

CCC LEGACY CHAPTER 123 NEWSLETTER

3412 Pleasant Run Road, Irving, Texas 75062

April 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- Larka Tetens, [info later], 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.

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**WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES:** Troy & Wanda Jones, Everman, TX, 04/14 [#46].

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY:** Willie Adair, New Boston, TX, 04/20; James Pixler, Fort Worth, TX, 04/11; and Truman Pixler, Aledo, TX, 04/16.

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**MINUTES OF MEETING OF CCC LEGACY CHAPTER 123, ON SATURDAY, April 13, 2013.** Weather: Clear, Temp 72°, Attendance: 10.

Meeting called to order by President Pixler at 11:04 AM. He welcomed everyone to the meeting for April, 2013. The invocation was offered by member, Steve Porter. The pledges to our flags were lead by Sgt-at-Arms, Troy Jones.

Pixler reminded those in attendance of our purpose, that being continuing education of the Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942, and the CCC Legacy.

Those in attendance had received the newsletter with the minutes from the March meeting, a motion to accept as written by Tony Rodriguez, 2<sup>nd</sup>, Troy Jones, motion passed.

A written financial report with the current status was offered by Pixler. Motion to accept as written, by Troy Jones, 2<sup>nd</sup>, Larkin Dilbeck, motion carried.

Sick call was reported by the phone committee and the members present. Bill Stallings shared he had talked to

G.C. Murray and shared he was still on dialysis 3 times a week; shared that he was in the CCC at Pueblo, Colorado as a night watchman, and time spent at White Rock Lake. Jack Bragg is feeling better. Shared information on Ernest Hubbard being moved to the rehabilitation center where his first solid meal in a number of days was chicken fried steak. He is getting a little better. Jim Rau mentioned Joe Holley of the Houston Chronicle was in attendance at the FWNC&R on 30 March, 2013, with an article of the event to be published, possibly on 14 April, 2013. Steve Wingo had a runny nose and was not able to play BINGO. We do hope he gets over that.

Jim Rau shared about Merle and Evelyn Timblin. She had eye surgery and is recovering. Merle did not want to leave her alone to attend the meeting. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all of our members. Bill McKee's phone number in Abilene, Texas, is 325-701-7208. He also shared of Mayan sculptures on display at the Kimball Museum in Fort Worth. Jim shared Ernest had been moved to Stonegate Rehabilitation Center on Hulen, and Helene's son and granddaughter were in town to help.

Old business was next with the Memory Pavers of our past members Al Clement, Curtis Greer, and Jim Lyde should be in place at the dedication of the Wall of Memories in May, 2013.

Under new business, a debrief of the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event at the FWNC&R was shared with Jim Rau thanking the Friends of the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge. Larkin Dilbeck, "CCC Boy," shared his personal thanks to all who helped make the event a success. Three Honorary Life memberships were passed by the chapter for.....

During Program/Guests, a partial pictorial presentation of the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event at FWNC&R; with Palo Duro Canyon State Park being shared while enjoying lunch.

Pass the Can/drawing was next with Wanda Jones winning the door prize and requested it go for 2013 membership dues. It will be done.

The blessing was given by Steve Porter, followed by a motion to adjourn by Tony Rodriguez, 2<sup>nd</sup> Bill Stallings, motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 12:15 PM. Our May meeting is 11 May, 2013. The chapter will be represented at "Buffalo Boogie" on that date. More to follow.

A wonderful meal was shared by all who attended.

Respectfully submitted for,  
Secretary/Treasurer,  
Mike Pixler, President  
CCC Legacy Chapter 123

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**The President's Corner, 13 April, 2013**

**The subject of this corner is: You can't do it alone.**

You know you can't do it, alone. I've heard it said, it takes a village to raise a child. At least on "Dharma & Gregg" that's what was said. No point. I do know it takes volunteers and a huge amount of effort by all to make events such as the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, CCC Day at the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge a success. People doing what people do every day. That is helping other people. Some are strong on this subject, this subject, no so much. Once the ball gets rolling the people seem to seek one another out and take care of the issue at hand. There are a few that are self proclaimed "leaders" but those just guide and check. But then again, someone has to. The event at the FWNC&R was outstanding! As each step was taken, you could see and feel the help just

kept on coming. The people/village raising the child – that was the event. If something was missed and, trust me, there was a lot of missing, the village caught it, and we continued to move forward.

Then there is the money. I don't like to worry about money, but I know of nothing one can do that does not come back to the money. Is it important? You bet it is. Fortunately the event happened because of the support from the village. The chapter could not have done it alone. You can't do it alone. Thank you.

Hey! How about those scouts? Thank you to Troop 134; nothing but praise from the visitors. As escorts and the "Honor Guard," you were tops. The troop demonstrated the spirit of scouting to the maxx, way to go! Cindy, our meal was great. Many want the recipe for your macaroni salad. The cookies were good too.

I'm so far behind in thank yous and letters, I may never catch up. I'm not going to name everyone who helped, mainly because I have "sometimers" sometimes I remember, sometimes I don't. So, I'm going to take the easier way and just say THANK YOU to all who had a part in the event for your help. You can't do it alone. Next chapter meeting, is 11 May, 2013, and the Buffalo Boogie, 2013. Hope to see you there.

## THANK YOU.

Yours in Service,

Mike Pixler, President  
CCC Legacy Chapter 123

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### REPORT ON OUR MEMBERS

Ernest Hubbard recently spent time in the hospital due to weakness apparently caused by internal bleeding from a stomach ulcer. He was given a number of blood transfusions which proved to be very helpful. He was on a liquid diet for some time. Recently he was transferred to a rehab hospital in Fort Worth. He likes the way he has been treated there, and also likes his doctor. About a week ago he had his first solid food in a while; it was a chicken fried steak with potatoes which he really enjoyed. Helene tells us that his doctor is pleased with his progress, but for now, Ernest does not care to have visitors nor phone calls because they tend to tire him out. Let's keep them both in our prayers.

We checked with Dennis Greer of Dripping Springs, TX, son of Curtis & LaVaughn, to see if family members Kelly Nelson and Nell Nelson of West, Texas, were affected by the recent tragedy in West. Dennis told us that they live in the section of town that is on the west side of Interstate 35, and the explosion and fires occurred in the downtown area on the east side of the Interstate, so their homes are ok. They surely had friends that were impacted severely by the event, so we need to keep the people of this tight-knit community in our thoughts and prayers. Dennis also told us that his mother, LaVaughn, is doing as well as can be expected. Someone from Hospice Care comes and reads the Bible to her which she enjoys.

We recently talked with Jack Bragg, our Poet Laureate, and he wanted us to know that recently he was honored by receiving his 50 year Masonic Lodge Pin, and he is a Knights Templar. He told us of his father's work in construction. He drove a team of horses and a wagon bringing loads of brick to help build the original Lake

Dallas Dam for the city's water supply. This was in 1927. Later a larger dam was built, and the lake is now known as Lake Lewisville.

We had a good conversation with G.C. Murray recently, and he is still doing dialysis three days a week.

Fortunately he and his wife do not have to leave home as early as they had been. He reminded us of his good experiences while in the CCC in his camp outside Pueblo, Colorado. He was the night watchman there, and later, when he came back to Texas, worked at White Rock Lake in Dallas as an assistant education instructor. He remembers when he left the Colorado camp, the Army lieutenant in charge told him that after he was home for two weeks, that he would wish he were back in camp. G.C. says that is exactly the way it was for him!

The other day we attended the meeting of the Arlington Rotary Club and heard member Larka Tetens, daughter of member Larkin Dilbeck, give a presentation of her on-going project of establishing a working library for the young Mayan children of a small village on the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico. She makes the journey down there several times a year, each time taking boxes and boxes of books that are written in Spanish and Mayan. This is so important because the children are taught in Spanish but until now, there was no Mayan translation for them. She has also been given many toys for them to play with, and the children do enjoy them, but they will immediately put the toy down if you hand them a book. That is a real treasure for them.

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### **OUR CELEBRATION OF THE 80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE CCC**

We must congratulate our President Mike Pixler for his long term planning and hard work done to make our 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the CCC held at the FWNC&R this past March 30, such a success. When it started raining pretty hard late that Friday night, we all did a collective, "Uh-Oh!" Then when we pulled into the park that Saturday morning with the sun shining brightly onto a freshly clean landscape of new green growth, and a nice size crowd began showing up, everything just fell into place. As Mike says above, the Scout Troup 134 got us started smartly, and the program progressed smoothly there in the outdoor area of the Hardwicke Center, and then inside to our "Ask a CCC Boy" portion, all seemed to enjoy the event greatly. Mike was greatly helped by the hard work and many hours put in by Suzanne Tuttle, Director of the Nature Center, Dr. Rick Shepherd, Head of the Friends of the Nature Center, and his wife, Karen [both new members of Chapter 123!], Judy and Cam Coberly [also recent new members!], and Dale Roberts, also of the Friends. We also thank members Pat Mann and Marcia Doherty who provided bus and car transportation to and from the event and Pat took us on our afternoon tour of the Park; Jim Rau was the able leader of the "Ask a CCC Boy" part of the celebration; and we mustn't forget our "Boys" who were the stars of the event: Walter Atwood [who came all the way from Jacksonville, FL], Larkin Dilbeck, and Merle Timblin [who also served as Co-Master of Ceremonies]. Ernest Hubbard provided a neat picture of him in his CCC uniform in Georgia and a wide photograph of his camp with all buildings labeled. Janelle Taylor of Texas Parks & Wildlife brought large displays of what the CCC did for the Texas State Park System.

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### **THE 80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION AT PALO DURO CANYON STATE PARK**

Just a week after our own celebration, our Chapter 123 was invited to be a part of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's own celebration of the CCC 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Janelle Taylor of TPWD almost single-handedly organized the three day event of April 5-7 at Palo Duro Canyon SP. The weather proved to be just right, with just a "gentle" West Texas breeze blowing some of the time! Janelle had hoped that maybe eight CCC "Boys" could

come, but only 17 showed up! So with that kind of start, it could not be anything but a great event. It was opened by a Meet-and-Greet Friday evening with a great outdoor meal served down at the base of the canyon. We got to meet for the first time Chapter 123 members Frank Borello of Alvin, TX, G.M. [Boots] Brice of

Oakwood, TX, and Claude Tyler of Blossom, TX. We had talked with these gentlemen over the phone several times, but had never met face to face. We got to renew acquaintances with members James Garner of San Antonio, TX and Walter Atwood [you can't keep him away from any CCC event!]. It was like "old home week." The next day the meeting continued at the new beautifully designed Pavilion down in the canyon. Pres. Pixler had a Chapter 123 Booth set up in the parking lot and we had many visitors to it. Suzanne Tuttle and Dr. Rick and Karen Shepherd brought a display of the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge also. There was an interesting display of the little known work that the CCC Boys did in the National Forests of East Texas. We got to meet "Boys" Reno Schubert of San Antonio, TX, Jack Vaughn of Arlington, TX, and Adrian White of the Metropolis of Dime Box, TX, all of which Pres. Mike signed up as new members of Chapter 123! We also got to visit with "Boys" Wayne Brooks, Lindsay Passmore, Juan Lujan, Don Page, Don Miller, Otis Hart, and Dan McGraw. Dan was born in the ghost town of Thurber, Texas. Juan Lujan and our own Claude Tyler are known movie stars, having been seen in the Ken Burns Production on the National Parks. The Texas Conservation Corps based out of Austin, TX, did demonstrations of the type of work the CCC did at Palo Duro Canyon and other state parks; works which they are proudly continuing. A BBQ dinner was served that Saturday evening, and Walter Atwood led the swearing in ceremony for the Texas Conservation Corps. We congratulate Janelle Taylor and say a hearty "Well-Done" for bringing this well planned celebration off without a hitch!

We mustn't forget the appearance of one other "star" to this occasion. Someone drove a genuine 1939 Chevrolet CCC truck to the event, complete with a 1939 CCC license plate. The truck is driven daily!

#### **WE RESUME OUR STORY OF LARKIN DILBECK**

In May of 1945 Larkin's unit had moved up to the North Sea area, and on the 5<sup>th</sup> of May they ceased fighting; the war was officially over on 8 May, 1945. Soon after, one morning when the captain came by, Larkin told him that he couldn't straighten up because his stomach was hurting so. The captain called a jeep in and had Larkin carried about 20 miles over rough roads back to a field hospital; he feeling every bump in pain. It proved to be appendicitis, and three doctors worked on him and removed his appendix. They used a local anesthetic on him, and he was aware of everything going on. After a few days of recovery, they loaded him on a C-47 [his first time on a plane] and flew him to Paris to a large hospital with all kinds of war-injured GIs, many in very bad shape. Larkin tells of the young man in the hospital bed next to him that had been in a German POW camp, and was suffering from severe frostbite in both legs. They were an ugly blue color, and when they got his infection under control, they were going to amputate both legs below the knee. To this day, Larkin regrets not learning this young man's name or where he was from.

Soon Larkin was feeling much stronger, and could freely move about. Each morning after breakfast, those able, were required to meet in the central courtyard of the hospital [a large building covering a full city block] to do a program of exercises. Once done, they were free to come and go as they wished. So, everyday Larkin would take off to see the sights of Paris, come back in the early evening for chow, and take off again because it was still light at 9:00 PM. He learned the Paris Underground, which was free to GIs, and traveled all over the city. He was there at the hospital over a month.

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One day Larkin was passing through one of the rooms in the hospital; one he had not been in before, when he heard his name called. He turned around, and it was his brother! Alvin, an older brother, also in the Army, but stationed in southern Germany, had heard from their folks at home that Larkin was in that hospital in Paris.

Larkin is still amazed that the brother walked into that same room as he did, at the same time. They had a good visit.

Larkin kept thinking that he would be sent back to his unit because he was basically fully recovered. Instead, he was sent to one of the Cigarette Camps that had been established near the French port of Le Havre. He would stay in one for awhile; then be sent to another one. They weren't restricted to stay in them, but could freely roam around in the day time.

These "Cigarette Camps" were originally set up as separate staging areas for newly arriving troops to the European Theater to be housed until they were sent to the various units in France and later Germany. At first they were crude tent camps in muddy fields with virtually no amenities, but as they grew, conditions gradually improved. There were nine of them, all named for different brands of cigarettes, and some, such as Camp Lucky Strike were huge. They were named such because it was something that GIs could immediately relate to, and at the same time, the Germans could not figure out exactly where the camps were. As the War in Europe began drawing to a close, the camps were turned around as processing centers for troops to return home to be discharged or be processed to the War in the Pacific. *This info is condensed from Wikipedia on the Internet.*

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There was usually a USO set up in a town near the camps where you could get coffee and doughnuts, and often someone had a musical instrument for entertainment. Larkin asked personnel in the camps if they knew where his unit was, but they didn't know any more than he did. He eventually was sent back to his unit; still up in northern Germany near the North Sea. Here Larkin obtained a nine day pass to go see his brother. He got a Red Cross road map with all the route numbers; got a mess kit, canteen, and blanket roll; and started hitch hiking. There was a lot of Army traffic, so he would get a jeep ride for a while, later a truck would pick him up, and so on. It was in late afternoon of his first day, when two GIs in a truck stopped and told him to get in the back. After a while and unknown to Larkin, the truck turned off on a side road to their camp. When they stopped and Larkin got out, they said, "Oh no, we forgot about you being in the back!" Larkin decided to spend the night there, and threw his blanket down next to a building. About then a jeep drove up, and an officer got out and went into the building, apparently officers' quarters. The jeep driver told Larkin to get in and go back to his own camp with him. He did, and he was given a cot and bunked with three other GIs in their room. The next morning they took him to breakfast, and then he hit the road again; this time on the right road. Later that day he located his brother's camp near a small town. He was told that his brother's unit was out in the woods nearby on bivouac. One of the GIs told him that he was going to that area, so they got in a jeep and headed that way. When they got to this camp, Larkin started walking up the road, when he runs into his brother walking down the road. His brother was totally surprised; he had no idea Larkin was coming and they had not communicated since the hospital meeting in Paris. Alvin was in an artillery outfit, and his job had been a fairly dangerous one. He was in charge of stringing communication wire from the front lines back to their artillery base.

Larkin got to spend a week with his brother and became good friends with the guys there, including the lieutenant in charge of their unit; who proved to be from Glover, Oklahoma, where Larkin was born. The lieutenant told Larkin when we get home, let's go fishing in the Glover River. Larkin and his brother took walks in the countryside taking pictures. Once they came upon a German family digging potatoes. They had a horse

and a big steer hooked up together pulling a plow to dig up the potatoes. The man was behind the plow, and the women were picking them up.

When his leave was up, Larkin hitch hiked back to his camp. At one time he got a ride with two Germans who figured Larkin could help them get some petrol. Larkin convinced them that he did not have that kind of pull, but they still allowed him to ride with them. Back at camp, there was not much to do. They did some minor training, but still had a lot of free time on their hands. Larkin signed up for some class room instructions nearby to learn a little German and took a class in forestry. They would ride horse back into the woods and try to identify the types and variety of trees there.

The night before he got his notice of being sent home, Larkin and some of his buddies went to the canteen next to their camp. Wine was about the only thing served there, so he had some red and some white wine; a little too much of each. Later when he got back to his bunk, he fell asleep before he finished undressing. His buddies had to do it for him. The next day riding in the truck heading away from camp, Larkin hung his head out the back of the truck, being more sick than drunk. His took some ribbing from his buddies over this.

They were taken to one of the Cigarette Camps again where they could be sorted out and sent to one of the ships

to take them home. Larkin wound up on the Battleship Oregon, and the voyage proved to be much easier for him than the one coming over. He was only a little queasy at times, but otherwise did not get sick. He spent most of the trip being topside on deck out in the fresh air. After landing on the East Coast, they were sent directly to St. Louis where he was discharged. He was given a train ticket to Texarkana, a bus pass to home in Mena, Arkansas, and \$300 in cash as mustering out pay.

Mena was still a tough place to find work, so Larkin and his wife moved to Texarkana, and he took a series of fairly low paying jobs mostly in grocery stores while his wife became a checker in one of them. He then got a traveling job selling crackers and cookies for Wertz Biscuit Co., out of Texarkana, calling on restaurants, grocery stores, and schools. He worked for them seven years having to drive about 100 miles per day. It was during this time that their daughter Larka was born.

Larkin decided to make a big change, and interviewed with American Airlines. They sent him to agent school in Kansas City, and when he completed the class in a month, he was hired to work in Chicago as a ticket agent at what is now Midway Airport. They found a nice place to live in Joliet, Illinois, about 30 miles south, and his wife got a job as a checker at a nearby Kroger Grocery store. In 1954 he re-located with American to Amon Carter Field, Fort Worth, Texas, and settled in Arlington. Then he went to Dallas Love Field, and finally DFW Airport, where he retired in 1980. In May of 1989, Larkin's wife died, and after being single for four years, he remarried. They were married for eleven years before his second wife died. He is now 94 and has two grandkids and two great-grandchildren.

In summing up his life, Larkin says he has been the luckiest guy around; some of it was bad luck all right; he was lost and stranded in the Arizona desert, lost on the New York City subway system, seasick all the way across the

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Atlantic, shot at and missed, had tanks shot out on either side of him, survived a direct hit on his tank, etc., etc.; but the fact that he is still around, and has a loving family, means he has been lucky indeed.

Bill Stallings

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The Civilian Conservation Corps Legacy is a non-profit organization dedicated to research, p  
education to promote better understanding of the CCC and its continuing contribution to A  
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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