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Documentary allows vets to tell war stories 'In Their Own Words'

By REBECCA BRIA
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The Invasion of Normandy was 65 years ago.

But to Jack Evans, it was just yesterday.

Evans, 88, of Trucksville, is a veteran of the U.S. Army Paratroopers 502nd Parachute Infantry of the 101st Airborne Division. He parachuted into France in the late afternoon of June 5, 1944, the day before the invasion, or D-Day.

"To some people and to newspapers, D-Day was 65 years ago but to some of us, it was just yes-

terday," Evans said. "And some-

times it was just an hour ago." Evans is one of 10 Back Mountain veterans featured in a short film titled "In Their Own Words." The video will be shown at Rep. Karen Boback (R-Harveys Lake) and Misericordia University's Annual Veterans' Appreciation Ceremony at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 7, in the Lemmond Theater at Misericordia University.

The ceremony will also feature remarks from Major General Jessica Wright, Pennsylvania's Adjutant General, and a performance by the 28th Infantry Division

IF YOU GO...

Annual Veterans' Appreciation Ceremony
Saturday, Nov. 7, at 11 a.m.
The Lemmond Theater at Misericordia University
For more information or to register, go to www.repboback.com or call 477-3752.

Keystone Brass.

The Veteran's Appreciation Ceremony is free and open to all veterans. Pre-registration for the ceremony is requested because certificates and commemorative pins will be given to participants from the 117th legislative dis-

trict.

"The ceremony is a celebration of America's veterans and is open to everyone in the community who wants to show their support for our hometown heroes," Boback said. "This will also be a great opportunity for young peo-

ple to learn about the men and women who have contributed to America's liberties and freedoms."

The video for the ceremony was produced by Misericordia University senior communication majors Mike Terlesky, 21, of

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Jacks Evans, of Trucksville, holds up a photo of himself from when he was in the U.S. Army Paratroopers 502nd Parachute Infantry of the 101st Airborne. Evans is a World War II veteran.



AIMEE DILGER/TIMES LEADER FILE PHOTO



Erin Dougherty, of Dallas, works on a hand-felted purse she is making at Verve Vertu at Arts Universe in Wilkes-Barre.

Special art by special people

By REBECCA BRIA
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Erin Dougherty's painting "Maine Sunflower" was such a success that she has already received requests from three people to paint similar works for them.

The 35-year-old Dallas resident is an artist at Verve Vertu Art Studio in Wilkes-Barre, an apprenticeship studio devoted to focusing on and developing the artistic abilities of people with special needs.

Dougherty has Down syndrome, but that doesn't stop her from pursuing a passion for art. Her inspiration for "Maine Sunflower" came from a painting she viewed on a Verve Vertu field trip during the summer to the Ogunquit Museum-American Art in Ogunquit, Maine.

"I'm lovin' it," Dougherty said of her experiences at the studio. "I like making something."

The Verve Vertu Art Studio is part of the Deutsch Institute, a

FIND OUT MORE

For more information on the Verve Vertu Art Studio, call 208-5305 or visit www.vervevertu.com. The studio also has a new blog at www.vervevertu.blogspot.com.

non-profit organization dedicated to creating and expanding leisure and recreation interests for people with disabilities and special needs. The institute is holding its 30th anniversary celebrity brunch fundraiser, "It's a Jungle Out There," from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at St. Mary's Center in Scranton.

The art studio opened in 2004 inside ArtsYOUiverse in the former Stegmaier Mansion on South Franklin Street. When Arts YOUiverse moved to the former First United Methodist Church on North Franklin Street in January, the studio relocated with it.

Gwen Harleman, arts coordinator at the studio, says Verve means high energy or spirit in La-

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Bessie Kleintob brings 'sunshine' into lives of prisoners at SCI Dallas

By REBECCA BRIA
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"Sunshine" is what Bessie Kleintob is called every time she walks into the State Correctional Institute (SCI) in Dallas.

The 91-year-old Huntington Mills resident helps lead a Bible study group two days a month at SCI Dallas, a medium security prison for men. And when Kleintob enters the prison's sanctuary,

the 10 to 15 men who attend the study always say, "Here comes sunshine."

Kleintob was one of 29 volunteers honored at the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections volunteer Recognition Banquet on Oct. 3 at the department's Elizabethtown Training Academy. Although she was not in attendance, Kleintob will receive a framed letter signed by Governor Edward G. Rendell and Sec-

retary of Corrections Jeffrey A. Beard, Ph.D.

Kleintob was also named Volunteer of the Year for 2009 at SCI Dallas. She was recognized at a dinner, cooked by the prisoners, in April at the prison's gymnasium. She was also presented with a gold watch and a proclamation from Sen. Lisa Baker in appreciation of her work.

"I felt it wasn't something I deserved because I was only doing

what I like to do," Kleintob said of being recognized for her volunteer efforts. "It's a pleasure and a blessing. I get a blessing every time I go to the prison. It's a blessing for me and for them."

A member of Town Hill United Methodist Church, Kleintob became involved with the Yoke Fellowship Prison Ministry about five years ago when her former pastor, the Rev. Stevan Atanasoff, requested assistance in the ministry at SCI Dallas from church members. Her friend, Laura Shaffer, was also active with the group and remains a part of it.

On two Mondays a month at noon, Kleintob, Shaffer and the Rev. Atanasoff, now preaching at a church in Williamstown, lead Bible discussions in the prison's sanctuary. The prisoners will al-

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S. JOHN WILKIN/TIMES LEADER FILE PHOTO

Bessie Kleintob, 91, receives standing applause as she is honored for her volunteer service at SCI Dallas during a banquet in April.

Inside: Special section for 'Best of the Back Mountain'

The Dallas Post presented the Second Annual "Best of the Back Mountain" awards ceremony last Monday evening at Fire & Ice on Toby Creek.

Winners in 80 categories

were presented with plaques and window decals to proudly display at their businesses.

Attendees at the ceremony were treated to food and refreshments prepared by Fire & Ice owners Joe and Sandy Fas-

ula and Gary Edwards.

See the special "Best of the Back Mountain" section inside today's Dallas Post for a list of winners and runners-up, complete with stories and photos.

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