



Coffee and Donuts Breakfast
Honoring our *Veterans*
at St. James Catholic School







Profiles in Courage

The Veterans Day Program on Tuesday afternoon, November 7, was one of the best events ever enjoyed in our library at Saint James Catholic Elementary School. Our guests of honor included Mr. William “Milkshake” Allen and Mr. Clifford Smith, who represented our neighbor, the Armed Forces Retirement Home. These gentlemen, along with Paul & Isabel Bullard, shared their memories of military service with 29 third grade students and their teachers, Ms. Stacie Barrient and Ms. Carmen Peters. This event is our way to thank veterans for their devotion to duty and for safeguarding our essential American freedoms, in times of war and peace.

Mr. William Allen, signed up for the Navy’s lighter-than-air duty aboard blimps in 1942. Blimps were used to detect German submarines along coastlines, approaching harbors and when escorting ships. Blimps were capable of finding subs in water up to 300 feet deep with highly sophisticated and top secret equipment. Blimps escorted over 89,000 ships and only lost one tanker, the *Persephone*, to enemy attack. Mr. Allen also explained the origin of his nickname, “Milkshake” to our audience. Mr. Allen was assigned to escort a famous movie actress, back then known as a “hot patootie”, who adorned him with this colorful nickname.

Mr. Paul Bullard, another Navy man, recounted how he was transferred from San Diego to Gulfport after his basic training and how he met his dream girl, Isabel, at a USO show. Isabel, now his bride of 68 years, emphasized how important music was during wartime and that it only took once dance for her to fall in love.

Mr. Clifford Smith served in the Navy for 20 years aboard 4 different submarines. Mr. Smith needed his father’s signature to enlist for military duty as he was still in high school at that time, at age 17. He said he would do it “all over again” if he could. Mr. Smith is a prolific artist and great contributor to our library. Be sure to see the many works of art created by Mr. Smith which are on exhibit and available for purchase. All proceeds from this sale directly benefit our library and you can peruse the set of military books for young readers purchased with the income from last year’s Veterans Day Program.

Our program concluded with some light refreshments and 1940s music and with the presentation of a specially commissioned cloisonné St. James pin to each of our veterans. We all agreed to do this again next year.

