



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John A. DeFrancisco

Alberto Caiella

JOHN A. DEFRANCISCO May 18, 2012



Alberto Caiella

Award: Honoring Our Veterans

Year: 2012

Alberto Caiella was born on May, 1918 and has lived most of his life in the Syracuse, New York where he still resides today with his wife, Lucy. Alberto's family includes 7 children, 14 grandchildren, and 4 great-grandchildren. Mr. Caiella was nominated by his proud granddaughters Kristin, Danielle and Bianca.

Alberto Caiella was drafted on July 16, 1941 and proudly served his country for four years as a half-track driver in the United States Army as a T5 (Technician, 5th Grade) A Company 17th Engineers, 2nd Armored Division 9th Army.

During this time, Alberto fought in several countries including Belgium, site of the Battle of the Bulge. Two-star General Ernest Harmon led Alberto's unit, the 2nd Armored Division. The Division known as "Hell on Wheels" played a pivotal role in halting the German offensive push against Allied forces. The Division arrived in Ciney, Belgium on Christmas Day, 1944 and bravely fought the German army for 30 days alongside British troops. Due to harsh weather conditions and minimal shelter availability, Alberto sustained a condition called frozen feet. On Monday, July 23, 1945, Alberto was discharged and returned to Syracuse, NY.

Alberto received 7 Battlefield Stars – one for each battlefield fought on Africa, Sicily, Normandy (3 days after D-Day), France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. As for his time spent in the service, Alberto meets twice a year to reminisce with his fellow local Battle of the Bulge veterans. Beginning in 1950, Alberto has also enjoyed regularly attending the annual 2nd Armored Division's national reunion. A proud veteran, Alberto has missed this tradition only 10 times in the 62 years since first going and intends to make the journey once again this year.