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Metro employees who served in the military joined in the annual Veterans Day celebration.
Photos by Jimmy Stroup



Metro's Military Veterans Celebrate in Style at Division 9

- Thoughts for this day: ["What the Flag Means to Me"](#) an essay by Alexandra Lozano

By JIMMY STROUP

(Nov. 10, 2005) Employees from all walks of Metro life turned out for a Veteran's Day celebration, Thursday, at San Gabriel Valley Division 9.

The hour-long ceremony included an Air Force Color Guard, speakers and a slide show presentation honoring the military.

Division 9 Maintenance Manager John McBryan, himself a Marine Corps veteran, spearheaded the annual salute. The ceremony was doubly meaningful this year—the Marine Corps celebrates its 230th birthday on Nov. 10.

"I know you see all this Marine Corps stuff up here," he said, "and maybe we're a little prejudiced...."

Though Marine vets were most represented among the 45 or so attendees, some Navy, Army and Air Force vets showed up to celebrate,



Metro Procurement Chief Lonnie Mitchell, a retired U.S. Navy captain, speaks about the meaning of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

too.

Ceremony highlights

They included Lonnie Mitchell, a retired U.S. Navy captain, now Metro executive officer of Procurement and Material Management, who spoke about the significance of the servicemen who have guarded the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier continuously since 1930.

“My remarks are not about the Tomb itself,” he said, “but the soldiers who guard it. They represent us all.”

Another feature was an essay titled “What the Flag Means to Me” written by Alexandra Lozano and read by her uncle, Division 2 Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Alfred Lozano.

Written in 1997, Lozano won first prize in the student essay contest at her school, Vine Elementary, as well as capturing top honors at the West Covina School District’s contest.

After the slide show, set to “Tears in Heaven” by Eric Clapton, McBryan cut the cake with a large cake “knife”—a Marine Corps sword—and the veterans gathered for a photo.

The Color Guard was provided by Los Angeles Air Force Base.

A U.S. Air Force color guard, led by 1st Lt. Jayson Giffen, third from left, presented the colors at the Veterans Day event. [<back to top](#)



What the Flag Means to Me

by Alexandra Lozano

The flag to me means a lot of things. To me it means daily freedom and liberty. It also means to me faith and courage that people (especially soldiers) have in the flag during a war. To me the flag means honesty and truth that everyone should have.

The flag also means to me justice, innocence, and independence. It stands also for purity and love. The flag means a whole lot of things to me. It’s a wonderful sight to see the flag on the fourth of July being raised and admired, as well as on Veteran’s Day. To me the flag seems to mean peace.

To me the flag means happiness and joy. It reminds me of all the people who sacrificed their lives for my freedom. It reminds me of all the people who fought to make my country better.

The flag reminds me to trust and care for people. People of all race, color, and sex no matter what. Yes, the flag means a lot to me. The flag reminds me of my grandfather, Alfredo Lozano, Sr. He fought during the Korean War and World War II. He earned himself two Purple Hearts. Yes, this brave soldier had courage.

When I see the stars and stripes on the flag it makes me feel proud. It makes me feel proud because I live in this country.

To me the flag means a lot more than words can say. The flag is more than just a piece of different colored cloth with stars and stripes. It is a piece of cloth honored by everyone in this country everyday.

The flag represents peace, liberty, freedom, faith, courage, love, justice, honor, purity, innocence, honesty, truth and last but not least independence. Our flag has integrity. This is what the flag means to me.

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