

CELEBRATE

Veterans Day with Yavapai-Apache Nation

By **DON DECKER**
YAN News

Under calm skies and warm November weather, veterans gathered at the Veteran's Memorial Park on the Yavapai-Apache Nation to be honored for their service in the military. The oldest veteran in attendance was 89 year old Stanley Jackson who was only 18 years old in 1944 when he joined the U.S. Army with the 81st Infantry Division Signal Battalion. This Army unit remains notorious to this day for relieving the 1st Marine Division that were clamped down on the island of Peleliu, September of 1944 in the Philippines.

It was suppose to take 4 days to take the island in Palaus, a strategic airstrip but it turned into a 2- month battle. The Japanese were dug in and heavily fortified. The 1st Marine Division were eventually evacuated and Jackson's 81st Infantry Division continued the battle. They did not "mop up" as some accounts would state but literally took command of driving out the last of the resisters.

Because of Jackson's unit's success, they were able to make the attacks on Iwo Jima an Okinawa easier.

Wednesday Ceremony

The opening ceremony consisted of posting of the colors by the Yavapai-Apache Nation's Honor Color guard composed of veterans Sgt. Larry Jackson, Brian Marquez, Caleb Rundlett, Marvin Redeye, and Cindy Nahee. Ted Pavatea's Southern Drum brought in the honor guard for posting of the colors. Lorie Ortega, peace officer for the Yavapai-Apache Nation sang the National Anthem as the honor guard held their salutes to the flags. Ortega is a member of the Hopi Tribe.

After invocation by Sgt. Jackson, who is also a minister of a church in Clarkdale, Jackson gave a brief history of American Indian's involvement in the military with respect to the ratio of enlistment and overall representation in all branches of the Armed Services.

Over 45 veterans participated in this event with Conrad Victor, a San Carlos Apache elder who had social ties to the Nation through his marriage to the late Dolly Victor traveled the farthest for this event.

Chairman Thomas Beauty spoke to the crowds on a personable basis about his relationship to the meaning of Veteran's Day.

Honors

Members of the Prescott's Intertribal Warrior's Society under the leadership of Sgt. Alfonso Santillion, a 2-time Purple Heart recipient of the Vietnam War led the honoring of veterans with ribbon-metals for the veterans.

During this honoring ceremony, the Southern Drum under Ted Pavatea and grandson Thomas Pavatea sang the honor songs in slow cadence and ended with a flourish.

The Nation's royalties led by Chairman Beauty also gave special gifts to the Veterans. These gifts included a matted watercolor measuring 16" by 12" depicting tribal members in their uniforms that represented the 4 branches of the military with the caption, "Honoring Our Veterans" and the date, a t-shirt with the Nations flags and the U.S. flag covered by an eagle with the word 'Veteran' at the top and a coffee cup with the Nation's logo.

Activities

Sam Plunkett, Hawaiian, Nation's social member through marriage to Delores, cooked a delicious meal composed of chicken/pork/rice and cabbage (read about Plunkett's cooking from last month's issue) that was enjoyed by all. The noon meal was a good departure from the regular frybread and beans.

Throughout the entire event, the Nation's royalty had various drawings that gave away bagged gifts and gift cards from WalMart. A miniature Indian camo-teepee donated by Jeff Boyd, Minnesota Indian and Vietnam Veteran, was one of the top prizes including 2-\$50 gift cards from Walmart.

Later in the afternoon, Apache singers led by Delmondo Cypress, San Carlos Apache and social member at YAN along with YAN members Nathan Ibarra, Lucas Evans and Darin Smith sang 4 traditional songs concluding with a blessing song.

The traditional gourd dancing continued into the afternoon led by the Prescott Inter-Tribal Warriors Society with Ted Pavatea providing the spiritual songs with a Southern Drum.



Clockwise from top: Veterans hold flags during the annual Veterans Day ceremony at the Nation's Veterans Memorial Park. Veterans line up to receive their special gifts. **Annabelle Ibarra** (left) First Attendant to Princess and **Nolani Victor**, Tiny Tot help with handing out gifts to the veterans. **Cornell Pavatea** helps with the family drumming. **Marvin Redeye** from Onadaga Nation, New York retires the colors. **Lori Ortega** sings the National anthem. **Chairman Thomas Beauty** shares a special moment with the visitors and participants. **Brian Marquez** leads the way as the colors are posted at the beginning of the ceremony. (Photos courtesy of Bill Helm)