

ALL GAVE SOME; SOME GAVE ALL

This week's veteran is Noel Hebert.

Noel entered the Navy in 1944. When he was drafted, he was given the choice of joining the Army or Navy, and he chose Navy. He was sent to Farragut Naval Training Station located on Lake Pend Oreille in Bayview, Idaho, for basic training. After basic, he went to Gulfport Naval Base, MS, for mechanics training. However, the school was not ready to train students, so he spent his time setting up the school, but Noel never received any training. Next he traveled to Lawley Shipyards in Boston, MA, to become part of the crew of a new ship, *LCI(L) 714*. LCI(L)s, flat-bottomed with a shallow draft, were made to land up to 200 troops on a beach. After a shakedown cruise, they made their way to Saipan via the Panama Canal where they went through three-abreast because they were small ships, San Diego, and Pearl Harbor.

While on Saipan, Noel asked permission to visit Bill Lacey, his friend from Assumption, on another ship. His request was granted, but while on Bill's ship, the *LCI(L)714* got orders for Okinawa, so it left without Noel. He was in Saipan for several days before the Navy flew him to Okinawa to rejoin his ship.

His ship was sent to Guam from Okinawa to pick up signal equipment and personnel which they would later take to Tokyo Bay after the Japanese surrendered. During their trip from Guam back to Okinawa, they were in a terrible typhoon. Upon returning to base which had been almost leveled during the storm, Noel's skipper was told by the base commander, "We knew that you were out there, but we didn't expect you to return."

On his voyage back to the States, Noel had an appendicitis attack. A doctor from another ship was transferred at great risk to his life to Noel's ship in rough seas. The doctor would not operate because of the tossing ship, so they put Noel on a reduced water and food diet for several days until they reached Hawaii where his appendix was removed.

He continued his trip home, but three days out of Pearl Harbor, the *LCI(L)714* started taking on water from leaks in the hull. Another ship escorted them back to Pearl to rescue the crew if the ship sank. The *LCI(L)714* was decommissioned.

After returning home in late 1946, Noel started farming west of Assumption. He married Mary Louise Fullerton in 1949. They have seven children: Phillip, Margaret, Mark, Paul, John, Therese, and Joe, 13 grandchildren, and 31 great-grandchildren.

Thank you, Motor Machinist 2nd Class Noel N. Hebert, for what you gave for us.