

LOCAL

CALENDAR

Memories

FROM 1C

The unit suffered heavy losses at the Battle of Midway and the months-long siege at Guadalcanal, but they kept fighting until their very last plane was shot from the sky.

"I don't mind saying it was a really tough experience," Hanson said.

The author, Robert Mrazek, a former U.S. representative from New York, interviewed Hanson several times while researching the book.

Mrazek said his goal was to look deeper than battle strategies and outcomes and delve into the backgrounds and personalities of the men who fought a generation ago.

"I always wondered who were these men and why did they do what they did? What was the impact of it, and what was the cost on their families?" Mrazek said.

After receiving a copy of the book, Hanson said that those personal details make all the difference.

"I think it's fantastic. It really restores my memory of those days," Hanson said. "It reminds me of all the close calls we had."

Brings back memories

It was more than 60 years ago. Hanson was 25 when he joined the Navy and became a torpedo dive bomber pilot flying Grumman TBF Avengers over the Pacific Ocean.

Despite the years that have passed, Hanson still remembers the grim reality of war.

Sitting at his kitchen table, he told stories about heavy losses; about squadron mates who flew away never to return; about being shot down over the Pacific and swimming away from his wrecked plane, only to realize that it sank with a man still inside.

"It's all in that book," Hanson said, pausing

briefly before launching into another story.

Making history

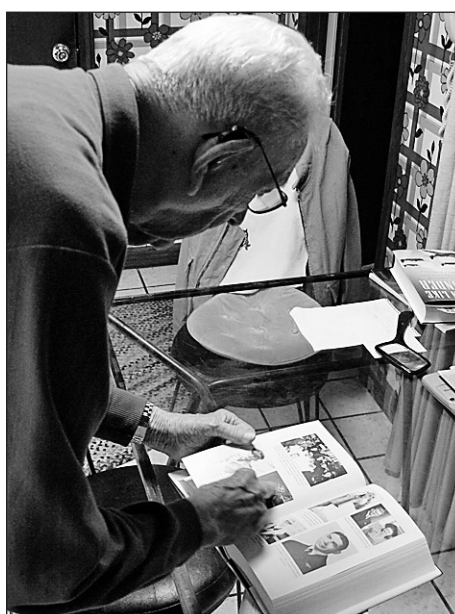
"I didn't feel like I'd make it back alive," Hanson said. "After the battle of Midway, I was pretty convinced I wouldn't make it back to the States."

Hanson did make it back, but not before earning two Navy Crosses and three Air Medals for his bravery in combat.

He stayed in the Navy and retired as a captain in 1966. In his final days in the service, he worked with Adm. John S. McCain Jr., the father of the 2008 Republican presidential candidate.

In 1978, he moved to Pensacola. And today, he has a book to add to the wall of pictures, medals and memories from his time in the Navy.

"I thought it was a great project," Hanson said. "I knew it would be a good story, and I believe that this will go down as one of the



Travis Griggs/tgriggs@pnj.com

Gene Hanson, 91, looks through a copy of "A Dawn Like Thunder," in his north Pensacola home. Hanson was featured in the book for his service as a torpedo bomber pilot in World War II.

classics of World War II." Mrazek said that one common trait he discovered while interviewing World War II veterans for the book, Hanson included, was that they did incredible things in service of their country but never

felt like they did anything extraordinary. "They just feel like they did their job," Mrazek said. "If you talk to Gene, you'll see, he's so self-deprecating. ... Sometimes I just wanted to say, 'You are my hero, Gene.'"

United Way applauds 'Spirit of Giving' winners

Earlier this month, United Way of Escambia County reported our projected fall campaign fundraising total of \$2.29 million. The community came together and made this campaign a success, despite the challenging economic climate affecting all of us.

However, the needs are greater than ever. United Way is committed to working harder than ever to raise resources that can reduce poverty, improve people's health, create opportunities for children, and ease suffering of those facing hardships, many for the first time.

There is still time to help. Please visit our Web site — www.unitedwayescambia.org — to give online and find other ways to help.

Our Victory Celebration, sponsored by Sacred Heart Health System and Bank of America, allowed us to recognize and thank campaign volunteers and the

hundreds of companies, schools and organizations that worked so hard to raise needed funds for our community.

The Spirit of Giving winners, chosen based on companies that completed an entry form, exemplify the good work that can be accomplished when a team comes together.

United Way wishes to thank and congratulate the following winners. Not only were these campaigns a major portion of the dollars raised, each boasted a high level of employee participation which reflects each orga-

nization's commitment to giving back to the community.

■ **Under 40 Employees Division:** Southern Scrap Co.; honorable mentions: Catholic Charities of Northwest Florida and Hobart Food Retail.

■ **40-99 Employees:** Community Drug & Alcohol; honorable mentions: Emmanuel Sheppard and Condon, and Bullock Tice Associates.

■ **100-399 Employees:** Exxon Mobil; honorable mentions: Gulf Winds Federal Credit Union and Northwest Florida Blood Center

■ **400-plus Employees:** Regions; honorable mention: Navy Federal Credit Union.

■ **Elementary School Division:** Blue Angels Elementary School.

■ **Middle School Division:** Ransom Middle School.

■ **High School Division:**

Pensacola High School. ■ **Support Services Division:** Evaluation Services.

During a time when nearly everyone is feeling the effects of the economy, the meaning of United Way's LIVE UNITED slogan is so important. As a community, LIVING UNITED, we will emerge stronger because enough people commit to helping others.

We asked guests of the Victory Celebration to tell us why they LIVE UNITED, and here are a few of the responses:

■ "I truly believe that there is strength in unity. And I give because I believe to whom much is given, much is required. Mom's favorite quote: 'You know where you've been, but not what tomorrow holds.'" — Herman McDole, United Way volunteer/Solutia.

■ "I LIVE UNITED because as individuals we can make a difference, but

as a community we make changes. I try to volunteer as much as time allows and show my children how important helping others is." — Amy Lord, United Way volunteer/Gulf Coast Community Bank.

■ "I've always been a supporter of United Way because of the good deeds you support. I guess I'm an advocate for the organizations you help. I try to LIVE UNITED in my life at work and in the community." — Brenda Whitaker, Blue Angels Elementary.

Thank you for supporting our community through United Way and for providing a hand up for our neighbors when they need it most. A favorite quote of mine from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow certainly applies to celebrate our community's caring: "Give what you have. To someone it may be better than you dare to think."



Jean Norman
jean@unitedwayescambia.org
444-7110

Mayors to have term limits, charter review panel says

Kris Wernowsky
kwernowsky@pnj.com

The City of Pensacola's Charter Review Commission reversed an earlier decision that mayors can serve without term limits.

The commission voted 8-1 Wednesday that both mayors and City Council members would be subject to no more than three consecutive full terms of four years.

The reversal on mayoral term limits, with the exception of commission member Samuel Horton,

came after additional public input in the wake of last week's meeting and continued discussion between commission members, Chairwoman Crystal Collins Spencer said.

The commission also decided Wednesday that it would recommend City Council members serve four-year terms instead of the current two-year terms.

The CRC decided in November that it would recommend to the Pensacola City Council that the city

be led by a mayor-council form of government.

That would be a change from the current city manager-council form, in which the city is led by a city council with a city manager as CEO, running day-to-day operations based on the council's direction.

The charter's last review was in 1931.

When the CRC completes deliberations, it will make its recommendations for changes to the City Council.

MILITARY NEWS

Air Force

■ The following enlisted personnel graduated from basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas: Airman **Azrszoton R. Johnson**, son of Marzlyn Bowman of Milton and a 2007 graduate of Pace High School; Airman **Kimberly N. Bailes**, daughter of Donnah and Daryl Bailes of Pace and a 2008 graduate of Pace High School.

Army

■ **Raith W. Copeland**, son of Samuel and Susan Copeland of Milton and a student at Jay High School, has joined the Army under the delayed entry program and will report to Fort Benning in Columbus, Ga., for basic

training in June 2010.

■ Reserve Pvt. **Ashley L. Lewis**, daughter of Lenola Lewis-McNeil of Pensacola, graduated from basic training at Fort Jackson in Columbia, S.C.

■ Spec. **Jason E. Wilkinson**, son of Sonye Goag of Pensacola and a 2000 graduate of Tate High School, graduated from basic combat training at Fort Jackson in Columbia, S.C.

Navy

■ Seaman Apprentice **Charles B. Mercer**, son of Angelita B. and Marcus M. Mercer of Milton, recently completed basic training and was promoted to his current rank at Recruit Training Command in Great Lakes, Ill.

■ Seaman **Pamela C. Henrikson**, a 2002 gradu-

ate of Pace High School, recently completed basic training and was promoted to her current rank at Recruit Training Command in Great Lakes, Ill.

■ The following enlisted personnel recently completed basic training at Recruit Training Command in Great Lakes, Ill.: Seaman Apprentice **Christopher P. Edwards**, son of Angelia J. and stepson of Thomas G. Pendelton of Pace and a 2008 graduate of Pace High School; Seaman Recruit **Shawn J. Wiley**, son of Nora E. Ashby of Pensacola and a 2007 graduate of Pensacola High School; Seaman Apprentice **Joshua C. Rozier**, son of Angel L. and Samuel L. Rozier of Milton and a 2008 graduate of Milton High School.

2009 Pcola Baby Baby Photo Calendar

The Baby Photo Calendars Are Here!

Photo Contest Winner: Moraya

2009 Pcola Baby Baby Photo Calendar

Featuring a 12 month pull-out poster

NewsJournal In Education

Available for \$4.95+tax (which includes an optional \$2 donation to the PNJ NIE program for literacy)

Purchase online at pnj.com/pcolababy or in the Pensacola News Journal lobby at 101 E. Romana St., Downtown Pensacola, M-F 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (closed holidays)

0000214839

BUYING OR SELLING? Call The Professional Realtors

Alice Fay Baker 850-341-8600
Mary Todd 850-572-5452

connell & manziel Realty, Inc.

When You Have Legal Questions... Robert C. Allen, Attorney

- Accident Cases
- Adoption
- Probate-Property Transfer
- Family Law
- Criminal Law
- All Criminal Cases
- Guardianship/Wills/Power of Attorney
- Civil Litigation
- Real Estate Law
- Police Misconduct
- Excessive Force
- False Arrest

Graduate of University of Florida School of Law

438-6800 376 West Chase Street www.robertallen.com

The hiring of a lawyer is an important decision that should not be based solely upon advertisements. Before you decide, you should research our qualifications and experience.

