

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution Proudly Honors



Patriot of the Month
May 2017



Charles Stockhausen

United States Marine Corps

Sponsored by:
Webster Groves
Chapter

Charlie Stockhausen, a member of the 1st and 5th Marine Divisions is one of the surviving members of the Chosin Frozen, or Chosin Few, from the Korean War, who was in Iwo Jima when the Marines raised the American flag.

Charlie was born on his family's farm. He enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in St. Louis, Missouri in September 1943. He was initially sent to San Diego, California, for basic training. After basic training, he was sent to Iwo Jima/Mt. Suribachi, Korea.

On his first night in Iwo Jima, he was on airstrip #1 as enemy artillery was firing at Mt. Suribachi. Later on February 23, 1945, he knew some fellow Marines were going to attempt to go to the top of Mt. Suribachi but the consensus was they would never make it. However, a fellow Marine said "look at the mountain." They could see Old Glory flying on the island of Iwo Jima. The battle was not over but it was a good start and a BIG morale booster. Iwo Jima was deemed essential to the United States war effort because Japanese fighter planes were taking off from the island and intercepting American bomber planes.

Charlie went back to Camp Tarawa, Hawaii where one of the Navajo "code talkers" was with his unit. On April 1, 1945, Easter morning, he was on his way back from Iwo Jima when Okinawa was invaded. His unit was supposed to go there but they were "too shot up" so they went back to Camp Tarawa. They were issued gas masks to use when they were preparing to invade Japan, but due to the dropping of the atomic bomb on August 6, 1945, they did not have to invade Japan.



He was sent to Pusan, on the southern edge of Korea, and was stationed north of the 38th parallel in Korea. On September 15, 1950, he made the landing at Inchon, close to the capital, of Korea, which is Seoul. The landing was hard because it was high tide, about 30 feet high, but the Marines landed. They were complimented by General MacArthur. The Marines were to cut across to the coast while the Army came from the south and trapped the Koreans. It was bitterly cold and the Marines did not have any cold weather gear. His unit, the 5th, went up the southern end of the Chosin Reservoir and the 7th Marine Division went up the other side. He has never mentioned anything about this attack. The armed forces of Marines and the Army were about 30,000 strong; however, they were encircled by about 120,000 Chinese soldiers. But the Marines and Army were victorious!

As they moved further north, they started taking Chinese prisoners who were high on drugs and poorly dressed. Intelligence told them they were cut off by 6-10 divisions. On the way down from the Chosin Reservoir (elevation about 4,000 feet) snow was on the ground with temperatures ranging to a low of 20 degrees below zero! Enemy troops were on both sides. His unit flushed out a company of Chinese who started shooting at them. The Marines finally were evacuated by all available ships.

Upon returning from the 38th Parallel, most of his unit was split up. Charlie was a jeep driver who had to take orders out every night. He always drove "blackout" (without lights) and had two partners with shotguns.

Charlie was finally sent back to the states and was discharged in July 1952. His awards and medals include: Presidential Unit Citation, America Campaign, Navy Occupation Service w/5 stars, Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation, Marine Corps Reserve-World War II.

To this day, he still has good and bad memories of Iwo Jima and the Chosin Reservoir. He still takes cover when fireworks are going off.

Charlie speaks at various schools in his local school district throughout the year regarding his military experience. He participates in several military organizations. He is a Past President of his local American Legion Post. Four times a year, he is a guest speaker at The Focus Marine Foundation, an organization that helps soldiers deal with post-traumatic stress disorder and other issues relating to war. His name is engraved on the Korean War Memorial in St. Louis, Missouri.

Charlie and his wife have five children and eight grandchildren.

Webster Groves Daughters are very proud and honored to recognize Charles Stockhausen as Patriot of the Month for his dedicated patriotism and service to our great nation.