

The Value of a Veteran

With the exception of some staunch history buffs, it's highly unlikely very many people will know Frank Buckles' name. After all, he was a rather unassuming man who, with the exception of becoming a civilian prisoner of war during World War II, lived a rather normal life. A very long life, but nonetheless not so much out of the ordinary. That is, until 2007 when he entered the national spotlight and was asked, at the age of 106, to join actor Gary Sinise as the Grand Marshall of a Memorial Day parade followed by a story of his life on the NBC Nightly News that same evening. On Veterans Day that year he was interviewed by the Washington Post. Then, in 2009 he was featured as ABC's World News Tonight's Person of the Week. He even met with President George W. Bush at the White House.

So why was there such a flurry of fame being showered upon this once unsuspecting centenarian? Well, his prominence was rooted in the fact that in 2008, out of 4.7 million brave American men and women, Frank Buckles became the last known living Veteran of World War I. He was also given the distinction of becoming the Honorary Chairman of the World War I Memorial Foundation which seeks the establishment of a World War I Memorial on the National Mall. His efforts even landed him an appearance before Congress in 2009 at the age of 108. Unfortunately, Buckles died in 2011, at the age of 110, before he was able to see the fruition of his efforts. It is anticipated that the \$30 million Memorial will be completed in 2018 to coincide with the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I.

Much more attention has been given to the Veterans of World War II. Tagged as, "The Greatest Generation," 16 million men and women served our country between 1941 and 1945. A memorial has already been dedicated to these outstanding individuals who served our country with valor. However, the World War II heroes are fading, with Korean War Veterans close behind, followed by our Vietnam Vets. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, of the 16 million who served in WWII, only 558,000 are still living and this number decreases significantly every day.



What is the value of a Veteran? The word "invaluable" or "priceless" comes to mind. Yes, there are some that stand out because of their outstanding accomplishments, however, it is the collective effort of all who have served our country in any capacity that has enabled us to remain the "land of the free."

Annually, November 11th marks the celebration of all our great Veterans. At CentraCare we will also honor our participants who have served our country. Unfortunately, some will not remember

their years of service because dementia has taken them prisoner. Yet, they will be honored.

At CentraCare "honor" is one of the things we do best because of the great value we place on the individuals we serve. On a daily basis we honor, not only Veterans, but each of the elderly individuals entrusted to our care. We recognize their battle with the circumstances and diseases associated with growing old and we function as support troops to honor their desire to live as independently as possible. Our mission is to deliver exceptional, comprehensive healthcare for frail older adults. These "veterans of life" are to be honored, valued and respected and that's exactly what we do. To our military Veterans who have fought battles in the past as well as to our "veterans of life" who are currently in their own battle with aging, we salute you, honor you, and consider you priceless.

Caregivers,
Are You Tired?
We
Understand!

For dates, times, and to register, please contact Donna at (269) 441-9319

CentraCare's experienced staff will lovingly care for your elderly loved one at our Battle Creek Day Center location to give you relief. **At NO CHARGE* to you!**

WE PROVIDE: Transportation, Nutritious Meal & Snack, Socialization, Assistance with Personal Care, and Cognitively Stimulating Activities.



200 W. Michigan Avenue | Battle Creek, MI 49017 | 269-441-9319 | www.mycentracare.com

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