

2010 Memorial Day Parade Grand Marshal



Cornelius L. Gray
U.S. Army
World War II, Korea,
VietNam

This year's Grand Marshal is Cornelius "Neil" L. Gray. Gray is the epitome of bravery and sacrifice. He served more than 27 years in the military, rising to the rank of Major. He is a veteran of three wars – World War II, the Korean War and Vietnam. He received three Bronze Stars. In June of 1945, Gray jumped by parachute behind enemy lines into Central Burma. He survived 77 days behind enemy lines as Japanese patrols hunting him in numbers of 100 – 1,900, using 45 dogs and many Burman informers. At one time the jungle was covered by a barrage of 37mm guns and machine guns about 500 yards from his camp. He trained 650 Korean and Burman guerillas that joined forces with the United States. He earned his degree from Siena College (Class of 1950) after World War II and was working on a master's at Georgetown's School of Foreign Service when he was "called back" to fight in Korea. Later, in Vietnam, he was with the 11th Armored Cavalry. During his military career, he spent three years as an Army reservist. His photo is hanging in the Air Commando Hall of Fame in Fort Walton Beach, Fla. Gray served from June 17, 1945 to September 9, 1972.

Neil was awarded a multitude of medals for his service in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam.

Neil is retired from General Dynamics, his wife is Cheryl Gray and they have a daughter, Mary Jo Gray Hughes.