

VETERAN'S CORNER

Over 100,000 Northwest residents watched our honored vet retire his horn from their living rooms

BY DALE POTTS

Over 100,000 Northwest residents watched Tualatin retire our senior bugler from his horn at Winona Cemetery on Memorial Day. Two Portland network TV stations, KATU-TV and KGW-TV, brought our Memorial Day Observance into 57,000 Northwest living rooms. We honored George Hager, a 92 year old WWII Navy submariner who closed our previous seven years commemorations with taps. George explained that he has "lost his lip" through lack of practice and is unable to play. He said he was "blowing all sorts of military evolutions" at a monthly meeting of WWII vets but all his buddies are now deceased or in care facilities. As the bugle master of a submarine repair ship in the South Pacific, his horn was the major communications method aboard ship, getting people up in the morning with Reveille, putting them to bed with Taps and activities like chow call, report to muster, and general quarters. A native Oregonian, George said his father sent him to volunteer summer training in 1940 at Fort Vancouver. On the final day, his group marched 22 miles from Camp Bonneville, wearing a full back pack, with only two rest stops. He explained that walk changed the opinion many about the Army and joined the Navy instead. The KATU citation is: www.katu.com/news/local/92-year-old-bugler-retires-honored-at-memorial-day-ceremony.

Patriotism and enthusiasm were contagious throughout the crowd on Memorial Day. Retired Marine Aviator Norb Murray prepared the crowd for the first event; a six plane Missing Man Maneuver flyover. This involves one plane peeling off from the formation to honor a pilot and plane missing in action. Next, the Tualatin High Crimonnairs choral group melodiously sang the National Anthem while Tualatin Police Honor Guard Officers Wes Girardi and Jack Rose posted the colors. Mike and Kathy Green from Living Savior Lutheran Church did a moving opening prayer. They married while he was a Marine Officer and she was a Navy nurse. The Crimonnairs then joyously sang America the Beautiful with wonderful soprano high notes. Joe Lipscomb lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Then Mike Hannegan, Winona Cemetery Board President, welcomed the crowd.

Tualatin Mayor Lou Ogden introduced the elected officials. State Representative Julie Parrish shared the journey made separately by each of her three sons with her to Washington, DC. Their itinerary had them at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on Memorial Day. They learned that no matter "which political party is in office, we have an obligation to care for our veterans". Julie said that "Memorial Day isn't a day for a sale at the Mall or a backyard BBQ, it's

a day where, if we value our freedoms, then we must remember the sacrifices of others". She explained that "Less than 2% of the nation today is making that sacrifice. And now, more often that not, a funeral for a combat veteran isn't because a soldier died in battle... it's because of a health issue directly related to a soldier's service. Twenty-two veterans a day in this nation take their own life. We must do better by these veterans". State Senator Richard Develin, explained that Memorial Day is officially 150 years old this year. The Civil War took 620,000 American lives. Waterloo won competition to be named the birthplace. The village began observing Memorial Day after a businessman watched a widow of a Union soldier placing flowers on her husband's grave. He wanted to insure that those who died in the Civil War were remembered. Waterloo lost 58 soldiers in that war.

Kathy Walsh read the traditional poem "In Flanders Field" and Phyllis Houston urged attending the picnic. Just before Taps was played by Martin Murrell, Tualatin Mayor Lou Ogden gave an inspiring Prayer for Peace. After giving thanks "for those who gave their last full measure of devotion so that we may enjoy our freedoms", he acknowledged the many problems here, in our country, and the world. He prayed "As you revealed to your servant John in a vision of the future, your glowing city Jerusalem, so also help us all make America your glowing country where we seek to praise and glorify you by serving one another, from our neighborhoods here in Tualatin all the way to the corridors of Washington".

Many next went the free community picnic sponsored by the Tualatin VFW 3452 Auxiliary. There was a wide variety of deliciously prepared food to choose from; hot-off-grill hamburgers, cheeseburgers, sausages and different hot dogs; a variety of tasty salads and chips, and fruits including watermelon and drinks including lemonade. Secons were available. VFW Auxiliary member Daniel Payne solicited advertising and collected donations to pay for the food. The lunch was prepared and served by Dalton's Northwest Catering staff under Dave Dalton's direction. Dave said they served 250 lunches.

Dale G. Potts has organized and MC'd Tualatin's Memorial Day observation for the past 13 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.



Lieutenant Dale Potts



Scout who helped with parking and distributing programs engrossed in Prayer.



Senator Richard Develin, Representative Julie Parrish and Mayor Lou Ogden put hands over heart for National Anthem.



Emcee Dale Potts draws laughter when discussing George Hager's longevity.



Martin Murrell plays Taps solo this year.



Mike and Kathy Green leading the group in prayer.



Plane pulls to the left in West Coast Raven wing to begin Missing Man Maneuver.



Tualatin Police Color Guard does Order Arms while George plays taps at 2015 Memorial Day ceremony.



KATU-TV reporter interviewing George Hager and his two daughters who accompanied him.



Crowd saluting and putting hand over heart while facing flag during National Anthem and Posting of Colors.



Picnic coordinator Daniel Payne (blue shirt) thanks Flyover coordinator Norb Murray for his service. TPD officers Wes Girardi (right) and Jack Rose are getting ready to post the colors while Crimonnairs assemble for the event.



Dave Dalton and his crew cook "dogs" over grill for picnic.

Special thanks to photo contributions from Chad Baker, Daniel Payne, Marianne Potts and Tony Rizzutto

