

The Columbus Dispatch

Columbus honors veterans with parade; France awards nine medals for WWII service

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The Columbus Dispatch

Though wind whipped through American flags and marching bands shivered with their instruments, a crowd still turned out to watch the Veterans Day parade today.

Beginning a little after noon, military vehicles, floats, marching bands and groups of veterans headed south on High Street, then west on Broad before ending at the Veterans Memorial, where the 2010 class of the Veterans Hall of Fame will be inducted this afternoon. Military veterans working in aviation were featured for the theme of this year's parade, "100 Years of Military Flight."

Spectators marveled as jets flew overhead on High Street.

Veterans Day is Thursday, but several activities are happening today to celebrate it because state and federal employees have Nov. 11 off. Organizers try to hold the parade on the Friday before the holiday to make sure there will be a big crowd Downtown to see it.

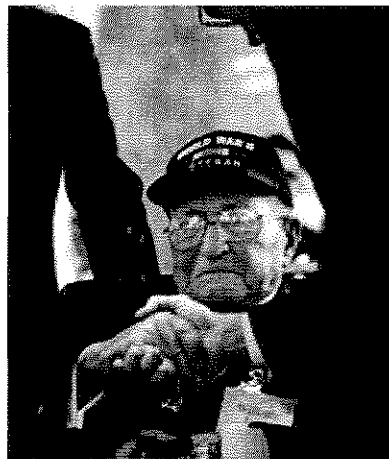
Earlier today, nine World War II veterans from Ohio received France's highest foreign honor for fighting to liberate that country.

Cold winds kept many parade watchers' hands hidden in their pockets, but many civilians and fellow veterans proudly waved tiny American flags. Lynn Knasel, the wife of one veteran, says that the temperatures should not have kept people from being thankful for the men and women working in the military.



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Lawrence Bott of Columbus salutes the audience after receiving the Knight of the Legion of Honor medal from Gov. Ted Strickland.



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"As I was walking down here, I heard people complaining about the cold, and I was thinking, 'That's nothing compared to what some of these guys went through,'" she said.

For the second year, members of Lima Company, 3rd Battalion, 25th Marines will collect toys for their Toys for Tots program. Marines then distribute those gifts to needy children for Christmas.

At the mornig event honoring nine World War II veterans, Gov. Ted Strickland and honorary French Consul Stephen Knerly Jr. presented the Knight of the Legion of Honor medals in Statehouse Rotunda for "remarkable deeds for France."

"We are in the presence of heroes," Strickland said.

France has awarded thousands of the medals to American World War II troops for their service to that country. The men who received the award this morning were:

- Lawrence Bott, 85, of Columbus
- Phillip Bradley, 86, of Columbus
- Robert Flohre, 84, of Centerville
- Donald Jakeway, 87, of Johnstown
- Alexander Lambros, 85, of Ashtabula
 - Lowell Norton, 87, of Springfield
- Harold Deane, 95, of South Vienna
- William Howcroft, 86, of Cincinnati
- William Tonini, 86, of Hannibal

The Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame will induct its 2010 class later this afternoon at Veterans Memorial. A reception begins around 2 p.m., and the induction begins at 3 p.m.

William Tonini of Hannibal gets emotional while shaking the hand of Honorary French consul Stephen J. Knerly Jr. (left) after receiving the Knight of the Legion of Honor medal.

Slide Show

Veterans Day Parade 2010

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