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Reading Eagle: Natalie Kolb | From left, Emily Johnson, 88, of Spring Township; and her daughter, Yvonne Millisock, 66; granddaughter, Maria Mickey, 44; and great-grandson Kale Millisock, 17, all of Robesonia, with his service dog Latias. The shadow box in front of them contains World War II memorabilia of Kale's great-grandfather the late Ralph S. "Stan" Johnson.

Tribute to great-grandfather thrills Robesonia teen

By [Bruce Posten](#)

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A shadow box contains the veteran's memorabilia

Kale Millisock, 17, of Robesonia never got to meet his great-grandfather Ralph S. "Stan" Johnson, an Army staff sergeant who served in the European theater (1942-45) during World War II.

"He had a wonderful sense of humor, was very outgoing and could talk on any subject to just about anyone," said Emily Johnson, 88, of Spring Township, Ralph's widow and Kale's great-grandmother.

She said her husband, who was a supervisor at a hosiery factory and a bank courier after the war, died Aug. 27, 1991.

But Kale, who just happens to be a World War II buff and is drawn to the aircraft, ships and firearms of the period, owning more than 100 books on World War II and admiring such flamboyant military leaders as Gen. George S. Patton, is the proud recipient of much of his great-grandfather's war legacy.

Some of it is in a glass-front shadow box, courtesy of his great-grandmother, who kept her husband's dog tag in her jewelry box and much of his old clothing in bags in her closet, until her daughter, Yvonne Millisock, 66, and granddaughter, Maria Mickey, 44, joined forces with the idea to create the display for Kale.

The shadow box contains most of Ralph's military memorabilia: uniform, jacket, hat, badges, mess kit, a bullet and official papers, all displayed and bestowed upon Kale as a gift. It is an historical treasure filled to the brim with a U.S. flag as a backdrop that amounts to three generations preserving the past for a fourth.

"Although I never got to meet my great-grandfather, he was my idol," said Kale, who suffers from neurocardiogenic syncope, involving fainting or loss of consciousness episodes, and a learning disability.

Kyle, who wants to be a history or archaeology teacher and is enrolled in **Agora Cyber Charter School**, has a 3-year-old service dog, Latias, or "Latte," a Border collie and Australian cattle dog mix.

For a young man with an historical bent, there is much to relish about holding historical items from his family's past. But he also treasures the family stories about his great-grandfather, who earned bronze stars and valor and good conduct medals for his service during the rough Italian campaign in Naples, Foggia, Rome and Arno.

They are not brutal stories, but tales that convey insights into his great-grandfather's character.

"I love the silverware story where he was with his platoon eating at some fancy place," Kale said. "On this table was all this silverware that many of his men didn't know how to use."

Ralph knew what each implement was for, Kale said, but so as not to have his comrades feel embarrassed or ill at ease, he gathered up all the silverware and left each man with only a sturdy knife, fork and spoon.

Like many World War II veterans, Ralph seldom talked about the actual horrors of his war years, according to Johnson and her daughter and granddaughter.

Overall, he was an American who did his duty, treated others with dignity and went on to a relatively quiet family life in the 20th century.

He great-grandson couldn't be prouder to revere such a man.

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- See more at: <http://www.readingeagle.com/news/article/tribute-to-great-grandfather-thrills-robsonia-teen#sthash.Tb4ARsy9.dpuf>