

# Veterans' Voices

A Virtual Creativity Magazine by Residents of:

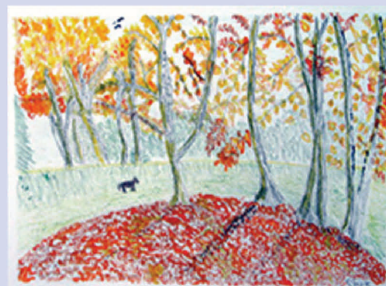
Volume Three, Number Two Winter 2011-2012

New Hampshire Veterans Home

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All of the artwork on the front cover was created by New Hampshire Veterans Home residents. Note cards featuring these paintings are available in the New Hampshire Veterans Home Store. Some of these paintings are also on display in the Tarr Dining Room.

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Veterans' Voices is a creation of the New Hampshire Veterans Home Art Committee. The members of the Art Committee are Don Giguere, Recreation LNA II; Anne Howe, Director of Nursing; Maureen Campbell, LEDU Recreation Supervisor/Recreation Therapist II; Donna Lamprey, Environmental Services Director; Kristen Griffin, MSW; Jodi Wolfe, Recreation Assistant II; and David Clark, Resident Council President.





# Untitled *By John Sears*



This Untitled painting by John Sears features a Western scene. John got the idea for the painting when he was looking in a book about Native Americans. He started painting the mother, father, and papoose (the Native American word for baby) and then he realized that the family he had just painted needed somewhere to live. So he started painting the rest of the scene, which took him 80 hours in total. He just kept adding different parts to the scene such as the mountains, rivers, houses, teepees and snow on the mountains in the distance.

Born in Manchester, NH, John has always been a lover of the arts. He spent most of his life in New Hampshire, but lived briefly in Rockville Centre, Long Island. He started painting in the late 1940s after his son-in-law introduced him to painting. During World War II, John served in the U.S. Army and served in the European-African-Middle Eastern Theatre Campaign. Prior to retiring, he worked for French's Radio, Evans Electric, and Pratt and Whitney.

After the war; he painted pictures of places and scenes that he saw while stationed in Italy. He enjoys painting all sorts of places, people, and things including this picture of Christa McAuliffe on the right. He is related to Louis Cyr who was once the strongest man on Earth.



# Autumn

***By David Clark***

Standing so erect upon a shelf in a store,  
I first saw her, and she saw me.  
We both looked at each other in a long stare,  
till my fluttering heart, tells me to help set her free.  
I'll try to explain, what really took place,  
as our gaze continued to merge into one.  
Her look is that of an Angel-with a Sunshine face,  
having long brown hair under her blue bonnet it hung.  
My sky blue eyes peered into her deep round brown,  
forming the merger of two souls that shine.  
From her rosy stilled lips comes not a sound,  
but a loud voice down deep tells me that she is mine.  
What type of form does true love come in-  
can it really be found standing on a shelf in a gown?  
For Autumn's features are but handmade porcelain,  
although radiating all around her, true love is abound.  
Standing so erect upon a shelf of dreams,  
alone she waits, unaware that time moves on.  
I will take her into my heart before Autumn leaves,  
for it is there, that I wish for her to belong.

David Clark is a veteran of the U.S. Army having served from 1965 to 1967 during Vietnam where he drove trucks in the infantry. He worked for Franklin Regional Hospital for nine years in the Environmental Services Department. He currently serves as President of the Resident Council. He enjoys writing and volunteering.



# Goodbye My Friend

*By Richard Golden*

A good friend journeyed to a better  
place  
I smiled while yet the tears were on my  
face.  
It would have pleased him (maybe did--  
who knows?)  
To see me smile at his early-sojourn's  
close.  
He had so striven to teach the world to  
smile--  
Should we forget in such a little while?  
The chiefest reason for the smile I gave  
Was not alone that he would have me  
brave,  
But that I reveled in the thought that he  
Had known, in life, had the love of  
me—  
I had not waited till he went away  
To say the kind things I with truth  
could say.  
So I am glad-not that my friend has  
gone;  
But that the earth he loved and lived  
upon  
Was my earth, too; that I had closely  
known  
And loved the lad, and that my love I'd  
shown.  
Tears over his departure? Nay, a smile  
That I had walked with him a little  
while.

# A Story of My Grandfather

*By Richard Blackmar*

During the 1930s, I spent the summers with my grandfather, Mortimar Blackmar in Gilmanton, NH. He had a little house and a little land for a garden. He was very proud of his garden. He lived in the last house in Gilmanton. It was bordered on a brook on one side, a river on the other and Suncook Lake on the end so the fishing was good.

My grandfather took me fishing the first day. I caught some fish and he showed me how to clean them and he said I was to clean them from now on. So I did. His next item was his garden; he took great pleasure in the garden and all the work in it.

My uncle Si Leavitt came to visit and he was shown the garden. The next day he was shown the garden again and he said "I saw it yesterday." My gramp said, "It has grown since yesterday." So it was a great summer.

My grandfather loved to fish. He had a simple bamboo rod with a line tied to it. He would use a live frog for bait, and he called it skipping for pickerel. It was his favorite fish; he was neatly dressed.

My grandfather had been a shoe cutter in Haverhill, MA and Pittsfield, NH. He was also a pattern maker. Now that he was retired he made home brew. I helped him with the brew, carrying the bottles to the cellar to age. He had many visitors to enjoy the brew. I rode my bike from Pembroke to Gilmanton and back every year, which was 30 miles.

I also enjoyed going swimming at Suncook Lake. Almost every day before I was of age, in the 1920s, my grandfather and my great-uncle Gilford Brickett sold alcohol in Barrington, NH. They delivered it with a trotting horse, which was a horse they also raced at the fairs. There is a picture of him in the barn. Gill Brickett was 6'2" tall and he was a boxer in his younger years.

# Poetry *By Gerard T. Sullivan*

Written in 1943 at age 17

## **Battle of Italy**

The fight is hard in Italy,  
But the fight's been hard before,  
It's not so hard to make a sally,  
Or to fight a freedom war.  
For men will fight for right,  
And to keep what they hold dear,  
And always hold these in sight,  
Whenever the enemy gets too near.

## **The Allies vs. Hitler**

The sun will rise and the sun will set,  
But nations and men will never forget,  
The pain and suffering of years in war,  
For they shall pay for crimes against law.  
These conquered nations once living in  
peace,  
But the killing Germans will never cease,  
Until they have been driven off others' land,  
And pay the price that the Allies demand.  
The Partisans of Yugoslavia are teasing their  
troops,  
And the underground of the Axis conquered  
groups,  
Are helping the Allies in bringing the Axis  
down,  
For the day the Allies will liberate each town.



# The Last Goodnight

*By David Clark*

It was just before Thanksgiving,  
he lay upon his bed, silent and alone.  
In a two bed room at FRH,  
made of brick, mortar and stone.  
His nurses enter through the door,  
medicine which they will give in hand.  
They check the vitals of just who,  
in this room does live.  
They eyed the room all about,  
for never a more homey room did they see.  
This man is loved by many, without a doubt,  
for even the flowers, were shaped like a turkey.  
The cards were hung by tacks along the wall,  
while flowers and gifts deck the window sills.  
Pictures of family members, letters sent by all,  
along with prayers to help replace the pills.  
He continued to lay upon his back sleeping,  
so silent, so alone.  
Never once hearing the nurses come-a-creeping,  
inside his two bed room FRH home  
the nurses as trained, go about their work,  
so silent, so vain.  
Changing his dressings without a quirk,  
placing into his IV medicine to kill his pain.  
Upon completing their hourly date,  
one nurse remains behind, with eyes so sad.  
Bending over, into his ear she does state,  
goodnight! I love you! Dad.

# Gaza, NH

*By Okie Howe*

In the middle of the 1800s, the section on Sanbornton now called Gaza was called Clark's Corner. The local store keeper there had a thriving business. His name was J.J. Burleigh. He realized that if he could get a Post Office in his store it would increase his business, so he applied to the Postal Department in Washington, D.C. The reply was that if he could come up with a short name for his Post Office it would be granted. There was already a Post Office called North Sanbornton and one at Clark's Corner. So J.J. Burleigh came up with an idea of how to choose a name for the new Post Office. The procedure was to blindfold his wife and let her point to a proper name in an open Bible. She did this and her finger came to rest on the proper name Gaza. In Israel it is pronounced Gaza (as a) but here in New Hampshire we pronounced it Gaza with a long a.

The store and the Post Office are long gone. Automobiles came into use and people went to Tilton or Franklin for groceries and so forth. There was no need for a store in rural Sanbornton. We who live in this section of Sanbornton take great pride in making sure the name Gaza is not forgotten. We have a neat sign at the corner that says Gaza, NH.

The farms are gone to house lots and the woods are full of houses. We Howe's are still an important part of Gaza. We had a gas station in our back yard for 30 years while Rt. 93 was being completed. It was Gaza Gas Station and it was a good business as we were considered an interstate station even though we were 2 miles from Exit 22. It is a beautiful spot. It is where Rt. 132 and 127 come together. It is listed on all major oil company maps and even on the sign at Exit 22 on Rt. 93. It says Gaza- 2 miles.

*Okie wrote this story on May 9, 2011.  
On the next page, there is a poem to  
accompany the story.*

# A Limmerick

*By Okie Howe*

There was an old woman in Gaza  
Who seldom let anything faze her  
But her flowers so bright were such a delight  
They never ceased to amaze her

*Okie Howe served in U.S. Army during World War II from 1942 to 1945. She was born in Okanogan, Washington. She enjoys reading, Tai Chi, Writing Group, exercise groups and Mentors. She also enjoys writing poetry and she has her own blog:*

*<http://poemsbyokie.wordpress.com/>*



# Arthur Foley: Cook's Corner

## **Homemade Fudge (Chocolate)**

1 stick of butter  
1 cup of sugar  
1 bar of chocolate (grated)  
1 cup of milk (half and half)  
2 tubs of marshmallows for when the mixture has stopped cooking

Place all ingredients in a large steel cooking pot and cook at medium heat for 45 minutes. Take the mixture and pour it into a square pan. Let it cool and mix the marshmallows in the mix. Cut into small squares when completely cooled.

Arthur Foley served in the U.S. Army during World War II from 1942 to 1945 as a truck driver for supplies and personnel. He worked for Nashua Corporation as a coater and operator. He enjoys the Writing Group, Tai Chi, Catholic Mass and the Art Studio.



# My Father

*By Gerard St. Cyr*

My father was the nicest man I ever met. During World War I, he served in the U.S. Merchant Marines. He traveled in the Caribbean Sea and one time he went to Puerto Rico. While there, he had occasions to eat ripe bananas right from the tree. He told us, his children, that their bananas tasted so much better than the ones we would get home in the States.

On another time, his ship docked in Baltimore, Maryland. A French sailor was lost and could not find his ship. He tried to convey his sad situation to my Dad's shipmates, but they could not understand his French. They sent him down to the boiler room to see if my Dad, who they called "Frenchy," could understand this poor French sailor. Dad told the sailor to speak slower and perhaps he could understand him. The foreign sailor was able to convey his plight to my Dad who explained where his ship was and the sailor was most thankful. My Dad said "Good Bye" and the French sailor had a big tear run down his cheek as he thanked my Dad.

On another occasion some of my Dad's shipmates and he went into downtown Baltimore. A group of them boarded a trolley car and my Dad was the last one to board. The door closed before Dad could get completely on but he had one hand on a handle and the trolley started up. His shipmates looked back for my Dad and noticed his hand on the handle and notified the conductor about my Dad being dragged along. So they stopped the trolley. My Dad was a big, robust man and he said he was not beat and he was all right.

Later on in life, his hip started to bother him. The local doctor in Franklin referred him to a specialist, Dr. Peters, a doctor in Manchester, who diagnosed my dad with a partial dislocation of a bone in the hip. The specialist advised that the dislocation had existed for so long that it could not be returned to its natural place. Consequently, my dad had to tolerate the dislocation. As a



result, my father walked with a slight limp.

My father was a big, strong man, almost 6 feet tall and weighed between 190 and 200 pounds. He had several different jobs. One job he had was working in a foundry. On one occasion he wheeled over 500 pounds of pig iron in a wheelbarrow. Another job he had was tending the horses that worked for the Public Works Department as well as the horses that pulled the fire wagon for the city of Franklin. As time passed the city departments became motorized and my dad became a full time firefighter. The city bought two fire trucks. One was a pumper made by the American LaFrance Company. The other with a little tank, ladder and truck built by the Mack Trucks Company. The fire chief was a professional machinist. With his expertise he built up the fire department into a five-truck department.

Fire Chief Edgar Wheeler, Charles Cunningham, and George St. Cyr, my dad, armed the fire stations. Mr. Cunningham, an electrician, was superintendent of the Fire Alarm System and set up basic AM radio communication with the surrounding town departments and contact between the station and the truckers.

Chief Wheeler, with the help of Cunningham and St. Cyr, went about to convert a REO wagon auto into a fire truck with a pump, a bed filled with hose, fire extinguishers, axes and other fire-fighting apparatus. The next project was to convert a Lincoln Roadster into a rescue wagon equipped with first aid supplies, oxygen supplies and rescue tools.

I am so proud my dad played a minor role in building a basic fire department in the city of Franklin, NH.

Gerard "Gerry" St. Cyr served in the Navy during the Korean Conflict from 1951 to 1955 and worked in Intelligence. After his military career, he went on to work for the State of New Hampshire and served as a State Representative. He also served as a selectman and a fire commissioner for the town of Northfield.

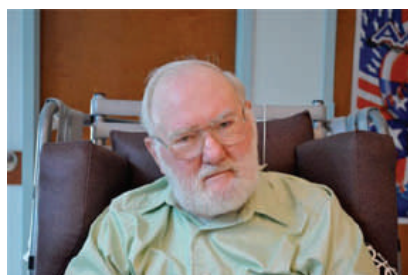


# The Toadstool and the Rose

*By Richard Golden*

Our window was etched by the frost  
yesterday,  
So early the sky was just hinting of  
gray.  
Lorraine and I played a whimsical  
game  
Of seeing if pictures in frost look the  
same  
To her and to me. It was quite a  
surprise  
To discover that, seen through  
Lorraine's kinder eyes,  
The toadstool design which I cynically  
chose,  
Appeared as a perfectly beautiful rose.  
Perhaps Lorraine's heart is as fair as  
her face,  
But I am not lacking in love and good grace.  
I'm aware of the beauty that life can  
disclose,  
But—I saw a toadstool, and she saw a  
rose.

Richard Golden served in the U.S. Army from 1953 to 1956 and went on to serve for 30 years in the National Guard. He also worked for New Hampshire Unemployment Security. He has written and published a book of his poetry.



# In Praise

*By Richard Golden*

A lady's eyes, my dearest Dear,  
Have been compared, both far and near  
To every sort of beauteous thing  
Of which a lover's heart can sing.

They're oft compared to crystal pools,  
Alike the dewdrops and to jewels.  
To do yours justice I would fain,  
Yet each comparison seems in vain.

A lady's lips, my dearest Dear.  
Are said by poets, year by year,  
To be so very like the rose,  
Or tulip petals, ere they close.

My sweet, these flowers have beauty,  
true,  
But none of them compares with you,  
And though these buds are truly fair  
Your lips, love, are beyond compare.

A lady's skin, my dearest Dear,  
Is likened, if 'tis wondrous clear,  
To winter fields of drifted snow,

Try as I will, I cannot see  
Their beauty, mirrored thus in thee.  
Your radiance of yourself was born,  
And not Dame Nature to adorn.

A lady's heart, my dearest Dear,  
A hard-won treasure is, I fear,  
And even won, 'tis easy lost  
Until each dreaded bar be crossed.

And so you see, my light of love,  
To me you are so far above  
The world I have about me here,  
I've but one thought, I love you, Dear.

# Men of Guadalcanal

*By Gerard T. Sullivan*

When the battle was over for a time,  
And the men lay down to rest,  
With their clothes full of dirt and grime,  
They were glad to be rid of a Jap nest.  
Men coming back from battle,  
Who went out young and eager,  
Returning weary, walking like cattle,  
With bodies scared and meager.  
Young boys and men awhile before,  
Now walking as if in a dream,  
Returning with tales of the horrors of war,  
Those who went in good and clean.  
Thinking of those pals left behind,  
On the battlefield of a distant land,  
Coming back with legs and arms to bind,  
Suffered in fighting; some hand to hand.  
But they'll go back again and again,  
With tanks and guns and armies of men.

Gerard "Gerry" Sullivan wrote this poem and many other poems at age 17 in 1943. Originally from Staten Island, New York, Gerry served in the U.S. Army from 1944 to 1945. He was wounded in battle and received a Purple Heart. He went on to become a Wall Street banker. He moved to Manchester, NH in 1983.



# The Blue Ocean

***By Richard Golden, Gerry Sullivan,  
Frank Kelly and Charles England***

The ocean shore is forevermore as blue as before.

The waves crash and roar forevermore.

This makes you want to make a castle in the sand that we make  
with a hand.

The fish swim by and jump toward the sky as the sea breeze flows  
through the salt air.



*Richard Golden, Gerry Sullivan, Frank Kelly and Charles England were members of a Poetry Group started by Recreation Therapy Intern Jodi Wolfe as part of her internship experience. The four of them reside on the Daniel Webster Neighborhood. The Poetry Group met during the Summer of 2011. Richard and Gerry have been writing poetry for most of their lives and have poems published in this issue of Veterans' Voices. Frank and Charles are life-long poetry lovers.*



# Two Poems About the Ocean

*By Gerard T. Sullivan*

## **Sailing O'er the Sea**

When I'm sailing o'er the sea,  
Thoughts of you come back to me,  
Of the times we spent together,  
In many different kinds of weather.  
In these times, the sea has many dangers,  
For at times it is calm, then it changes,  
Destruction is great upon the sea,  
What modern man never thought could be.

## **Water**

Water is very lovely to see,  
Whether in a lake, ocean, stream or sea,  
Flowing alone without a care,  
Dressed in a flowing gown bright and fair.  
Gliding gently along its way,  
Through all kinds of days  
Useful to man in factories and on farms,  
And to men on islands with swaying palms.

# 20 Steps

*By Okie Howe*

I took twenty steps out into the hall  
With no one to help me in case I should fall  
The nurse had told me she was coming right back  
So I stepped out alone on my same old track

Then, all of a sudden, there were nurses galore  
Med Techs and LNA's and RN's and more  
I'd taken 20 steps all alone and with the greatest of care  
But I'd broken a rule-no trifling affair

So they called in the troops from near and from far  
And they all agreed. I'd made a "faux pas"  
I know the rules that make it safe for us all  
And, I'd never again all alone, take twenty steps down the hall

Chicken Little was certain he'd heard the sky fall  
I know how he felt from my jaunt in the hall  
It was a world shaking event, a terrible crime  
It's there in the record to last for all time.

# Yellow Violets

*By Okie Howe*

I walked in the woods on a soft April day  
Spring breezes had just chased winter away  
The carpet of leaves was all matted down  
From the deep winter snow that had covered the ground

The brook rushing down on the way to the sea  
Seemed as lovely and joyful as it ever could be  
The trees weren't quite ready to wake from their sleep  
All budded and waiting-a promise to keep

Right there by the path, so close to the ground  
Was the first little flower in the woods all around  
Yellow Violets! So lovely, so small!  
Step softly! Don't hurt one at all!

Then I remembered a long time ago  
I knew where the first yellow violets would grow  
By an old birch tree on the side of a hill  
I wonder if they are growing there still?

Springtime-new time for all living things.  
Sunshine and showers-whatever it brings  
If you might find nuggets of gold on the way  
Let me find yellow violets on a soft April day

# Forever 41

*By David Clark*

***May 17<sup>th</sup>, 1986***

I lost my wife, my life this day  
(She'll be forever Forty-one)  
She is no longer here,  
The good Lord has taken her away.  
(She'll be forever Forty-one)  
Her starry-eyes forever closed,  
Her ever-loving heart forever stilled,  
(She'll be forever Forty-one)  
No longer reflecting her happy life  
No longer being thrilled,  
(She'll be forever Forty-one)  
How quickly came her decease,  
An infliction, causing her so much grief,  
(She'll be forever Forty-one)  
May you lie in peace, my loving wife,  
Till my day comes, an end to my life,  
(For, I as well will remain forever Forty-one)

# Arch Hill

*By David Clark*

I loved sledding when I was a lad,  
sledding fast down Arch Hill.  
With winds blowing hard, snow falling mad,  
having fun with my friends, was such a thrill.  
My sled: long, lean and made of wood,  
sure did go,  
down the hill, skipping o'er the snow.  
Finally, at the end of the downhill run,  
in the distance traveled, I had won.  
Heading up was yet another thing,  
for upon my back I saw no wing.  
From bottom to top, slipping and sliding,  
I could not stop.  
With no footholds in the snow, my sled I lugged,  
I strained, I struggled, I could not give in,  
this journey, also I must win.  
At the top, tired, but with a smile it was said,  
I had arrived, ahead of my winning sled.

*David Clark won The Famous Poets Society's  
"The Muse of Fire" award for this poem in 2001.*

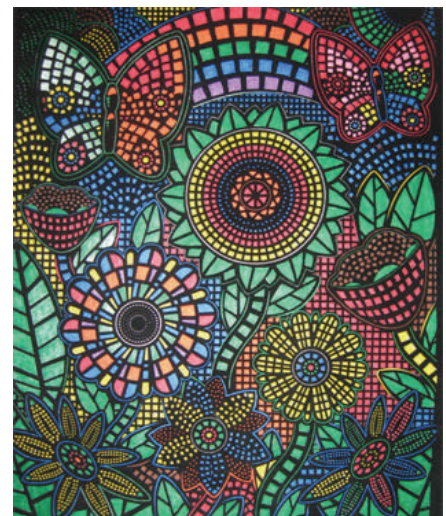


# Puzzle Creations

*by Arthur Mourtgis*



Arthur Mourtgis' favorite hobby is working on puzzles. Once he completes a puzzle, it is glued together and hung up for display. Arthur displays his puzzles in both his room and in the hallway of his neighborhood for all to enjoy. Here are a few of his favorites.



# My Star In A Velvet Sky

*By David Clark*

There's a bright glittering star above in a velvet sky;  
though separated, we longed for one another as years pass by.  
Your visits to many-a-foster-home, had filled my sad heart;  
while tears of love steadily flowed upon your depart.  
Gone now-our hopes and golden dreams for the coming years;  
of a family unity which would reflect our own lives.  
Gone now-the sparkle in the eyes to be replaced with tears;  
of a loss and wonder why a certain family vegetates and dies.  
Without your guidance, your love, I seem to have lost my way;  
my journey has been long, a high price I have to pay.  
Inside, my soul burned with memories of yesterday's years;  
while continuing forward, all hope is dimmed with tears.  
Your body gone now-to a world without tears or pain;  
your Godly soul shines above, we'll be together again.  
Until that day, my life remains empty, for you, I cry;  
for there was never any time given to say, Goodbye.  
To live as a family, has been my only wish to behold;  
sharing laughter and joy and sorrow until I too grow old.  
Now, gazing into the flickering light above, I see a star;  
and with adoring eyes and heart, bow my head to whisper,  
I love you and miss you, Dad, I'll always know where you are.

# Snow Tonight

*By Okie Howe*

Deep woods in December—we've hiked there all day  
Bare trees—oaks, maples and beeches all gray  
The leaves of last summer cover all of the ground  
Like a soft brown blanket tucked in all around

The brook running softly to places below  
All ready to hide under deep winter snow  
The beaver pond frozen among the dead trees  
Beavers, are you ready for a long winter freeze?

I sit on a stump almost rotted away  
From a lumbering job on a long ago day  
Late afternoon sun on an old stone wall  
Who built it! I wonder. It's here for us all

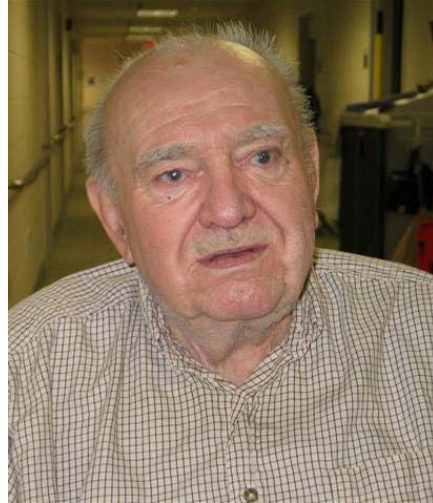
The weatherman says tonight it will snow  
My woods will be changed tomorrow, I know  
Each season is lovely but what a delight  
To find a new world when it snowed in the night.

# Additional Veterans' Voices

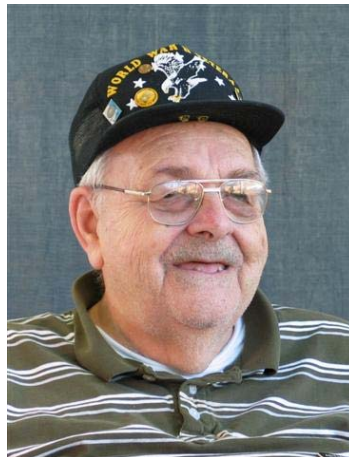
## Contributor

## Information

Richard Blackmar (A Story of My Grandfather, p.7) served in the U.S. Marines during World War II from 1943 to 1946. Over the course of his career, he has worked as a painter, a forklift operator and a woodsman. He enjoys being part of the Writing Group, attending Peaceful Moments, attending a weekly discussion group and observing at the nurses' station.



Arthur Mourtgis (Puzzle Creations, p. 25) served in the U.S. Army during World War II as a rifleman in the 3rd Infantry Division. He is originally from Manchester, NH. He enjoys working on puzzles, working on other artwork projects and attending Catholic Mass.



Thank you everyone for your contributions!