

**Descendants Group, an Auxiliary of the American Defenders of Bataan & Corregidor
Annual Meeting – Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania June 24, 2011**

The meeting was called to order at 4:12 PM by President Jan Thompson.

Pledge of Allegiance

Announcements

Ms. Thompson thanked the volunteers who helped during the convention, with special thanks to the Patriot Guard Riders for escorting the buses to the ADBC museum, to the local police and citizens of Wellsburg who joined in at the city border and to Mary Kay and George Wallace who organized the bus tours and escorts. She recognized the following people for their contribution:

Auction chair: Pat Wang

Audio/Visual: Dave Beauvais

P/R: Joe Vater, Jr. – coverage in the newspapers and TV resulted in 5 new attendees.

Introductions

Jan Thompson introduced the current board: Caroline Burkhart, Jim Erickson, Judy Pruitt, Linda McDavitt, Kris Dahlstrom and Nancy Kragh.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the 2010 Annual Meeting were not available for distribution, so were not voted on.

Officers Reports

President

Last fall, due primarily to the efforts of Lester Tenney and Kinue Tokudome, the first Peace and Reconciliation trip to Japan for POWs, was sponsored by the Japanese government. Nancy Kragh and Jan Thompson were chosen to travel representing the descendants. It was an important and emotional trip. The highlight was hearing the first official public apology for the treatment of the POWs during WWII from the Foreign Minister.

Media coverage was difficult to arrange because we did not get trip information and a firm itinerary until arrival in Japan, and the Japanese government did not send out a press release in advance. However, Jan Thompson was able to get CNN to cover trip and brought video of that coverage to share at the convention.

Dispatches sent back from the group during the trip so people at home would know what was going on. These were also published in the DG Google Group and the Quan.

Jan Thompson then read a letter from PNC Lester Tenney announcing that the Japanese Friendship program will continue and that American former POWs, their families, and other decedents will visit Japan in Oct 2011.

Ms. Thompson then announced that the following POWs will go: Robert Vogler, Jr., Ed Friese, Ralph Griffith, Oscar Leonard, Harold Bergbower, Jim Collier and Jim Corre.

Treasurer

Judy Pruitt presented the budget and balance sheet approved by the board.

Fundraising

Several new fund-raising initiatives were started this year:

- The Education Grant Fund – which Linda McDavitt will discuss later in the meeting.
- The Roger Mansell Fund – to pay for the expenses of an expert guest lecturer at each convention
- Sharon Cooper has created greeting cards with POW artwork which we can sell on the website, through the Quan and at the White Sands Bataan Memorial Walk.
- Sale of patches with the DG logo
- Sale of bumper stickers designed by John Whitehurst
- A potential project is the publishing and sale of books of cartoons by Bob Erhart

Website

Jim Erickson is acting as a temporary webmaster, but we need another volunteer to take on this job.

Committee Reports

Grants

Linda McDavitt gave a presentation on the grant application process and forms. Applications will be accepted until September 30 for funds to be distributed in 2012.

Communications

Caroline Burkhart reported the following activities:

Placement of an ad in the White Sands program

Quan articles

Google Groups announcements

Radio and news media interviews at the convention

Presented a letter of condolence to the Japanese ambassador regarding the earthquake and tsunami

Jim Erickson and Linda McDavitt reported on the Bataan Memorial Death March at White Sands. It is an active and inspirational commemoration of an historical event, and they encouraged everyone to attend. It will be on March 25 in 2012 and is an excellent way to reach out to and meet other people.

Elections

With no nominations from the floor, the board candidates were elected by acclamation. They are: Linda McDavitt, Carrie Collier and Joe Vater, Jr.

After discussion from the floor, the proposed changes to the Bylaws were approved.

2012 Convention

The 2012 convention will be held at the Hotel Albuquerque in Old Town in Albuquerque. It will be in May to correspond with the 70th Anniversary of the fall of Corregidor.

Comments from the floor

It was suggested that with the dissolution of the ADBC, the next board should consider changing the name of the organization as it can no longer be an auxiliary.

It was suggested the mission statement be changed to “include and serve them” (POWs).

The DG was asked to support the Clark Veterans Cemetery Association, which is trying to get the American Battle Monuments Commission to take over maintenance of this cemetery that has American veterans dating back to the Spanish American War.

George Wallace thanked everyone who visited the museum. Mr. Wallace wants the POWs, the museum and the Descendants Group to work together. He discussed the recommendation of a professional fundraiser that they hold off on a capital funds drive, but will start raising operations funds.

Jan Thompson showed the trailers for “Tragedy of Bataan” with narrator Alec Baldwin, and for the full-length documentary she is working on about the POW experience.

We were asked to establish a plaque at the site of the *Enoura Maru* victims’ graves at Punchbowl in Hawaii.

Mindy Kotler offered to assist the organization in Washington DC.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Kragh
Secretary, 2011

James Erickson
Secretary, 2012

Minutes Approved by voice vote without opposition on Friday May 4, 2012 at the DG-ADBC Annual Convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico