
America's Last WWI Veteran Turns 110

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Frank Woodruff Buckles, the last surviving soldier to have served on the Western Front during World War One will turn 110 tomorrow and two artists have united to share his legacy with the world. Buckles now becomes the oldest person to become a filmmaker. Frank Woodruff Buckles was born in 1901 and has survived WWI, WWII, is lobbying for a National World War One Memorial in DC, is the oldest person to have ever testified before senate and can now add film producer to his resume.

Buckles will spend the day at home enjoying his birthday and continues to be optimistic about life: "I look forward to living to be 115." He said earlier this week. When Buckles was born motion pictures were just six years old and he rode a horse to school in the teens as in early nineteen hundreds that is.

Buckles and his family will be paid as writers and producers and share in any proceeds that the film generates. The project is being led by David DeJonge and his non-profit organization Survivor Quest based in Hudsonville, Michigan.

Four years ago DeJonge interviewed Frank Buckles as part of his documentary on the last survivors of World War One and has been shooting HD footage of the soldier ever since. The two later unveiled that collection in the Oval Office, Pentagon and have educated over 50,000 students with the traveling exhibit. "After accumulating hundreds of hours of footage and interviews the time has come to fundraise and complete the film." Today at 11:11 est a "kickstarter.com" campaign was launched to raise at least \$150,000 to complete the feature length film.

"My family and I have self-funded this project for four years and it has been a priceless experience. We are however now at a point where we need to expand our team and complete this project to share Franks incredible life story with the world." DeJonge said.

Kickstarter is a website where individuals can participate and fund creative projects. It is an all or nothing campaign meaning that if funding is not reached no money will exchange hands and the project will have to look elsewhere to be completed.

Sculptor Gregory Marra contacted DeJonge about a year ago to discuss the idea of a bronze statue to honor Buckles. The two immediately hit it off and began discussing the best way to honor Frank.

"Honoring our fighting men and women with figurative bronze work is the best way to thank our defenders for their courage bravery and valor, this statue of Frank Buckles is mandatory" Stated Marra in an interview on Monday.

Ultimately a larger than life bronze of a young Frank Buckles leading General Pershing's riderless horse was decided on. Buckles met Pershing after World War One and was an equestrian during the 20's and 30's.

A location for the bronze is being considered and it may end up as a tribute in multiple locations including Europe.

A campaign to offset development of the bronze is underway now and a kickstarter campaign for the sculpture will launch soon. Both projects have links from frankbuckles.org and tax-deductible contributions can be online.