

ONLINE ONLY

- 1 injured in two-car wreck at US 90 and CR 49 Tuesday
- 2 injured in Tuesday afternoon wreck at CR 49 and US 27



12A

Suwannee Weekend
Live Oak Scarecrow Festival

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL
breast cancer
awareness MONTH

Breast cancer survivor -

Michelle LeNeave



6-7A

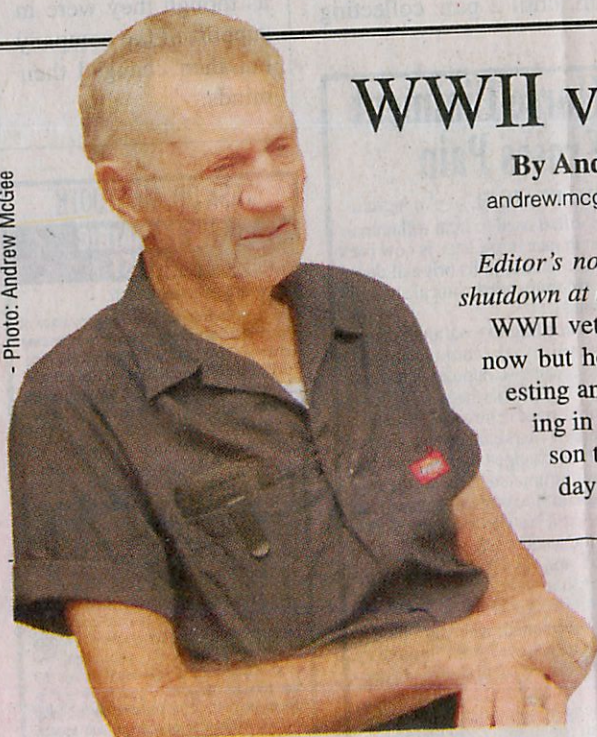
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- Photo: Andrew McGee



WWII vet angry over closed memorial

By Andrew McGee

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Editor's note: The government was still shutdown at time of this interview.

WWII veteran Johnny Thompson is 89 now but he still remembers some interesting and often terrifying times of being in Europe during WWII. Thompson told a *Democrat* reporter Tuesday he was highly livid over the

government shutting down the WWII memorial as part of the government shutdown and that if he was in

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Thompson

WWII vet angry over closed memorial

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Washington with the others that removed the barri-

cades, all of D.C. would have known he had arrived.

The spry Live Oak native said when he was in

Europe fighting to defend our country there were no barricades to keep him safe when he stormed Nor-

mandy; there were no barricades when he fell off a bridge into icy cold water, and almost drowned and there should not have ever been any barricades at a memorial to honor his and the sacrifice of others.

Thompson is also angry that vets were kept out of the Colleville-sur-Mer Cemetery and Memorial in Normandy, France where thousands of Americans are laid to rest, overlooking Omaha Beach.

"I can not tell you a reason for the government to shutdown this memorial to the World War II veterans except stupidity," said Thompson. "Stupidity is the only word I can use."

He said whoever was responsible whether President Barack Obama or Congress, should have more respect than keeping the veterans from seeing a memorial they fought and

many died for.

"It was a disgrace to do that to the WWII veterans," said Thompson. "It was like spitting in their face."

Thompson had the opportunity to visit the Washington memorial which he enjoyed seeing and appreciated what was done in their memory. He didn't see where the expense of running it would give the government the authority to shut it down. He saw no expense and if there were any security guards, he didn't notice them and saw no admission to anything there - and this was a few years ago when he visited.

"We walked in free. We saw all that we wanted to see free," said Thompson. "We were able to stay as long as we wanted."

He said every veteran who was there that day enjoyed it because it meant something very deep to

them.

"There were some veterans over 90-years-old with tears in their eyes knowing the sacrifice they made and the appreciation that was shown to them by building this memorial," said Thompson. "And then our government to come over there and put a (barricade) across there and tell them they can't go in was a disgrace."

Thompson is from Phenix City, Alabama, and if he had been there that day when the barricade was across the walkway, they would have known that Phenix City blood was coming out.

"I would have torn that gate down or died trying," said Thompson.

Thompson concluded the *Democrat* couldn't print "all" he wanted to say. Might make some folks turn red.