

Veteran of the Month November 2003

Congratulations to Nels Jensen!



In partnership with the Veterans Coordination Commission, I am pleased to present the November, 2003 Veteran of the Month – Nels Jensen.

Nels Jensen was born in Melford, Iowa and enlisted in the United States Navy in early 1944. After attending boot camp at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center in Illinois, he was stationed in Florida at Fort Pierce and assigned to the 5th Beach Battalion of the Amphibious Force. Nels was eventually transferred to the U.S.S. Cilea with 52 other seaman and 2 officers. His tour of duty took him throughout many ports and battles of both the Atlantic Ocean and Pacific Ocean Theatres of World War II. When Nels was asked about his service and any medals that he had received, he was heard to say, "I didn't do anything that the other guys didn't do." Such is how Nels sees himself, just one of the guys.

Nels moved to Rapid City during the 1950's, starting his family of two daughters (Colleen & Joyce), followed by 4 grandchildren and 1 great grandson. In 1975, Nels became a member of the American Legion Post 22. As a lifetime member, Nels has served as Post Treasurer, 2nd Vice Commander, 1st Vice Commander and eventually Post Commander. His dedication to the Post didn't end there; he is a past Post Home Association President and continues his service today as the manger of kitchen operations. From the regular Wednesday night steak dinners or Friday night fish fry's, to the many special meals throughout the year, Nels ensures that everyone enjoys the food, the fun and more importantly the camaraderie.

Nels is a member of the 40/8 Votitore 658, where he at one time or another has held all of the local offices. Nels has also held the honored positions of South Dakota Grand Chef de Gare, National Lambsite, National Sous Chef de Chemin de fer, and National Cheminot. He is a life member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1273.

Nels strong belief in freedom and honor, as well as his dedication to all American Veterans is why so many are proud just to know him. His most recent success was the feeding of 500 hungry veterans on this most recent Veterans Day, which is why it is with great pleasure that Nels has been selected as the November Veteran of the Month. As you can plainly see or any number of people will tell you, Nels is NOT just another guy. He is "one in a million."