

## CCC LEGACY CHAPTER 123 NEWSLETTER

3412 Pleasant Run Road, Irving, Texas 75062

December 2013

**Chartered:** Nov. 1, 1985. **Past Presidents:** \*Nelson Oats, \*Harold Ballard, \*W. O. Mullin, \*Verle Oringderff, \*Harold Trammell, \*William Oakley, Frank Polenta, \*S. L. Baker, \*George Payne, \*Harry Steinert, & \*Al Clement. \*deceased. **Current Officers:** President-Mike Pixler, phone contact: 817-929-1557, First Vice President-Jim Rau, phone contact: 817-367-3343, Second Vice president-Pat Mann, phone: [info later], Secretary/Treasurer- Steve Porter, phone contact: 817-244-6714, Sergeant at Arms-Troy Jones, Chaplain-Rev. James Pixler, Kitchen Committee, [Open], Historian-Ruby Pixler, Reporter at Large & Newsletter Editor-Bill Stallings, phone contact: 972-255-7237.

**Monthly Meeting** is held on the *second* Saturday of each month from 10:30 AM to 1PM at the North Side Multipurpose Center, 1801 Harrington [North], Fort Worth, TX 76106. Dues are \$10 a person annually and are effective from Oct. to Oct.

**Directions:** Interstate Hwy 30 runs east & west. It accesses the downtown Fort Worth area from the south. Exit north on Henderson St. After a couple of miles it crosses a fork of the Trinity River and becomes State Hwy 199 which goes to Lake Worth, and the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge. When you reach the traffic light at the intersection of 18<sup>th</sup> St. NW, turn right [east] and go up the hill four blocks to Homan St. Turn left [north], and go a block to the Y. Stay right and continue into the Center's rear parking lot. Our meeting room door with the CCC sign is to the right as you approach the building. Bring a friend & enjoy fun, fellowship & food. Sign the register for you may win the \$10 door prize.

**WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES:** None in December.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY:** Larka Tetens, Arlington, TX, 12/19; Claude Tyler, Blossom, TX, 12/14.

MINUTES OF MEETING OF CCC LEGACY CHAPTER 123, ON SATURDAY, December 14, 2013. Weather: Cloudy and cold, Temp. 41, Attendance: 9.

The meeting was called to order at 11:04 AM by President Pixler. The invocation was offered by Steve Porter. Sgt-at-Arms Troy Jones led the pledges to the U.S. and Texas flags.

President Pixler reminded the members of the purpose of the CCC Legacy.

All members present indicated they had received a copy of the November, 2013 meeting minutes. A motion to accept the minutes as written was made by Bill Stallings and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tony Rodriguez. Motion passed. Financial report was read by Steve Porter, Secretary/Treasurer. Motion to accept the financial report was made by Tony Rodriguez and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Troy Jones. Motion passed.

No birthdays or anniversaries were reported.

Under old business the need to assure that all members are current on chapter dues was discussed and the need to build the number of members belonging to CCC Legacy National.

Under new business the CCC built structure at Casino Beach on Lake Worth were discussed. President Pixler has met with city officials and is seeking written assurance that the structures will be preserved and not be demolished.

The poem "Twas the Night Before Christmas" was read by various members in three different languages. Quite entertaining. Gifts were exchanged and the can was passed. The \$10 door prize was won by Troy Jones.

The blessing was offered by Jim Rau. Motion to adjourn by Bill Stallings, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tony Rodriguez. Motion passed and we adjourned at 11:59 AM.

The kitchen committee was short-handed, but an ample and delicious meal was enjoyed by all present.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Porter, Secretary/Treasurer

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### **The President's Corner, 9 December, 2013**

The subject for this corner is: The CCC Legacy family will move forward in 2014.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! December is a special time of the year for most of us. We celebrate the birth of Jesus, the reason for the season, Christmas with family and friends and a time to bring in a new year.

A part of the CCC Legacy family moving forward in 2014, is remembering the passing of our family members in 2013. Each one remembered and missed by family and friends for the special person they were. Juan Lujan, 91, CCC Company 1855, passed 22 November, 2013, and Hermon Elliott, 92, CCC Company 843, also passed 22 November, 2013.

It was noted by one of the "Boys" that at each of the gatherings, WE, with we being those in attendance always go over and over the things the CCC did from 1933-1942. I must say that is a part of the purpose listed in the meeting agenda. However, the agenda has been updated in recent history to reflect the CCC Legacy's purpose and mission and the intent of the chapter in support of the CCC. We shall NEVER forget what the CCC accomplished during their active years. We can't and will not forget those times. That's why we are here. That's what we do, in the CCC Legacy. It is, in part, the goal in CCC Legacy Chapter 123 to move forward in 2014 by becoming more involved with the youth of the state and the nation. That includes, but is not limited to, more information on programs such as the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Conservation Corps, and/or Southwest Conservation Corps, just to mention a couple of the programs. We must if the chapter and the legacy is to survive in the future. We need to move forward by offering our knowledge, and to volunteer in the areas that we excel. We all have something to offer. The same people doing the same thing, does not help the chapter or the legacy. We will be drawing

from the resources during 2014. The CCC Legacy family will be moving forward in 2014. With your help, it will be the most productive to date.

Hope to see you next year at the meeting, 11 January, 2013. Oops, did it again; 11 January, 2014. Things you might think about prior to the meeting: the Marshall's office @ Casino Beach and possible useage of the building should it become available in the future; Mapping of CCC structures around Lake Worth, and/or WPA projects in and around the city of Fort Worth; the second annual CCC Day at the FWNC&R, 29 March, 2914, location TBD; the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of the Nature Center and the 40<sup>th</sup> for the Friends of the Nature Center; and maybe some of the events on 22 March, 26 April, or the Buffalo Boogie on May 10<sup>th</sup>. It is a lot of "stuff" to think about and help with as we move forward in 2014. Have fun.

Yours in Service,

Mike Pixler, President, CCC Legacy Chapter 123

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### **A Big Oops Has Occurred**

In the Minutes above you may have noted that no birthdays for the month were reported. Well, we really dropped the ball by forgetting Larka Tetens birthday of December 19<sup>th</sup>. Our long time member Claude Tyler of Blossom, Texas, also celebrated his birthday on 12/14. A belated Happy Birthday to them both!

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### **A REMINDER**

As mentioned above, we want to remind everyone to renew their membership dues to our national organization, CCC Legacy, P.O. Box 341, Edinburg, VA 22824. It is \$20 a year, and if you are not a member or have let your dues lapse, please help support our national organization. Our Chapter 123 dues are still \$10, with our CCC "Boys" given life memberships. That does not apply to the national organization.

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### **We Now Begin a Visit with One of Our New Members**

We first met Edward Schuckert at the 2012 CCC Legacy Reunion in Montana. Ed is a CCC "Boy" and was born in California in 1925. Ed has kindly permitted us to use some of his story, so with some editing of length, here it is in his own words:

"I was one of six children and being the baby, I knew little of the internal matters of the family. I was totally unaware that our family, as with others of the times, was poor and did without clothing and food. My father left the family in 1927, and he and my mother divorced shortly thereafter.

Mother worked in a café earning \$10 a week to supplement the \$65 per month ordered by the court as child support. Times were difficult for those old enough to understand, such as mother and the two older brothers. The three younger ones, a brother, sister, and I didn't know the difference, believing that life was just this way. The others struggled to support the family. One brother that learned of the CCC enlisted in 1935 and was sent to a camp at the confluence of two rivers in Oregon. The \$25 sent to my mother each month of his \$30 earned was like pennies from heaven. Unknown to us kids was that mother's health went into a decline. We kids didn't

realize that our mother had cancer of the cervix and could no longer function as the leader of the family. Another brother joined the CCC's in 1938. Though my father abandoned the family at my age of two, the court expected him to continue support of we young'uns. My sister and I were situated with a family here from Canada where we attended school in Los Angeles. I was asthmatic and soon became so ill that I needed to be relocated to a different climate. Father was informed that I would die if kept in the Los Angeles climate.

Dad placed me with two German people located in Lockwood Valley, Ventura County, California. They felt the responsibility of caring for me was too much, and asked my father to take me from them. I was scarcely 14 years old, and a local school teacher, with whom I lived for 3 months, took me in. Winter arrived when this teacher moved to Ventura, California, and I was about to be returned to Los Angeles, when another place was found. I landed on a 640 acre ranch in the same area with the elderly owners for the next 12 months. Due to my schooling, I needed to return to Los Angeles so I could continue. An older brother took me in to live with him and his wife, which was against her will. While attending the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, I had my ups and downs with her. I returned to the ranch for the summer months, after which, schooling again in the city, but not with the brother and his wife. The only place remaining was with my other older brother who had a flying school and a small office building. Until WW II started, I lived in that 12X14 office building on the airport, presumably as a night watchman. I rode a school bus to school from this point.

I was age 16 when the Japanese attacked the U.S. on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1941. The flying school came to its' end and so did the small house I lived in for the past 3 months, so I was out on the street again.

My brothers liked the CCCs and what they gained from their enrollment, so I was aware of the program. It would be one month of waiting before I could enroll. I was only 16 and needed to be 17 with parental consent. I located my father and explained that I needed his written consent to enroll, and so I lived with him and his new wife until January 8<sup>th</sup>, 1942, when I rode the streetcar to downtown Los Angeles and enrolled into the CCCs.

Each of my two brothers that enrolled previously had been sent to exceptional locations; one to the Rogue River area in Oregon and the other to the Sequoia National Park in the Sierra Nevada Mts. of California. I had great hopes of getting an assignment a great distance from California thinking of an exciting train trip. With the war underway, funds for the CCC were rapidly dwindling. Other than returning some enrollees to their home states, transportation by rail was finished. Buses and Army trucks were the mode of transportation. Enrollees were assigned to existing camps nearest their home city. Those of us inducted on January 8<sup>th</sup>, in Los Angeles were trucked to Mill Creek Camp No. 1943, sixty five miles away to the east. We were loaded onto a 1939 Dodge military truck. It was governed at 35 miles per hour because that was the National speed limit during WW II to save fuel. The ride, on hard fold down seats, was very uncomfortable.

A Lt. Whitaker was waiting for the new enrollees as he ordered us off the truck and told us to line up. Roll call was next, our first introduction to a military way of conducting ourselves. Single file, we were led to the camp storeroom, received our issue of clothing and work boots, all of WW I issue and they may even fit; and then directed to our quarters in Barracks A. We found a cot, obtained sheets and blankets and set up housekeeping. The following three days were consumed by fire training administered by a Forest Service foreman. The instructor introduced the new CCC boys to the elements of fire; what makes the fire burn. He taught the dangers associated with wildland fires, and the introduction to fire tools and their use. We were another three days or so loitering in camp before any crew assignment, adjusting to camp life.

My two brothers in the CCCs during the 1930s enjoyed every minute of their enlistment. I cannot make such a statement. Even this early, areas of Los Angeles were gang oriented, and they were present in our camp and congregated in one barrack at the upper end of the camp. Our clothing and boots were subject to being stolen.

The Army managed the day to day operations of the camp, and the Forest Service supervised the work program and was responsible for us kids when out of camp. We were formed into work crews, identified as "Hand Crews," and when trained, were very capable at constructing a fire line. Our only communication with camp was through the use of a hand cranked magneto telephone. Camp crews were tied together through a low frequency radio system. The foreman counted the number of boys getting on and off the truck and any other time he felt the necessity. Wildland fire fighting was dangerous work, and the crew foreman absolutely had to know the number of fire fighters [us CCC boys] he had and to where each was assigned.

After I had been on a work crew for six weeks, I availed myself to night schooling by taking courses from the Calif. State Department of Education. I also filled in as canteen steward as well as tool room service man. By April 1<sup>st</sup> I learned that additional schooling could be had if I transferred to Dalton Camp near Azusa, Calif. Attrition had reduced Mill Creek Camp population from 100 to 35. I learned that Lt. Whitaker was leaving and going to Dalton as commanding officer, so I requested a transfer and hitched a ride with him. I enjoyed the ride from Mill Creek to Dalton Camp, but we were halted a half mile from the camp by a guard standing behind a steel pipe gate. The guard was Bill English who was there to keep the public from entering on to National Forest Lands because they had been closed by the U.S. Congress. Soon we were in camp and I unloaded, moving my things into a barrack, grabbed my cot, and set up housekeeping.

The following day at roll call, I noticed that my foreman at Mill Creek, Mr. Biddison, had been transferred to Dalton also. It was then April and fire season was approaching and Foreman Biddison recommended me as a firefighter to be assigned to the Forest Service "Tanker 291" stationed at Dalton Camp. Tanker 291 was an initial attack unit where hose lays were used mostly; subject to dispatch anywhere on the forest.

Weeks passed when a Forest Service representative informed the tanker crew that the government was designating Dalton Camp as a facility for conscientious objectors, and that we firefighters and the foreman would need to be transferred. I accepted a transfer as a firefighter to the Newhall Ranger District on the same forest. The foreman there had left for military service, so my old friend, Foreman Thelmas Biddison, had been transferred there as well."

*We will leave Ed here for now, but continue next time.*

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The Civilian Conservation Corps Legacy is a non-profit organization dedicated to research, preservation, and education to promote better understanding of the CCC and its continuing contribution to American life and culture. *"I propose to create a Civilian Conservation Corps to be used in simple work, more important, however, than the material gains will be the moral and spiritual value of such work.*

**--FDR, 1933**

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