

8823 Lincoln Avenue
Marshfield, WI 54449
June 18, 2011

Board of Directors
Never Forgotten Honor Flight
P.O. Box 5056
Wausau, WI 54402-5056

Dear Madams and Sirs of the Board:

It is with a profound sense of gratitude that my siblings and I thank the Never Forgotten Honor Flight Board of Directors, all the many volunteers of north-central Wisconsin, and those of Washington Dulles International Airport/Washington, D.C. area, and the many generous corporate sponsors for making possible your fourth Never Forgotten Honor Flight. It was a truly memorable experience and greatly appreciated by our father, William "Bill" Breu.

It also offered us and Bill's extended family and friends perhaps our last – and in some cases, our first – opportunity to personally recognize him for his heroic World War II service. At the same time, it afforded us the opportunity to recognize other wartime heroes among us, and those who preceded us in death, especially as a result of enemy action. Memorial Day will never be the same.

I also personally thank the Board for extending to me an invitation to be Guardian for my father, a role of a lifetime for me. The staff at Bethel Center, Arpin, where my father now lives, recently asked me to write for their newsletter an article about Bill's Honor Flight. The story which I subsequently wrote is indicative of the impression that the flight made on me, and I would be pleased to share it with you. Please find it attached to this letter. (It was printed in The Pittsville Record on May 26 and in The Marshfield News-Herald on June 7.)

Thank you for all the work you have done, and for any that you will do in support of the Honor Flight mission.

Sincerely,

Ken Breu

Bethel Resident Bill Breu on Honor Flight to Washington, DC

On Monday, May 2, Bethel Center resident Bill Breu was awakened by his son, Ken, in their Howard Johnson's room in Wausau. It was 4:10 a.m., but Bill did not complain. By 4:30 it was time to leave for CWA - Central Wisconsin Airport, for the trip he had been anxiously anticipating for months. It was back in February when he received the letter inviting him to join about 100 other veterans on the fourth Never Forgotten Honor Flight.

Honor Flights are all-expense-paid trips to Washington, D.C., arranged for World War II veterans so that they might see the national memorial built in their honor. During the war, Bill had served under Lt. Gen. George Patton in the 94th Infantry Division as a combat rifleman, often as a scout during the night. He fought in four major European campaigns, including the Battle of the Bulge. He is amazed that he has made it to 91 years of age. Accordingly, he and the other vets are now in line for "a trip of a lifetime."

For easy identification, all veterans are wearing gold Never Forgotten Honor Flight polo shirts. Guardians, volunteers who pay their own way for the honor of accompanying the vets on the trip, are wearing green shirts. They are assigned one or two vets for the day, to ensure each vet has a safe and memorable experience. Ken is paradoxically both proud to be the Guardian for his father, Bill, and humble to be with this unassuming hero. Wearing red baseball caps emblazoned with "MEDIC" are doctors, nurses, and emergency personnel. They will address any medical need arising throughout the day. At all the transition points, there are volunteers wearing red shirts, whose job it is to guide the vets around the airports, to help them through security, serve them refreshments, and to welcome them to Washington, D.C., and back home, later at CWA, personally thanking the vets for their service, and distributing many heartfelt hugs. Overseeing it all are the blue shirted members of the board of directors.

I'm sure Bill found all of this attention almost overwhelming. And I'm pretty sure that at Bethel Center, Bill's roommate, George, himself a veteran of the Korean War, doesn't give him nearly as much. Bethel Center staff, however, did give Bill special attention throughout April in the form of extra walking, which prepared him well for all the walking in Washington. And actually seeing Washington's sights – the White House, Congress, The Pentagon, the Marine Corps War Memorial, a.k.a. the Iwo Jima Memorial, the soaring Air Force Memorial, the Navy Memorial, the Korean War Veterans Memorial, the Jefferson and Lincoln Memorials, the Washington Monument, and the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery – was simply magnificent.

Yet all of that must have paled in Bill's eyes when he saw his World War II Memorial – seeing the white granite pillar engraved with "Wisconsin" representing all Wisconsinites who helped in the war effort, and seeing the wall of 4,000 gold stars, each star representing 100 Americans killed in combat. One of those stars represents 99 who gave the ultimate for their country, plus one more, Bill's best friend in the Army, Ken Reineke of Manitowoc, Wisconsin, in whose honor I am so named. Also, seeing those 24 bronze bas-relief panels, each representing the transformation of America in support of the war effort. One depicts the role of mail service, utilized daily by Bill sending V-mail to his fiancée (my future mother), Miss Dorothy Blessing, R.N., and seemingly fitfully bringing her daily script to him. Much later, Bill would retire from a 26-year career with the US Postal Service in Marshfield.



-Submitted by Ken Breu, Bill's son. Ken is a resident of the Town of Rock, Wood County. Read more about Bill and Dorothy Breu in *The Marshfield Story 1872-1997: Piecing Together Our Past*, by Marshfield History Project, pp. 351-2, and in *The Story of Saint Joseph's Hospital: A Century of Caring 1890-1990*, p. 21, © Saint Joseph's Hospital, Marshfield, Wisconsin.

1. [Sheboygan County WWII KIA](#)

Barnes, Julia S. March 13, 1945, First woman **casualty** from Sheboygan County. Army (Nurse) **Reinecke, Kenneth J.** January 21, 1945, Army Sgt. ...

freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~sheboygan/kia.htm -
Cached

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The Sheboygan Press Cards for KIA's in WWII
