



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



'I was very fortunate'



Veteran Wayne Sering missed out on Korean War, serving in Germany instead during Cold War

Dan Richter

For Gannett Central Wisconsin Media

A lifelong resident of Wisconsin Rapids, Wayne Sering was 23 when he was drafted into the United States Army to serve in the Korean War. "Basic training is 16 weeks long, and in my 15th week, they pulled the plug in Korea. I was very lucky I didn't have to go over there," Sering said. "Instead, I was sent to leadership school and shipped off to Germany."

Sering, 82, recently discussed serving in the Army artillery in Germany, his civilian life after the service and the Never Forgotten Honor Flight he took with his two veteran brothers, Darwin and Norman, in 2012.

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

A: I was in Germany and started out as a gunner on a 155-millimeter howitzer. I worked my way up to the chief of gun section, which had nine people in it. We trained and traveled all over Germany on maneuvers. We were sort of there to keep an eye on the Soviets. They did some of their training nearby at the same time.

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

A: On the trip over to Germany, we hit a storm that took us three days to get through. The waves were 30 feet high and you almost felt like you'd fall out of your bunk with all the up and down movement. A lot of guys were getting sick. The trip home was memorable, too. When we saw the Statue of Liberty, there was a lot of celebrating. As far as when I was in Germany, there were a couple of old bunkers that were Hitler's that I remember we blew up.

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

A: I was very fortunate that I didn't have to go to Korea. That was quite a nervous time, after I got drafted. Every outfit ahead of me went right over there after basic training and we all heard stories that weren't too good. We heard there was a lot of fighting going on and the winters were very cold.

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

A: When I got back, I met my wife, Shirley, and we got married in 1956. We're both from Rapids and lived here all our lives. We had two kids, a son and a daughter. I worked as a millwright at Consolidated Papers in Rapids and worked there for 44 years. I retired 20 years ago this year.

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

A: That trip was wonderful. We lined it up so all three of us brothers could go together. I was in D.C. one other time but they didn't have any of the memorials then. The World War II memorial was something to see and the Korean War memorial was just surreal. The changing of the guard at Arlington National Cemetery, that was something to see. It made you think of all the young guys that didn't make it home. When we got back into Mosinee, they handed us letters from local school kids, and that was a nice surprise. We all enjoyed that.

ABOUT WAYNE SERING

Age: 82
Residence: Wisconsin Rapids
Conflict involved in: Korean War
Military branch: United States Army
Years of service: 1953 to 1955
Rank upon discharge: Corporal



MEGAN MCCORMICK/GANNETT CENTRAL WISCONSIN MEDIA

Wayne Sering served in the Army during the Korean War.

MEGAN MCCORMICK/GANNETT CENTRAL WISCONSIN MEDIA
 Veteran Wayne Sering lives in Wisconsin Rapids.

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

