prior to the roll call of officers.

Question: Can the Post Quartermaster's Report be maintained on a computer generated form other than what is available from the National Emblem and Supply Department? **Answer:** Yes, as long as such forms contain the required data.

Question: At a Post meeting during the Good of the Order, can a motion be made to spend money? **Answer:** No. Demeter's Manual of Parliamentary Procedure provides that the "Good of the Order" is reserved for voicing complaints, suggestions and constructive criticism.



