

Jeremy Bloom's Wish of a Lifetime WWII Memorial Trip to Washington, DC March 30 – April 1



The Wish: A group of WWII & Korean War Veterans from Mt. Pleasant Retirement Village in Monroe, OH have asked to visit the WW II Memorial in Washington, DC. It is not just seeing the Memorial that it is important – it is seeing the Memorial with their colleagues that is important. They need to do it together.

Since JBWOL agreed to grant the wish 2 of the WWII Veterans has died and 1 has become too frail to travel. The need to do this is evident and we need to do it now.

The Participants from Mt. Pleasant Retirement Village (Monroe, OH)

June McFeters – WWII, Staff Sergeant, Army Civil Service, Camp Atterbury Army Hospital – Indiana

Harold “Mac” McFeters , WWII Tech Sergeant, Army Air Force and Air Transport Command Army Air Corp, Asiatic-Pacific, European-African, China-Burma-India (1943-1945)

Mac was a radio operator and waist gunner on B-26 bombers and on C-46 Transport planes. His 42nd bombing mission was on D-Day. Received the “letter of commendation” from Gerald E. Williams, Colonel Air Corps, Commanding.

Marlyn Hackney, WWII Sergeant, Army Infinity & Air Corp, United States (1945-1946)

Mrs. June McFeters and her husband Mac both served in WWII. He was a waist gunner on a B26 Bomber. He flew 48 missions hauling gasoline over the Himalayan Mountains to China. He flew 68 bombing missions to France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany. He was also a radio operator on a C-46 Transport Plane from India to China. His 42nd bombing mission was on D Day. He received a letter of commendations from Commanding Colonel Gerald Williams. As he tells it: “I didn’t do much.” Mrs. June McFeters was an US Civil Army Staff Sergeant nurse at Camp Atterbury military hospital in Indiana where the injured came home, some of the wounded soldiers still vivid in her mind. She admitted, “After seeing the first burned soldier, I wanted to run out of the hospital and never return. But, I got past it and really learned to love being a part of their healing process. You know, there are no unwounded soldiers.” June’s family is rich in patriotic service. She had five brothers who served in WWII, four brothers-in-law, and one brother who was a POW for 18 months before his death. The McFeters have two sons who served in the Vietnam War. One of them is still in the Navy. It has weighed heavy on June that she was only a US Civil Army and not official military

Magaret Bissell, WWII, Army Nurse Corp, Pacific Theater

John “ Jack” Brelsford, WWII, Seaman First Class, Navy and Army, 1940-1945, Pacific and North Atlantic Theater
Made 19 trips during his time in the service

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AFY86pIDkAA>

Tom Schuler, WWII, 1st Lt. Army Air Corp, Bombardier (1942- 1945)

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SHZsGUoF6I>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ocW1Myogqg0>

Betty Sexton, WWII – WAVES - Specialist T Second Class, Navy Air Corps , Pilot Trainer, Texas (1943-1945)

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RNnZ95Z11-I>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1FZszWBM2L4>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tXAx13pEf7s>

Marion Riggs WWII, Navy, Gunner Mate 2nd Class LCT Boat, European & Pacific Theatre - Normandy Beach (1941-1945)

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-VLAvHJzeg>
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EX_cRAjr77w

Marion Riggs hit the beaches of Normandy on D Day manning a Twin 40 machine gun on the deck of a 284 LST. He was in a newly formed branch of the navy on an LST - Landing Ship Tank. He explained, "*We were formed because the Germans were sinking our ships faster than we could put them in the water. We were first in line on the beach of Normandy and for some reason we were told to back down and let a 282 take our place. We backed off and the Germans bombed the 282. There were over 300 men on that ship, only nine walked away. It happened right in front of us. I was never afraid, not once. The officers were on deck and through our earphones they told us where to fire, if it was in the air or on the ground, we did what we were trained to do. Our gun had two barrels and took seven men to operate. We did what we had to do.*"

Jake Ireland – WWII , First Lt., 15th Air Force Army Air Corp, Bombardier, European Theatre (1943-46)

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9DNPeIJfewk>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SiC7ZrGT-KA>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MqCbVZg0yBU>

“It is a humbling experience when you remember the history of the United States. When you think of all the people that were killed, crippled, or had their lives disrupted to give us the freedoms, liberties, and abundance our generation is enjoying in our lifetimes. When you realize that you too are a member of this important group of veterans. It is even more humbling.

I will admit I was really scared one time. It was on my first flight. I stood between the pilot and the co-pilot to observe. When the flack guns near the target opened, they knocked out 5 or 7 planes right ahead of us. We were 30 seconds behind them and 500 feet higher. We went through, bombed the target and survived with a few flack holes in the plane. All other missions I was too busy to think about anything other than what I was doing.

War is hell. In this country, the general population can't grasp the suffering and devastation. We had 9-11 when over 3,000 people were killed. When Churchill decided the bombing would stop in London. He ordered on five consecutive days 1,000 plane raids to wipe out 5 different German cities. First was Dresden where 20,000 people were killed. Next was Bremen where 40,000 people were killed. Followed by Frankfurt where 20,000 people were killed. There were two more cities with 20,000 – 40,000 people wiped out. This country was upset when we lost 3,000. I do not mean to belittle that, even one is too many. I just want to make the point.

The things that happened bother my sleep now more than it did at the time. Back then, your mind automatically took the attitude you were either going to live or die, and there was nothing you could do about it. I am still here and I thank the Good Lord for that.”

Ruby Bors, WWII, Staff Sargeant, US Army Air Corps. ,European & Pacific Theatre (1940 – 1949)

Flight engineer and flew 134 missions on Berlin Air-lift, saving 2 million Germans behind Russian Blockade in Berlin from 6/24/48 to 5/12/49. He was sent home in 1949 because he was the only son left in his family and he had to care for his mother. In 2009, Rudy was awarded “The Caregiver of the Year” by the Council on Aging for the dedicated and loving way he cared for his wife with end stage Alzheimer Disease. She passed away and then he became the caregiver for his brother who is in poor health. He and his brother applied to Senator Dodd from Connecticut to make the trip to the memorial in Washington DC, but were not accepted. His brother has died.

The Participants from Lifecare Alliance (Columbus, OH)

Milton Mavpo BM 2/C USNavy, Pacific Theater

In 1939 I decided to join the Navy and see the world. I was 19 years old in Feb.1940 in Jamaica Queens, NY. I was transferred to the USS Detroit. On December 7, 1941 at about 8:00 I heard an explosion top side. I ran to see what happened. Once I got top side I saw a plane coming right at the ship. It was so close that you could see the Japanese insignia and the pilot's face. I saw something drop from the plane and a torpedo barely missed the bow and hit Ford Island which was right next to us. We prepared to get under way and out to sea as soon as power up was possible. We made it out of the harbor for a few miles where we able to see all the damage from the sneak attacks to other ships that were caught still at berth. All of them were destroyed and the loss of 3,000 sailors occurred in about an hour.

On Monday we returned to port, refueled and escorted a Matsonia Liner carrying civilians back to San Francisco, we made to two trips escorting wounded back to San Francisco. I then was transferred to a new destroyer the USS Pringle in Charleston, SC

After escorting liners with civilians back to San Francisco I was transferred to the USS. Pringle. Our duty was patrolling between Okinawa and Japan looking for Japanese activities. In the middle of March 1945 we were attacked by a kamikaze plane that hit us mid ship which cut our ship in half. I was rendered unconscious from the ensuing explosions. When I came to we were sinking, I suffered a compound fracture of my right leg. I fell in the water and held on to a life raft until help came from an accompanying ship that was also in the same kamikaze attack as the Pringle. I was transported to a hospital ship then eventually back to California in 1947 when I was discharged as unfit for sea duty.

This injury has required me to wear a brace to protect my leg from permanent curvature and have been walking with a cane.

Also attending from Mt. Pleasant Retirement Village, Monroe, OH

Lyman Peck, WWII 1st Lt. Army Air Corp, Meterology Officer and Fighter Pilot (P-47 and P- 51), SW Pacific and Philippine Islands (1942 – 1946)

William Brehm, WWII, T-4 Army Heavy Maintenance Ordinance, European/Africa/Italy Theatre (1942 – 1945)

Roger Miller, Korean War, Airman First Class, Air Force, Korea (1957 – 1962)

Bob Wieneke , Korean War, Corporal Army Ordinance, Alaska (1953-1954)

Bob Boonstra, Korean War , Communication Officer on Destroyers, Navy, Atlantic

William Crawford, MD, Korean War, Major, Army Medical Corp, Korea (1957 – 1964)

Emerson Murtlow, WWII, Staff Sergeant, US Army Infantry, European Theatre (1944-1946)

Also attending from Life Care Alliance, Columbus, OH

Jackson Taylor, Korea, US Marine Corp

Speakers – Tuesday, March 31st, WWII Memorial 2pm

- Representative from the General Conway, Commandant of the Marines Office
- Commander Lippold was the commanding officer aboard the USS Cole when it was attacked in Yemen in October of 2000. The USS Cole was saved from sinking under the leadership of Commander Lippold and his crew. (See separate bio for more info if needed)

Other Participants:

Jeremy Bloom, Founder, Jeremy Bloom's Wish of a Lifetime, former Olympic & World Champion Skier NFL Wide Receiver

Deirdre Moynihan, Executive Director, Jeremy Bloom's Wish of a Lifetime

Laura Wildt, Director of Wishes, Jeremy Bloom's Wish of a Lifetime

Elva Pellouchoud, President, Epiphany Luxury Marketing

Char Bloom, Owner, Outdoor Adventurer/Entrepreneur

Rob Colburn, Visiting Angels, Bridgeport, WV

About JBWOL

Jeremy Bloom's Wish of a Lifetime Foundation (JBWOL) is a Colorado-based 501(c)3 nonprofit organization created in living honor of Jeremy's grandmother, Donna Wheeler, who still works fulltime at the age of 84. Donna has shared a lifetime of inspiration and love with Jeremy, teaching him from an early age that senior citizens should be respected, honored and aided in our society for the lifetime of service, wisdom and love they have shared with their communities and families.

Today, Jeremy embraces that philosophy through the JBWOL Foundation. As a young man, Jeremy was blessed to have Donna, and many others, make it possible for him to pursue his passions and chase after his dreams. This support enabled him to become a highly accomplished two-time Olympic Skier and an NFL football player very early in his career. And now, through JBWOL, Jeremy has created an organization filled with those who share the same passions that he and Donna do...an organization committed to help our country's cherished "Seasoned Citizens" fulfill their dreams too.

JBWOL's mission is to inspire an entire generation and to create a cultural shift on how we view aging. JBWOL's belief is that growing older doesn't mean you have to stop dreaming and living a life of purpose.

Commander Kirk S. Lippold, United States Navy (Ret.) Biography

Commander Lippold was the Commanding Officer of USS COLE when it came under a suicide terrorist attack by al Qaeda in the port of Aden, Yemen. During his command he and his crew distinguished themselves by saving this American war ship from sinking. This event is widely recognized as one of the most brazen acts of terrorism by al Qaeda prior to September 11, 2001. With this unique and invaluable experience, Commander Lippold has briefed over 3,000 military officers and given over 100 presentations on this seminal event in the war on terrorism.

His assignments prior to the USS COLE included Executive Officer of USS SHILOH, an Aegis-class guided missile cruiser. His department head tour was unique in his assignment to the crew that commissioned the Navy's first Aegis guided missile destroyer. He served as the Operations Officer responsible for the training and operation of a next generation \$1 billion warship with a crew of over 300 Sailors. He had two division officer assignments, which included a tour on USS YORKTOWN, an Aegis class guided missile cruiser. There, he completed a lengthy seven and half month deployment to the Mediterranean, where he participated in the Achille Lauro aircraft seizure, Black Sea Freedom of Navigation operations against the Soviet Union, and Attain III combat operations in the Gulf of Sidra off of Libya that followed several Libyan sponsored terrorist attacks in Europe. His initial division officer tour was in USS FAIRFAX COUNTY, a tank landing ship, where he completed deployments to Beirut, Lebanon, in support of the U.S. Marine Corps and the Multinational Peacekeeping Force. It was during this deployment that the American Embassy was attacked and severely damaged. His second deployment was as part of UNITAS XXV, which circumnavigated South America and included operations off the west coast of Africa.

Commander Lippold is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and received his commission in the Navy in 1981. He attended the Navy Postgraduate School from 1987 to 1989 where he received a Masters of Science in Systems Engineering (Joint Command, Control and Communications) with a subspecialty in International Strategy. He is a 1994 graduate of the United States Army Command and General Staff College and is also a 2001 graduate of the Joint Forces Staff College. He served as the Administrative Aide to the Secretary of the Navy under The Honorable John Dalton and The Honorable Richard Danzig. He recently served as Deputy Division Chief and Politico-Military Planner, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Directorate for Strategic Plans and Policy (J-5), War on Terrorism Division, where he was instrumental in crafting detainee policy for the war on terrorism during its initial stages following the 9/11 attacks. His most recent assignment prior to retirement was as Section Chief for Regional Affairs, International Strategy Division in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (N5IS). He is now President of Base to Peak, LLC, specializing in motivational and business-oriented professional speaking and consulting.

Commander Lippold's personal awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit (three awards), Meritorious Service Medal (three awards), Combat Action Ribbon, Navy Commendation Medal (two awards), Joint Service Achievement Medal, Navy Achievement Medal (two awards), in addition to various campaign and service ribbons.

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