

Cierra Hernandez & Zeke Johnston

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Period 3

Mr. Leduc



Richard Waggoner

Richard Waggoner is one of the only kind of people to grab life and take it as his own. Waggoner is a strong man who did incredible things for the country he loves. Waggoner had to face many crucial and difficult battles during his military service for three years, one month, and twenty six days on the USS Cabot.

Waggoner was born in Michigan in 1925 and was raised by a family of five. He was the oldest of two siblings, he had a younger brother and sister. Waggoners father was an MD and his mother was a music teacher. He was about seventeen when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, once they heard the tragic news of the attack his lifelong friend Art Oswald and him rushed out

to volunteer together to join the fight. “There was a war, and I was ready to fight!”, Waggoner said.

During his choice to volunteer he decided to go into the Navy and after his two courses of gun hydraulics and gun mechanic training he became a gunner's mate second class. Waggoner went through the Panama Canal then the Pacific then San Diego to Pearl Harbor and finally to the Pacific. He was in 9 major battles at sea and was hit with a Kamikaze after his crew shot its wings off. He received a Purple Heart due to him getting a fractured leg, he claims “He was in the wrong place at the wrong place”. It wasn't until the end of the war that he finally received his heart in the mail.

After the war ended in the Pacific, he returned to his wife Helen, whom he had met during his time in High school, and raised his three kids. He then attended college in Michigan getting his bachelor's degree in industrial arts in 1950, then served in the Korean War for its duration. Came back and got his his master's for industrial arts in '54. He then worked at Dooghas Aircraft for a while until he became a teacher and taught high school shop until his retirement. Now retired he spends his days being with his three daughters, who are also retired, and hangs out with his grandchildren.

When he was asked whether he was proud to serve his country or not he said “you bet your sweet pippi!”. Waggoner is a strong man willing to grab life and take it as his own. He's fought in a horrific war, yet still made it back to support his wife and kids. Waggoner is a proud man and a proud veteran to this country, but most importantly he's a proud father that his children can look up to everyday.