

10:00 OPENING REMARKS

By Hosts Sharon Wells Wagner, Steve Wagner, and Carol J. Haile

Marine Corps Color Guard

Diane Price, *Pledge of Allegiance - Invocation*

Christian Leinbach, Berks County Commissioner

Dale Derr, Director of Berks County Veterans Affairs

10:20 Artist and author **Margery Wheeler Mattox** will honor the memory of her father, World War I veteran Clarence Wheeler, by reading a poem he wrote upon his return home from France after the war.

10:30 Pearl Harbor Survivor, **Lyle Koenig** was serving on the U.S.S. Aylwin in Pearl Harbor when the Japanese attacked on December 7, 1941.

10:45 WWII Veteran **Gene Strine** joined the Navy in 1942. He served with Anti-Submarine Squadron PBM-74 flying patrols and hunting down enemy submarines. Gene, who is co-founder and Vice President of the Mid Atlantic Air Museum, recovered and is restoring the world's only flying P-61, a rare Black Widow night fighter.

11:00 WWII Army Veteran **Ed Taggart** served with the Americal Division in Guadalcanal, New Caledonia, Leyte, and the Philippines. Ed was a writer for the Reading Times/Eagle newspaper, retiring as an editor after more than twenty years.

11:15 WWII Veteran **Gust Kraras** served with the OSS in Greece in 1944. His Special Forces unit, the 122nd Infantry Battalion (Sep), also known as the "Greek Battalion" was formed under the Office of Strategic Services, predecessor to the CIA. Gust was one of 200 men who volunteered for a dangerous special mission - espionage behind the lines on a mountain in Greece.

11:30 WWII Veteran **Richard Biehl** served in the Army with the 1st Division. He participated in the African Campaign before landing on Omaha Beach on D-Day. Dick is a recipient of the French Legion of Honor.

11:45 WWII Veteran and POW **Paul Gordon** served as a ball turret gunner on a B-17 Flying Fortress in Europe. While under heavy fire, Paul was seriously wounded when his B-17 was shot down over Belgium where he was taken prisoner.

12:00 LUNCH BREAK – FREE TO ALL VETERANS

Lunch is available for purchase by the general public.

Autographs, Photos, Book Sales

SPECIAL AWARD PRESENTATION

2010 Celebrate Veterans Honoree

"Veterans Serving Veterans"

12:30 WWII Veteran **Stan Blazejewski** served with the Army's 9th Armored Division. While trapped on a bluff with no food and little ammunition, Stan survived the Germans' massive assault after their build-up for the "Battle of the Bulge."

12:45 Auschwitz Survivor **Severin Fayerman** tells the story of his survival as he recalls life in Auschwitz, Birkenau, Buchenwald, and other concentration camps during WWII. At the suggestion of former British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, Severin penned his memoirs, *A Survivor's Story*.

1:00 WWII Veteran Col. (Ret) **Felix Uhrenik** served with the 774th Tank Bn. with Patton's Third Army. Felix will talk about crossing the Remagen Bridge over the Rhine.

1:15 WWII Veteran **Ken Stoudt** served with the Navy on the Amphibious Cargo Assault ship USS Polana in the Pacific. Ken remembers counting B-29s taking off from Saipan for Japan, and seeing beautiful Mt. Fuji at the end of the war.

1:30 **Stewart "Rusty" Lerch** was orphaned when his father, Stewart E. Lerch, was killed in the Pacific during World War II. Rusty is very active with the American WWII Orphans Network and many other veterans' and military organizations.

1:45 Korean War Veteran Major (Ret.) **Joseph Boccagno** served with 8th Army Headquarters in Korea from 1947 to January 1949. In 1965, 2nd Lt. Boccagno was sent to Viet Nam in a combat unit with the 1st Infantry Division.

2:00 Viet Nam Veteran **Bob Orzechowski** joined the Marine Corps in 1967 and served 13 months in Viet Nam engaged in ground operations and security activity from the DMZ to Da Nang. Afterwards, Bob volunteered for two more tours of Viet Nam.

2:15 Viet Nam Veteran **Douglas William Graybill, Jr.** who served with Kilo-3-7, 1st Marine Division, was a tunnel rat in Viet Nam. He will talk about his experiences in clearing tunnels of Viet Cong and detonating explosives. He also served in the infantry with the 2nd Marine Division in Granada and Beirut, Lebanon.

2:30 Sgt. 1st Class (Ret) **Liz Graybill** is a 23-year veteran of the US Army who served with the 101st Airborne Div., 1st Armored Div., 1st Infantry Div., 1st Cavalry Div., and 18th Military Police Brigade. She served two 1-year tours in Bosnia, two 1-year tours in Iraq, six months in Saudi Arabia, and three tours in Germany.

2:45 **Joseph Baddick**, a veteran of the 82nd Airborne Div., will talk about his son, A.J. Baddick, also of the 82nd Airborne Div., who died in Iraq while saving the life of a fellow soldier. Joe has written a book about his son titled *My Hero My Son*.

3:00 End of Program – Autographs, Photos, Book Sales

The hosts and participants of “CELEBRATE VETERANS” wish to express their heartfelt thanks to the West Lawn United Methodist Church for providing volunteers, preparing and serving lunch, and for the gracious and generous use of its beautiful facilities.

SPECIAL THANKS to Pat Goshert,, Luke and Fay Dundore, Berks County Commissioner Christian Leinbach, Director of the Berks County Veterans Affairs Dale Derr, our honored Veteran guests, our guest speakers, and all of our wonderful volunteers for generously giving their time to help honor our heroic patriots, Berks County’s veterans

Your Celebrate Veterans Hosts:

Carol J. Haile is an author, calligrapher, and self-taught artist. She has written four children's books and is presently illustrating her fifth. She traces her family lineage to the Schwenkfelder District of Montgomery County, a region well known for the exquisite PA German Frakturs created in that area during the 1800's. Genealogical research has recently revealed that her great-great grand-father, Pvt. Jacob Batzel (119th Regiment of PA Volunteers, Union Army of the Potomac), died in 1863 at the tender age of 24 from wounds sustained in the Battle of Fredericksburg. (www.caroljhaile.com)

Steve Wagner is President of Aperture Press, LLC, a publishing and design company. He made his literary debut in 2008 as co-author of *Ordinary Heroes*, an extraordinary account of one of history's greatest conflicts, World War II, told through the eyes of over sixty Pennsylvania enlisted men. Most recently Steve co-authored *Forgotten Widow*, the incredible true story of two men’s efforts to recover and restore a rare WWII P-61 Black Widow night fighter. He is a writer, graphic designer, photographer, and filmmaker whose interests include reading and traveling. Born in Reading, Pennsylvania, he presently resides in Berks County. (www.stephenandrewwagner.com)

Sharon Wells Wagner is Vice-President of Aperture Press, LLC. She made her literary debut in August 2006 with the story of her father, *Red Wells, An American Soldier in WWII*. She and her son, Steve Wagner, co-authored a second book, *Ordinary Heroes, Untold Stories of WWII*, in August 2008. Most recently, Sharon was commissioned by the Mid Atlantic Air Museum to author a new book. Co-written with her son, Steve Wagner, Sharon wrote *Forgotten Widow*, the incredible true story of two men’s efforts to recover and restore a rare WWII P-61 Black Widow night fighter. She also writes books for children and has another book on WWII coming out in the near future. Sharon is Producer and Co-Host of BCTV’s *Tales of World War II*; a Liaison to the Veterans History Project, Library of Congress; a Member of the Berks County Armed Forces Advisory Committee; an Associate Member of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, and Friend of the local Pearl Harbor Survivors. Sharon resides in Berks County, Pennsylvania with her husband, Richard. (www.sharonwells.wagner.com)

Second Annual
CELEBRATE VETERANS

*An Event to
Honor our Veterans*

*Saturday, November 13, 2010
10:00 am to 3:00 pm*

Meet Local Veteran Heroes

Representing WWII, Korea,
Viet Nam, Granada, Beirut,
The Balkans, Afghanistan & Iraq

sharing stories, signing books
and autographs

Program begins promptly at 10:00 a.m.

West Lawn United Methodist Church
15 Woodside Avenue, West Lawn, PA 19609

www.celebrateveterans.org