

... were in V. trains affected, but there was at least one washout in the town of Cedar Lake, and an-

ing the rain-soaked trails. Witnesses were urged to photograph or take video of vehicles that damage the trails,

predicting, I could be a week to 10 days behind." Lentz said many of his fellow farm-

And the deadline to buy that pass in March."

Korean War veteran on Honor Flight

By Bob Zientara

Rural Barron resident Bill Huiras and his daughter Rose Maxon, Cum-

berland, were settled into their seats on an airliner, on their way back to Wausau, Wis., from Reagan National Airport in Washington, D.C., on the

night of Monday, April 8, and were just about to fall asleep, when shouting echoed through the cabin. "Mail call! Mail call!" said the voices.

Workers for Wausau-based "Never Forgotten Honor Flight," a nonprofit organization, passed out thick packets of letters to each of the veterans on the flight.

"My great-grandson is a (Grade 3) student at Almena Elementary School," said Huiras, age 93, a veteran of the Korean War.

"He and all his classmates wrote letters to me," Huiras said.

"There were over 60 letters in his mail pouch altogether," Maxon said.

For Huiras, who had never been to the nation's capital before, it was just one of many amazing moments on a one-day round trip that took him and dozens of other Wisconsin veterans to Washington.

The Honor Flight and tour were free for every participating veteran. Adult companions, including Maxon, who is, herself, a U.S. Army veteran, paid \$500 each to accompany their friends and/or loved ones.

It was Huiras' stepdaughter, Nancy Maxon, who started nudging him about the Honor Flight a couple of years ago, he said.

"I put the idea aside, but (after the passing of his wife, Ruth, in June 2018), Nancy brought up the idea again. We applied late last summer or early in the fall. But there was only one opening on the first flight, and Rose couldn't go with me. So I decided to wait until April."

Maxon, who served in the Army's Signal Command during the Desert Storm era and was stationed both in the States and Europe, lives just outside Cumberland, and was delighted to have the chance to travel with her dad.

"It turns out that I am qualified, too, because I went into the Army at the tail end of the Vietnam era," Maxon said. But she decided to pay for her passage so as not to keep an older veteran from taking one of the complimentary trips.

From the farm to Korea, and back

Drafted in 1950, Bill Huiras did his basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. And was attached to the First Cavalry Division, 8th Engineering Combat Battalion.

He spent about 10 months in Korea, from March through December of 1951.

"I was the battalion electrician," remembered. "I had to make sure the lights were on, keep the portable generators going. Every time (headquarters) moved, you'd have to tear them down, then put them up again."

Although not in combat, Huiras put in many a long hour of work.

"We went from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m.," he said. "But there were a lot of times when (the headquarters staffs) were there all night -- and we were expected to be there, too."

Mustered out in June 1952, Huiras returned to Barron County and went back to farming.

"It was a dairy farm near Cantonsville -- up on the (eastern Barron County) rock piles," he said.

In 1960, Huiras moved to his present home, an 80-acre parcel in the town of Barron, a couple of miles northeast of the city.

But the memories of his military service kept coming back, from time to time.

"The South Korean government still honors us," he said, displaying a medal sent to him to mark his 50th anniversary of service. He was also presented with a book, which arrived in 2012, for his 50th anniversary.

A whirlwind trip

As is the case with most Honor Flights, Huiras, Maxon, and the others on the April 8 trip did it all in one day. They stayed overnight on April 7 in Wausau before boarding their plane for an early morning flight.

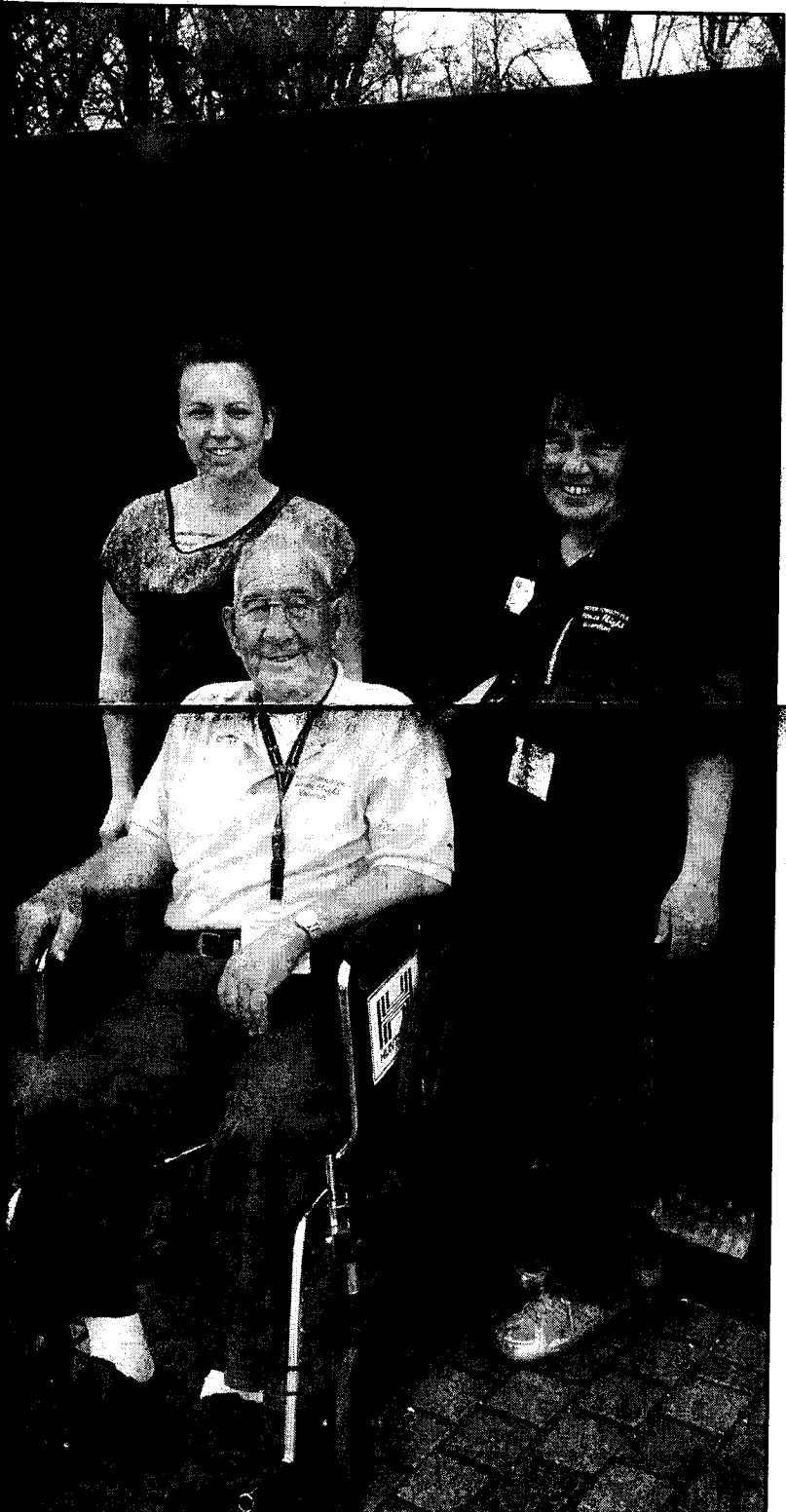
Arriving at Reagan National, the visitors took a short bus trip across the Potomac River and spent most of the day at the National Mall and Arlington National Cemetery. Along the way, they saw the memorial to World War II, the Korean and Vietnam wars, visited the Lincoln Memorial, and -- later in the day -- participated in a solemn changing-of-the-guard ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, in Arlington National Cemetery.

Whether they were on foot, on walkers or in wheelchairs, many of the veterans did their best to stand a little attention for the emotion-filled ceremony.

"There were motorcycle police escorts for (the tour buses) and they never had to wait for a stop light," Huiras said. "They told us the only one they'd stop for was the President."

Each bus was staffed by a doctor.

(Please See Above)



Bill Huiras, Barron resident, with his granddaughter Ashley Savage, left, and his daughter Rose Maxon, stop for a photo during Huiras' April 8 Honor Flight visit to Washington, D.C. Photo contributed

and additional medical staffers were on the plane going to and from Washington.

"They had one patient who carried oxygen," Maxon said "He was a World War II veteran. They made sure (his equipment) was up and running, and they changed it out when needed."

The experience changed his ways of thinking, Huiras said

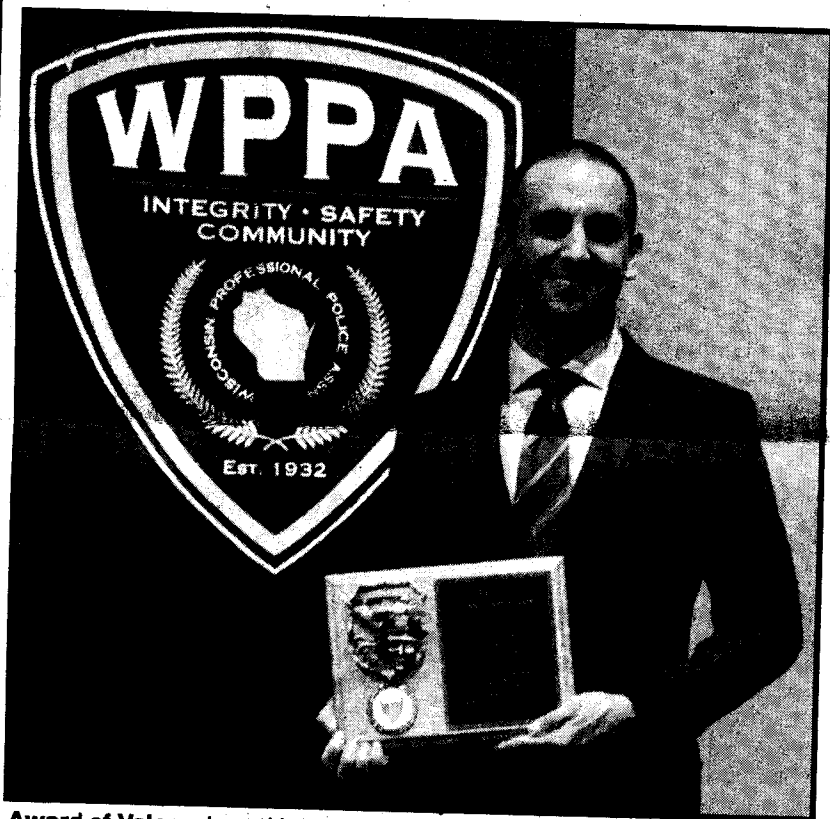
"I know a lot more about what they have out there (in Washington)," he said. "Before (the trip) I didn't give it too much thought. I was in the Army,

I came home, and I went back to work. I belong to the (Barron) VFW (post) but haven't been at a meeting in a long time."

Maxon said her dad "had all his Korea stuff paced in a closet. He never talked about it until this trip."

Maybe the best part of the journey — for both father and daughter — was the chance to bond with family.

Ashley Savage, Huiras' granddaughter, and her son, Roy, age 10, traveled to Washington from North Carolina to meet Bill and Rose.



Award of Valor—Jesse Henning, a sergeant with the Eau Claire Police Department, was recently presented the Award of Valor for his actions during a three-hour police standoff involving an armed man inside an Eau Claire apartment. After all attempts by law enforcement to mitigate the situation failed, the man pointed a long gun through a window at officers and then shot at officers after chemical agents were deployed. Henning returned fire with one shot from his service revolver, which hit and killed the perpetrator.

Disney's Cinderella Kids

A Two-week Theatre Camp for youth entering
6th grade up to those completing 8th grade.

**CLASSES: MONDAY TO FRIDAY,
JUNE 17 - 28, 9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.**

TWO PERFORMANCES

**on Friday, June 28th at 2:00 p.m.
and at 7:00 p.m.**