

# THE FREEDOM COMMITTEE OF ORANGE COUNTY

A 501(c)(3) organization

“Passing the Torch of Liberty on to Future Generations”

General Meeting

December 10, 2014

Costa Mesa Neighborhood Community Center

Pledge of Allegiance: Capt. Tom Gorla, USN (Ret.)

Invocation: Peter Katz, USA

Binnacle List: Rally Bates, USN, WO Jack Hammett, USN (Ret.), Capt. Robert Meyer, USAF *and* Major Robert Sternfels, USAF

Guests Present: (13): Rich Donaghy, Marv Garrison, Carol Grimm, General Norman Jones, Jim Manifold, John Mannino, Art Martinez, George Masaki, Cathy Mesaubriui, Valerie Phillips, Lynn Redman, Irvin Saunders and Steve Sierad.

Members Present: (63): Louis Ast, Jim Baker, Vic Bakkila, Jesse Bequette, Alan Bernstein, Larry Bersch, Bob Bolin, Dave Brooks, Tim Brown, Jack Cole, Bus Cornelius, Bob Davis, Bob Dugan, Tom Egan, Kirk Ferguson, Richard Grabow, James Grimm, Herb Guinness, Ronnie Guyer, Sid Hallburn, Dale Hanson, Dwight Hanson, Hal Hayes, George Hill, Vince Howley, Jack Hubbard, Peter Katz, Michael Knybel, Thomas Knybel, Hans Lamme, Bob Leahy, David Lester, Jack Linscott, Norm Loats, Edward Magee, Frank Mannino, Ted Marinos, Edison Miller, Doug Milliken, Charles Mitchell, Ron Nichols, Don Pageler, Frank Pangborn, Pete Pedersen, Fred Pellicciotti, Bob Perry, Ken Pruitt, Frank Ramirez, Keith Regan, Bryan Roland, Ed Royce, Larry Schnitzer, William Schultz, Ted Tanner, Michael Trerotola, Phillip Vinci, Fred Wagner, Buck Wall, Jack Walters, Fred Whitaker, Paul Wilder, Scott Williams and Sid Yahn.

Associate Members Present (29): Bette Bell, Shirley Bolin, Cindy Brenneman, Tom Brenneman, Arlene Cole, Robby Conn, Guy Coulombe, Cherrie Danks, Eliza Delpizzo, Teresa Drain, Shirley Hanson, Betty Hayes, Ramona Hill, LaVonn Larsen, Lori Martin, Audrey Miller, Betty Mueller, Joyce Nichols, Gary Oberts, Charlene Pedersen, Tanya Pham, Beth Refakes, Gladys Refakes, Pam Reich, Jeff Sebek, Denise Weiland, Linda Williams, Ray Wong and Rob Wood.

All veterans in attendance were recognized according to their theater of operation from WW II through the Afghanistan War.



Staff Sgt. Arnie Hanson WW II, Army veteran where he served in the Pacific Theater. Arnie is a recipient of the Bronze Star and a Purple Heart. The Freedom Committee members and guests joined Arnie and his family to celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. Through a cell phone and audio-visual support Freedom Committee members, associates and guests sang birthday greetings to Arnie, who is currently living in the suburbs of San Antonio, Texas.

### Personal History Presentation

The keynote speaker Chief Warrant Officer (CWO -2) James Grimm’s presentation, “A Helicopter Pilot’s Perspective of a Year in Vietnam 68-69” was a one-of-a-kind personal history story. Jim is a native Southern Californian who grew up in South Pasadena back when you could leave your windows and doors unlocked without trepidation. He comes from a family of military service, tradition and honor following his grandfather- four uncles- WWII, and his brother and cousins, all of whom served in the U.S. Armed Forces.



After graduating from high school and receiving his private pilots license in 1967, Jim enlisted in the Army after receiving his draft notice. During basic infantry training in Fort Polk, LA., Jim saw his future in flying helicopters. He attended and graduated from the U.S. Primary Helicopter Center, Fort Wolters, Texas, Class 67-25. Jim commented that one-half of his class of 36 were killed in combat in Vietnam. Further training at Ft. Rutgers, Georgia for HU-1D “Huey” and instrument training resulted in his Commission as a Warrant Officer. Within 5 weeks, Jim was in Vietnam flying the Huey as part of an assault insertion platoon for the 1<sup>st</sup> Aviation Brigade, 17<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Group located in II Corp. In his first month, Jim had 100 hours flying time. “**May Day – MAY DAY... SHOT DOWN!**” occurred after one month and four days in country while flying second seat with senior pilot “crash Kirshbaum”. Jim described the crash as a “hard landing”.

Fortunately, the pilot and Jim escaped with minor the crash was a 30 caliber bullet that entered into gearbox at the tail rudder, disabling the flight



injuries. The cause of the 90 degree controls.

Jim took his audience through the remainder of his challenging 12 month tour working with U.S. Army Units, Special Forces, Arvins and Republic of Korean Army, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy, Navy Seals, and Medical evacuations. He concluded with his last flight in Vietnam, five days before rotating back to the states, a night extraction in support of the Korean troops who were being over run by the NVA. While attempting the extraction, Jim's platoon leader was shot, his co-pilot was shot in the face, and his door gunner was killed.

In concluding, Jim believes he is here today because God was his co-pilot as he survived two crashes and a night extraction that went wrong.

**Financial Report** by **Bette Bell**, Treasurer, filed.

**Schools Report** by NMUSD- FCOC Liaison **Denise Weiland**.

Denise asked for more FCOC veterans to sign up for the personal history interviews with the **Corona del Mar High School** students. The interviews will be conducted by the students through December and January.

**FCOC Schools and Civic Organization Report Veterans Day Activities.** The flag deck ceremonies at **Sonora Elementary** was attended by FCOC members: Chairman Jack **Hammett**, "Bus" **Cornelius**, Bob **Dugan**, and FCOC President Scott **Williams**.

The flag deck ceremonies at **College Park Elementary** school was attended by FCOC President Scott **Williams** and Pete **Rivas**.

**Costa Mesa Middle School** was the host to FCOC members Jack **Hammett**, Chairman, Ted **Tanner**, Dave **Hayward**, Frank **Orzio**, FCOC VP Frank **Pangborn**, Don **Pageler**, Bob **McClain**, and FCOC President Scott **Williams**. The veterans made personal history presentations in three classrooms covering eight periods.

### **FCOC Civic presentations**

FCOC VP Frank **Pangborn** was the keynote speaker at the Veterans Day Ceremonies at **El Toro Memorial Cemetery** on November 11, 2014.

FCOC members Frank **Orzio**, Fred **Whitaker**, George **Widly**, and Shep **Bentley** were the keynote speakers at the **Laguna Niguel Veterans Day Ceremony** at the Laguna Niguel Seniors Center on November 11, 2014.

FCOC members Dave **Hayward**, WWII, B-25 pilot, and Frank **Pangborn**, Army, Vietnam War, 1<sup>st</sup>.Lt. were the keynote speakers at the **Huntington Beach Library Author's Luncheon** in November.

FCOC Chairman Jack **Hammett** was a special guest of the **USO Bob Hope** at the USO “grand opening” ceremony at **John Wayne Airport(SNA)**

The meeting concluded with a visit from Santa Clause and his elves who delivered good cheer to all.



Minutes by Scott Williams, President/lsw