



Articles & Features

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A Local American Hero: Last Surviving World War I Veteran Turns 109



Far Left: Frank Woodruff Buckles, age 16, U.S. Regular Army, First Ft. Riley Casual Detachment of 102 men.

Left: Frank Woodruff Buckles wearing medal.

Photos: Library of Congress

A local American hero from Charles Town, W.Va., and the last surviving World War I Veteran is 109 years old today.

Frank Woodruff Buckles was born in 1901 and was only 16 years of age when he enlisted in the U.S. Army where he served as an ambulance driver. Following the Armistice, Mr. Buckles served with a prisoner of war (Prisoner of War) escort unit returning prisoners back to Germany.

Later, as a civilian traveling abroad with his shipping business, Mr. Buckles was captured by the Japanese during World War II and held for three years and two months as a POW.

Mr. Buckles is a true American Hero and the Martinsburg VA Medical Center staff and volunteers congratulate him on his military service and his service to our Nation.

More information can be found at the Library of Congress:

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/bib/loc.natlib.afc2001001.01070>

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/vhp-stories/loc.natlib.afc2001001.01070/album>

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The Martinsburg VA Medical Center mission is to honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being. Located in West Virginia, the Medical Center offers a comprehensive range of services, including internal medicine, ambulatory surgery, audiology and speech pathology, dental, nursing home, nutrition, podiatry, prosthetics, women's health, mental health, and rehabilitation medicine. With a service area of nearly 130,000 veterans in West Virginia, Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania, the Medical Center operates three VA-staffed Outpatient Clinics in Cumberland and Hagerstown, Md., and Stephens City, Va., and three contract clinics in Franklin and Petersburg, W.Va. and Harrisonburg, Va. Construction for a new clinic in Fort Detrick, Md. has started with an opening tentatively scheduled in Fall 2010.