



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

OLEAN WWII VET AND FORMER POW INDUCTED INTO SENATE'S VETERANS' HALL OF FAME

CATHARINE YOUNG May 24, 2012

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ALBANY – WWII veteran John J. Maroon has one piece of advice for students in Western New York – never give up.

In honor of his dedicated service, Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I – Olean) named Private First Class John J. Maroon an inductee to the 2012 New York State Senate Veterans' Hall of Fame.

Private Maroon served in the U.S. Army, participated in combat operations in Italy during 1944 and spent time as a Prisoner of War (POW). He often shares those experiences with school children.

“It is a privilege to recognize John for his military service and his unflagging commitment to our country during combat and captivity. His service continues in his dedication to the community. His patriotism and tenacity in the face of hardship serve as a positive example to us all,” said Senator Young.

Private Maroon tells his life story to students, many of whom are the same age as he was when he entered military service.

“I try to tell these kids about how great our country is. I ask them to think about these guys who have sacrificed their lives,” said Private Maroon. He encourages them to not take life for granted, to take their education seriously, and to go to college.

“Don’t give up. If I gave up, I wouldn’t be here,” said Private Maroon.

Private Maroon was born in Niagara Falls in 1925 and, before completing high school, joined the U.S. Army in November 1943.

After being assigned to the 36th Infantry “Arrowhead” Division, he fought in the Battle of Monte Cassino, and the capture and liberation of Rome.

In August 1944, Private Maroon participated in the Operation Dragoon assault landing at Saint-Raphaël.

In November 1944, he was captured during heavy fighting as the 36th Infantry Division advanced into the mountains. He and 12 other survivors were taken to Germany's Stalag 7A POW camp in Moosburg, Bavaria. He was later freed by advancing American forces.

Private Maroon credits his Catholic faith for giving him the strength to endure the hardships he endured as a POW.

Upon returning to civilian life, he married Margaret Agnello in 1947 and raised a family of three children, Linda, Debbie, and John. He later relocated to Olean. He and his late wife have five grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

In 2002, Private Maroon received his high school diploma through the Operation Recognition Program.

Private Maroon's awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, the POW Medal, the Good Conduct Medal, the American Campaign Medal, the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with three campaign stars and bronze arrowhead device, the World War II Victory Medal, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, the Marksman Badge with rifle bar, and the New York State Conspicuous Service Cross.

The New York State Senate Veterans' Hall of Fame was created in 2005 to honor and recognize outstanding veterans from the Empire State who have distinguished themselves both in military and civilian life. Their meritorious service to our nation deserves the special recognition that only a Hall of Fame can provide, as a fitting expression of our gratitude and admiration.

Private Maroon's biography, along with those of other inductees, past and present, can be

found online at www.nysenate.gov/honoring-our-veterans.