

KOREAN WAR MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

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NEWSLETTER

September–October & November–December 2017

Korean War Vets Honored at Korea National Day Luncheon



Acting Consul General Jimin Kim and some of the Korean War veterans

On September 29, in the Grand Ballroom of the Palace Hotel in San Francisco, the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea, in coordination with the California Department of Veterans Affairs, hosted the annual National Day of Korea luncheon. This year's gathering was dedicated in honor of Korean War veterans.



The guests recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Photos by Daniel Kim, Special to the S.F. Examiner

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About 500 guests attended the luncheon, including scores of Korean War veterans and their families. Speakers and other dignitaries in attendance included Jimin Kim, Acting Consul General of the Republic of Korea in San Francisco; Vito Imbasciani, MD, Secretary, and Russell Atterbury, Undersecretary, California Department of Veterans Affairs; Wallace Levin, Member of the San Francisco War Memorial Board of Trustees and of the KWMF Board of Directors; Donald Reid, KWMF Treasurer and his wife Helen Reid. Mrs. Reid was appointed First Chairperson of the Seoul-San Francisco Sister City Committee by Senator Dianne Feinstein, a position in which Mrs. Reid served faithfully for more than fifteen years.

Following the speaking program, Acting Consul General Kim presented Ambassador for Peace medals to all those veterans present who had not previously received the award. This medal is symbolic of the gratitude of the Republic of Korea for all those who fought for that nation's freedom during the Korean War.



The Ambassador for Peace medals



The U.S. Air Force Golden West Band provides musical accompaniment for the gathering.



Acting Consul General Kim welcomes the guests.



Russell Atterberry, Undersecretary, California Department of Veterans Affairs, expresses gratitude to the veterans for their service.



Acting Consul General Kim with Vito Imbasciani, MD, Secretary, California Department of Veterans Affairs



Acting Consul General Kim presents Ambassador for Peace medals to the veterans.

The Korean War veterans and their families were genuinely moved by this well-earned recognition and honor of their sacrifices more than sixty years ago. The Korean War: no longer the Forgotten War.



Abraham Lincoln High School Students Learn about the Korean War

In 1949, our nation was at peace and KWMF Education Director Wallace T. “Wally” Stewart was a 16-year-old student at San Francisco’s Abraham Lincoln High School. In an act of youthful bravado, Wally stretched the truth a bit about his age and joined the Marine Corps Reserve. His buddy and fellow Lincoln High student Richard A. “Dick” Pearce, also 16, signed up with him. The two boys were soon to learn the unin-

tended consequences of their decision. Within months, the Korean War broke out, they were called up to active duty in the 1st Marine Division, and before they knew it, they were in combat in Korea. Wally came home. Dick didn’t.

On October 7 of this year, at the invitation of Lincoln High’s JROTC Commander George Ishikata, Colonel, U.S. Army (Ret.), Wally, a

retired teacher in the San Francisco Unified School District, returned to his alma mater to instruct several classes of JROTC students about the Korean War—and about unintended consequences. This wasn’t a dry history lesson of a long-ago, faraway war, but a first-person narrative by one of Lincoln High’s own alumni. This was living history.



From L: JROTC Commander George Ishikata & KWMF Education Director Wally Stewart with several of the JROTC students at the Abraham Lincoln High School War Memorial

Photos by Michelle Marcaida, 2LT, U.S. Army

Wally was accompanied on his visit by fellow classmate and fellow Korean War veteran Richard Friedman, who fought with the U.S. Army's 2nd Infantry Division during the conflict.

Wally made presentations to several groups of the JROTC students. He interwove his personal experiences with a description of the geopolitical tensions of that era that led to the war; and he pointed out that these same dangerous tensions, unfortunately, are still with us today. As Shakespeare wrote in *The Tempest*, "What's past is prologue."

While Wally was teaching, Richard had an opportunity to visit the school's Sports Hall of Fame and recall his high school "Glory Days." The multicolored ribbon and medal around Richard's neck in the photo below is the Ambassador for Peace medal, an award bestowed upon him, Wally, and thousands of other Korean War veterans by the grateful Government of the Republic of Korea.

Lincoln High alumni and Korean War vets Richard Friedman and Wally Stewart with JROTC students



Wally Stewart with one of the student groups



Richard Friedman at Lincoln High's Sports Hall of Fame



Richard's name plate

After the classroom sessions, the students joined Wally and Richard at the War Memorial outside the school's entrance. This memorial honors and remembers those from Lincoln High who died in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. Engraved on the memorial surface, under "KOREAN WAR," note the second name from the bottom: Richard A. Pearce. That's Wally's teenage buddy Dick Pearce, who was killed in Korea. Unintended consequences. May he rest in peace.

This presentation at Abraham Lincoln High School is just one element of KWMF's ongoing Korean War Education Program. The program began at Lowell High School, where Wally once taught, and will soon spread through other secondary schools in San Francisco and beyond. The program is designed to inform future generations of the causes on the Korean War; the sacrifices made in defense of freedom by the United States, South Korea, and our United Nations allies; the war's outcome; and the lessons learned.

You can support KWMF's Korean War Education Program by making a donation at <http://www.kwmf.org/donate/>, or by mailing your donation, payable to KWMF, to: Korean War Memorial Foundation, 401 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 213E, San Francisco, CA 94102.



Wally Stewart with students at the Abraham Lincoln High School War Memorial

The Korean War Memorial Foundation is 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, Federal Tax ID #27-2773272. Your donation is tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law. Thank you for your support.

Remembering Chosin

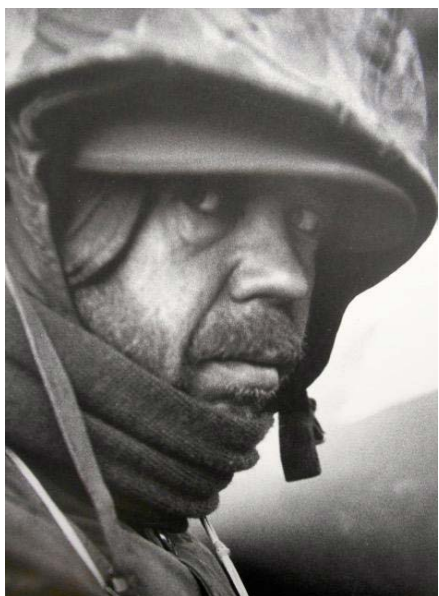
By Ned Forney
October 26, 2017

It's a pivotal event of the 20th century. An experience so monumental that it has come to represent, even encapsulate, the ongoing struggle between the forces of oppression, tyranny, and authoritarianism and those

who believe in freedom, justice, and democracy. The Chosin Campaign, correctly called "Changjin" in Korea, was a defining moment in history.

The two-week long battle (November 27 – December 11, 1950), pitting approximately 30,000 US, ROK, and British troops against 120,000 Chi-

nese soldiers, occurred in the worst of conditions: excruciatingly cold weather, brutal terrain, and deadly isolation. The snow, ice, wind, and below-zero temperatures, combined with towering mountains, plunging cliffs, and treacherous roads, were perfect for a Himalayan mountain-climbing movie set. Not a battlefield.



Photos above by David Douglas Duncan, Life Magazine. All other photos by Ned Forney.

The conditions at Changjin were so bad that Oliver P. Smith, the commanding general of 1st Marine Division—the largest unit at the Reservoir and the one that did the most fighting—said it was “never intended for military operations.” Anyone who fought there would agree. But the Chinese were the real enemy. The disciplined, courageous, and seemingly tireless Chinese soldiers were everywhere. The 1st Marine Division, surrounded and vastly outnumbered, was in one of the most precarious and potentially disastrous predicaments of any unit in Marine Corps history, arguably in American history.

Through herculean efforts, exceptional war-fighting skills, and countless acts of valor, the Marines broke out of the trap and made their way to Hungnam, a North Korean port on the East Sea. By the end of December 1950, 105,000 servicemen and 100,000 North Korean refugees had been evacuated in one of America's largest sea-borne withdrawals. Mao's boast that the 1st Marine Division would be annihilated in “only a matter of time” had backfired. It was the last time the Chinese leader would ever threaten to obliterate a US Marine unit.

On October 25, I was privileged to participate in an event honoring the brave men who fought at Changjin. The ceremony, held at Seoul National Cemetery, was a moving tribute to the Marines, soldiers, airmen, and sailors who suffered, sacrificed, and died in the remote mountains of North Korea. Pi Woo-jin, the ROK's Minister of Patriots and Veterans Affairs (comparable to the US Veterans Administration) attended the ceremony, and on behalf of ROK President Moon Jae-in, thanked the Changjin veterans for their sacrifices. President Moon has a personal connection to the campaign. His parents were North Korean refugees and were rescued during the Hungnam Evacuation.



Seated: Minister Pi Woo-jin, Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs, with Republic of Korea Marine Corps Commandant Lee Sang-hoon



President Moon Jae-in, Republic of Korea, speaking at the Chosin (Changjin) Memorial in Quantico, VA this past summer

Thank you, Lighthouse Worldwide Solutions

KWMF wishes to thank Dr. Kim Tae Yun and her staff at Lighthouse Worldwide Solutions in Fremont, CA — www.golighthouse.com — for their generosity in underwriting the costs of printing and mailing this newsletter.

I also heard Major General James W. Lukeman, Commander of US Marine Corps Forces Korea, give a heartfelt and powerful address on the Changjin Battle's significance to the Republic of Korea, the United States, and the US Marine Corps. Echoing the words of President Moon in his speech this summer (<http://nedforney.com/index.php/2017/07/01/home-again-home-again/>) at The National Museum of the Marine Corps, Gen. Lukeman reminded the

nearly 10,000 attendees that without the sacrifices made at Changjin and Hungnam, the lives of 100,000 refugees—and South Korea's freedom—would have almost certainly been lost.

Especially memorable for me was the recognition given to my grandfather, Colonel Edward H. Forney, USMC, the evacuation control officer at Hungnam. Col. Forney was recognized for the part he played in rescu-

ing the refugees, and I was honored to represent our family at the event.

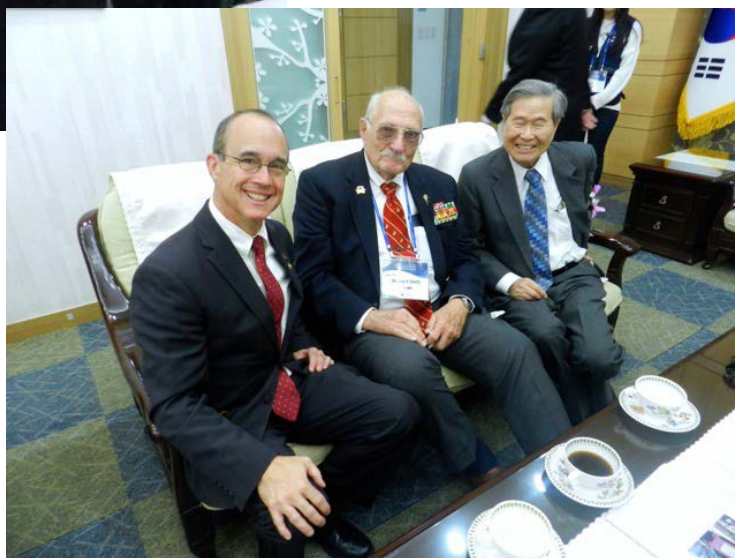
I'm thankful for the MPVA and the Korea Military Merit Awardees Association (KMMAA) for organizing the ceremony and for Mr. John Lee, a Changjin veteran and interpreter for 1st Marine Division, for inviting me. Looking back on the afternoon, I feel privileged to have been part of the special occasion. From Lee Gyeong-pil's ("Kimchi 5") emotional letter of appreciation to those who participated in the Changjin Battle and Hungnam Evacuation, to talking with Mr. Jean White, a US Marine Changjin veteran and president of the Chosin Few, the observance was an outstanding tribute to truly outstanding men.

Semper Fi!

Ned Forney is a Marine veteran and career educator. He currently lives in Seoul, South Korea, where he is writing a book on the Chosin Reservoir Campaign and Hungnam Evacuation. He can be reached at ned.forney1985@gmail.com or his website, nedforney.com.



Major General James W. Lukeman, Commander of U.S. Marine Corps Forces Korea, with Chosin veteran and Chosin Few President Jean White



L to R: author Ned Forney, Chosin veteran Jean White, and Chosin veteran John Y. Lee, who is also KWMF's Advisor in Korea



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