

WWII Vet Turns 100

VFW Post commander celebrated 100 years of age among family and friends

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Reaching the ripe age of 100 comes with many stories to tell, and more than 130 friends, family, and state officials gathered at Calvert Hall College High School in Baltimore on Sept. 10 to hear Victor Fuentealba tell them.

A World War II veteran who served with the Army's 83rd and 84th Infantry Divisions in the European Theatre, Fuentealba was celebrated for both his centennial milestone and his lifelong devotion to fellow veterans.

"I have 4 daughters, and they went all out for the 100th birthday," said Fuentealba, who is still serving as the VFW Post 9083 commander in Parkville, Maryland. "We got all kinds of citations from the governor and other veterans' organizations. It was a special moment for me."

Fuentealba joined the VFW while recovering from gunshot wounds to both of his legs in 1946 at an Army hospital in New York. He was wounded on April 14, 1945, and held as a POW for 22 hours by German troops in a village near the Rhine River.

"It happened three weeks before the war ended," said Fuentealba, who received the Maryland Governor's Citation for his service to veterans during his birthday celebration on Sept. 10. "The Germans captured me because I was shot on both legs and could not move. They eventually left me in a German town, where I was rescued by the 182nd Division."

Following his discharge from the Army, Fuentealba began practicing law in Baltimore County, where he continues to do so today. He also rose through the ranks of VFW, serving as a judge advocate at the Post, District, Department and National levels.

"I served a term as the VFW judge advocate general, and I spent around 15 years as the Department of Maryland's judge advocate," said Fuentealba, who has also been an avid musician for many years. "I have traveled all over the world for entertainment organizations. I was always involved with music. Law, music and the VFW have been my

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prime activities and devotions.”

Fuentealba’s dearest devotion, however, is his family, which he praised for continuously taking care of him as he continues to age beyond 100 years old. His four daughters orchestrated the birthday party, which also included a lunch, jazz band and a presentation of several awards and citations for Fuentealba’s contributions to veterans.

“I always get asked what the secret to longevity is, and I would say it’s having a great family,” Fuentealba said. “My four daughters are the secret because each one has contributed something to my welfare since my wife passed away. Having a great family that works together and plays together. I am already looking forward to the next birthday party.”