



News Release

FROM: Chambers of the Chief Judge
19th Judicial Circuit
Lake County

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WAUKEGAN, IL

LAKE COUNTY TO ONCE AGAIN PARTICIPATE IN VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT ESTABLISHED BY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Chief Judge Jorge L. Ortiz announced that various partners of the Lake County legal community and the County of Lake will again work together with the Library of Congress on its Veterans History Project being held on the morning of Friday, November 10, 2017 in the Lake County Courthouse.

Veterans are encouraged to register for the opportunity to have their oral histories recorded by court reporters who will produce written verbatim transcripts of their interviews. The typed transcripts will be archived at the Library of Congress and a copy will ultimately be provided to the veteran. Lake County's annual participation in this program since 2012 has been a moving and inspirational experience for all who attended.

The Library of Congress-sponsored project collects first-hand accounts of veterans from World War II (1939-1946), the Korean War (1950-1955), the Vietnam War (1961-1975), the Persian Gulf War (1990-1995), the Cold War, the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts (2001-present) and other armed conflicts, as well as personal items such as photographs, diaries, letters, etc. of the veterans, if they so choose.

Civilians who were actively involved in supporting war efforts (civilian nurses and other medical personnel, war industry workers, such as "Rosie the Riveter," USO workers, civilian flight instructors and pilots, etc.) are also invited to share their valuable stories.

The program will also use volunteers from the Office of the State's Attorney, the Public Defender's Office and members of the Lake County Bar Association to conduct the oral interviews of the war veterans and the civilians that supported the war effort.

Chief Judge Ortiz said, "We are seeking veterans who were on active duty during the times our country has been involved in armed conflict. The veterans need not have been involved directly in combat themselves. Northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin are home to thousands of veterans and those civilians that helped them. Veterans are often hesitant to talk about their own experiences because of a sense of humility but they are often the last witnesses to events, to the sacrifice and bravery of others who did not survive the war or have since passed. The events they witnessed firsthand and their memories of their comrades in arms need to be preserved."

Court reporters Deborah Cohen-Rojas and Colleen Eitermann will be coordinating the court reporters' support of this important project. "The court reporters covering this year's Lake County's Veterans History Project event are again very excited to be a part of this effort. The first-hand accounts will be archived in the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress for electronic search by researchers and to serve as an inspiration for generations to come, making accessible the personal accounts of American war veterans so that future generations may hear directly from veterans and better understand the realities of war." said Ms. Cohen-Rojas.

The following judges who are veterans, Michael Betar (USMC), Michael Fusz (USN) and John Scully (USN), have been contacting various organizations and individual veterans in Northern Illinois to advise them of the project and to seek their help in contacting other war veterans and civilians that aided in the war efforts.

The guest of honor will be A. Robert Abboud, a decorated Korean War veteran. As a young Marine Corps infantry officer, he was involved in extensive combat operations with the 1st Marine Division. He was wounded in action but stayed on the line with his platoon, later receiving the Purple Heart and Bronze Star for Valor. Upon leaving the Corps, he went on to earn a Harvard Law Degree and a Harvard MBA. He has been a corporate leader, including Chairman and CEO of First Chicago Bank and later President of Occidental Petroleum. His other corporate accomplishments are too numerous to mention.

Registration for this event is required. Any veteran interested in being interviewed or anyone interested in volunteering to assist in this project, contact Lorena Hernandez, Administrative Assistant to Chief Judge Ortiz at 847.377.3771 for registration by Monday, October 23, 2017.

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