

# VETERAN'S CORNER

Photos by Daniel Payne, Tony Rizzuto, and Valia Eskondari

## Local Memorial Day Observance Highlights

**Korean War Veteran Joe Lipscomb, U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley; Shown throughout Pacific Northwest on two TV news broadcasts.**

BY DALE POTTS

"With a lot of gusto and the right amount of pomp, Tualatin's 2014 Memorial Day Observance was the best ever!" That was the general agreement of the more than 250 attendees who also enjoyed bright warm sunshine at Tualatin's annual patriotic event at Winona Cemetery.

Thirty-two members of Tualatin High School's talented choral group, The Crimsonnairs, all decked out with gentlemen in tuxedos and ladies in black gowns, opened this year's event with a stirring version of the National Anthem while Tualatin Police Honor Guard officer's Wes Girardi and Eric Hermann posted the colors. A Vietnam vet, Pastor John Pries from Horizon Community Church provided the opening prayer. He prefaced his talk with details of a recent visit to Burma where he was deeply moved at a cemetery where 24,000 soldiers of various nationalities were buried. Some of the American gravestones read "Known unto God. He emphasized "that regardless of the circumstances surrounding those who gave their lives, God knows and sees their bravery and their sacrifice and that we celebrate today with thankful hearts."



TuPD Honor Guards Eric Hermann and Wes Girardi initiate the ceremony.

have put their life on the line for their country and their families." He then read the President Obama's Memorial Day Prayer for Peace Proclamation.

Our honored vet, Joe Lipscomb, verbally transported his audience back in time with him to the 50's when he served as a field medic with the Marines on the front lines of the Korean Demilitarized Zone. He named popular radio, TV and movie entertainment in addition to national events. He moved to the more current TV series MASH "where the Army medical guys to our rear who seemed to have all the fun. However we managed to create some mischief as well." He said his family has served with our country's military for over six generations, beginning with the American Revolutionary War. He closed by urging support for the new USO at the Portland International Airport.

When Kathy Walsh, President of VFW Post 2666

Ladies Auxiliary was introduced, her mother, Lois Dalton, was cited for "designing, raising funds and overseeing the construction of the Cemetery Kiosk" which is the central location for cemetery information. Kathy is a member of the cemetery board and traditionally recites the poem "In Flanders Fields" and explains origins of "Buddy Poppies".

State Rep Julie Parrish is married to a retired Army Colonel. She said she has taken each of their three sons, one at a time; to Arlington National Cemetery on Memorial Day to listen to our nation's leaders speak. It connects them to their dad's military service and helps teach them the purpose of the holiday. When they become uncomfortable with hot and humid weather at Arlington, she tells them "of their dad and all the soldiers who served in the Middle East in 130-degree weather in their uniforms, packing their full gear, or their grandfather who served in the heat of Vietnam." She reminded everyone that Oregon is preparing to send soldiers to Afghanistan in just two weeks; ending with "Today let's leave this event uplifted by gratitude, and let's find a way to ensure we do what's right by Oregon's nearly 350,000 veterans."



VFW Post 3452 Mens Auxiliary team gather at picnic in front of the Pioneer Brass.

VFW Post 3452 Mens Auxiliary President Terry Pennington presented a \$500 check to Mission Mahalo, a local non-profit group that sends thousands of care packages to troops overseas. The money was accepted by the two founders, Jennifer Fair Lamaye and Rene Atkins. Terry then invited everyone to the free picnic at Tualatin Community Park.



Patriot Guard Rider flag line at Winona. Guard mission is to ensure dignity and respect at memorial services honoring Fallen Military Heroes, First Responders and Honorably Discharged Veterans.



Vietnam vet John Pries, a pastor at Horizon Community Church, gives opening prayer.

As the emcee, I thanked VFW Post 3452 Mens Auxiliary for helping move our observance event to a higher level this year by taking over the facilities functions which included redoing traffic control through the cemetery and coordinating parking with local boy scouts and inviting the Patriot Guard to participate with their colorful flag line.

WWII submarine vet George Hager was joined by Martin Murrel to perform an eerie Taps bugle duet as the Honor Guard closed our event with "Order Arms" and the crowd observed a somber moment of silence.

The mood soon turned festive at Tualatin Community Park as picnic Chef Perry fed 300 with tasty barbeque food supplied by VFW Post 3452 Men's Auxiliary. A jovial crowd enjoyed the outing as young couples with families mixed with old timers. Local veterans swapped stories with Patriot Guard motorcyclists. Tualatin's first city manager, Yvonne Addington, stopped at one table to joke with Tualatin historian Loyce Martinazzi and her husband, Norm Parker and Tualatin Heritage Center Director Larry McClure and his wife, Ellie. Some remained to enjoy the relaxing music by The "Pioneer Brass" trombone quartet.

When the evening news came on that night, two local TV channels covered our event, Ch 6 - KOIN TV, and Ch 8 - KGW TV. Their main focus was on our 90 year-old WWII submariner bugler who has been closing Tualatin's observance for the past eight years. His first taps duet was for a burial at sea in 1943. Their camera's shared highlights of our event throughout the Pacific Northwest.

Dale G. Potts has organized and MC'd Tualatin's Memorial Day observation for the past 12 years. He is a Navy Vietnam vet, serving as the Public Affairs Officer of the Aircraft Carrier USS Yorktown. After active duty, he remained in the reserves, retiring as a Navy Captain (same rank as an Army Colonel). His civilian career was primarily as the Oregon Public Affairs Officer for IRS. Contact Dale at [vet.dale@gmail.com](mailto:vet.dale@gmail.com).



Ensign Dale Potts



Dale Potts emceed'd the ceremony.



Korean War Veteran Joe Lipscomb was honored at this year's ceremony.



Senator Jeff Merkley addresses crowd.



WWII submarine vet George Hager played first taps echo duet for burial at sea in 1943.



Mission Mahalo founder Jennifer Fair Lamaye and co-founder Renée Atkins are thrilled to receive \$500 check from VFW Men's Auxiliary President Terry Pennington.



Crimsonnairs, Directed by Kim Kroeger, open event with The National Anthem.

The Crimsonnairs, directed by Kim Kroeger, carried the patriotic mood forward, with a melodious "America the Beautiful", setting the scene for State Senator Richard Devlin, who has served as a Marine, to lead the crowd in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Senator Devlin then explained that the "Pledge" was written in early 1800 to instill patriotism in American children. He shared the fascinating history behind wording and phrases in the Pledge.

After Winona Cemetery Board Chair Mike Hannegan welcomed the crowd, our energizing Mayor, Lou Ogden, covered the background behind Memorial Day history, emphasizing that Memorial Day is for the living. He read the poem - Freedom isn't free. Mayor Lou introduced U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley, who represents all of Oregon in Washington, DC, saying it was an honor for the Senator to share Memorial Day with Tualatin, "the best little city South of the North Pole."

Senator Merkley said "we cannot honor those who have fallen without also honoring all those who