

NEEDED!!! VETERANS' ORAL HISTORIES BE A PART OF HISTORY YET AGAIN

One of the missions of the aspiring Alaska Veterans Memorial Museum (AVMM) is to educate the population on persons, operations and sacrifices made in defense of our precious gift of freedom. Veterans' oral histories provide a lasting tribute and record of a serviceman or woman's service. A videotape is made of the interview and the AVMM provides one copy of the VHS tape to the veteran, along with a thank you card. Two copies remain with the AVMM to await transcription and the potential ultimate publication of a book.

The oral history team has been busy, both here in Anchorage at King Career Center with the extremely supportive help of Mr. Dan Sparkman, teacher of Radio and TV Production, and on the road with our camera and equipment, collecting Alaskan veterans' stories. We have 39 "in the can" and are looking for more. We have at least eight packages out here in Anchorage (to be done soon) and six more in the Soldotna area (hopefully mid-Oct 07). The Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 93 in Wasilla has even offered to fly Suellyn out to the villages to collect two WW II veterans' stories.

Dan Sparkman was also "point man" in preparing packages to be sent to the school districts for students to help collect oral histories as part of their Alaskan Studies unit. This will greatly increase our "reach" and our variety of stories. As Alaska is home to the most veterans of any state in the union, we have made a good start but need your help in finding veterans willing to share their stories.

As nationally we are losing 2000 WW II and Korea veterans a day, we are trying to focus on these first, but no veteran will be turned away. We often hear a veteran say "But I didn't do anything special" or "My service was boring, I saw no combat." Nothing could be further from the truth, as each serviceman or woman has a picture that together makes a beautiful photo mosaic of what service in our armed forces truly is. We have a unique brother and sisterhood unmatched by any other group in the world. As I saw on a ball cap "Freedom, to those who have served, has a taste the protected will never know." Truer words were never spoken.

Help the AVMM succeed by calling 696-4904 and requesting an oral history package today. We can help you complete the paperwork, copy your photos and documents and record, for all times, your service to our great nation. God bless America, our troops, and our veterans.