



MILITARY VETS' LIFE

V.F.W. Post 4048 Newsletter - April 2011

PURPOSE: Fraternal, Patriotic, Historical, Educational and Camaraderie



COMMANDER'S COMMENTARY

Ed Bond



It seemed like only yesterday! April 18th, 1942. America strikes back with our bold first blow against Japan! Sixty nine years ago. "The Doolittle Raid"! Some of our capital ships were still in the mud at Pearl Harbor. Japan ruled the seas throughout the Pacific, Wake Is-

land, the Phillipines, Singapore, New Guinea and more. All lost. Morale in this Country was at an all time low.

AMERICAN PLANES BOMB TOKYO were the newspaper headlines throughout the Country.

On the morning of April 18, 1942, sixteen American B-25's swooped over the Japanese homeland at treetop level. At Tokyo and four other cities, the planes climbed to 1500 feet and let go of their 500-pound bombs. Then they dropped back down again and headed for China. The raid, which was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel James Doolittle, was a total surprise. It caused considerable panic in Tokyo and left the world wondering where the land-based bombers had come from. President Roosevelt jokingly said the answer was "Shangri-La". The facts were these: the aircraft carrier Hornet, with a heavy escort, had brought the B-25's to within 700 miles of Tokyo. But early on the eighteenth, they were spotted by an enemy patrol boat; the boat was promptly sunk and the attack launched ten hours sooner than planned, and from about 150 miles farther out. As a result, most of the planes had to crash-land in China. One came down in Russia and two in Japanese territory, where three crewmen were later executed. The raid had little military importance, but it had an electrifying effect on American morale, and that alone, in early 1942, was quite important.

Preparation for the "Doolittle Raid" began on March 1 in Florida, where Air Corps pilots practiced, over and over, getting B-25's air-borne within a 750-foot run. Though none of the pilots had ever taken off from a carrier before, all sixteen got off with out a hitch despite 45 mile-an-hour winds and rough seas. Colonel Doolittle, who was then 45 and a veteran of World War I, was the first plane off. Later on a movie was made titled "Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo" honoring the event.

In 1969 Beverlee and I and our two youngest kids, were in Colorado Springs for the Pikes Peak Hill Climb. I had a

friend who was sponsored by PARKWOOD CHEVROLET in Lakewood, CA. and competing. While in the area we visited the Air Force Academy Chapel and Museum. They had a display of engraved pewter tankards and a large bottle of champagne. As the survivors of the "Doolittle Raiders" passed on, their mugs were turned upside down and the last man was to open the bottle and toast his buddies. The last pilot died this March, and only 5 mugs remain upright today.

We had nominations for Post Officers at the March meeting Elections will be held at the April meeting. Spots are open and all are encouraged to attend and vote. Thank you to all members of Post 4048 and Auxiliary for attending and participating in the meetings.

DISTRICT 2 BBQ
April 23, 2011, 11:30 AM

Seal Beach
Naval Weapons Station,
800 Seal Beach Blvd.
Bunker 33 picnic area

End of the year picnic/BBQ.
Family & friends welcome.

\$5.00 - Hamburgers, Hotdogs, Baked Beans,
Chile, and Potato or Macaroni Salad
\$1.00 Soft Drinks — \$2.00 Beer/Wine

Because of Base Security Requirements we
need to add you to our list of attendees by the
10th of April. RSVP to the Commander at
gunny@thegunnys.us or call: 714-897-8018

Driver MUST have Driver's License, current
registration and proof of insurance in
driver's name to come aboard
the Weapons Station.

