



“Sierra Charlie”

Dec
2007

ISSUE 73

Maine Wing 76th Squadron Participates in WAA



Just a sample of what 10,000 plus Christmas Wreaths look like when laid on Veterans graves. (Photo by C/CMSgt Vincent)

December 9th was the start of the 2007 Wreaths Across America Program for The 75th and 76th Composite Squadrons in Maine Wing. Both Squadrons supplied senior officers and cadets to help decorate and load 10,000 wreaths destined for Arlington National Cemetery. This was the 8th year that these two squadrons have helped in the Arlington Project to decorate Veterans graves with the holiday wreaths donated by Worcester Wreath Company in Harrington, Maine.

This year we were requested by Morrill Worcester of Worcester Wreath Company to escort the Christmas Wreaths to Arlington National Cemetery. This meant we would leave on December 9th and not return home until December 17th with cadets missing a lot of school. With parents permission and the school's permission a set of guidelines were set up by me which were needed by the cadets to be able to participate in this once in a lifetime adventure. After all

of the requirements were met, we ended up with the following cadets qualifying for the trip.

Holliann Bergin, Felicia Vincent, James Lee, Joseph Martorano, Dominic Martorano, Steven Martorano, Kimberly Lane, Patrick Lappin and Josh Chambers. We also had two Standby positions. Jake Randall and Chris Sprague. As it turned out James Lee was unable to go due to illness and Jake Randall could not go so Chris Sprague made the trip instead.

This year, two Civil Air Patrol Vans escorted the two Tractor Trailers filled with wreaths all the way to Arlington National Cemetery with the guidance of the Patriot Guard Riders and two Maine State police cruisers and their drivers. There were many stops along the way at Veterans Homes, Schools, Fire Departments, etc. At times we had over 60 vehicles and as many as 200 motorcycles or more in the parade. The cadets counted 417 red traffic lights we went through as police escorts took us through many towns without stopping and when we did have a stop, they made sure we had room to park all of the escort's vehicles.

We stopped at several schools along the way and the cadets were a hit with the students. Between the hugs from the youngsters and the thank you, I don't believe there was a dry eye amongst us. Everywhere we stopped, we were treated like we were special even though we were there to thank them for their service to our country. I am sure this will be a trip that will stay with all of us the rest of our lives.

Bad weather made it almost impossible to have Patriot Guard Riders all the way, but you would never know it. We always had at least 4 or 5 members with us during the trip. When we arrived in Arlington, we were escorted to where the wreaths were to be laid and met up with the estimated 3500 volunteers plus to lay the wreaths in section 33 of the cemetery. In addition several Maine Wing Members also traveled to Arlington to Meet with us and help lay wreaths. The cadets and senior officers were kept busy making sure that every volunteer who attended received at least one wreath to lay on the grave of a Veteran.

After a brief ceremony with the Cemetery Director and Maine State Society we started laying wreaths at 0900. One hour and forty-seven minutes later all 10,000 plus wreaths had been placed on the Veterans Graves. During the same time, our Interim National Commander, Brigadier General Amy Courter held ceremonies at the CAP Memorial and the Air Force Memorial attended by several key VIP's.

Wreath laying ceremonies were also held at Edmund Muskie's Grave, the Kennedy Family Memorials and at the Mast of

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Our cadets were well behaved and professional through out the week long escort.



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the U.S.S. Maine.



Most Photos by C/ CMSgt Vincent. Thank you.

Starting at 12:00 noon sharp a ceremony at the Tombs of the Unknown Soldiers as well as at 268 locations around the country were taking place to Remember-Honor-Teach. These ceremonies were lead by Civil Air Patrol Units (49.25%) with an additional 27 units in support of other lead groups, Patriot Guard Riders (17.54%), Cemetery staff (4.10%), Daughters of the American Revolution (3.73%), VFW (3.36%), American Legion & Aux. (2.61%) and a host of other groups including, Vietnam Veterans, Soliders Angles, Disabled America Veterans, Rolling Thunder, NFD, Boy Scouts, Knights of Columbus, 1st California Brigade, US Military Vets MC, Department of Veterans Affairs and twenty nine other groups which included individuals and companies all supporting the project.

What started out 16 years ago by Morrill Worcester donation of wreaths to Arlington National Cemetery has grown into an annual National Project with the help of Civil Air Patrol and many other groups around the country. We thank the Worcester Family for allowing us to be part of their dream to **Remember** the fallen, **Honor** those who have served and are serving and **Teach** our children the Value of Freedom.

Maj Wayne Merritt and I also wish to thank all of the members of Maine Wing Civil Air Patrol, for your support, not only as escorts to Arlington but to those who stayed back and performed the ceremonies all over the state. This project takes a lot of planning and coordination to pull it off and all of you helped to make it happen. We wish to also thank our Wing Commander, Col Chris Hayden, for all of his support including the trip to Arlington. In addition, we wish to thank the parents of our cadets for your support in allowing your cadets to participate in this national project. I hope you are as proud of them as we are.

The wreaths affect all of us differently as we lay them on the Graves of our Veterans. All of us who traveled to Arlington and those who laid wreaths here in Maine, all have a story as to how it affected us. Take time to say "Thank You" to a veteran both past and present.

Maj Dennis Murray, National Co-Director
Wreaths Across America



Karen & Morrill Worcester Welcome the estimated more than 3500 volunteers who came to lay wreaths.



Ready to pass out wreaths to the waiting crowd.



CAP Vans had to be cleaned at every stop. The Ladies work while some rest. (Above)



This cadet sold over 500 sponsored wreaths this year and won the trip to Arlington with all expenses paid by WAA.



Morrill Worcester takes time to thank cadets for their participation in WAA.



Our Music source for all of the 750 miles to Arlington National



Sierra Charlie

Arlington Pictures Only





Sierra Charlie

Arlington Continued





Sierra Charlie

Recent Promotions



**Congradulations
to all of the
cadets on your
recent
promotions.**



**Visitors always
welcome and we
encourage parents to
participate in the
promotions**



To our featured cadet James Lee. We know how hard you worked to meet all of the requirements to attend this year's Arlington National Cemetery Escort. We also know how disappointed you were when you were too sick to make the trip and had to be replaced with another cadet. We tried to call you while we were on the road but must have missed you.



One of the exercises we were doing at Arlington was to take the information off the grave so we could look up that person when we returned and find out as much as we could about them and their family. We do not want you to miss that opportunity to explore and find out all you can about one of our Veterans who is in Arlington National Cemetery.

Please use this picture and find out all you can on this person as though you were there and laid the wreath.

***The youth of America is their oldest Tradition.
It has been going on now for three hundred years.
-Oscar Wilde***

**We
Have
Room
For
You !**

Proud To Serve Our State & Nation



Emergency Services



Cadet Activities



AEROSPACE EDUCATION

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Maine Wing 76th Squadron, St. Croix CAP Base. P.O. Box 426, Baileyville, Maine 04697-0426
Meeting every Thursday at 18:30 hrs (6:30)
Army National Guard Armory, Calais
Visitors Welcome.
Call for additional information:
(207) 427-3421 Maj Dennis Murray, CC
(207) 427-3887 Lt Col James Greenlaw, DCC
Both numbers are good for information about meetings and membership.
National Information line 1-800-FLY-2338

**Leaders don't create followers,
they create more leaders.
- Tom Peters in "Fast Company"**

This newsletter may be copied, sent electronically, cut and pasted as needed. All opinions stated herein are those of the author only and not necessarily those of Civil Air Patrol or the United States Air Force. Maj Dennis Murray, Editor.