



## News Release

FROM: Chambers of the Chief Judge  
19th Judicial Circuit  
Lake County  
Waukegan, Illinois 60085-4359

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Point of Contact: John T. Phillips  
Diane Flory  
Telephone: 847.377.4500  
847.377.3818

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Waukegan, Illinois

### VETERANS DAY AT THE COURTHOUSE

Chief Judge John T. Phillips announced that the Lake County legal community will participate in the Library of Congress Veterans' History Project. At 9:00 a.m., on Veterans Day, Tuesday, November 11, 2014, approximately 30 veterans from World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War will meet at the Lake County Courthouse for a reception and ceremony and to have their oral histories recorded by official court reporters. Upon completion, the typed transcripts will be archived at the Library of Congress for use 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 the veterans.

Many organizations and individuals have provided resources including volunteers on what would otherwise be a court holiday. Court reporters from Lake County and other courthouses and from the private sector donate their time to attend and transcribe the wartime experiences. Lawyers from Lake County (including several lawyer veterans) serve as interviewers. Assistant State's Attorney Ken LaRue, who recently returned from active duty in Afghanistan, said, "I do this because I have so much respect for the people who served before I did. I want to hear what they have to say and I want their memories to be preserved for the future."

Breakfast, which will include the military favorite chipped beef on toast, will be served to the soldiers. The guest of honor at the courthouse ceremony is Medal of Honor recipient Allen Lynch who will say a few words to the veterans prior to their interviews.

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Deborah Cohen-Rojas, the Lake County court reporter who is coordinating the court reporter volunteers, several of whom come from other Illinois counties, said, "The Veterans History Project provides a very special opportunity for court reporters to give back to our veterans, using our unique skill set in a unique way. Our volunteers have expressed how very fortunate they are to be able to provide this service to men and women who have given so much of themselves to their country. Helping our veterans preserve their histories is a fulfilling and important experience, and we are forever changed after hearing their stories."

All of the military services will be represented in the participants. Among the veterans to be interviewed that morning are:

- a Marine, a Pearl Harbor survivor, who saw further action in the South Pacific;
- a sailor assigned to the aircraft carrier USS Princeton who was aboard her when she sank at Leyte Gulf;
- several infantry soldiers who served with General Patton in Europe;
- an Army Air Corps pilot who flew 51 combat missions over Europe in a P-51;
- a Korean War field artillery soldier and two infantry soldiers, one who was awarded the Bronze Star and wounded on two separate occasions;
- a Marine who was in the bloody battle at Khe Sanh in Vietnam, awarded the Silver Star, two Purple Hearts, and the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry;
- soldiers who saw action during the Tet Offensive, Central Highlands, etc.;
- two Army combat helicopter pilots in Vietnam;
- three combat Army nurses in Vietnam.

Chief Judge John Phillips, who is also a retired Air Force officer, said, "As time goes on, more and more war veterans pass away and the details of their experiences and those of their comrades are lost to the American people. War veterans are often hesitant to talk about their own experiences because of a sense of humility, but they are often the last witnesses 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."

For further details, please contact Carol Cord, Administrative Assistant to Chief Judge John Phillips, or Judge John Scully by calling 847.377.3771.

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