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38th Parallel

A publication to remember, honor and thank the Korean War Veterans



Karen Sas

Judy Erksa, a Department of Defense 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee member, pins a Korean War veteran pin on a veteran from the Canadian military March 22 at the Great Lakes Regional Korean War Commemoration Ceremony in Warren, Mich.



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Nation to salute Korean War vets, commemorate armistice signing

Recording stars Randy Travis, Wayne Newton and Phil Driscoll will honor Korean War veterans during a national commemoration event July 26 at the MCI Center in Washington, D.C.

The star-studded performance highlights a three-day commemoration that begins July 25 as the United States commemorates the signing of the Korean War armistice, which took place 50 years ago.

The free event is at the MCI Center will also include guest speakers and Korean War veterans Ed McMahon and James McEachin. The event will also include a parade of colors from all four branches of the U.S. military, the U.S. Coast Guard and the 21 other nations that participated under the United Nations Command during the war. This

parade of colors will mark the first time all the colors of the major units from the Korean War have been brought together.

During the National Salute to Korean War Veterans, the DoD 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee will also sponsor a wreath laying at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery and an Armistice Day ceremony at the Korean War Veterans Memorial on the Mall.

“Korean War veterans are true heroes, and history has proven that what these service members did to halt communist aggression 50 years ago not only saved a nation, but also helped begin the downfall of that form of government rule worldwide,” retired Air

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Salute from Page 1

Force Maj. Gen. Nels Running, executive director of the DoD 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee, said. "This commemoration event is our nation's way of telling all Korean War Veterans 'thank you,' and that we have not forgotten what you have done for our country and all freedom loving people in the world."

All Korean War veterans, family members, next of kin and the public are invited to attend the events. To order the free tickets for the MCI Center event call 703-604-0820/0831. For updates and more information about other armistice commemoration events during the July 25-27 weekend, call the phone numbers listed above or visit our Web site at www.korea50.mil. For discount hotel reservations call 1-800-554-2220.



Ssg Tim Volkert

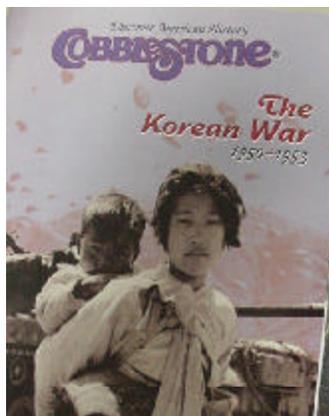
Turkish Defense Attaché, Brig. Gen. Orhan Ugurluoglu lays a wreath at the Korean War Veterans Memorial on The Mall in Washington D.C., Feb. 12, honoring those who served in the war 50 years ago.

In Memorium

Robert Hansen and Lester Guidry, two veterans committed to honoring their comrades, recently passed away. Hansen, a Navy veteran, was the executive director to the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board. The Korean War Veterans Memorial opened July 27, 1995.

Guidry, an Army soldier during the war, was one of the pioneers in Commemoration Partners gathering a large number Republic of Korea-Korean War Service Medal applications. His crusade to collect more than 200 DD Form 214s from veterans in 2001 was one of the largest orders for the Air Force Personnel Center to process at the time. Guidry drove from South Carolina to Randolph AFB, Texas and personally delivered the applications to the AFPC.

The Department of Defense 50th Anniversary of the Korean War wishes to express our condolences to the families and friends of these two men and all other lives they touched.



**38th Parallel
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For your service

In his office on Capitol Hill Senator Bill "Nighthorse" Campbell, (R.-Colo.), a Native American, receives a plaque from retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Nels Running for his support of the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War. Senator Campbell is a Korean War veteran who served in the Air Force.

Korean War veterans get medals 50 years later

By 1st Lt. Brandon Lingle
AFPC Public Affairs

SAN ANTONIO - "This is fantastic," says Airman 2nd Class Harry Woodville. "Finally, 50 years later I got the medal."

Woodville, a 1950's-era B-29 life-support technician was beaming minutes after receiving his Korean War Service Medal in front of more than a thousand people at a ceremony here March 8.

"The Korean veterans' sacrifices of youth, sweat and blood laid the groundwork of the Korea that stands tall today," said the honorable Yang Bong-Ryull, Consul General of the Republic of Korea addressing the crowd. "Without these sacrifices our freedom would not have existed."

The San Antonio gathering is just one of many nationwide events to be hosted by the Department of

Defense's 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee through Nov. 11.

Music from the 332nd Army band and enthusiastic cheers from the crowd echoed through the circular hall as one veteran from each service branch received the medal from Bong-Ryull. Former airman Woodville, a San Antonio resident who spent 27 months in the Korean Theater, received his medal as the Air Force representative.

"We should have gotten these in 1953, but this ceremony is an honor and quite a surprise," Woodville said. "I had it easy compared to a lot of guys over there."

The Republic of Korea first offered the medal 50 years ago, but a law prevented U.S. troops from accepting medals from foreign countries. By 1999, the law was changed and the Department of Defense approved the medal to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the war.

The Air Force has responsibility for issuing Korean War Service Medals to eligible veterans of all military branches or their primary next of kin.

While Woodville talked about

how pleased he was, more than 30 other veterans were busy registering for their medals with two people from the Air Force Personnel Center at nearby Randolph Air Force Base. Several other veterans picked up the medal application to take home.

"Seeing vets get their medal presented in person is really something," says Staff Sgt. Heather Moody from the AFPC awards and decorations branch. "We process hundreds of requests for these medals every day and rarely do we see the actual recipient, let alone their reactions. It really makes me appreciate what we do."

More than 150,000 medals have been sent to veterans so far, according to Moody. The Air Force provides the medal at no cost to qualifying veterans who apply with appropriate documentation. About 1.8 million people are eligible according to Department of Defense estimates.

Additional information on the Korean War Service Medal is available at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/awards/ or by calling the Air Force Contact Center at (866) 229-7074 or DSN 665-5000.

More information about Korean War 50th anniversary events is found at www.korea50.mil or by calling (703) 604-0831.



Retired Army Col. Richard Gonzalez (right) receives his DoD Certificate of Appreciation after receiving his Korean War Service Medal March 8 at La Villita in San Antonio. Gen. Freddy E. McFarren, commander, 5th U.S. Army at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, congratulates him. (Photo by Tech.

Korean War vets receive ‘welcome home’ during international commemoration event

WARREN, Mich. – When Marine Sgt. William Gobert returned to the United States from his tour in the Korean War in 1951, there were no parades or cheering crowds. Unlike the mass return of service members from World War II, the Korean War veterans came back in small groups as they completed their tours and rotated home.

“There were 17 of us,” recalled Gobert. “We got as far as San Diego and then from there, we went our own way. I took a plane back to Chicago. I finally got to Pittsburgh and took a bus up the Allegheny River. I’ll never forget. I had a Sea Bag and I was walking down the street and a dog started chasing me. That was my welcome home coming back from Korea.”

Gobert and more than 1,500 other Korean War veterans and family members received the recognition they deserved March 22 during an international Korean War veteran commemoration ceremony in Warren, Mich.

The event, sponsored by the U.S. Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command, the City of Warren, Mich. and the Department of Defense 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee, included U.S. Korean War veterans from Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois. South Korean and Canadian veterans also attended the event.

The keynote speaker, Ryang Hong, a Korean War veteran from South Korea, fought alongside the

service members from the United States and 20 other nations to halt the communist invasion from the north. For his sacrifices and service during the war, he was awarded South Korea’s highest decoration for combat valor, the Wharang Medal with Gold Star.

“I’ll never forget. I had a Sea Bag and I was walking down the street and a dog started chasing me. That was my welcome home coming back from Korea.”

William Gobert, Korean War veteran and former Marine sergeant

Hong told the group that 50 years ago they were all young, good looking and their eyes sparkled as they defended the freedom of the Republic of Korea. Now, he told the veterans that although they are all old, “we are still good looking,” and “our eyes sparkle with pride. “We fought like hell to do the job and we are proud of it.”

The ceremony included international participation with guest speakers from South Korea and musical support from Canada including the Windsor Military Band and the Essex and Kent Scottish Highlanders Pipes and Drums.

“It makes you feel great. This is outstanding,” Gobert said. “I think now, we’ve been recognized and we’re very appreciative of things like this gathering.

“This is our last hoorah ... the end of the 50th year,” he said. “(They call it) the ‘Forgotten War.’ It sure wasn’t forgotten today.”



Karen Sas

Women from the local Korean Community perform during the commemoration ceremony on the Macomb Community College Campus in Warren, Mich., March 22.

Korean War soldiers remembered in DoD with Pentagon Exhibit

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Before the candles on the cake for his 17th birthday could cool, Charles Lojewski found himself in the middle of the Korean War as a private. Before he could celebrate number 18, he was a sergeant first class leading South Korean soldiers in the fight for freedom against North Korean forces.

Although he could laugh about the quick rise in rank, which he attributed to being the lone American soldier leading a group of South Korean men, the humor in the situation quickly faded behind tears streaming down his face as he remembered the harsh reality of what he was doing in Korea 50 years ago.

On Feb. 12, Lojewski and his wife Catherine were among a group of about 100 veterans and family members attending a ribbon-cutting ceremony in the Pentagon to unveil a new exhibit honoring the Army's role in the Korean War.

The exhibit, which is located on the A Ring in the Pentagon, on the second floor between corridors six and seven, is an educational display that not only pays tribute to the soldiers of the Korean War, but also serves as a visual history lesson for today's fighting men and women, said Walter H. Bradford, curator for the Center of Military History.

"It's real important for people in the Pentagon to see the history of what they do because they need some sort of perspective for their job," Bradford said. "It's great for the veterans to see it because it shows that the Army recognizes their service and the fact that they were the predecessors for today's generation.

As the guest speakers talked about the war and the impact it had on the world, Lojewski wiped away tears as he was reminded of his quick transition from teenage boy to combat-hardened soldier.

Others sat silently, motionless, as if reliving the events that shaped their young lives more than 50 years ago.

"It brings back memories," said Eric Orsini, special assistant to the Army G4 and veteran of both Korea and World War II. "It brings back memories, some of which you would rather have not brought back."



Staff Sgt. Tim Volkert

From left, Republic of Korean Ambassador Sung Chul Yang, the Honorable Reginald J. Brown, Assistant Secretary of the Army, Manpower and Reserve Affairs, and retired Army Gen. Edward C. Meyer cut the ribbon to officially open the Korean War exhibit in the Pentagon Feb. 12.

The exhibit also educates those who view it to the fact that the Korean War veterans fought the first real battle against communism," said the Honorable Reginald J. Brown, assistant secretary of the Army, Manpower and Reserve Affairs. "In the summer of 1950, most Americans were only just beginning to understand the threat posed by communism in that era."

Republic of Korea Ambassador Sung Chul Yang said this ceremony was a great moment for him to witness because the exhibit focused on the men and women who helped save his country.

"Korean people will not and must not forget the sacrifice and contribution of those great soldiers from the United States," Yang said. "All the contributions, service and sacrifice America has rendered to my country throughout the years have not been in vain."

While viewing the exhibit will mean different things to those who stare into the eyes of those soldiers who fought into the Korean War, Orsini said one fact would remain long after the photos fade.

"The American people did a great deal of good in Korea," he said. "I don't think it will ever be forgotten."

Sunshine state celebrates nation's heroes

TAMPA, Fla. — More than 1,500 Korean War veterans and families were in the audience when the national anthem echoed through the room at the Tampa Convention Center in Florida Jan. 18.

Some put their hands across their hearts, some saluted, some cried, but all stood at attention when the music of their country was played to honor them.

The City of Tampa and the Department of Defense, 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee worked together to honor the area's veterans and thank them and their families for their sacrifices and service to preserve the freedom of the Republic of Korea and stop communist aggression.

"Freedom that fifty years later, too many in this nation, too many in the world take for granted," said retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Nels Running, executive director of the DoD 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee. "For had you not stopped communist aggression in its tracks at the 38th Parallel, the world would wear a very different cloak today."

During the ceremony, which was the first regional Korean War commemoration event in 2003, Korean War veterans and their families were thanked by city, national and international public officials for their sacrifices and service.

"I would like to urge that the Korean War is not the forgotten war. Rather, it is the first war that democracy won over communism," said Maj. Gen. Young-Han Moon, military attaché for the South Korean Embassy. "Most of the people in Korea still never forget the horrible tragedy of the Korean War and also keep in mind your sacrifices and devotion for saving us from the brutal communists."

While speaking to the veterans and families, Tampa Mayor Dick Greco said that Americans today "live a wonderful life in the greatest country on earth because of people like you."

A highlight of the ceremony was the presentation of the Republic of Korea – Korean War Service Medal. This medal was originally offered in 1951 to United Nations forces serving in Korea and adjacent waters, but U.S. law prohibited service members from wearing foreign military awards.

By the time Congress changed the law in 1954, the armistice was in effect and most veterans had returned home. The Department of Defense approved wear of the medal in 1998.

At Tampa, a representative from each of the five U.S. military services, received the KWSM on behalf of all their fellow veterans. Two additional medals were posthumously awarded to the families of the state's two Korean War Medal of Honor recipients, 1st Lt. Baldomero Lopez, a Tampa native, and Pfc. Emory Bennett of Cocoa, Fla. After the DoD ceremony concluded, the Military Order of the Purple Heart handed out hundreds of the Freedom Medallions to the veterans and family members of deceased veterans.

The medallions are a way for the South Korean people to say "thank you" to the American service men and women who helped save their country from communist aggression, said Ed Sitton, commander of Tampa's Military Order of the Purple Heart chapter. The MOPH sponsors the Freedom Medallion and presents them to Korean War veterans during ceremonies and events around the country.



Korean War Veteran John P. McMillan of Korean War Veterans Association Chapter 174, receives a kiss from Anna Park, 5, after she presented him with his Freedom Medallion during a Korean War commemoration ceremony Jan. 18 at the Tampa Convention Center in Tampa, Fla.

(Photo by Staff Sgt. Tim Volkert)



Tech. Sgt. Michael Dorsey

This Date in History

April 16, 1953: During the Battle of Pork Chop Hill, the 17th and 31st Infantry Regiments of the 7th Infantry Division were hit hard by the Communist Chinese and sustained heavy casualties.

April 13, 1951: As General Ridgway was winding up affairs as Eighth Army commander prior to assuming command of the UN Command, he put the final touches on plans developed during his term of command for rotating Army troops. More than 70,000 soldiers already were eligible under the length of service criteria of six months in combat units or one year in a support unit. The backlog of eligible troops would leave in monthly quotas based on the replacement flow. Since replacements currently exceeded casualty losses by more than fifty percent, the first quota of troops would leave Korea beginning April 22.

April 14, 1951: UN forces reached the Kansas Line as Operation "Dauntless" continued to push the Communists north.

Since 15 Dec. 15, Bomber Command B-29s had destroyed 48 out of 60 assigned bridges and 27 of 39 listed marshaling

yards under Interdiction Campaign No. 4, but at a loss of eight bombers and their crews from combat and operational causes.

April 12, 1951: The 1st Marine Air Wing flew its first night close air support mission of the war using intersecting searchlight beams to mark enemy targets.

April 11, 1951: President Truman relieved Gen. Douglas MacArthur as UN commander and appointed Lt. Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway to succeed him.

April 3, 1953: The second Australian Battalion arrived in Korea.

April 3, 1951: Eighth Army, led by the 1st Cavalry Division, crossed the 38th Parallel.

US Air Force Capt. Robert H. Moore, 4th Fighter-Interceptor Wing, shot down his fifth enemy plane and became the ninth ace of the Korean War.

April 2, 1951: Far East Air Force flew 1,245 sorties in the third highest daily total in the war.

March 31, 1952: The Kimpo Provisional Regiment was organized

by and within the U.S. 1st Marine Division for the defense of the Kimpo peninsula.

March 31, 1951: Operation "Ripper" was officially terminated as Eighth Army fought its way back to the 38th Parallel.

March 30, 1951: The heaviest air attack of the war was staged by 38 B-29's on twin bridges over the Yalu River at Sinuiju, dropping some 280 tons of bombs. Escorting F-80s and F-86s engaged enemy MiG-15 jets, destroying three and damaging six.

March 30, 1952: A fire completely destroyed the headquarters of the 7th Cavalry Regiment at Camp Crawford. Many of the regiment's souvenirs, some dating back to the time of Custer, were lost in the blaze.

March 25, 1952: Three hundred and seven UN fighter-bombers dropped 260 tons of bombs on the rail line between Chongju and Sinanju.

March 24, 1953: The 2nd Infantry Division's artillery units began to support the embattled 7th Infantry Division on Pork Chop Hill, firing 15,000 rounds in one week.

HONOR ROLL

CHARLES J. LORING, JR.



Rank and organization: Major, U.S. Air Force, 80th Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 8th Fighter-Bomber Wing.

Place and date: Near Sniper Ridge, North Korea, Nov. 22, 1952.

Entered service: Portland, Maine.

Born: Oct. 2, 1918, Portland, Maine.

Citation: Major Loring distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. While leading a night of 4 F-80 type aircraft on a close support mission, Maj. Loring was briefed by a controller to dive-bomb enemy gun positions which were

harassing friendly ground troops. After verifying the location of the target, Maj. Loring rolled into his dive bomb run. Throughout the run, extremely accurate ground fire was directed on his aircraft. Disregarding the accuracy and intensity of the ground fire, Maj. Loring aggressively continued to press the attack until his aircraft was hit. At approximately 4,000 feet, he deliberately altered his course and aimed his diving aircraft at active gun emplacements concentrated on a ridge northwest of the briefed target, turned his aircraft 45 degrees to the left, pulled up in a deliberate, controlled maneuver, and elected to sacrifice his life by diving his aircraft directly into the midst of the enemy emplacements. His selfless and heroic action completely destroyed the enemy gun emplacement and eliminated a dangerous threat to United Nations ground forces. Maj. Loring's noble spirit, superlative courage, and conspicuous self-sacrifice in inflicting maximum damage on the enemy exemplified valor of the highest degree and his actions were in keeping with the finest traditions of the U.S. Air Force.

