

To remember, pay respect to and assist old soldiers who fought during WWII in China: 1213 volunteer program in China

During the Double Tenth Day banquet in late November, 2013, Ms. Yuan Jan-Pin(袁劍平), a retired professor of 天津 (Tianjin) university, China, accompanied by Daniel Chang, introduced the 1213 volunteer program (1213VP) to Nancy Lo.

The primary mission of the 1213PV is to recruit volunteers to seek old soldiers (the youngest are older than 90 years old) who fought during WWII. They have been treated badly after the communist took over the China in 1949 because these old soldiers were fighting under the government of Nationalist China and they were considered as anti-revolutionary, anti-military officers and/or remnants of Kaomingtang (KMT). Thus they were criticized, punished, looked down upon and lived really hard lives. The name of 1213VP was based on the first day when Japanese imperial army invaded Nanjing: December 13 (12/13) in 1937. 1213 pronouns similar to ‘one love one life’ in Chinese.

In recent years, as the Chinese society became more open and free, the Communist government began to recognize the effort of the fighting-against-Japanese by the nationalist government militaries and even showed respect to them. However, it is not easy to provide assistance to them to improve their living conditions. If no effort was made to do so, those old soldiers would be heading to their tombs together with their patriotic fighting history.

In 2005, a young woman Ph.D. student at Nanjing Art Instituted, majoring in art education,, pen-named ‘Wen Sheen’ (文心, Gentle heart), started her journey of searching for old soldiers so as to pursue justice for them. She, all by herself, started a website 「西祠胡同」 (<http://www.xici.net/b1244435/> in Chinese) for recruit volunteers, and the 1213 volunteer program was established in 2007.

According to professor Yuan, much donation has been provided by private sectors, and the offspring of Nationalist militaries. 1213VP uses these donations to assist the old soldiers, in particular those who lived alone in the countryside. When they met any old soldiers, volunteers would solute the soldiers and mentioned to them respectively that they are not anti-revolutionary, instead, they are heroes of

fighting- against-Japanese before the donation and gifts were presented. Each old soldier received a medal of fighting-against-Japanese old soldier.

1213VP got support from Nationalist government in Taiwan. Mr. 連戰 (Lien Zhàn), the honorable chair of Kaomingtang (KMT) (Nationalist party) gave towels with Kaomingtang emblem and a scroll with 「追思定遠」 (Keep in the memory and looking forward to the future) to the Nanjing civil resistance against Japan museum (南京民間抗日戰爭博物館). Other KMT leaders also provided writings to 1213VP.

Eventhough these old soldiers were fragile, due to their age, and/or illness, their spirits would be easily lifted up whenever ‘fighting against Japanese’ were mentioned. They even began to recite the will of Dr. Sun Yet san, the founding father of the Republic of China, raised their hands and saluted a standard military salute.

Professor Yuan called up overseas Chinese to join the effort of 1213VP, possibly with the donation to the old soldiers.

(part of the material was based on a World Journal article by Daming Lee, October 12, 2013)

Professor Lily Xu, one of our board members, had chance to visit Nanjing in last December. She met with members of 1213VP-Nanjing branch, led by the vice chair Mr.Zhao Jin (趙汧) at the Nanjing civil resistance against Japan museum on December 24th and delivered the donations from APHAFIC, USCPFPA, Nancy Lo and Judy Lu. Those donations will be used to assist old soldiers of Sichuan province,川軍團 (四川興文縣農村老戰士) winter living expenses. Mr. Zhao Jin expressed their appreciation of the financial support of overseas organizations and individuals, like APHAFIC, and USCPFPA. To contact 1213 VP, please e-mail to Mr. Zhao at zhaojin1130@126.com (Chinese only).

Note for other report on the old soldiers, please see ‘ **The last fight of Nanjing ‘s survivors’** by Amanda Mustard (<http://roadsandkingdoms.com/2013/nanking-massacre/>)

Photographer **Amanda Mustard** followed a long chain of contacts, and helpers to arrive at her project on the survivors of the Nanjing Massacre. It started with her high school history teacher, who led her to read *The Rape of Nanking* by the late Iris Chang, whose mother, Ying-ying Chang, would later help Mustard break down barriers and locate a handful of the last survivors of one of the most brutal chapters of World War II. A picture is worth a thousand words. Amenda’s pictures remind us of not only the victims during the Nanking massacre but also the suffering of those soldiers who fought during the Sino-Japanese war and remained on the main land after the communist took over.



1. Nancy Lo, APHAFIC, Alex Chuang, SDCHMS and professor Yuan at the San Diego Double Ten Day celebration banquet in September, 2013.



2. Gifts presented to an old soldier, including a scarf of KMT Kaomingtang emblem given by Mr. ° Lien Zhàn



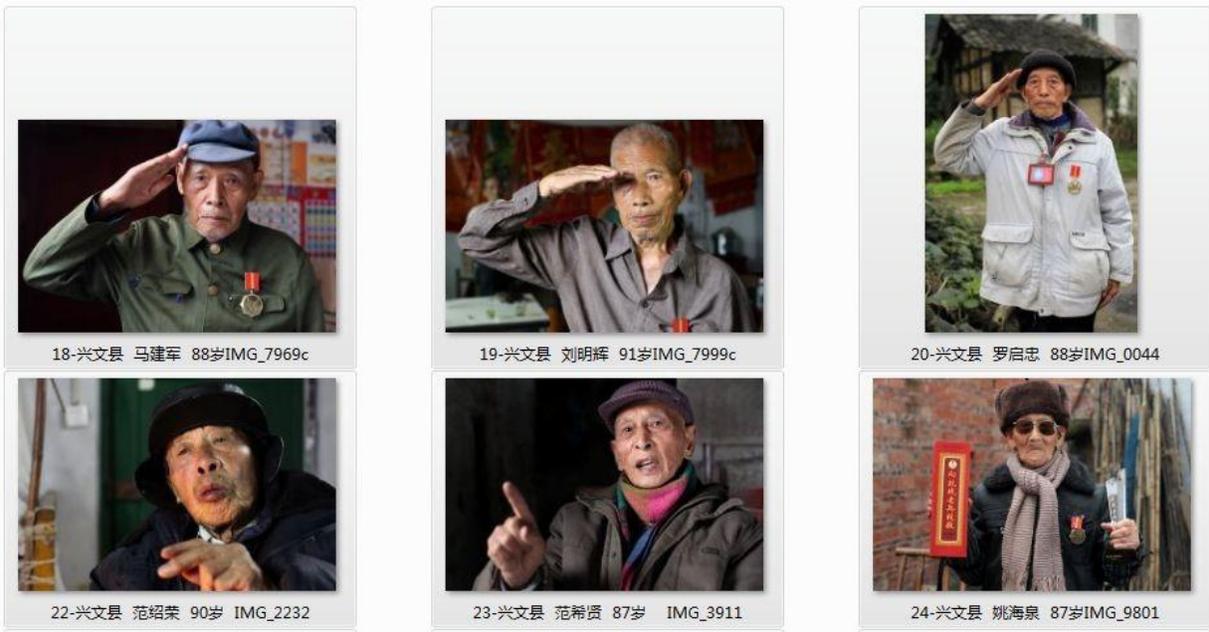
3. A volunteer brought gift to an ailing WWII soldier.



4. Four WWII old soldiers in wheel chairs (front row) during the mid-moon festival, 2013 appended opening ceremony of shooting the TV film on the memory of Huangpu (黄埔) . The lady wearing a hat is 文心, the founder of 1213 VP.



5. Professor Lily Xu, one of our board members, visited Nanjing museum. Mr. Zhao Jin (second from left in the front row), 'Wen Sheen' (文心), professor Xily Xu, the president of the museum, and volunteers on December 24th, 2013



6. Some of the old soldiers of of Sichuan province,川軍團