



30 DAYS OF HONOR ★ *A Salute to Local Vets*



An end to the fighting

Veteran Bud Englert thankful 'strong, determined' Japan surrendered to end WWII

KARLA SWITA
FOR GANNETT CENTRAL WISCONSIN MEDIA

WAUSAU — Bud Englert had enough credits to graduate early from high school, so he got permission from his parents to enlist in the U.S. Marine Corps at 17. With World War II in progress, Englert was trained at Marine

Corps installations in San Diego and at Camp Pendleton, and prepared for Operation Olympic, a code name for a planned landing in Kyushu, Japan.

"We boarded the ship and on our way there, Japan surrendered." If that hadn't happened, Englert believes mass casualties would have resulted "because the Japanese were prepared to fight until the end."

Question: What is your most enduring memory from your time in the service?

Answer: After Japan surrendered, we were headed back on troop ship USS President Jackson. We passed by a Japanese fisherman in his small boat, and he stood up and waved and took his hat off. That's something I haven't forgotten all these 70 years.

Q: What did you do in the service and where were you stationed?

A: I was in the 12th motor transport battalion as a truck driver. I was stationed in San Diego,

Camp Pendleton, Camp Lejeune in North Carolina and overseas.

Q: What do you most want people to know about the conflict in which you served?

A: So often we hear people say that we didn't have to drop the atomic bomb, but we did. The Japanese were very strong and determined. There could have been a million U.S. casualties.

Q: Tell us about your life after the service and how your time in the military affected your civilian life.

A: I came back home in 1946 and met my wife, Joyce, on a blind date. We got married in 1950, and I was called back into the Marine Corps to Camp Lejeune. During that 13 months, my son Lenny was born. I didn't get to see him until he was 2 months old. After the service, I worked at my father's shoe repair shop and then at Wisconsin Public Service. We had three boys and one girl.

Q: What did going on the Honor Flight mean to you?

A: It was very special to me because my guardian was my son, Lenny, who was born when I was in the Korean War. I met so many wonderful people along the way. There are a lot of beautiful people out there who really do care. Mike Thompson and Col. Campbell work with Never Forgotten Honor Flight and do a really wonderful job.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Leonard Englert joined the Marine Corps at age 17.

About Leonard 'Bud' Englert

Age: 89
Residence: Wausau
Conflict during service: World War II and Korean War
Military branch: Marines
Years of service: 1944 to 1953
Rank upon discharge: Sergeant



Leonard Englert of Wausau vividly recalls the Japanese fisherman who waved to U.S. military personnel following Japan's surrender in World War II.

A flight to never forget

The Central Wisconsin chapter of Never Forgotten Honor Flight celebrates its fifth anniversary this spring. Since April 2010, the Honor Flight program has taken 1,828 veterans of World War II, Korea and Vietnam and 1,106 guardians from Central Wisconsin Airport to Washington, D.C., to view the memorials built in honor of their service.

30 Days of Honor is a project of Gannett Central Wisconsin Media to profile veterans who have taken an Honor Flight, or are scheduled, and to encourage more veterans to do so. Profiles will appear each day April 26 through Memorial Day.

Veterans may apply for a free Honor Flight (or loved ones may apply for them) by filling out an application. The only qualification for a veteran to take an Honor Flight is to have served in any branch of the U.S. military during the periods of World War II, the Korean War or Vietnam War. Veterans do not have to have been in combat. The applications and more information are available at <http://www.neverforgottenhonorflight.org>



SPONSORED BY

