



A Day He Will Never Forget: Surprise Parade Means Everything To Wood River Korean War Veteran

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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WOOD RIVER - Korean War Air Force veteran Denny Gaines had a day he will never forget recently thanks to loving family and friends. Denny had a rough bout with COVID-19 and battled double pneumonia, then was hospitalized, but when he returned home his family decided to surprise him.

Each year, he traveled to Branson for the annual Veteran's Day Parade. This year, because he had battled COVID and was weak he wouldn't have been able to go to the parade anyway, so they brought a parade to him. Denny was extremely moved by the parade and the following day kept saying, "That sure was some parade wasn't it," to family members.

Denny was mesmerized by the parade and had tears in his eyes watching the kind act by all those involved.

Trish Murphy, Denny's granddaughter, was the organizer of the parade. Denny lives on Eighth Street in Wood River, so the parade went from Wood River Police Station, Across Lewis and then to Eighth Street and Esther.

Denny worked for the railroad for 47 years, retiring in 1990. He coached Little League Baseball for many years and served as a deacon at Whitelaw Avenue Baptist Church for more than 50 years and taught Sunday School, so much of his life has revolved around serving his community and his church.

Donna Panapinto Gaines thanked all who participated from her family and the neighborhood. The Wood River Police and Fire Department also took part. Panapinto Gaines said the parade seemed to bring Denny back to life and now he is fighting his

physical problems and hopefully going to make a full recovery from his battle with COVID-19.



