



Interviewing Korean War Vets Allows Saint Viator Students to 'Touch' History

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Senior Teddy Marszalek of Arlington Heights takes a picture with Robert Cunningham. Marszalek interviewed Cunningham for the book.

Saint Viator students again found themselves as published authors, as the book they compiled after interviewing Korean War veterans remains on sale at both locations of The Peoples' Bank of Arlington Heights, as well as for checkout at the Arlington Heights Memorial Library.

"Lest We Forget: Arlington Heights' Korean War Veterans," is the second book in an ongoing series, and a follow up to "Arlington Heights' Greatest Generation," which told the stories of local WWII veterans. The new book includes stories of 18 local Korean War veterans written by honor students from Saint Viator.

Senior Eileen Mallof of Arlington

Heights interviewed Roger Steingraber about his experiences, and she found the experience compelling.

"It was interesting and fun to get to know him and hear his stories about serving in Korea," said Mallof, an AP U.S. History student.

Another Arlington Heights senior, Maddie Ptacin, concurred, adding: "I got far more out of this than I thought I would. I felt like I was touching history."

Students were mentored by AP U.S. History teacher Mr. William Pirman along with the Rev. Daniel Hall, C.S.V., a veteran himself and chairman of the social studies department.

The Rev. Robert M. Egan, C.S.V., president of Saint Viator, said the intergenerational project is another example of students learning outside the classroom and of reaching out to the community.

He added that as the school continues to celebrate its 50th anniversary, school officials remain committed to offering students a rigorous education while preparing them to be active citizens in a global society.

"The students working on the first book learned so much in their time spent with the veterans," Egan said. "When the bank approached us, we jumped at the chance to participate again."

Late last month, students and veterans gathered at Arlington Heights Village Hall for the official release of the book. Illinois State Rep. David Harris, a 1966 Saint Viator graduate, joined Arlington Heights Mayor Arlene Mulder in affirming their efforts as did executives from Peoples' Bank.

"As a community, we owe it to our local veterans to express our gratitude and honor their stories," said Frank Appleby, bank president. "Working on the first book was an incredibly rewarding experience. Continuing on to another volume seemed like a natural next step."

The release of "Lest We Forget" was planned to coincide with the start of the Korean War on June 20, 1950.