



105-Year-Old World War II Veteran Among First Females Officially Recognized by US Military

Wauwatosa, Wisconsin (August 5, 2024) – August 14 marks the date in 1945 that Japan surrendered, ending World War II. A local woman — who turned 105 years old in March 2024 — was serving in the Pacific Theater when it happened. **Marge Jochen**, a resident of **Luther Manor** in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, is one of the U.S. military’s first female officers, advancing to First Lieutenant while serving as a nurse in New Guinea and the Philippines.

While in **New Guinea**, Jochen treated soldiers from her home state. The 32nd “Red Arrow” Infantry Division included members of the **Wisconsin National Guard**, who fought the Japanese in what many considered extremely brutal combat, according to the [U.S. Embassy to Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu](#). (The Red Arrow logged 654 days in combat – more than any other division in the war, according to [The National Guard](#).)

Jochen celebrated the day that she was assigned work she was trained for – assisting as a surgical nurse. However, in addition to the “horrific injuries” she treated, Jochen endured sweltering heat, rat infestations, nearby combat, and mosquito-borne disease. At one point she contracted Dengue Fever.

While in **the Philippines**, she served in a remote, makeshift hospital that had previously been used by the Japanese as a shelter for their horses. The conditions were rough, but it was at this

hospital that Jochen had the opportunity to meet **General Douglas MacArthur's wife, Jean MacArthur**, who was visiting the soldiers and personnel.

Later, Jochen's civilian life held other challenges. At the age of 75, Marge was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer that had metastasized in her lungs. Like the challenges in the Pacific Islands that she survived, Marge overcame the cancer.

At 105 years of age, Jochen still recalls details of her life blazing trails for women and serving her country, including the day that Japan surrendered. It was a day of hope for a young woman who had been serving for nearly three years with only a single two-week leave in Sydney, Australia.

"We finally had some possibility of going home," Marge said.

About Luther Manor:

Luther Manor is a Life Plan Community that offers a continuum of care for older adults. A nonprofit, faith-based community founded in 1961, Luther Manor provides shelter, care and community to  over 350 residents. Jochen has lived at Luther Manor since 1995.

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