

Veterans' Salute

Centuries of American Veterans Remembered

November 11, 2008

“A Wing and a Prayer”

The Army Air Forces Historical Association, an interactive, living history museum dedicated to honoring World War II aviators, performed a special theatrical presentation of “A Wing and a Prayer” on Sunday, November 9 at the Campbell-Christie House in River Edge. The event, in conjunction with the Bergen County Historical Society, was part of its Veterans Day Salute called “USO Victory Canteen.”

AAFHA members, many of them Army Air Force Veterans and dressed in period uniforms, provided visitors a chance to roll back the hands of time and experience life during the war years. A display of aviation artifacts also provided visitors with a hands-on connection to Veterans.

“A Wing and a Prayer” is a theatrical performance that, according to its author, aviation author Al Parisi of Wyckoff, incorporates a number of elements that brings audience members up close and personal with the experiences of World War II airmen. It is a compilation of vignettes taken from interviews conducted with Veterans as well as published historical anecdotes and era songs, all poignant and stirring.

“Over the years, whether they were first-hand accounts or just pieces that I’d read that touched me deeply, the bits and pieces that make up ‘Wing and a Prayer’ come from those deep-rooted emotions of Veterans that are born in times of war,” said Parisi. “And those experiences are just as true today for those serving overseas



in Afghanistan and Iraq as they were for those fighting in Europe and the Pacific Theater,” he adds.

They range from fliers’ recollections of fear and dread to the Andrews Sisters’ tale of the war’s end and jubilation.

And there is a series of letters home from one young airman to his mother, masking the danger and focusing on easing her fears for her son’s safety.

“The Donovan letters, from a 21-year old B-17 bomber pilot,” says Parisi, “are particularly touching and poignant because “there’s this young man

responsible for the lives of 10 men, in the midst of the worst of the air war, and his letters are like those of a boy writing home from summer camp, longing for his loved ones that he misses dearly, and not letting on that, for him, death can be on the doorstep.”

The River Edge performance, he said, was particularly meaningful for him because his 21 year old son, Chris Parisi, who just graduated from the renowned Lee Strasberg Theatre School in Manhattan, took on the Donovan role.

“He brought great insight

to the role, because it’s a young man, his age, with the weight of the world on his shoulders trying to shelter his loved ones from the war, like countless others are doing today, only with e-mails and cell phone calls from the battle zone,” said Parisi.

Why the performance? “Because we read about sacrifices and casualty figures each and every day about the war, and unless we put a face to them, we will never learn that war exacts a far deeper toll than any of us can ever imagine,” says Parisi. ###



USS Arizona Relics Unveiled at USS Ling

During a dedication ceremony on Sunday, November 9, 2008, the New Jersey Naval Museum, home of the USS Ling (SS-297), unveiled two relics from the USS Arizona BB 39.

The program began with Tom Conlon, National President, Emeritus SubVets, Inc. There was The Presentation of Colors and the Pledge of Allegiance. The National Anthem was sung by Wayne Behr,

with an Invocation by Chester Skrocki, SubVet WWII.

Basil Kio, SubVet WWII provided welcoming remarks, with a dedication by John M. Carbone Esq. Michael Melfi, Mayor of Hackensack and Dennis McNerney, Bergen County Executive, made comments.

“Amazing Grace” was played by bagpiper Eamonn Radburn, Pipe Sergeant for the Bergen County Firefighters Pipe Band. Benediction

was given by Gerald Dougherty with concluding music by Wayne Behr. The program was hosted by the Submarine Memorial Association.

The Arizona was sunk during an early morning air raid by the Imperial Japanese Navy on Sunday, 7 December 1941. The sinking of the Arizona and the loss of 1,177 crew members made it the largest casualty in the history of the US Navy.

After the dedication, the artifacts went on public display, one in the museum and the other in the wardroom of the USS Ling (SS-297). For more information, call 201-342-3268. ###

Memorial Service at Ling
December 7th at 1 p.m.
Public is welcome.



America's Veterans Rem



Wood-Ridge

On a rainy Saturday, November 8, 2008, at 10:00 a.m., a brief service was held at the Wood-Ridge Senior Center.

The Veterans Day service was conducted by VFW Post 3616 and the Ladies Auxiliary. The service began by Commander Joe Cecere highlighting the Post's commitment to the

Veterans' Home in Paramus. Acting Chaplain Al Tomaszewski gave the Invocation and Benediction.

Mayor Paul Sarlo commented about the Post's commitment to the Veterans' Home. Ladies' Auxiliary President Jan West also made remarks.

The service was preceded by an 8 a.m. Mass at Assumption Church. ###



Assumption School Honors Veterans on November 11th

Under the direction of Student Council Moderator, Miss Lynda Seeley, members of the Assumption School Student Council organized a school-wide commemoration of our nation's Veterans.

Students first expressed their gratitude to the Veterans for their service through a "Letter to A Veteran" program. In conjunction with this, the Student Council and Miss Seeley held a special ceremony on Veterans Day to honor the Veterans and thank them personally for their sacrifices.

The service was attended by many local Veterans as well as soldiers who are currently serving in the Armed Forces.

Principal Heather Muller opened the ceremony, and the Student/Council co-president provided welcoming remarks.

Shannon Rodriguez and Freddy Dressel, Student Council 8th Grade Representatives, led the Pledge of Allegiance. The National Anthem followed. Fr. Thomas Kelly gave the Benediction.

Sergeant Justin Zajicek gave

a moving speech about his devotion to his country and his experience in the Marines.

The observance included a poem, "Veterans Day Creed" paying tribute to the men and women of the military, read by Nicolas Lamendola, Tyler Zoltowski and Nicholas Christi.

Speeches were written and delivered by Assumption School Eighth Graders Nicholas Picinic and Gabriella Costa.

Everyone sang "God Bless America," followed by "Taps."

The program concluded with the Student Council walking over and shaking hands with the Veterans. ###



Popular Veterans Day Creed

Let us never forget those brave men and women who fought to preserve our freedoms over the centuries:

- It was the **Veteran**, not the preacher, who has given us freedom of religion.
- It was the **Veteran**, not the reporter, who has given us freedom of the press.
- It was the **Veteran**, not the poet, who has given us freedom of speech.
- It was the **Veteran**, not the campus organizer, who has given us freedom to assemble.
- It was the **Veteran**, not the lawyer, who has given us the right to a fair trial.
- It was the **Veteran**, not the politician, who has given us the right to vote.
- It was the **Veteran**, not the campus organizer, who has given us freedom to demonstrate.
- It is the **Veteran**, who salutes the Flag,
- It is the **Veteran**, who serves under the Flag and whose coffin is draped by the flag, who allows the protester to burn the flag.

All gave some -- Some gave all

Remembered November 11th



Little Ferry

On November 11, 2008, at 10:00 a.m., a brief service was held at the American Legion Post home.

At 11 a.m., a short service was held at the Washington School (Grades 1-4), immediately followed by a service across

Liberty Street at the Memorial Middle School (Grades 5-8).

During each service, American Legion Post 310 Senior Vice Commander Frederick J. Marston led the ceremonies.

Wreaths were placed at each Memorial stone by the American Legion, VFW, Sons of the Legion, Mayor and Council,

Little Ferry Police/Fire/EMS and American Sokol Little Ferry.

Rosa Martinez sang the National Anthem at the Washington School. Members of the school choir sang patriotic songs at the Memorial School.

Mathew Gomez read his First Place VFW Post 809 sponsored Veterans' Essay.

Speakers included: Bergen County Sheriff Leo P. McGuire and Little Ferry Mayor Mauro D. Raguseo.

The Mayor and Ms. Diane Fenton unveiled a Plaque on the Memorial Stone, honoring her son, Sgt. Matthew J. Fenton, USMC, who died on May 6, 2006 from wounds received in

Iraq on April 26, 2006.

The plaque was donated by the Borough of Little Ferry, P.B.A. Local 102, and Police Chief Ralph C. Verdi.

Chaplain Hal Feibelman offered the prayers. The firing squad shot volleys, and the bugler played "Taps." ###

Americans Thank You for Your Service



Hasbrouck Heights

On Tuesday, November 11, at Memorial Park, a brief service was held at 11:00 a.m. The service was co-sponsored by VFW Post 4591 and the American Legion Post 106.

The service began with Conchita Parker singing the National Anthem followed by remarks by Sr. VFW Commander Michael Vaughan,

with an invocation by American Legion Chaplain Frank Zabransky.

Mayor Rose Marie Heck made comments. VFW member, Sal, concluded the service by leading the assembly in the singing of "God Bless America." Light refreshments followed at the VFW Post home. ###



Carlstadt School Honors Veterans

On November 11, 2008, at 1:30 p.m., the Carlstadt Public School held a Veterans Day Ceremony in the gym.

About 500 school children shared the moment with Veterans, Fire Department, Police Department, Ambulance Corps, community and elected officials.

The highlight of the program was when Veterans stood up and were recognized.

The school children read essays they had written about Vets. Ken and Pam Schwarz, whose son Michael, was killed in Iraq last year, attended. A student, Foster, read an essay saluting Michael.

The school band played several patriotic songs.

Following the assembly, guests went to the first floor hallway to view a 4' x 20 foot flag painted on the wall facing a display memorializing Carlstadt Veterans from all wars.

Light refreshments followed. *Story and photos by Dennis Kronyak. ###*



On November 11, 2008, at 11:00 a.m., the Carlstadt Veterans from Post 9149 held a brief ceremony at Carlstadt Memorial Park on Hackensack Street.

The program began with the Pledge of Allegiance, Chaplain's prayer and the Commander's words commemorating Veterans. Mayor

Roseman, spoke followed by the Chaplain's concluding prayer. The Ladies' Auxiliaries also attended. *Story and photos by Dennis Kronyak. ###*