

# Veterans Day Presentation

## Carrying on the Veterans Day Family Tradition

The last time Mark Seeba saw his father, Walter Seeba, smile was when he showed the 91-year-old Korean War veteran a news clip about his grandson – and Mark’s nephew – U.S. Navy Lieutenant Commander Ryan Seeba giving a Veterans Day presentation to Mark’s Washington Elementary fourth grade class last year.

Walt was too sick to say anything, but Mark knew his father was happy to see Ryan carrying on his tradition. For about 20 years, Walt visited his son’s class to talk to students about his military service. The Korean War veteran showed wartime and military memorabilia and gave a presentation about his experience as a soldier.

With Walt in poor health last year, Ryan stepped in to give a presentation via Zoom and began his own new tradition. Walt died two days after Veterans Day last year on November 13, 2020.



*Walter Seeba gives a Veterans Day presentation to his son, Mark Seeba's, fourth grade class.*



*U.S. Navy Lieutenant Commander Ryan Seeba*

“Ryan’s dad – my brother Jim – passed away a year before my dad,” Mark Seeba said. “I miss them both every day. (Ryan’s presentation) keeps their memories alive.”

Last year when Mark reached out to Ryan to ask him to present to his class, his nephew accepted the offer enthusiastically.

“There was no hesitation,” Mark said. “He said ‘Absolutely.’”

Ryan returned this year to give another Zoom presentation on the day before Veterans Day on November 10. For Ryan, stationed in Korea, it was actually 5 a.m. on Veterans Day.

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# Veterans Day Presentation, continued

The Lieutenant Commander spoke with the kids about his 18 years of military service and all of the places he has lived including Guam, Hawaii, and Korea. He showed the students photos of the ships he's been on, including the USS San Francisco, the George HW Bush, and the Chung Hoon.

Mark says the students enjoyed the pictures of the ships – they thought the aircraft carrier was particularly cool – and thought the fact that he got to live in Hawaii was neat.

“(The importance of the presentation is) to never take the freedoms we have for granted,” Mark said. “And that our freedoms are provided for us by men and women who risk or have given their lives.”

Having Ryan, an active member of the Navy, present to his class brings a new perspective to the annual presentation. While having Walter, who led 200 men as a commander in the Korean War, reminded his students of the sacrifices of older generations, having a younger presenter helps to make it more real and modern for them.

“I think Ryan helps them connect with people in their lives that are currently serving,” Mark said. “Whereas, my dad may remind them of a grandparent that served.”

While Ryan and Walter may give the students a different perspective in their presentations, their military paths crossed in a major way.

“I just think it is special that my dad served a year in Korea and that not only is Ryan stationed there now, but his wife is Korean and obviously his three children are half-Korean as well.”

Lieutenant Commander Seeba asked the students to give a special Veterans Day message to veterans and those people in their lives who are currently serving or to the veterans they may know.

“He asked them to thank a veteran that they maybe know and to hopefully appreciate the sacrifices they have made.”



*Walter Seeba and his company receive a Presidential Citation.*

