

bethany theater showing documentary about the last survivor of World War 1
News

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Posted on : 2013/5/19 17:38:28

A documentary film about the last American veteran of World War I is being screened throughout May in Missouri, including Monday at Bethany-- helping continue the late Frank Buckles' fight for a national memorial in Washington, D.C.

The film is called "Pershing's Last Patriot." Buckles, who was born in Bethany, died in Charles Town, West Virginia in February 2011 at the age of 110. The last doughboy had devoted his final years to seeking greater recognition for the world war that claimed over 116-thousand American lives.

The film tells the story of Buckles' adventures as a young man and his years as a prisoner of war during World War II but mainly focuses on his quest to have a national memorial in Washington. Though Buckles visited the National World War I Museum in Kansas City and supported its mission of education, he also believed there should also be a place in the nation's capital to pay respects. Proponents say the idea, however, has been thwarted by legislation limiting construction of monuments and memorials.

The quest began five years ago when the films' producer and Buckles visited the abandoned District of Columbia War Memorial. The sidewalk was so badly cracked that Buckles' wheelchair got stuck. Hundreds of school children are expected to attend the Bethany screening (BIG TIME CINEMA) where the film will be shown throughout the day Monday and on into the evening.