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Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Hold Spring Luncheon

By Betty Thomas

Thirteen years ago in April 1999, the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Florida Southeast Chapter (62), held their first ever luncheon/meeting at the 391st Bomb Group Restaurant that was located at the south side of the Palm Beach International Airport on Southern Blvd. in West Palm Beach. The restaurant had a WWII U.S. Army Air Force theme. There had to be at least 25 diners to rent the room. There were 34.

The next meeting in December, 1999, "The Christmas We Never Had," had to be held at the Hilton Hotel, Palm Beach Airport, due to the rapid growth of the Chapter.

This was due to the work of one man, George Fisher, with the help of his wife Annette. The Chapter became the fastest growing group in the U.S. even as the number of veterans of WWII are dwindling in huge numbers.

"I got a letter from George Fisher," explains Chapter Commander Brig. Gen. Al Irzyk (ret), "saying that he wanted to form a Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Chapter in Palm Beach County, but he needed signatures and



Photo by Jimmy Shirley

State Senator Maria Sachs with George Fisher, Pres. & founder of the Chapter.

would I agree to sign the petition. I did," said Irzyk. The rest is history.

This Chapter meets twice a year for their "Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge" gala/luncheon in December and again in the Spring, in April.

The next meeting will be on the 68th anniversary of the Battle, Sunday, December 16th, 2012.

Keynote speaker for Sunday's meeting was State Senator Maria Sachs, a true friend of all veterans. She has introduced and co-sponsored many bills to benefit veterans. In fact, she said she has not served on any other committees as State Senator so she can put all her efforts towards veterans issues.

Later in the program,

Charles Dykes, a National Service Officer with the Military Order of the Purple Heart, detailed the claims process. He reminded the audience that he is always at the VA Hospital to assist veterans in making their claims.

For information about the VBOB Chapter, please call George Fisher at (561) 585-7086.