



WE HONOR VETERANS

**Sonoran Winds Hospice,
Buena Park CA**

Walter Callahan served during WWII as a Navy Sailor and fought in the Pacific Theater. He came on to hospice care when he was close to the end. Walter was bed bound and spoke very little. It was just after Memorial Day when Sonoran Hospice got the call for his admission. The admissions nurse, who had been trained on the military history check list, asked Walter's family all the appropriate questions. It was no secret that Walter had served in the Navy. He was covered in a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier blanket his children and grandchildren had gotten for him. When the nurse (Silvia) noticed that Walter's admission paperwork indicated he was a Navy Veteran, she immediately made and presented a We Honor Veterans certificate to him and his family.

Silvia was at his bed side and showed him the certificate and thanked him for his service to our country. Walter was only able to hold the certificate briefly because of his weakened state. His daughter then tried to help Walter and put his certificate away. The Navy Veteran would not let his daughter put the certificate away and made her place it in a position so he could look at it while he lay in bed.

When the rest of the hospice team had made their visits, the family advised each of them not to move the certificate from the spot Walter had picked for it. However, Walter let the certificate out of his sight long enough for the staff to frame it. Walter passed a few days later. It was an honor to be able to thank him for his service and let him know all his sacrifices were appreciated. The family was very appreciative for all that Sonoran Winds Hospice had done for Walter, and knew how special that certificate was to him. The hospice made a blanket for Walter and his family with the image of Walter dressed in his Navy uniform. Sonoran Winds makes something similar for all of their Veterans and embroiders "Grata Semper" on each blanket, Latin for "Always Grateful."

Submitted by: AJ Ferrio

