

WWII VETERAN AL COHN

by Richard Long

A veteran is someone who, at one point in his life, wrote a blank check made payable to 'The United States of America for an amount 'up to and including my life.'

Al Cohn, age 18, was drafted in 1945 near the end of WWII. He, alongside his cousin (he recalled his cousin carrying his bag), reported for duty to Ft Sheridan, Illinois. Once inducted, each was tested for individual aptitudes, Al was assigned to heavy weapons training and sent off to Fort Robinson, Little Rock, AK. His cousin with a different specialty went elsewhere. However, even as Al was being inducted, he was suffering from various adolescent respiratory issues. Those issues quickly deteriorated to the point where hospitalization was needed. Ultimately it turned into pneumonia. Then, while attempting to recover, his unit was shipped out to the European front. Al remained behind. Now, with no unit and no duty assignment, the Army decided he should be discharged.

Al received, and wore the WWII Ruptured Duck Honorable Discharge Patch, a cloth insignia depicting an eagle inside a wreath. Worn on the right breast pocket, it was issued to veterans about to be discharged under honorable conditions. It is utilized by all branches of the military and was called "Ruptured Duck" because of the "rupture" of service expectations and because some people thought it looked more like a duck than an eagle.

Al, we honor you and thank you for your service.



Al Cohn



Ruptured Duck Patch