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War Comes Home

By Laurie Snyder



From Nov. 28 to Dec. 3, 1950, members of the United States Marine Corps' 5th and 7th regiments fought through twice their number of Communist Chinese forces for 15 miles to Hagaru-ri on the southern tip of Korea's Chosin Reservoir, where they regrouped for an even more heroic 40-mile fight down mountain trails to the sea. A significant number of the exhausted Marines like those shown in this Nov. 29 photo lost fingers, hands or feet to severe frostbite. Many also still suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Source: United States Marine Corps History Division

the Korean War and those who lived it.

Then on Tuesday, Dec. 2, Lamorindans will hear from Purple Heart and dual Bronze Star recipient, Luis Carlos Montalván, the former U.S. Army captain who has been educating the nation about the life-changing healing that has been happening to veterans when paired with service dogs. He appeared on the Late Show with David Letterman in 2011 to discuss his book, "Until Tuesday: A Wounded Warrior and the Golden Retriever Who Saved Him," a New York Times bestseller. Telling Letterman that it can take as much as \$25,000 to train just one service dog, he observed that his own dog, Tuesday, "brightens my days and calms my nights." Montalván developed post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after suffering a traumatic brain injury (TBI) and being stabbed while on duty at a U.S. Army outpost in Al-Waleed, Iraq - 300 miles from Baghdad and a lifetime away from the comforts of home.

The event with Montalván, which is not suitable for children under the age of 13, will begin at 7 p.m. at the Lafayette Library Community Hall, and is being presented in partnership with Cal Humanities and the California Center for the Book. It is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Lamorindans privileged to catch the screening or lecture will never look at the American flag the same way again. Copies of "Until Tuesday" are available at the Orinda, Lafayette and Moraga

They are our dads, our uncles, our grandpas, our sisters, our neighbors. Quiet, reserved men and women tossing off occasional references to time spent in the Army, Navy or Marines. No big deal. They went off to war, did their duty and returned home to start careers and families. A shoulder shrug usually ends the conversation, leaving Lamorindans realizing decades later that they never learned the details of what happened to friends and family at Normandy, Chosin, Khe Sanh, or Fallujah - and how they survived.

Soldiers have kept to themselves since first suffering Soldiers' Heart at Antietam during the Civil War. But now, they need no longer agonize in silence and anonymity. Thanks to 2014's blockbuster California Reads event, Lamorindans are being given an unprecedented chance to have the critical conversations they need to have with loved ones before they pass on, taking their untold stories with them.

The program kicks off in Lamorinda at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 12 at the Orinda Theatre when the library presents "Chosin," the acclaimed documentary which chronicles the courage of "the Chosin few" - the vastly outnumbered men who helped stop Communist Chinese forces from capturing South Korea while saving 100,000 Korean refugees. An unflinching look at the heartbreaking suffering and incredible heroism of a bunch of regular Joes, the film is guaranteed to spark dialogue between those who have only read about

libraries. For more information about War Comes Home and its related events, contact your local librarian.

America's National Day of Listening (<http://diy.storycorps.org/>) is Nov. 28; sit down with your family, friends and neighbors and start recording their stories. Your great-great-grandchildren will thank you.

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