

“A Day with Our Veterans” by an English Class from BHS

“War.” It’s a small word, but sometimes the smallest things carry so much baggage. My fellow class members and I spent a morning visiting the Veterans’ Hospital in Asheville learning all about this small word. We went because our teachers made us go, in honor of Veteran’s Day. **I am SO glad they did!** We met a group of men more than willing to share their experiences in the war with us. There I learned that wars are not just fought on the battlefield, not just with the enemy, and don’t always end when you get home. Each of us got the chance to talk to a soldier. Each of us got the chance to learn. Each of us got a chance to become more thankful. Here are all of our different stories...

We went to the VA hospital on Friday and I met some WW2 veterans. It was so awesome to learn what happened to them. It was so interesting to get to know all of the people that fought in that war. We saw some really great men that told us about their life in the war. It was cool to hear about some of the things that they did in the war. They asked us some questions about what we did in our spare time. I heard it was hard for them to leave their family. I found that it was hard to leave these soldiers at the end of our visit. I really enjoyed being there with them. I learned a lot. I would love to go again to visit them. Thank you, veterans, for all that you have done and for teaching me how important you are.

We went on a great trip to the VA hospital medical center. We saw a lot of different people and we got to talk about the wars. This experience was sad- but actually happy, too. I was not expecting these soldiers to be so happy and so proud. We asked them questions about their service and their lives. I learned a lot about what they had seen and been through. Things that I will never understand. I was not expecting their stories to be so interesting! I found out that I had a lot in common with these men! They asked us a lot of questions too, and we had such interesting conversations. I was not expecting these soldiers to be so interested in my life! But I guess that’s what they fought for. This experience was so great and I learned so much. I am definitely hoping to go back soon and learn even more. And I can’t begin to tell them how thankful I am.

I was able to go to the VA hospital to visit and learn from our soldiers. I visited soldiers in the hospice wing. I talked to a man who told us all about his experiences in the Air Force. His story was sad because his experiences led him to a life of drug use. It was hard-life as a soldier was hard. He couldn’t tell us all that he had done and all that he had seen. I’ll never know what he sacrificed on the battle field. But the amazing thing was that he is still so proud to be an American soldier-so proud to have fought for his country. Do I think he’d do it again? Yes, I do. And for that, I am thankful.

Now I see what it is like to meet people who have seen war. They got hurt, saw bad things, have flashbacks or bad dreams and their lives were changed forever. While I was at the VA hospital, I heard all their stories and they were so interesting and incredible. One guy was in the Air Force with his son. He was in the Air Force for 9 years. We talked to a guy that experienced hard times because of what he saw. It has taken his life away from him. Another soldier enjoyed cooking on the ship. The man was a paratrooper. I saw things that were depressing. I heard some things that were positive and hopeful. I’m glad I got to talk to these men. I glad I got to hear their stories. I’m glad that they are still alive and they served for our country. I am thankful for you, Veterans.

I learned a lot of things from the veterans at the VA hospital. The most important thing that I learned from the veterans is that you should always be thankful for the things that you have because somewhere there is somebody that has it worse than you do. These Veterans put their life on the line so you and I wouldn't have to. I think this was an amazing experience to go to the VA hospital and talk to some of the war veterans. A lot of the guys there enjoyed the students going to talk to them about their experience in the war almost as much as the students enjoyed going to talk to them. They want us to come back again. They want visitors. They don't want to be forgotten. We will never forget you, Veterans. Not after all that we learned. Not after all that you told us. Thank you, Veterans, for all that you've done and all that you taught us. And we will definitely come back to visit.