

Veteran Celebrates 100th Birthday



CWO Sam Domino and his grandson Jason mark the time on his watch that begins his 100th birthday

Marine Chief Warrant Officer Sam Domino is 100 years old, July 12, 2010. This Veteran's life and career are notable in his dedication to the Marines, his country and his family.

In the Marine Corps, he served in two major conflicts, World War II and Korea, as well as stations throughout East Asia.

The son of Italian immigrants, Warrant Officer Domino was an exceptional athlete in his youth, lettering in baseball, football and track. His studies in agricultural engineering at university were interrupted when his father, a store keeper, lost everything in the great depression.

That's when he joined the Marine Corps for his first tour of duty, earning less than \$20 a month. He was to later re-enlist and make the Corps a career.

Domino was married for nearly 50 years to the love of his life, Anne. They had four children who gave them six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Proud to say he "loved the Corps," he served as a valet to Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Commander in Chief of the United States Pacific Fleet, in the early days of World War II. His tour of duty included service on the USS Augusta, a heavy artillery cruiser.

Domino served in Okinawa for five years during the occupation and sadly remembers the many marines who died there.

Warrant Officer Domino was a star baseball player for the Marine Corps — his team was Asiatic champs in 1932 — and was so talented, the Navy tried to recruit him away from the Marine Corps team.

He spent a total of 27 years in the Marine Corps, retiring in the late 1950s. After leaving the Corps, he worked for the State of Florida Department of Transportation.

Domino loved to garden and tended his orange trees, vegetables and flowers until he reached 95 years of age.

His daughter, Madeline, enjoys looking through photos of his days training at Paris Island, his tours of duty to China, the Philippines, the Panama Canal, Australia and Japan.

About her dad, she says, "Dad is truly an amazing person and a great father and husband. He is always complimentary of my mother who followed him around the country on his U.S. assignments and reared the children, many times alone.

"As a father, dad always offered guidance to his children and instilled in us the virtues of faith in God, hard work, honesty and the value of an education. We are so blessed to have dad with us on this momentous occasion. We love you dad!"



Sam Domino receives a promotion from commanding officers during World War II.

A lifetime member of the Masons, Warrant Officer Domino was saluted on the NBC Today Show on July 12. The local Veterans Affairs Medical Center will celebrate his 100th birthday with a special party in his honor.

By Hans Petersen, VA Staff Writer