



## BOROUGH OF MATAWAN DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION

◆ 201 BROAD STREET ◆ MATAWAN, NEW JERSEY 07747 ◆

May 26, 2021

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*Quote by Mr. Leonard regarding his service, "it was no big deal" he just "did what I had to do".*



The Borough of Matawan Recreation Department is proud to announce our Special Guest of Honor **Mr. Frank Leonard** a 61 year Matawan resident. Please join us in honoring him and his service during WWII and the Korean War on Sunday, May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 11:00AM at Veteran's Memorial Park.

**Mr. Leonard** was born in July 1924 and was raised in Harrison, NJ. He was drafted into military service in 1943 and was

stationed at BTC10 Greensboro, North Carolina where he received basic training. He then was transferred to Sioux Falls, South Dakota for radio operating training. Lastly, he trained at Yuma, Arizona for aerial gunnery. Afterwards, he was assigned to a crew and transferred to the AAF overseas training unit at David Monthan Field in Tuscan, Arizona.



During **Mr. Leonard's** military career, he flew on a B-24 bomber for 32 missions in the Pacific as a radio operator and gunner.

Early on, his missions from Clarke Field, Philippines included many bombing runs over Formosa. In one mission flown from Palawan, Philippines his plane was hit, experienced engine failure and crashed. The crew jumped into a life raft with the exception of Mr. Leonard and two others who could swim and were rescued by a Catalina. His crew subsequently went to Okinawa and flew several more missions prior to the end of the war. He participated in the August, 1945 flyovers over Japan in the days following the dropping of the bomb and before the official surrender took effect. In September / October he flew American POW's from Okinawa to Clarke Field Luzon, Philippines.

He was honorably discharged with the rank of Tech Sergeant in December 1945. After the military, **Mr. Leonard** worked for Otis Elevator Company for 32 years. In 1960, Mr. Leonard moved to Middlesex Road in Matawan where he has lived for the last 61 years. He was married to his wonderful wife Ida for 57 blessed years and has 4 children: Frank, Cheryl, Kim, and Pam all graduates of Matawan Regional High School.

Currently, **Mr. Leonard** is a member of VFW post 4745, a devout New York Giant fan, enjoys crossword puzzles, and reading James Patterson. He enjoys spending time with his 8 grandchildren, and 3 great grandchildren and is eagerly awaiting the arrival of his 4<sup>th</sup> great grandchild.