



The Freedom Committee of Orange County

Neighborhood Community Center

1845 Park Ave., Costa Mesa, CA. 92627

Web Site <http://www.fc-oc.org>

Minutes of the Meeting of November 10, 2010

Pledge of Allegiance:

Fred Whitaker

Invocation:

Fr. Enrique Sera, Pastor, Saint Joachim Catholic Church

Special Guests:

Chief Christopher Shawkey, Costa Mesa Police Department, James Shawkey and Pamela Shawkey, our luncheon hostess.

Guests Present: (13) Bill Bennett, Gene Brakke, Frank Callahan, Arlene Cole, Marty Flacks, Frank Hagler, Don Louis, Thuy Phan, Dan Reider and Duke Steinken..

Members Present: (66) Jim Baker, Rally Bates, Betty Bell, Howard Bender, George Ciamba, Robby Conn, Bus Cornelius, Bob Cowley, Bobbie Cowley, Jeff Davis, Bob Dugan, Eddie Felix, Kay Felix, Kirk Ferguson, Jack Ferris, Francis Flacks, Ray Grissom, George Grupe, Herb Guinness, Ronnie Guyer, Sid Hallburn, Jack Hammett, Arnold Hanson, Dale Hanson, Shirley Hanson, Dick Higgins, Ramona Hill, William Holiday, Art Lambert, Dag Larsen, David Lester, Syd Lucas, Bill Mall, Frank Mannino, Ted Marinos, Vern Martin, Robert Meyer, Charles Mitchell, Dick O'Brien, Pat O'Brien, Don Oldis, Bob Perry, Jim Pinnix, Lou Possemato, Gladys Refakes, Tim Richards, Larry Schnitzer, Terry Schnitzer, Harry Selling, Fr. Sera, John Skara, Martha Somers, Bob Sternfels, Bob Stoddard, Ted Tanner, Bob Thomas, Allan Thompson, Phillip Vinci, Linda Wallace, Gene Wallace, Denise Weiland, Fred Whitaker, Paul Wilder, Scott Williams, Sid Yahn and Greg Young.

Special Presentation

"Let Freedom Ring"

The Freedom Committee was treated to a very special two part presentation by Mr. **George Ciampa**, a WWII veteran. Out of basic training, George was assigned to the 607th Graves Registration Company, a section of the Quartermaster Corps. They saw combat before D-Day. "**Operation TIGER**" was major training dress rehearsal for the 4th Infantry Division's assault at Utah Beach, Normandy, France on D-Day, 6 June 1944. In the early morning hours of 28 April 1944, eight Landing Ship Tanks (LSTs) with the assault's follow-on force of combat service support soldiers were caught by German E-boats which machine gunned and torpedoed sinking two and damaging all of them. There were only 290 survivors of 744 soldiers and 282 sailors. George's unit went on to follow the Allied Forces from Normandy to near Berlin. His job for 11 months was to collect, document, and bury dead soldiers in temporary Cemeteries along the way. "It was estimated that we handled about 75,000 bodies both American and German," (An interesting side note...Some of the wounded and bodies of Operation Tiger were transported to the U.S. Naval Hospital at Netley, Hants, just south of Southampton.) **Jack Hammett**, then a Chief Hospital Corpsman was stationed there and received some of these casualties but was never able to find out what happened. This was all cloaked in secrecy apparently for several reasons. One reason, of course, was not to let know of their success, and another, so that our troops would not lose morale.



Almost everything a soldier wore, carried or ate on D-Day was supplied by the Quartermaster Corps.

www.qmmuseun.lee.army.mil/d-



Henri-Chapelle Cemetery In Belgium

These crosses and Stars of David mark the graves of 7,992 American soldiers that died in the region near Homburg, Belgium. Many of them were killed during the "Battle of the Bulge"

Each one of these crosses represents a young man or woman, who gave their lives protecting what every man and woman on this earth cherishes the most, FREEDOM.

For the second part of George's presentation, he played a very stirring and patriotic DVD titled "*Let Freedom Ring*". **George Ciampa** created "*LET FREEDOM RING*" in order to educate today's

generation on the importance of FREEDOM and to never forget those men and women who gave their lives for freedom. This is also the mission of the Freedom Committee.

Table Topics

The Freedom Committee was treated with a free lunch provided by Mrs. **Pamela Shawkey** and her husband, Costa Mesa Police Chief **Christopher Shawkey**. FCOC veterans were honored with the good food. Pamela's father served in WWII. **She received a well deserve round of applause for her delicious food and service.**

A Vietnam veteran, **Jess Lawson** was featured on the front page of the OC Register in a column by **David Whiting** on November 10th. "*Veterans' Day Helps Heal the Invisable Wounds*". Forty years on, Jess Lawson finds his place among other veterans. "*Few cherish peace more than those who have gone to war.*" Jess served as a deck officer on a LST in the Navy.

Bill Bennett informed FCOC of a "Veterans' Recognition Service" at the Crystal Cathedral on Sunday, November 14, 2010 at 6:30 PM. This will be a patriotic and spiritual concert.

Jack Hammett introduced Mrs. **Denise Weiland** who is working within the Newport Harbor School District to enable veterans to speak to the students. **Bob Meyer**, a glider Pilot in WWII, has led the Pledge of Allegiance at five local high schools. Bob also encouraged students to participate in "*A Bit of Home*" by donating a DVD or writing a letter to a serviceman. **Bus Cornelius**, who served with Gen. Patton's forces, received a letter from a student that he spoken to, two years ago. The student thanked him and asked for a follow up story. Major **Harry Selling**, a WWII, B-17 bomber pilot, was honored at the Newport Harbor High School football game. All these veterans were involved because of the work Denise is doing.

Roger Young, a Vietnam Veteran, announced the Snow ball Express which provides hope and new memories to the children of military fallen heroes who have died while on active duty since 9/11. Snowball Express 2010 will be Dallas, TX. Contact them at info@snowballexpress.org.

Fred Whitaker, a WWII "Battle of the Bulge infantry veteran, is scheduled to speak at St. Edwards Elementary, a Dana Point school.

Jack Hammett announced that there will be a special Veterans Day Ceremony at the Harbor Lawn-Mt. Olive Cemetery in Costa Mesa on Veterans Day. A large bronze eagle will be unveiled in the Veterans' Memorial Garden in remembrance of **Bud Hohl**. Jack will be the Master of Ceremonies.



Edwards AFB tour bus, scheduled for Wednesday, November 17th, will leave from in front of the Costa Mesa Community Center at 0700 hours *sharp*. All must have a picture type of I.D.



Knott's Berry Farm annual tribute to our Military, past and present, is between now and Thanksgiving. FREE admission for Veterans or current serving military personnel and one guest with proper I.D. presented at turnstile.

Mona Hill expressed a *thank you* to the volunteers at the door for our FCOC meeting; **Dick Higgins, Frank Callahan, Bob Stoddard, Terry Schnitzer, Bob and Bobby Cowley, and Shirley Hanson**. Mona also stated that the Lending Library has an assortment of Non-fiction, History, famous people, large print and history on tape and DVD's.

Ronnie Guyer announced this is the last meeting he will attend as Representative of Assemblyman Van Tran who has termed out.

Robby Conn made a very generous offer. He stated he would contribute \$10 if the Veteran would pay \$5 for a \$15 Freedom Committee of Orange County Cap. Several members accepted his offer and are wearing a new cap. Robbie also presented two caps to the Shawkeys at his expense.

FCOC Treasurer **Larry Schnitzer**, reported \$ 2181 Balance after all receipts and expenses paid.

The meeting then at 1:30 p.m. adjourned.

*(Minutes of the meeting prepared by **Tim Richards**)*

Submitted with a hearty **WELL DONE** to all those FCOC members that have made the success which our Committee enjoys...

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jack Hammett".