



*Neighborhood Community Center
1845 Park Ave., Costa Mesa, CA. 92627*

Minutes of the Meeting of October 12, 2011

Pledge of Allegiance: Major John Hughes, USMC (Ret)
Pearl Harbor Survivor

Invocation: Pastor Frank Orzio, Wounded Warriors Ministry

Binnacle List: Dr. Norman Loats

Guests Present: (8) Louise Alcalá, Bob Cermak, Laura Cermak, Ray Deufau,
Russell Hawkins, Mary Kline, Mary Knybel and Louis Kreidelbaugh

Members Present: (53) Kelly Alcalá, Vic Bakkila, Rally Bates, Howard Beach, Jesse Bequette, Frank Callahan, Jack Cole, Bus Cornelius, Robert Cowley, Roberta Cowley, Jeff Davis, Bob Dugan, Tom Egan, Tom Evans, Eddie Felix, Kirk Ferguson, Raymond Grissom, George Grupe, Ronnie Guyer, Sid Hallburn, Jack Hammett, Arnold Hanson, Dale Hanson, Dick Higgins, William Holiday, Jack Hubbard, John Hughes, Michael Knybel, Art Lambert, Jess Lawson, David Lester, Ted Marinos, Vern Martin, Robert Meyer, Charles Mitchell, Dick O'Brien, Don Oldis, Frank Pelicciotti, Bob Perry, Lou Passemato, Jim Powers, Tim Richards, Larry Schnitzer, John Skara, Bob Sternfels, Bob Stoddard, Ted Tanner, Eugene Verge, Gene Wallace, Fred Whitaker, George Widly, Paul Wilder and Scott Williams.

Associate Members Present: (14) Bette Bell, Robbie Conn, Eliza Delpizzo, Kay Felix, Ramona Hill, Carmen Holiday, Pat O'Brien, Sherrie Orzio, Gladys Refakes, Terry Schnitzer, Linda Wallace, Denise Weiland, Ray Wong and Elizabeth Yee.

Special Presentation: “Bolts of Thunder”

What was it like flying a P-47 fighter in Europe during WWII? **James Vincent Powers** had never flown an airplane before WWII. In September 1944, 2Lt Powers joined the 510th Fighter Squadron, 405 Fighter Group and flew 45 combat missions in a P-47 Thunderbolt. The enemy they faced was the dreaded German Luftwaffe, the most experienced pilots in the world, many of them Aces having shot down over a hundred planes.

He remembers his first mission was a familiarization flight around the airfield at St-Dizier, France. As he approached the landing field, a red flare was shot from the control tower and he applied full power and called the tower. He was told only one landing gear was down. James put his P47 through a series of loops and rolls but was told, “Still only one wheel down.” That left him with two options: bail out or “belly-in”. As he approached the field with wheels up, the control tower warned “Not on the runway! We have the Squadron returning. Use the grass alongside the runway.” He made a three point landing: propeller, belly of the plane and rear landing wheel and skidded along the grass, coming to a stop. There is a saying among



WWII P-47 Thunderbolt -The red markings indicate his squadron. The yellow indicate American

The German POW Camp was located in tunnels near the Austrian town of Ebensee.



flyers: “*Any landing that you can walk away from is a **GOOD** landing.*”

The day after WWII ended, Powers’ Fighter Group was given a mission to fly low over a German POW camp to show the POWs that rescue was coming. This POW camp was located in valley with high mountains on both sides. The planes had to clear the mountains and dive down close to the camp and depart over a large lake. One of the P-47s lost power and crashed into the lake. He was rescued by local villagers. Five years ago (2006) The National Geographic had a program on the recovery of this P-47. It came out of the lake after 66 years with very little damage and the machine guns even worked. The P-47 is now being restored at the Planes of Fame, Chino Airport, CA. **James Powers** is the Author of *Bolts of Thunder, Words of Whisper*, which has more P-47 stories.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ray Wong and **Scott Williams** were *commended* for their effects on scheduling and preparing programs for FCOC. They are responsible for setting up the audio visual equipment for each monthly program and assisting the speaker with pictures and DVD’s.

Jack Hammett requested that members bring the Meeting Agenda that were emailed or snail-mailed to them before each meeting. This will save money and time reprinting them for the meetings.

Scott Williams updated the membership on the progress of Incorporating FCOC. The IRS has now approved the FCOC Application for a non-profit status and only State approval is needed.

Bette Bell, FCOC presented the September monthly report of deposits and expenses. Deposits \$ 362.00; Expenses \$ 154.31; Balance in the Bank \$ 3,749.28.

Many thanks to **Rob Woods** for volunteering to manning the FCOC Library. There are many books of interest on military subjects that can be checked out for free. Thanks to **Mona Hill** also!

Fred Whitaker and **Bob Meyer** have volunteered to maintain records of FCOC speakers and their audiences and the meeting places. FCOC will use these numbers to establish what we can do to spread the words, “*Freedom is Not Free.*”

Ronnie Guyer reported on the scaled replica of Vietnam Memorial Wall, The Moving Wall, which was in Garden Grove for five days last week. Near the Wall, there was an outstanding exhibition of memorabilia from servicemen that served in Vietnam. Ronnie’s display centered on the Battle in the Ia Drang Valley and the book, “*We were soldiers once...and young*”, written by **General Hal Moore** and **Joe Galloway**, a reporter that was there. **Frank Orzio**, who participated in the closing ceremonies, said a young girl said, “My Father has the Medal of Honor like that”, and she pointed to a set of dog tag identification chains. **Anyone who has worn the Dog Tags is a Veteran and a Hero!**

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

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

Jack Hammett Chairman

Do know why two tags
and two chains are worn?



The next FCOC Meeting is **November 9th**