

IN GRATITUDE HONORING OUR TROOPS MAINE TROOP GREETERS NEWSLETTER



VOL. 3 ISSUE 4

Oct – Dec 2014

Welcome to the IN GRATITUDE, HONORING OUR TROOPS issue of our newsletter. This name submitted by Brian Polley was one of many suggested names that were submitted at the general meeting held in July. Good work Brian!

OUR MISSION The mission of The Maine Troop Greeters is to express the Nation's gratitude and appreciation to those Troops going overseas for a safe return and for those returning, for a joyful homecoming and to make their (hopefully brief) stay in Bangor as comfortable and pleasant as possible.

LETTER OF APPRECIATION:

8/3/2014

Mr. Knowlen,

Sir, I am Major Matt Crouch, The Executive Officer of VMM-264. I and my unit passed through Bangor on the 22nd of July and were privileged to be greeted by the Maine Troop Greeters. I wanted to take a moment to thank you and the rest of the men and women who give so much to ensure that we feel welcome and appreciated each time we transit through the Bangor Airport. I myself have been through 11 times and without fail, I am greeted each time. Thank you for your efforts on our behalf, they are truly meaningful to those of us serving today. Please be sure to pass on my and my unit's gratitude for all that you do.

Sincerely,

Major Matthew R. Crouch

Executive Officer

Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 264

AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2014



CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE: Save 22 November 2014 from 9 AM to 12 noon.

This is the most important general meeting I am aware of in the 7 years I have been a Greeter.

We need your opinions on some very basic subjects! This is your opportunity to inform the current Board how we can insure our membership stays strong; so we can continue to lead the Country giving thanks to our Troops. ***It looks like we will be needed for some time!***

Somebody must give direction to our very large membership; and, you need to decide what you want for policy and who you want making the decisions for the membership.

You are the greatest and the troops love you! However, we need more of you to help keep us a healthy group. At this time, a small core group is doing most of the work and the decision making is up to them. This is your group and we need you to ***step up*** and ***speak up*** and help guide us.

Saturday 22 November you need to decide who you would like to see taking this membership forward. We need to elect 4 new Board members who will serve for three years but who may ask to leave the Board if they find it is not for them.

You will be asked to vote changes to the by-laws to include the purpose of the Maine Troop Greeters.

You will learn how we intend to preserve the wonderful artifacts that fill the room the airport allows us to use. It is the Troop museum you have heard rumblings about but don't quite understand.

You will learn how we will make a special deal out of welcoming the Vietnam Veterans Home on their 50th Anniversary on Armed Forces Day 2015.

AND, WE HOPE TO LEARN HOW WE CAN BETTER SERVE YOU AND THE TROOPS.

It is your meeting, I ask you to come and take advantage of it!

Chuck Knowlen Chair

Calendar of Events:

November 11th, Veterans Day Parade: 10AM to 12 noon, plan on meeting at the former Muddy Rudder parking lot to view parade and honor our Veterans.

November 22nd, Annual Meeting: 9AM to 12noon. Note starting time for this meeting. Election of Board members, changes to the by-laws, and a presentation on the Troop Greeter Museum will be covered at this important meeting. Watch for more details to be sent to your home.



GREETERS PROFILE:

Maxine Doucette was born in Old Town Maine, and in the course of her life has never wandered very far from home. An only child of French speaking parents, she was a student in the first class to graduate from the current Old Town high school in 1954. Upon graduation, she entered the work force and was employed by the Penobscot Shoe Co., one of three shoe factories active in Old Town at the time. In 1956 she married Louis Doucette who also had grown up in a French speaking family, but unlike Maxine had eleven brothers and sisters: so Maxine's family increased immediately upon marriage. Maxine and Louis had two children, a daughter and a son. Unfortunately, Louis passed away in 1984, her daughter in 1998, and her son in 2013. Maxine was deeply moved by the support given to her

by our Troop Greeter family upon passing of her son. Her five grandchildren and one great grandchild are the center of her life.

It was in 2003, while she was working at the Orono Nursing Home that a coworker talked her into going to the airport to meet a troop flight. It only took that one flight for Maxine to be "hooked", and from that time to present day, she will drop anything she is doing, with the exception of spending time with her family to be at the airport meeting a flight. In those early Troop Greeter years, she along with three other gals, were known as the Golden Girls. The other three were Gloria Guptill, Joan Gaudet, and Margery Dean. Her visit to Washington D. C. provided by Cole Transport has been one of the high lights of her Troop Greeter experience, especially the opportunity to meet Senator Olympia Snowe.

DONATIONS: July 23th, Jim Conlon President of Bangor Savings Bank presented our group with a check for \$15,000 to go toward the development of the Maine Troop Greeter museum to be based at the airport.

July 29th, Deborah Windom of Sunbury Village presented Maine Troop Greeters with a check for \$1,420. This donation was the result of a Memorial Day BBQ and fundraiser held at the Village facility.

Sept 11th, The Harley Davidson International Motorcycle Club donated \$1,980 to Maine Troop Greeters at a function held at The Cole Museum.

SICK CALL: Former Troop Greeter Joe Cushing is not feeling well, and a card or call would be appreciated, 474 S. Main St., Brewer, 04412

Troop Greeter Ernie Von Tobel is at home recovering from surgery, and a card or call would be appreciated. 13 Longmeadow Dr., Brewer, 04412

IN SYMPATHY: Condolences to the families of the following Troop Greeters who have recently passed away.

Former Greeter

Raymond G. Parsons

Sept. 10. 2014

Patricia (Pat) Gallupe

Sept. 24, 2014

Lights, Camera, Action: Did you know that Troop Greeter Jerry Lyden had made appearances in Hollywood films and television movies as well as dramas and soap operas? His appearances in Hollywood films include, **Goodfellas, Innocent Blood, and Toy Soldiers** and his roles in TV dramas, movies and soap operas include **Law and Order, Homicide, The Young and the Restless, and As the World Turns**. Jerry also has done numerous training films and audio books.

Jerry currently heads-up a media related company in Bangor, and has just completed an audio book, “**River City**” due out later this year.

Maine Troop Greeters, The Early Years:

There are so many stories that go back to the early days of Maine Troop Greeters, some humorous, some serious, and some of everyday happenings that portray the dedication of that group of original greeters.

As Don Crosby tells the story, it took place on a spring day after an inbound flight had landed and all on board had deplaned. Shortly thereafter, a weather bulletin came in warning of a fast moving snow storm that was to hit the Bangor area shortly, the flight crew for this newly arrived plane was from a part of the world that never sees snow, and they panicked and took off leaving all the troops stranded in the terminal. Three days later Don acting as tour guide had hit all the entertainment places available, had taught any number of people how to eat lobster, and was as happy as the troops to see them finally on their way home. And then, we have the legend of the Golden Girls, not those with the TV show popular a few years ago, but the Maine Troop Greeter Golden Girls: Maxine Doucette, Joan Gaudet, Gloria Guptil, and Margery Dean.

The dedication stories include the hours that Gloria Guptil and Debbie Bickford have put in over the years knitting baby blankets to be given to new fathers on home bound flights during the holiday season, between Thanksgiving and New Year Day, and the many times that Troops Greeters used personal funds to buy supplies (tooth paste, razors, snacks, etc..) to be given out at flight arrivals. Eventually, these Greeters would go from business to business in the area and obtain donations to keep the items in supply. And then, there are the stories of people coming to early morning flights in their work clothes with their lunches packed, so they could go directly from the airport to work, and in many instances returning to the airport immediately upon leaving work. And of course, the many instances of sleeping at the airport between flight arrivals, Bill Knight was known for keeping a cot behind the counter in the Troop Greeter room.

Finally, the personal experiences with service people, especially those on home bound flights, where a Troop Greeter would be singled out and asked to step aside to hear a story of the deployment just completed and how the serviceman or woman is struggling to return home and face everyday life again. The Greeter response would be “I listened to the story they needed to tell , and did the best I could to offer comfort”.

Museum Project: The ad-hoc museum committee will be completing the planning phase of its work the week of October 13. Plan on being at the annual meeting on November 22 to learn how this project will go forward.