

Tell America

2 - NORTHWEST ALABAMA [AL]

George Ellis

Some of our members presented a program at Northside Middle School in Tuscumbia, AL—the birthplace of Helen Keller.

LEFT: Northside welcomes Chapter 2 members

BELOW: (L-R) George Ellis (U.S. Army), Bobby Bray (U.S. Marine Corps), and Bill Gober (U.S. Marine Corps), Chapter 2 members, at Northside



Bobby Bray, A "Chosin Few" Marine, talks to students at Northside



Ralph Dula (U.S. Army) explains how, when, where of Korean War at Northside



(L-R) Bill Gober and George Ellis explain ordnance used in Korean War to Northside students

THE KWVA 2006 ANNUAL CONVENTION WILL BE HELD IN SAN ANTONIO, TX 8-11 OCTOBER, 2006

121 – GREATER CINCINNATI [OH]

Bob McGeorge

288 – SSgt Archie Van Winkle [AK]



121 members at Monfort Heights School (L-R) Bob McGeorge, Joe Celenza, Don Seiwert

199- MANASOTA [FL]

Richard Coalts



A letter to 199

It is the time of year when our chapter visits the local schools to talk about the history of the Korean War and personal experiences during their tour of duty. At the Lakewood Ranch High School, one of the teachers commented that, "History just walked into the classroom" when 14 Korean War Veterans shared their experiences with the students. "It's not just reading about it or watching a video; it is where lots of students cement the knowledge."

At Palmetto High School, our return members got to talk to an exchange student from Korea, whose name is Ho-Joon Jang. He is a student who didn't understand or know about the Korean War. He learned a lot from our members.

The students have sent lots of letters of appreciation to the veterans for the knowledge of the Korean War that they have acquired, as the nearby sample suggests



Bill Gilkerson of Ch. 199 shakes hands with Ho-Joon Jang

The history books leave a lot of blank spaces between WWII and the Vietnam War. What I have learned from talking to the students is that the Korean War will not be forgotten, and patriotism is as strong as ever.

288 – SSgt Archie Van Winkle [AK]

Our membership comprises 51 veterans who served during the Korean War Era, and other veterans who have served in Korea or its territorial waters since Sept 1946. We live in Anchorage, Juneau, Palmer, Wasilla, Willow, Fairbanks, Kenai and Soldotna. We hold our regular monthly meeting at VFW Post 1685 in Anchorage on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:05 p.m.

Our activities are all aimed at preserving the memory of the Korean War, its cause, and its cost. One way we do this is by going into the classrooms of junior and senior high schools with our "Tell America" program.

Our team members instruct the students on flag etiquette and patriotism, including civic responsibility. We tell short histories about our military experience. The main theme is that "FREEDOM IS NOT FREE."

Helpful Hints From An Avid Tell America Presenter

By John Reidy

Tell America has been one of my favorite pastimes for quite some time. I became involved years ago when my granddaughter mentioned to her Social Studies teacher that she knew where there was a veteran. (They were looking for one for some project that they were working on)

Being a four-year Navy veteran of WWII and a three-year Army veteran of the Korean War, it seemed that I was just what they were looking for, although they were mainly interested in WWII. (I worked in the Korean War.) They wanted me there for the morning class, but they kept me there all day, one class after another.

Because they alternate their lunch classes, I ate lunch during one of the lectures. It became evident to me that this was an avenue worth exploring. Since then, I have been to many schools, many senior homes, and a few Boys and Girls clubs. In the process, I have developed the following procedures, which may be helpful to some folks:

- Whenever possible, wear class A with fruit salad. In warm weather, wear

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summer uniform with salad.

- When lecturing, I bring my Army shirt, showing all of my medals, and hang it up in a very prominent place. That is a sure attention getter. I explain that if Uncle Sam keeps you around long enough, you pick up a lot of trinkets.

- Bring some equipment, etc. to demonstrate. I bring “C” rations, mess gear, cartridge belt, steel pot, etc. etc. Some schools have even let me bring in my M1 rifle. At the school in Marathon NY, they let me bring in the rifle, but confiscated my bullet. When leaving at the end of the day, I behaved like Barney Fife, demanding my bullet.

- Get them into question and answer as quickly as possible, That leads to other things, like how you were fed, where you slept, how much sleep you got, what was your duty, etc.

I was in Korea in '53 and '54, so I tell them about the outposts and the shower points and the M.L.R. Sanitary conditions at the outposts were a major concern, and I explain about that. At three schools I even got into the subject of the “piss tubes.” Of course, I called them the number one tubes, but they got the message. These kids, the seniors, and every one in between want to hear these stories, and who is there to tell them but us?

- Limit the number of speakers at one time. You don't need a whole bunch of guys. In fact, if you have more than two, then there is a competition for the floor. They see that, and lose interest.

There are instances, of course, where more are needed, e.g., during museum tours where the veterans act as guides, or like this past Veterans Day ('05) where the teacher asked for a team, and assigned each veteran a group of students, and then alternated them from veteran to veteran. For that gig, we had seven veterans and it worked very well. But, to tell you the truth, I would much rather do it by myself or with just one other veteran, because you can get hoarse.

- Bring a package of mints if you decide to go it alone to alleviate the hoarseness...

Remember, It is a worthwhile effort to get to these people. The only drawback is the letters, such as the one nearby, because I try to answer each one individually. That takes a lot of time. Just remember that you are before the public, and you are not just representing yourself, but the whole veterans community.

Good luck in your efforts, and have fun doing it.

John E. Reidy

Dear Mr. Reidy:

Thank you for telling me about your life and the wars that you were in. I thought that what you told was very interesting. I never knew that there were so many positions in the wars. I also want to thank you for fighting for our country.

You are a true veteran.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Austin Tolsal

(The last name is not legible in the original letter)

107 – James P. Dickel Chapter Celebration of Flag Etiquette

The Volunteer Center of Allegany County presented their Service Learning Impacting Citizenship (SLIC) program to Washington Middle School in Cumberland, MD on November 7, 2005. As part of the program, two eighth-grade classes participated, with approximately 43 students in each class. Bernie Wenrick taught them about flag etiquette and being a good American citizen.

Bernie Wenrick, a WWII and Korean War veteran, talked to the students about the pride he had in fighting for his country doing his service in the U.S. Army. He also discussed with the students their thoughts and feelings about people they knew who fought in conflicts or wars.

Wenrick went on to chat about how he enjoyed traveling across this nation as a serviceman, and the experiences he had “across the pond.” He felt that if it weren't for the Army he would have been put in jail, because he was a bad kid. The Army gave him structure and guidance to make him a responsible person. He recommended to the students that they join the armed forces because of the positive influences they have on character.

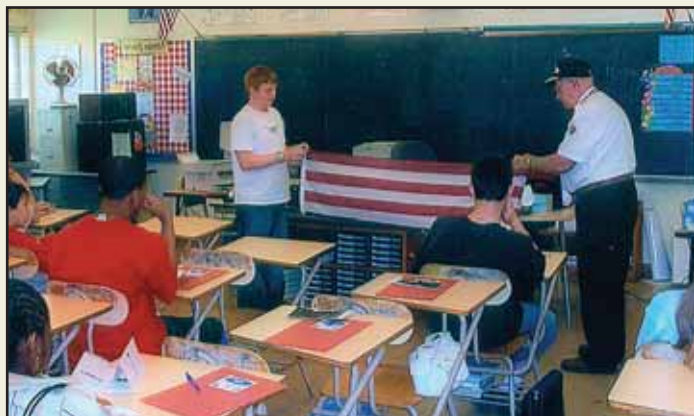
“How to Honor and Display the American Flag.” He informed the students about the proper way an American Flag should be hanged. He also discussed the proper way to dispose of a flag.

Wenrick shared with the students the etiquette of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. He also gave them the knowledge of flying the flag and the respect that should be given to our country's freedom, which our flag represents.

Wenrick used a student volunteer to assist him with the folding of the flag. He went onto discussing the symbolism and tradition of giving the folded flag to the soldier's family.

In closing, Wenrick conveyed the idea that the students needed to respect the flag and the veterans of the United States. Those veterans fought—and are fighting—for the freedoms that we take for granted each day. They should remember to thank a veteran if they see them!

The VCAC chose Bernie Wenrick to speak to the eighth-grade students because he is a member of the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RVSP), a life member of the Gold Post 6453 in Ridgeley, WV, and a member of the Korean War Association in Mount Savage, MD. Bernie volunteers with a variety of non-profit agencies such as the Allegany County United Way, the Cumberland VA Clinic, and the VCAC.



Bernie Wenrick demonstrates how to fold flag properly