Past VFW National Commander Holt Dies at 85

May 03, 2009

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Past VFW National Commander Cooper T. Holt passed away at his home on Friday, May 1, 2009. He was 85.

Cooper T. Holt was elected Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in 1956. At 32, he was the youngest Commander-in-Chief in the history of the organization.

A World War II veteran, he joined VFW Post 1289, Chattanooga, Tennessee, in 1945 after having been a member-at-large for a year. He served as Post Adjutant, Senior Vice Commander and Post Commander. He went on to become Third District commander, Department Junior Vice, and Senior Vice and Department Commander. In 1954, he was elected National Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief; in 1955, National Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief.

After serving as Commander-in-Chief, Holt was appointed Executive Director of the VFW Washington Office in August 1963, following the 90th VFW National Convention in Las Vegas and served in that capacity until his retirement in 1989.

Past National Commander Holt was born in Chattanooga, Tenn., and graduated from the Edmondson School of Business. He enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1943 and served overseas with Company L, 164th Infantry, Americal Division. He earned the Asiatic-Pacific Theater ribbon, the Solomon Islands campaign battle star, the Combat Infantryman's Badge and the Bronze star.

He was a member of several civic and fraternal organizations. He and his wife, the former Betty Sivley of Chattanooga, have one daughter, Cynthia Pappas, one grandson and one great-grandson.

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