

Bill McNutt: [00:00](#) State funeral for World War II veterans is a uniquely American story. It came from a 10 year old school girl in Texas who wanted to honor her godfather, who happened to be the recipient of the Congressional Medal of honor in World War II. But this is America. Sometimes the most powerful ideas come from the most basic among us and we want to push through to make sure that the greatest generation has a wonderful final slate.

Narrator: [00:30](#) This powerful idea came from Rabel McNutt, and we sit down with her today to talk a little bit more about what inspired her to start this because of state funeral for World War II veterans.

Rabel McNutt: [00:40](#) Hi.

Narrator: [00:41](#) Hello. It's nice to meet you.

Rabel McNutt: [00:43](#) Nice to meet you too.

Narrator: [00:44](#) How old are you?

Rabel McNutt: [00:45](#) I am 11 years old.

Narrator: [00:46](#) Your Dad said that you actually came up with the idea for, for the state funeral, for World War II veterans. Is that, is that true or is he making that up and what inspired you? What was your uncle emailers light?

Rabel McNutt: [01:01](#) It's just really fun to be with you always saying be happy. And, um, whenever I got a C and we spent a lot of time together, I remember his house, his wife collected a lot of dolls. So that was always fun to see. How did you come up with this idea? It's a really special idea. And My Godfather, Walter, um, passed away, right. Um, he fought in world war two and he received the medal of honor. So when he passed away, my dad had, I watched some state funerals, um, and military funerals. One of the things we found was the state funeral for Ronald Reagan. And that got me thinking. So I asked my dad if uncle, either his friends would have a state funeral. So that's where the idea has got started. There only four amount of honor holders, um, left. So when the last one passes away, you want to have a state, you know, to honor all the 16 million men, a woman who fought to save the country.

Narrator: [02:02](#) That's really special that you would come up with that idea. Do you think that there's kids that don't know much about World War II or people like your uncle wheelers?

Rabel McNutt: [02:11](#) Yeah. From a kid's point of view, you don't really know much of history like until you actually get into school, like middle school, which I am now, so I'm just starting to learn about all that stuff. But in elementary school I didn't know about all this stuff and that was kind of like made me wonder that all this stuff is going on in the world without us and we have no idea what any of it is. It's really big,

Narrator: [02:41](#) really, really big. Have you, have you been to Washington DC with your dad

Rabel McNutt: [02:45](#) at all now? Has he told you about how big it is? They're speaking of Congressman, my dad wanted me to tell you that, um, lots of senators and congressmen have written the president on behalf of our organization, so that is good that the president knows what we want and we just had to get enough signatures. You've met Mr. Williams? Yes. He's really nice and funny. From a kid's point of view, why this is important, what do you tell your friends where they ask you about it? Um, I don't know. My friends don't really know much of it. Like, I like to explain it and everything, but they're kind of clue, listen to what's going on, about everything. Especially will like that. Has it come up in any of your classes? Not yet. Um, we talked about the civil war and then we're moving onto world for one, then we'll go to a luncheon.

Rabel McNutt: [03:46](#) Very interesting. Do you think that you will talk about it whenever it gets? It comes time for World War II. Yes, totally. Whatever it takes to get more signatures. I went around last year in fourth grade and collected everyone's signature and my grade, that helped a lot. So we have over 12,000 signatures. That's awesome. If I'm a parent, so I'm a parent and I have two little boys, how do I help my kids go and support your cause? What, what do I need to tell them if I'm a parent? Well, we have had some crates. We've had, um, be able to look, oh, 4th of July parade and we went into that. Um, it looks like museum Lovefield Flight Museum and for Veterans Day we went over there, they had like a little kind of conference and stands. So we got signatures there, juice, just lots of ways to participate where in course it can and we're trying to have a parade and trying to get some boy scout troops there and that's a way to organize kids into it because those parents have kids and if there's a way for them to bring their kids, it's not as hard.

Rabel McNutt: [05:02](#) My son, whenever I told him about it, he told some of his classmates about it and they were like, they didn't know what a state funeral was. Should they go check out some videos on youtube and maybe check some things out so they could find

out some more information. And we think that when everyone, if we do have a state funeral, it'd be a good way to teach other children about the sacrifices that world war two veterans made. Yeah, I think you're absolutely right. Do you think that um, there was a kid had questions and they said, I don't know why this is important. Do you think after they watched a video of one of those funerals that they would think that it's really important still? Yes. So right now kids have the impression that, oh well cool, so on fought for me. Like they don't really get like the concept of it and once they actually see, we're trying to do see videos, talk to people that had a fight in the war here, different stories, they'll start to realize how real and how it affected their generation today.

Rabel McNutt:

[06:11](#)

Yeah. And so just taking a few minutes to go and sign the petition actually helps them understand history a little bit more. Yep. Is there any, any one thing that you would, you would want people to know? The American Legion backing us up. We have three State Ledge legislators have passed our resolution. Uh, we have state chairman in 25th state. Yep. That's, that's all I can think from the top of my head. What have you learned about the power of an idea? Well, this is basically like my first idea. I did, but I felt like it gave me something to do is like something I can do after school and that has nothing to do. Just something I can focus on whenever I have this free time or whenever I feel like doing it because first of all, I know that it's not just really my free time being wasted. It's helping others and then it's educational also, which is my parents big thing. What has it been like working with your dad on a project like this? It's fun. Um, it's gotten as closer kind of, um, yeah.

Rabel McNutt:

[07:32](#)

Do you think that there's other dads, uh, have a closer friendship with their daughter or their son if they, uh, if they did, definitely, yeah, definitely. Because like Dad's not only into shopping or I'll be things, especially for girls. So whenever you can do something, they would like when they're little, they played with ladies like airplanes or cars or whatever. So when they get to talk about all this stuff, because it relates back to Wilbur too, they could do this together and that'd be fun. It could go to our website called [www dot \[inaudible\] to salute.org](http://www.dot[inaudible].to.salute.org) mmm. And you can go there and sign our petition online or they can go to [change.org](http://change.org) you can go to [change.org](http://change.org) it's listed there for people to sign as well. Those are two great places to go. Sign the petition. We now talk to bill McNutt, Rachel's dad about this cause everything is good in our world and

Bill McNutt:

[08:34](#)

I'm excited that Rabel came up with this. Well, an idea, meaningful idea and it's such a great way for young people to

learn the history and the sacrifices of the World War II veteran. Rabel has a couple of cool things or godfather arrived on Omaha Beach in 11 in the morning. And this picture, it's something that he gave her. Now he is not in this Higgins boat, okay, on Omaha beach. But this, uh, picture was taken at about the time he arrived about 11 o'clock on Omaha beach and then it's also autographed to her and says to my God-daughter, God bless

- Bill McNutt: [09:20](#) Walter Ealers, Medal of Honor, easy read, big red one. He came in on the beaches, of course were named, well Alterian, no one pleasure, you know, Alpha Charlie Echo at easy, et cetera. Big Red one was what is Fort Riley, Kansas,
- Narrator: [09:40](#) The inspiration from one young little girl as led to the support of many, many people, Vietnam veterans from all over the country who want in particular have been invited to talk about this cause, how powerful it is and what we can do to honor the greatest generation and teach future generations member of the national board per state funeral at World War II veterans General John Digital. Yeah,
- General Digilio: [10:02](#) I was a first lieutenant in Vietnam. I was commissioned in 1967 as an ROTC graduate from Lasalle College, now Lasalle University in Philadelphia. And we were trained to be artillery officers. Uh, we would fire one oh fives and training, learn how to fire them, learn how to position them, learn how to aim them correctly, hopefully to hit the target the first time. So everything was done out of tables and big manuals and would slide rules. So it was an interesting time. But, uh, growing up in, in the late fifties and early sixties, what's a phenomenal time, especially on long island, very proud and privileged to be able to grow up at that time to ensure that today's generation, the young children in school as well as the young adults, don't forget about what occurred in the early forties. Unfortunately in the school systems today and basically throughout the country, but primarily in the northeast and in west coast history is taught from a different perspective.
- General Digilio: [11:05](#) Uh, to paraphrase what the Irish Nobel laureate Sir Edmund Burke said, those who fail to study history are doomed to repeat it. And we can see that over and over again throughout the world history as well in the history of our own country. We make the same mistakes. Einstein, you know, said stupidities doing the same thing over again and expecting different results. We don't really look in the past and see where did we go astray slightly and how do we come back on track. What, what's happened is that World War II veterans are diminishing at an extremely rapid rate. Obviously they're in there very late

eighties and early to mid nineties. A few, one or two years ago, a an an article was written in the paper in Raleigh, North Carolina asking about basically how do we celebrate this World War II generation of men and women who served in our armed forces both overseas and at home as well as the wives, as the friends, the families of those who are serving.

- General Digilio: [12:13](#) There was an elementary school child named rabble McNutt. Her Godfather was a World War II metal, Ivana Winter. And she said to her father, Bill McKnight, who happens to be the chair of the chairman of the board of our, of our group, said it set to a father. Are they going to give Godfather we elders, uh, a funeral when he passes away? Bill said, basically, well, let's look at state funerals and what's been done in the past. And He, they went on youtube and got a video of president Reagan's funeral and general, the army MacArthur's funeral. And the young child said, are they going to do that for my godfather? And this was the genesis of the thought of, we need to ensure that we provide the last living medal of honor winner from World War II with the state funeral. What's important to remember about a state funeral is that the president is the only person that can authorize it. It doesn't require a, a bill passing through Congress. It doesn't require anything else. But the president's saying, we will have a state funeral.
- Narrator: [13:25](#) The chairman of the board, Bill McNutt traveled to imaging Emma Interviewing World War II veterans to get some final thoughts to celebrate and honor those that served during World War II.
- Bill McNutt: [13:37](#) Visiting with David Fisher from Lafayette, Louisiana, who was a radio man. I'll be 29 pilots and uh, you know, very interesting ceremony today with the Japanese. What did you think of that serve on Jima?
- David Fischer: [13:51](#) I thought, well I've not even heard of it before on you that we will come and Iwo Jima but only only when I began investigating the that I'll find out that they want you. There was a 73rd anniversary of the end of the war, and uh, so it was pretty emotionally to me to say that to two Countries, to get all the warriors from two different countries or add one another's throat. And here we have a situation where and where there's some cooperation between the two countries and a lot of different ways the historical impact, I really enjoyed it
- Narrator: [14:34](#) 16 million Americans served in World War II. Those stories need to be told. Those stories capture very valuable history, historical lessons to pass forward to future generations.

Bill McNutt:

[14:45](#)

I'm Bill McNutt, co-founder of State Funeral for World War II veterans on website. We've got a special place and we'd love to have your family's story about the family member that serves and World War II. It doesn't matter whether they were decorated military hero or they serve state side fair place is own. Our website, please go to [www.worldwar2salute.org](http://www.worldwar2salute.org) or upload their picture and tell us their story and we'd be so proud to put it on our website. 464 gallant Americans received our nation's highest honor in World War Two, the Congressional Medal of honor. Today only a handful remain, each and every one of them was an enlisted man. Our nation has held many state funeral in Washington, DC for general, but never one for an enlisted man. And we need your help to change American history. Please go to our website, [www.worldwar2salute.org](http://www.worldwar2salute.org), and help us petitioned the President that when the last of these Medal of Honor recipients to be given a state funeral in Washington DC. Not just for that one great American soldier, but as a way of providing special recognition to all 16 million men and women who serve in uniform in the Second World War. Thank you for signing our petition.