

Brittany Pointe Estates Veterans Affairs Committee



BPE Pointer Article

Veterans' Corner by Harry Franklin

A VETERAN

According to Webster, a veteran is one who has had long experience, a former soldier or other serviceman. The latter seems to be the colloquial definition of “veteran”. There have been varied, colorful and somewhat nostalgic conceptions of “a veteran”. Most are just like you and me.

World War II ended in victory over the formidable Axis power after more than four years of horrific conflict on land, sea and air. After World War II our American veterans were revered as heroes of the free world and often glorified in films and books. Most average vets just wanted to get back to life as it was before the war. Their marriage, a home and family were priorities.

Several conflicts followed WWII including the drafting of eighteen and nineteen year olds without college deferments or other exclusions. Some completed their education prior to serving in the military. Others chose the G.I. Bill to lighten the cost of education expenses after discharge from the service. The G.I. Bill was a wonderful veteran’s benefit and the greatest impetus to education ever.

President Eisenhower ended the Korean War (officially dubbed “A Police Action”) in July 1953. Although the war never ended technically, the conflict ended in Korea and many service personnel chose to be discharged from the military. Those who had enlisted served inactive stand-by Reserve obligations for as many as four additional years.

Although much has been written about altruistic behavior of many brave servicemen and women, not all look back on their service time as heroic. Many were not directly involved in war. Many served in critical support positions and had a relatively predictable lifestyle. But the commitment of those individuals was without question in service to the United States of America.

As a member of the Brittany Point Veterans Affairs Committee my contribution to this committee of dedicated members is to interview the vets and write the biography of those selected by the committee to be honored each year in a ceremony on Veteran's Day in November.

Humility dominates initial notification of candidate selection. Of course we ask permission from the candidate and expect the usual response. "NO, I'm no hero, I didn't do anything special." A common response! We have honored men whose horrific combat service is subject to our deepest gratitude and admiration, but the majority of our honorees similarly offered themselves for undetermined assignment during their tour of duty. Some were assigned to support service on land, sea and air to keep those on the front lines replenished and prepared for any eventuality. No one could anticipate the challenges or conditions of a pending assignment awaiting them.

There are veterans who loved the military life. Those serving in our country's military services today volunteer because it is a good and honorable way of life. Risk is not factored into the equation any more than any of us who drive or fly or even walk across an intersection.

Of course our service personnel perform many challenging tasks. They make significant contributions to our country each day for which we are grateful. At Brittany Point we honor and salute the 205 former military and Maritime service personnel posted on our Wall of Honor, for their significant contributions, the full knowledge of which we shall never know.....only that it endures.