



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George D. Maziarz

Remembering Medal of Honor winner George "Bud" Day

GEORGE D. MAZIARZ August 16, 2013

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One-time Niagara County resident George “Bud” Day, who led a stellar military career through three wars and received the Medal of Honor, died on July 27 at the age of 88. He deserves to be remembered.

Day served with the Marines in the Pacific Theater during World War II. During the Korean War, he served two tours as an Air Force pilot who participated in numerous bomber and fighter missions. In the 1960's, Day was stationed at the Niagara Falls Air Force Base. There he continued to fly, and he lived with his family in our area for three years. Then came the war in Vietnam.

On August 27, 1967, Day’s plane was shot down over North Vietnam. He ejected and was immediately captured by the enemy. Spending the next five and half years as a prisoner of war, Day endured unspeakable torture and deprivation. He offered maximum resistance to his captors and earned the Medal of Honor for a dangerous escape attempt. At the infamous Hanoi Hilton and the Plantation Day he shared a cell with future politician John McCain. After being released in 1973 and reuniting with his family, he chose to return to active flying status.

Day retired as a colonel and became the nation’s most decorated soldier since the days of Matt Urban and Audie Murphy. He wrote and spoke extensively about his war experiences, and he never stopped being an ardent advocate for veterans.

After his recent passing, his comrade John McCain called him “the bravest man I ever knew,” and praised his leadership, courage, and patriotism. Niagara County is proud to be one of the places where Colonel Day lived and served.