



Photo of John Kuhn

John Kuhn was born May 1, 1923 in Walling, Tennessee.

He served in the U.S. Navy in World War II where he participated in the Pacific Theater of Operation and was a hero of the Battle of Tarawa as he drove Marines ashore under fire.

While encountering the hazards of landing the Higgins Boats on the island, John experienced the grief of losing his fellow soldiers. He saw them drown in high waters, be shot by enemy fire, and other tragic ends. John buried some of his comrades in ponchos and placed them on higher ground to avoid the washing of the tide. This was something John lived with the remainder of his life--leaving his boys behind.

According to John's family, he suffered from terrible nightmares nightly, never forgiving himself for leaving the boys behind. He never married. He became a simple man who loved life and was dedicated to his family and beloved dogs.

John's friend, Chris Batte', co-founder of Honoring Veterans' Legacies, became witness to a change in John. While on a trip to Pearl Harbor with other vets through Forever Young Veterans, Chris overheard a conversation about the repatriation of soldiers (bringing them home) from Tarawa to the Punch Bowl Cemetery in Hawaii. Chris introduced John to the man and one thing led to another. John told of how he buried "his boys" in their ponchos. The man, astonished to hear this, asked John to help bring them home. He also learned about the other "boys" being brought home to rest.

Chris saw a change in John's eyes. The next morning, Chris asked John if he had any dreams the previous night. His response was "yes." He followed up with "but, they were good dreams." He did not have any more nightmares. He was at peace, healed. He helped bring his boys home.

Alternate or Additional Story: "Organization helps to heal senior veterans."

https://www.eneWSCourier.com/news/local_news/forever-young-organization-helps-to-heal-senior-veterans/article_1c139ce4-1adf-11ea-ab45-6bd6d67e090e.html