

The Greatest Generation is Living at The Villa by Renee Shea

As I sat working in my office on a Monday morning, just a few weeks ago, I was touched to hear The Villa Choir practicing songs they would soon perform at nearby nursing homes. The songs were patriotic in theme, and often referred to the freedom we enjoy in our great nation. It occurred to me that the very people singing these songs are some of the same people responsible for the independence I enjoy today. They are the people journalist Tom Brokaw labeled “The Greatest Generation”.

I felt a little lump in my throat as I thought about that. I have the daily privilege of working among members of *The Greatest Generation*. I have the pleasure of looking into the eyes of the people who fought for a better world, and then passed the rewards of their unyielding labor down to me. It is like looking into the eyes of treasured history.

I, of course, never met the courageous people who voyaged from Europe, China or Polynesia to find the land where I now live. Nor will I ever meet the heroes who brought forth freedom to a new world, and declared that I have a right to pursue happiness, and then guaranteed me that right.

But every day I come face to face with people who, some 165 years later, sacrificed to preserve that right and other entitlements as well. These are the people who lived through The Great Depression, and, as Brokaw put it, *“answered the call to save the world from the two most powerful and ruthless military machines ever assembled.”*

Brokaw wrote, *“At a time in their lives when their days and nights should have been filled with innocent adventure, love, and the lessons of the workaday world, they were fighting in the most primitive conditions possible across the bloodied landscape of France, Belgium, Italy, Austria, and the coral islands of the Pacific, or they were back home in the United States working and striving to produce the weapons required to win the war.”*

“This was not a perfect generation. They made mistakes along the way -- they let racism go on too long. They were too slow to respond to the place of women in our society. But taken collectively they came out of a very difficult time -- the Depression, when economically there was so little hope in this country, and they succeeded on every front.”

So when I hear The Villa Choir rehearsing tunes such as “God Bless America”, “You’re a Grand Old Flag”, and “The Marines’ Hymn”, I will constantly be reminded that the greatest generation who ever lived, lives right here in The Villa at Riverwood. Imagine!

Invite some more members of this generation to live here with you. You know from experience that we will treat them with the respect and warmth they deserve, and will celebrate the great works they have performed throughout their lives.

As a small token of our appreciation, when your friend moves in, we take \$1,000.00 off your next month’s rent. Now, a thousand dollars is a thousand dollars; but *you are priceless*. Thank you for the gift of freedom!