



(A California nonprofit 501(c) 3 Public Benefit Corporation)  
*Neighborhood Community Center*  
1845 Park Ave., Costa Mesa, CA. 92627



**Minutes of the Meeting of September 11, 2013**

**Pledge of Allegiance: Robby Conn, Associate Member**

**Invocation: Pastor Frank Orzio, Sgt. USMC (Ret.), Vietnam Veteran**

**Guests Present: (18)** Yarizo Amaton, Bob Bolin, Shirley Bolin, Gene Brakke, Gretchen Coburn, Pat Coburn, Tom Crammer, Otis Cranford, Olee Dessing, Edmee Emerson, Richard Grabow, Laurie Mola, Eloy Morez, John Poletti, Asterid Rice, John Trenfield, Corky Venen *and* Karen Vinci.

**Members Present: (77)** Bill Anderson, John Baca, Jim Baker, Bob Bangston, Rally Bates, Howard Bender, Jesse Bequette, Alan Bernstein, Dave Brooks, Malcolm Campbell, Jack Cole, Bus Cornelius, Robert Cowley, Roberta Cowley, Arman Cruz, Andy Cullinane, Bob Davis, Bob Dugan, Bruce Ellyson, George Emerson, Tom Evans, Eddie Felix, Kirk Ferguson, Walter Friedman, Thomas Gorla, Archie Gregory, James Grimm, Ray Grissom, Ronnie Guyer, Sid Hallburn, Jack Hammett, Arnie Hanson, Dale Hanson, George Hill, Bill Holiday, Vincent Howley, Jack Hubbard, Peter Katz, Louis Kridelbaugh, Hans Lamm, Dave Lester, Edward Magee, Frank Mannino, Ted Marinos, Edison Miller, Doug Milliken, Charles Mitchel, Dick O'Brien, Frank Orzio, Don Pageler, Frank Pangborn, Jim Powers, Ken Pruitt, Frank Ramirez, Keith Regan, Timothy Richards, Ed Royce, Larry Schnitzer, Bill Schultz, Harry Selling, Enrique Sera, Ted Tanner, Allan Thompson, Jim Thurn, Dick Tyhurst, Edward Vincent, Phillip Vinci, Fred Wagner, Buck Wall, Jack Walters, Jay Wertz, Fred Whitaker, Chase Wickersham, George Widly, Paul Wilder, Scott Williams *and* Sid Yahn.

**Associate Members Present: (32)** Celeste Ames, James Baker, Bette Bell, Valerie Boston, David Brandt, Arlene Cole, Robby Conn, Guy Coulombe, Cherrie Danks, Teresa Drain, Linda Ellison, Dave Ferguson, Sandy Genis, Geri Hanson, Shirley Hanson, Ramona Hill, Cornell Ilescu, Lori Martin, Adrian Michael, Audrey Miller, Tod Monk, Betty Mueller, Carlos Navarette, Beth Refakes, Gladys Refakes, Judy Selling, Lynn Thomas, Marge Tyhurst, Tom Watson, Denise Weiland, Ray Wong *and* Rob Wood

**Remembrance Day: Chairman Jack Hammett**

**Jack Hammett** set the theme for today, 9/11, a Special Day to remember the attack on the USA. Only three times in history has the USA homeland been attacked: The War of 1812 when Britain attacked the USA; 1941 Pearl Harbor when Japan attacked the USA; and 9/11/2001 when 19 Islamic terrorist attacked the USA. Jack's daughter volunteered with the Salvation Army at Ground Zero that day and brought vivid memories home of that destruction. So we remember those 2,998 mostly civilians that lost their lives 12 years ago.

George Emerson  
B-17 tail gunner



### ***SPECIAL PRESENTATION***

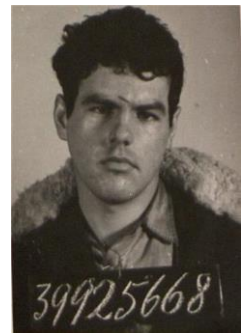
**Sgt George Emerson** was **tail gunner**, one of nine crewmen on a WWII B-17 bomber who defended against enemy fighter attacks from the rear of the plane. The tail gunner operated a machine gun on the tail-end of the aircraft with an unobstructed view toward the rear. He saw the group of plane formations and the results of the bombing.

Tail gunners had a rough existence. Their compartment in the rear of the plane was one of the tightest. The gunner sat on a modified bicycle type seat in a kneeling position for the majority of the mission. The tail was drafty and the gunner had to constantly battle with fighting off frostbite and clearing the windows of frost.

On February 9, 1945, George's B-17 was part the 303<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group, 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force, on a mission to bomb a synthetic oil refinery in Lutzendorf, Germany when they came under anti-aircraft fire. A plane near Emerson's was hit by anti-aircraft flak, lost control, and collided with his bomber. The tail section, with Emerson still inside and unconscious, was severed from the rest of the aircraft and tumbled from 25,000 ft.

Sometime during the fall, he was flung from the tail. He estimates he must have been at around 10,000 feet when he regained consciousness and somehow, his parachute opened. He landed in a field, and except for a gash on his head, he was fine, but very scared. The rest of the crew was killed, as was the crew of the colliding B-17.

When he landed, he was found by German farmers calling him "*Chicago Gangster*". He was taken to a German military prison near Moosberg, photographed, and remained there until liberation on April 29, 1945. The Germans wrongly wrote on his photo his last three number of his serial 668 instead of 686 that meant he was listed as missing in action instead of a POW.



A prospective member of FCOC present today, **John Poelletti** was with the Army unit they liberated the POW camp that George was in.

### **ADMINISTRATION**

**Bette Bell**, FCOC treasurer, reported on FCOC financial. Starting Balance was \$2,376.69. Expenses were \$604.28 and donations were \$433.66. The ending balance was \$2,206.07. **Scott Williams** reported that the 2012 audit was completed with *no* deficiencies. Bette received a big round of applause: **Job WELL done, Bette!**

**Scott Williams** stated that FCOC has entered into a contract with the Newport/Mesa Union School District to bring “*The FCOC Living History Program*” into their six high schools. FCOC has entered into an agreement with **Denise Weiland**, as an independent contractor, to administer this program. She has conducted a similar living history program which has worked so well at Corona del Mar High School for the past several years.



Denise Weiland and Jack Hammett signing the Contract.

**Denise Weiland** and **Frank Pangborn** conducted a speaker-training workshop for 37 FCOC members. **Jack Hammett** stated only speakers that complete this training will be qualified to represent FCOC at the High Schools. 37 FCOC members attended the last training program held August 20<sup>th</sup>. Please contact **Denise** or **Frank** to sign up for the next training program.

**Denise Weiland** has a **Library of Congress History** project that all graduates of the training program will complete.

**Frank Pangborn** concluded the meeting by leading all FCOC members in singing “**God Bless America**”.

*Minutes prepared by  
Tim Richards*

*Jack Hammett*  
Chairman, FCOC

**God Bless America Lyrics**  
by Irving Berlin



God bless America,  
Land that I love,  
Stand beside her and guide her  
Thru the night with a light from above;

From the mountains, to the prairies,  
To the oceans white with foam,  
God bless America,  
My home, sweet home.  
God bless America,  
My home, sweet home.