

# Tell America

## An Obligation, A Challenge, An Opportunity

Larry Kinard, National Coordinator

I haven't changed the central theme of this article because I still feel the same about our OBLIGATION, CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY. The WEBSITE and the GRAYBEARD magazine articles have resulted in many e-mails, letters and phone calls about the Tell America programs.

I am still firmly convinced this is one of the best things chapters can do for their communities, and also one of the most rewarding efforts for chapter members. I have received several requests for material to help get the program started. One of the first chapters I heard from was Chapter # 288 in Anchorage, Alaska. B. J. Ide told me they were just getting the TA Program started and needed a little help on what to do.

In a recent newsletter from him, he says "Our activities call for preserving the memory of the Korean War, its cause, its cost, and its results. One of the ways we do this is by going into the classrooms of junior and senior high schools with our Tell America program, where we instruct the students on flag etiquette and patriotism, including civic responsibility. And, we tell short histories about our military experiences. The main theme is FREEDOM IS NOT FREE. This is just one of the many programs this very active chapter has going for them.

Keep up the good work guys; you are making a difference.

We have also received pictures, program material and stories about other programs that are doing very well. Dave DePew, a former Tell America Chairman, has given me more ideas and sent scripts that will be useful for any chapter in their program. Frank Shively, from the Western Ohio Chapter #108, sent an outline that has some very good ideas about how to conduct programs in the schools. He also sent pictures and stories that were published in the Graybeards magazine and placed on the website. I really appreciate the good things that his program and others are doing with the schools. Other chapters have provided material that will appear in our magazine in the near future.

It is still of great concern to me—and should be to all of us—that our students are growing up with essentially no knowledge of the sacrifices we and our comrades made 50 + years ago. When we get together in our meetings, we recite in our Creed never to forget those who made the ultimate sacrifice for the freedoms we enjoy in this country today. It is our OBLIGATION to make a valiant effort to help students and teachers remember the "Forgotten War." Again, I say the people who are the best equipped to do this are the veterans. We are the ones who were there and experienced

what it takes to assure our freedoms.

There is no question that it is a CHALLENGE to get organized and go to the schools with a program that is meaningful and acceptable, but I can assure you it is well worth the effort for you and the schools. All the chapters I have talked with are quick to say they feel they are making a difference in the lives

## The Benefits Of Talking Directly With America's Young Folks

Arthur Berzon

The Thomas Daley Chapter #54, in Gibbsboro, New Jersey, is a relatively small post, comprising a little over 50 paid-up members. We meet every month, and average around 25 members at each meeting. What keeps us at this high level of attendance is the camaraderie of its members and the many service projects that we perform.

We cover a great area of South Jersey. The majority of the members joined us as individuals, not as groups of friends. Our projects are numerous, and I'm sure other posts do a lot of the same ones. But, there is one project that brings the most pleasure to all of us. That is our visits to the area high schools.

This past year alone we visited 14 different schools. We usually have at least six members at each visitation, with different mixtures every time. We speak about who we are and of our personal experiences and observations as 18- to 21-year-old kids in a foreign land that we

of the students, and are glad they have made the effort.

We encourage those who have programs in place and are having some success to send us stories and pictures so we can publicize what you are doing. As mentioned above, I do have some material that is available for those who need information to help get the program started.

You may contact me at e-mail address lck1613489@aol.com or postal address 2108 Westchester, Mansfield, Texas 76063. I welcome pictures, program information or any help you would be willing to share.

never heard of, protecting our country from a vicious enemy. We tell them that we didn't ask questions about why we were there. We tell them we were there for them, the next generations.

Over the years that we have been doing this, we get numerous letters from school personnel explaining to us that this was the best reality situation these kids ever experienced. More importantly, they keep calling us back again for next year programs.

I must admit, though, that we are blessed by having one of our members, Capt. Andy Jackson, US Army (Ret.), running this program. He is dedicated 24/7 to its success.

I feel the direct communications with our youth has done more for the KWVA than all the banquets and all the presentations etc. we can dream up. I am a lover of communications. And the place to begin is with our youth.



The "Instructors for a Day" at West Point

### Want To Speak At West Point?

For the past five years, the United States Military Academy, West Point, NY has run a program in which veterans talk to the cadets. They tell them of their experiences in service. Around the year 2000, I became the coordinator for this program. At that time, Major Chris Starling, a Marine attached to the Department of Military Instruction, was the OIC (Officer in Charge). He was responsible for the course, labeled MS201.

Chris and I became friends. He needed veterans to come to the academy and speak to the second year cadets about their experiences, and to tell them what it took to be a good officer. I was glad to help.

By 10 November 2004, the Military Science Department was again running the speaking program. As a result of the first program that I ran back in 2000, I

assumed the responsibility of getting veterans to come up for this one day. At the time this program started, we only had about 53 classes to cover. The department desired that at least two veterans attend each class.

From that date, the ranks of "Instructors for a Day" have been filled by veterans from the rank of E-2 (Pvt) to O-8 (Lt General). The program commences at 10:30 a.m. in the parking lot of Buffalo Soldiers Field, where the veterans board buses, which transport us to Washington Hall, on the main part of the academy grounds. We go to the 5th floor, Department of Military Science, where I, the OIC, and the Department Head deliver welcoming addresses. Once the speeches are completed, the veterans are assigned to a cadet, who takes them to the Cadet Mess Hall on the 1st floor of Washington Hall to have lunch with that cadet's company. It is truly amaz-

ing to see how the staff is able to handle in just 30 minutes the feeding of 4,500–5,000 cadets and visitors who are there for the day.

Once lunch is finished, we move out to our respective classrooms, escorted by the cadet guides, to start the 1½-hour program of talking to a class of 15-20 cadets. The dialog between the veterans and cadets has been exciting each year—so exciting, in fact, that some of the cadets have been corresponding with veterans after the program is done.

At approximately 2:45 p.m., each veteran returns to the Washington Hall conference room for a follow-up and another address by the Department Head.

After that, certificates and specially made commemorative mugs are handed out to each veteran in attendance. It has become such a popular event that those veterans in attendance look forward to seeing what the design will be each year. In fact, the mugs

have turned into collector items.

Since the event was held on 10 November last year, which is the Marine Corps' Birthday, the Marines in attendance asked why we do not have a birthday cake for them. The first year I informed some of the Marines with whom I was friends that I would have a cupcake for them and put a candle into it for them to blowout. The Department thought differently. They brought in a sheet cake!

The US Marine attached to the academy was Major Dean Bailey. He came out dressed in his full dress blues and used his saber to cut the cake. Major Bailey had a couple Midshipmen from Annapolis, who were on an exchange program, bring in the cake. After Major Bailey cut it, each veteran received an individual piece and coffee.

Before we had the cake we sang songs for each branch of the services. At about 3:30 p.m., we assembled at the front of Washington Hall to for a group photo. Each veteran who attended was mailed a picture for his memories of the event. I am happy to report that we had participants from WWII, Korea, Viet Nam, and Desert Storm in attendance.

Some of the KWVA chapters represented were from Westchester-Putnam Chapter #91, Eagle Chapter #90 – Rockland County, and Central Long Island Chapter #64.

As the summer session is now upon us, I am getting letters ready to send out and invite those veterans back. This year's event is being planned for 9 November. We are scheduled to have 63 sections to talk to. That means we need 126 veterans. If there are any local veterans who desire to attend, please drop a line to IRVING M. BREITBART @ Eagle Awards & Trophy Co. Inc. 2051 East Main Street, Cortlandt Manor, N. Y. 10567, or email me at Eagleatci@aol.com