

Dayton V.A. Freedom Festival

On Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 May 2015 the 101st AB 502nd Living History and the Central Ohio Military Museum (COMM) set up at the Dayton, Ohio Veterans Administration. Displays included AC patches, airborne patches, D-Day items, Handie Talkie, knives, uniforms of WWII veterans, weapons, T-5 parachute, posters, 30 cal machine gun, bazooka with rocket, 60mm mortar, ammo crates, grenades and sand table. The VA was open from 11:00am to 6:00pm daily.

We were located adjacent to the museum. The Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts will put flags on the graves to honor the veterans. We will participate in formation to honor Gold Star Mothers.

Poultry Festival - Versailles, Ohio

We returned to the Poultry Parade and Festival in Versailles, Ohio on Friday June 12th, Saturday the 13th and Sunday the 14th. Displays included the sand table, a marker panel, the mortar, the camo netting and a 1942 GPW (jeep). In the tent we had a weapons area, a display of infantry equipment, airborne equipment, uniforms on shirt forms (Army, Navy, Marines and Armor), a display case (with a map and edge weapons) and much more.

Warrior Weekend

On July 11th we set up a full display for the Warrior Weekend held in Middletown, Ohio. The location was at Smith Park. The event ties in with the Balloon Festival. The veterans come from all over the United States. Sponsors foot the entire bill to treat wounded veterans to balloon rides, a ride in a WWII B-25, a Reds game, parachuting, night fishing, shooting competition and much more. We appreciate the opportunity to do a display for these men and women.



Town Center Display

Beginning September the 15th we will be setting up a display in the Town Center Museum at located at 3378 Park Street in Grove City, Ohio. We have been working on setting up the past week. We are hoping you may be able to stop in and enjoy the military displays. We will have display beginning with the Civil war to current veterans. We will be providing the display activity through December. The museum is open Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Tuesday hours are 10a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Saturday hours available by appointment, call 614-539-8762 to schedule. In the September 24th edition of the Grove City Record was an article on the museum display. The article is below.

World of Wonders

Museum opens doors for military display

By MARK DUBOVEC
THISWEEKNEWS.COM

The new exhibit at the Grove City Welcome Center & Museum is reporting for duty.

The World of Wonders exhibit, sponsored by Grove City Town Center Inc., officially opened to the public Monday, Sept. 21, and will remain on display at the center and museum, 3378 Park St., through mid-December.

This year's exhibit centers on military memorabilia such as uniforms, helmets, medals, replica weapons and other assorted gear, including K-rations.

"Hopefully, we'll have a little bit of everything," said Bob Traphagan, who contributed most of the items on display. "There's so many things you

At a glance

The World of Wonders exhibit, sponsored by Grove City Town Center Inc., will remain on display through mid-December at the Grove City Welcome Center & Museum, 3378 Park St.

can own, and I have a lot of it."

Traphagan, a Grove City resident, has been collecting military memorabilia for more than 25 years. He is also the curator of the Central Ohio Military Museum, a nonprofit organization he founded with the intent to house his collection in a permanent, physical location.

One of the goals of the World of Wonders exhibit, he said, is to stir up interest for a permanent museum in the Grove City area.

Andy Furr, executive director of the Town Center group, said the organization has talked for a couple of years about a military-themed exhibit. The Town Center has also reached out to families of local veterans and other groups for items to display.

"There's a lot of history when you talk about the military," Furr said. "We thought it was a good time to memorialize it."

The uniforms and gear on display come from a number of conflicts, ranging from World War I and World War II to Korea, Vietnam and Operation Desert Storm. Traphagan said they are looking into obtaining gear from the more recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Included with the uniforms are write-ups explaining the history of the service members who owned them. Among them are the Army uniform of the late Lee Huffman, who was a teacher and coach at Grove City High School and participated in the Battle of the Bulge

during World War II, and the Marine uniforms of Harold and Luther Crabtree, brothers who were at Iwo Jima.

Traphagan, who is also a member of the living history group 101st Airborne 502PIR Co. 3rd Battalion, said he meets a lot of veterans through the organization and hears their stories.

"You never know who you meet," Traphagan said. "Everyone has a story ... (and) I love to hear their veterans' stories."

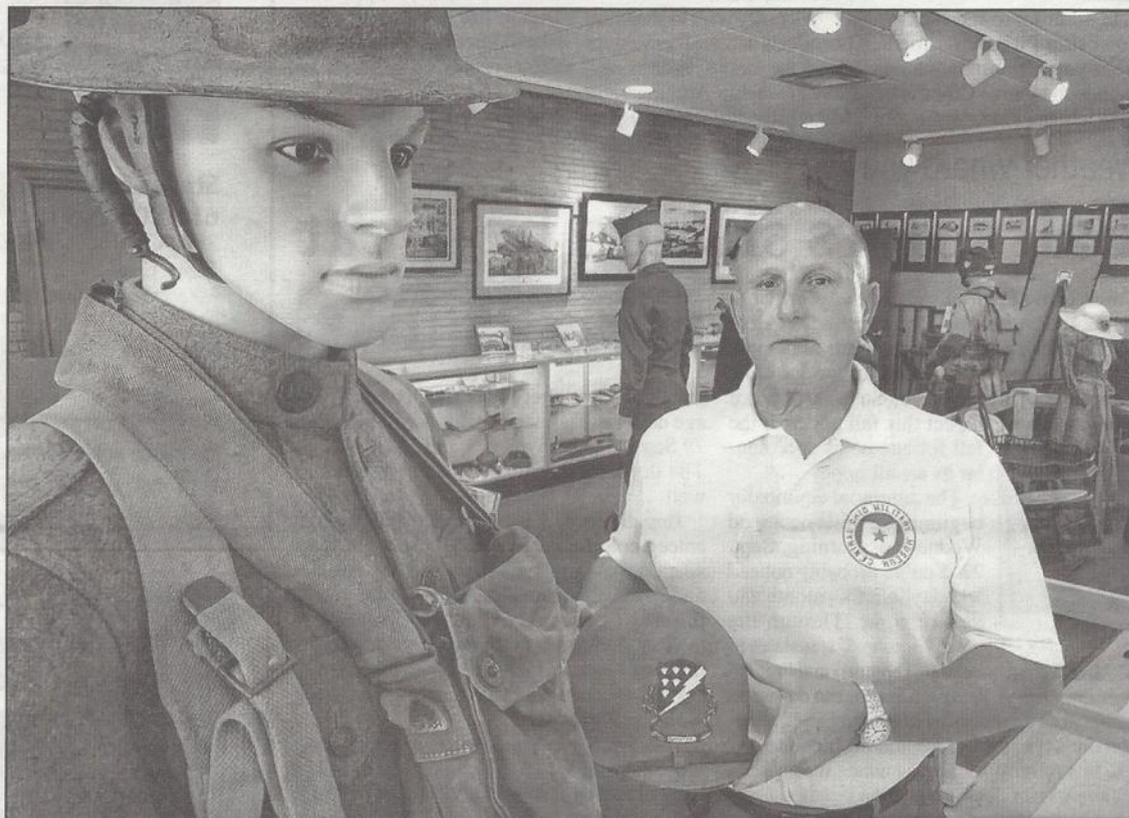
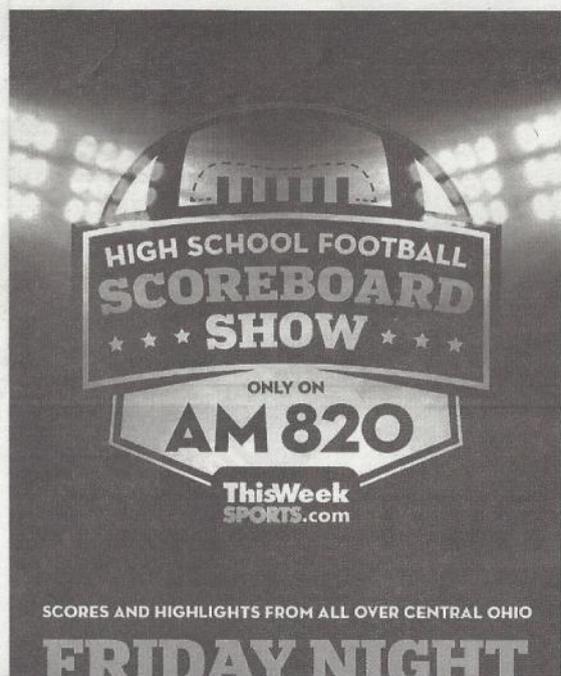
Traphagan said his interest in history stemmed from his father, a World War II veteran.

"All my dad's friends were

vets," he said. "You'd hear the stories."

During the World of Wonders exhibit, the Grove City Welcome Center & Museum will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday; and 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday. Special Saturday hours will be from 8 a.m. to noon Saturday, Sept. 26, as well as Oct. 3 and 10.

For information about the Central Ohio Military Museum, visit thecomm.org. For additional information about the exhibit, visit grovecitytown-center.org or call 614-277-3061.



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Grove City Veteran Corporal Lee R. Huffman

I interviewed Lee on 06 December 2010. I met Lee at a Lion's Club meeting in 2010 where I was giving a talk about the museum to all the members that attended. I was told about Lee prior to the meeting and was looking forward to talking with him.

Drafted: He was drafted in 1943. He was processed at Fort Hayes in Columbus, Ohio. From there he was sent to Fort Riley for basic training. Lee had two years of ROTC.

Training: After basic he went to Ft Lewis. Then he was sent to Camp White in Oregon with the 14th Cavalry Regiment (a 3 squadron mechanized unit). He was then sent to Texas for 3 months to complete his training. Training consisted of four elements: driver, assistant driver, gunner and loader. At Camp White the C.O. Captain Meadows had them take target practice with their tanks. They were one of the few units to do so.

Shipped Out: From New York to Glasgow, Scotland aboard the Queen Mary. From there they were trucked to England.

France: Lee was unable to ship over with his Unit due to a boil he developed on his hand. The British doctors would not allow him to be released for duty. So two weeks after D-Day he was shipped to France and placed in a replacement depot. He moved through four replacement depots and arrived in southern Belgium. Unbelievably he was assigned to his original Unit. This placed him in the Losheim Gap near the Ardennes. This would become the "Bulge".

Combat: The Bulge Offensive began and on 16 November 1944 his unit at 0530 hours had to fall back to a new position. As the Germans advanced his Unit became engaged in battle. A water can between Lee's legs was hit by a bullet. For three days his Unit moved against the advance of the Germans. Arriving at Poteau, Belgium the 14th was again engaged by the Germans (<http://www.museum-poteau44.be>). Lee said the American tanks were small in comparison to the German armor. There was a big tank battle. An officer ordered Lee and another soldier to recon a house up the road. The house had no windows. As they approached they could hear tanks. They could see one of their trucks. They crawled along the road in a ditch. They got in the truck and returned to their area. Two soldiers approached and thanked them for bringing the truck back. Lee was unaware they abandoned the truck full of explosives. During the action the Americans moved their vehicles, but due to cold weather they began to break down. Lee's unit arrived in the small town of Villers-L'Éveque, Belgium on 25 December 1944. There were two roads. One was dirt and the other gravel. They moved on to Alken. From Alken they pushed on to the Rhine River. They arrived two days after the bridge at Remagen was taken on 9 March 1945. They moved down the east bank of the Rhine. They crossed the Rhine on a pontoon bridge to the Ruhr Valley region. The war was nearing an end as it was now April. They were near Nuremberg when the German's surrendered. Lee remembered his Commanding Officer Captain Clinton "Pappy" Meadows. He was from Arkansas. He played football and was in ROTC at the university. He received a teaching degree. Eventually he was sent to the South Pacific obtaining the rank of Lt. Colonel. Lee's vehicle was an M-8 with a 75mm Howitzer. It had an open turret and was mounted on a Sherman chassis.

Occupation: We played baseball and liberated a large winery.

Return: Lee came home in 1945. He had two weeks leave and then went to Camp Gruber, Oklahoma (<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/C/CA022.html>). This is where we had training for the invasion of Japan. He got married at Camp Gruber. He met his wife when I was on furlough in Columbus, Ohio. We went roller skating at Smith's. I got lots of letters, as many as 5 a day. My Dad owned a grocery store, so lots of people knew me. Lee was a 50-year member of the Lion's Club and a Grove City High School coach.

Discharged: He was discharged in 1945. His ending rank was Corporal.

Citations: Occupation of Germany, European Theatre of Operations w/three battle stars, American Theatre, Good Conduct Medal and WWII Victory Medal.

Born: 21 November 1921 in Clintonville, Ohio

Passed: 28 April 2015 in Grove City, Ohio