

THE MAINE TROOP GREETERS SUMMER NEWSLETTER



**Vol. 3 Issue 3
Jul - Sept 2014**

**WELCOME
NEW
TROOP GREETERS
April- June
2014**

Tom Giroux	4/5/14
Brittney Tilley	4/28/14
Barry Bedlau	5/10/14
Wayne Spoffard	5/25/14
Joy Asuncion	5/31/14
Gynell Schoppee	5/31/14
Jessie Daley	6/4/14
Kathy Skinner	6/4/14

Welcome to the summer issue of our newsletter. It's the season everyone looks forward to, a time to relax and enjoy the outdoors. Along with the picnics and family get-togethers, try and keep your schedule open to meet flights and greet troops.

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.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE: First of all...thanks to everyone who participated in and/or supported Our Open House/Armed Forces Day event, **NICE JOB!**

None of us know what the future holds for Maine Troop Greeters: events are taking place around the world on almost a daily basis that have the potential to impact our organization.

But, what we do know is that the servicemen and women still passing thru Bangor International Airport (as well as their families), need our ongoing support: a smile, a handshake, and expression of gratitude.

I KNOW we will not let them down. Come out at night if you can. You won't be sorry!

Chuck Knowlen

SICK CALL: Larry Bridgham is home recovering from a recent accident: and in Larry's words "making a remarkable recovery", if anyone would like to send a card, the address is 247 Millvale Rd., Bucksport, Me. 04416

Joan Gaudet has returned home after a brief stay in a nursing home, and a card could be sent to 28 Hamel Lane, Old Town, ME 04468



GREETER PROFILE:

Don Guptill, was only seventeen years old when as an Army Infantryman he stepped ashore at Inchon Harbor, South Korea. His unit was sent directly into combat and Don says “he was scared to death”. Eventually he was wounded by a grenade explosion, and was sent to Japan for recovery. When he returned to Korea he was transferred to a transportation unit and drove a truck. One of his memories from his Korea days is being at an airfield one day when Marine pilot Ted Williams landed his disabled plane. All-in-all Don would spend fifteen months in Korea before being returned to the U.S. to complete his service.

Don was born in Hampden, one of six children in the family. His mother passed away when he was three years old, and his father, unable to raise a family this large, placed three of the children into adoption. It was only until Don was in his forties that he was reunited with his missing sisters and brother. He worked at various jobs in the Bangor area for a number of years after he returned from service, and eventually he took a civil service exam and began working for the Post Office, retiring after twenty- nine years. Don and his wife Marie had one daughter and were married for forty- two years at the time of Marie’s death. Don eventually married Gloria, widow with five children, and fourteen years later there are numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren to complete the family.

Don and Gloria have been Troop Greeters since 2003, and in the early years along with Bill Knight would visit local businesses to obtain donations of food and toiletries for the Troops. One of Don’s fondest memories as a Troop Greeter is the chartered flight made by Greeters to Washington D.C. a few years ago thru the efforts and expense of Cole’s Express. Looking back at his time as a Troop Greeter, Don says “it has been the most rewarding thing I have done in my life.”



Maine Veterans’ Homes: How fortunate we are to have a Maine Veterans’ Home here in Bangor. Maine Veterans’ Homes was established by the Maine Legislature in 1977 as a separate not for profit group. This designation allows Maine Veterans’ Homes to act independently and not be directly dependent on the State for the funding of many of its projects. The Bangor facility is one of six Homes throughout the state, and opened its doors in 1995 at its present location, 44 Hogan Rd. Services are provided in

skilled nursing, therapy services and care for both residential and dementia patients. A 4500 sq. ft. addition was completed in 2012 to expand therapy services. This new unit offers state of the art equipment found in no other facility in Maine, and is available to both out-patients as well as Home residents.

To be eligible for admission to the Home, a veteran must have served at least one day of active duty, and this applies as well to members of the Reserve and the National Guard. Spouses and widows of veterans may also be admitted to the Home. Some homework to be done before admittance would include: 1. Have discharge paperwork available, 2. Contact home to ensure eligibility, 3. Contact primary care provider on intent to use Maine Veterans’ Homes.

LETTER OF APPRECIATION: May 24, 2014

I would like to send a long overdue thanks to the thoughtful men and women who greeted me and my unit when we returned from Iraq in 2010. Stepping off the plane and being greeted by all the volunteers, especially the older veterans, was one of my best memories from deployment. I think of you all often and have been bragging about how special the welcomes home was, however I have never formally thanked you. I am a bit ashamed it has taken this long. Perhaps some of the older WWII or Korea vets from that day are no longer with us, and the thought that they will not hear my words of thanks upsets me. But please once again convey my sincere thanks and know that coming off the plane and shaking the hands of those great Americans (servicemen and volunteers alike) was a very moving moment for me that I will remember always.

Sincerely,
Captain (retired) R. Bradley Faulkner
278 ACR, Tennessee Army National Guard



MEET YOUR NEW GREETER: Cindy King

Question: How did you become involved with the Troop Greeters?

Answer: I was asked to join by a Greeter and I'm glad I did.

Question: What do you enjoy the most about greeting our Troops?

Answer: I love meeting our Troops, they are special people: intelligent and brave folks. From the youngest to the oldest they are all proud of their service. They don't consider themselves to be heroes, but to me they are heroes.

Question: What are some of your hobbies?

Answer: My hobbies include writing, Folk Art, swimming, photography, reading, but most of all, meeting new people.

Question: Are you from Bangor?

Answer: No, I grew up in the Penobscot county area.

Cindy became a member of Maine Troop Greeters in February of this year, and in that short time has become one of our most active Greeters. She rarely misses a flight and is a member of both the membership and the operations committees.

Maine Troop Greeters: The Early Years

In previous issues of the Newsletter, we listed the names of Troop Greeters who were members in 2003 when the organization started. The following names were left off and should be added to the list: John Solak and Loretta Solak.

In Sympathy: Condolences to the family of Troop Greeter John E. Buckingham Capt. USMC Retired who passed away on April 26, 2014

Calendar of Events:

July 4 – By the time this newsletter is issued the Fourth of July will have passed. Thanks to all Troop Greeters who either participated in or supported their local July 4th events.

July 19 – Trooper Greeters General Meeting: 10 AM to noon, Bangor Parks and Rec. Bldg. Pot-luck lunch to be served. Please plan on attending. Details to follow.

Memorial Ceremony: A ceremony was held at the airport on May 22 to recognize those Troop Greeters who have passed away since Memorial Day 2013. Commemorative bricks bearing the names of the following were added to the walkway adjacent to the Greeters Pavilion:

Carolyn Barbour Fred W. Bean Elaine Bean Neil Bishop Dana Chase Fred Hardin
Barbara J. Crawford Dorothy P. Heath Barbara Jewell Vilora ‘Sally’ Jones
William ‘Bill’ Knight Chris W. Kopang William Leslie Jr. Jean G.Moffett Ward Shaw
Douglas Morris Jr. Elthier L. Sonia John E. Buckingham Robert Del Guidice

Museum Project: A permanent committee has been set up to manage this project thru the stages of working with the exhibit designers, setting up a fund raising program, and working on an over-all timetable for the project.

AS OF JUNE 30, 2014

