

# AVIATION WALL OF HONOR



## **Sgt. Oscar G. Johnson Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient**

Oscar G. Johnson was a native of Foster City, Michigan, and is the only man in the Upper Peninsula to receive our Nation's highest award for military valor, the Congressional Medal of Honor. Johnson, who died on May 13, 1998, received the medal for his actions in September 1944 in the mountains Italy. He was a member of the U.S. Army's Company B 363<sup>rd</sup> Infantry, 91<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division during World War II.

A copy of Sgt. Johnson's Medal of Honor Citation is attached.





*The President of the United States  
in the name of The Congress  
takes pleasure in presenting the  
Medal of Honor  
to*

**JOHNSON, OSCAR G.**

***Rank and organization:*** Sergeant, U.S. Army, Company B, 363d Infantry, 91st Infantry Division. ***Place and date:*** Near Scarperia, Italy, 1618 September 1944. ***Entered service at:*** Foster City, Mich. ***Birth:*** Foster City, Mich. ***G.O. No.:*** 58, 19 July 1945.

***Citation:*** (then Pfc.) He practically single-handed protected the left flank of his company's position in the offensive to break the German's gothic line. Company B was the extreme left assault unit of the corps. The advance was stopped by heavy fire from Monticelli Ridge, and the company took cover behind an embankment. Sgt. Johnson, a mortar gunner, having expended his ammunition, assumed the duties of a rifleman. As leader of a squad of 7 men he was ordered to establish a combat post 50 yards to the left of the company to cover its exposed flank. Repeated enemy counterattacks, supported by artillery, mortar, and machinegun fire from the high ground to his front, had by the afternoon of 16 September killed or wounded all his men. Collecting weapons and ammunition from his fallen comrades, in the face of hostile fire, he held his exposed position and inflicted heavy casualties upon the enemy, who several times came close enough to throw hand grenades. On the night of 1617 September, the enemy launched his heaviest attack on Company B, putting his greatest pressure against the lone defender of the left flank. In spite of mortar fire which crashed about him and machinegun bullets which whipped the crest of his shallow trench, Sgt. Johnson stood erect and repulsed the attack with grenades and small arms fire. He remained awake and on the alert throughout the night, frustrating all attempts at infiltration. On 17 September, 25 German soldiers surrendered to him. Two men, sent to reinforce him that afternoon, were caught in a devastating mortar and artillery barrage. With no thought of his own safety, Sgt. Johnson rushed to the shell hole where they lay half buried and seriously wounded, covered their position by his fire, and assisted a Medical Corpsman in rendering aid. That night he secured their removal to the rear and remained on watch until his company was relieved. Five companies of a German paratroop regiment had been repeatedly committed to the attack on Company B without success. Twenty dead Germans were found in front of his position. By his heroic stand and utter disregard for personal safety, Sgt. Johnson was in a large measure responsible for defeating the enemy's attempts to turn the exposed left flank.



# Memorial unveiling



Theresa Peterson/Daily News Photos



The Oscar G. Johnson Memorial in Foster City was unveiled on Veterans Day during a dedication ceremony. Shown here from left unveiling the monument are Oscar Johnson's children Larry Johnson, Linda Kovar and Ed Johnson. Oscar Johnson earned the Congressional Medal of Honor while fighting in Italy during World War II. He was a native of Foster City and the only man in the Upper Peninsula to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor during wartime. This medal is the nation's highest award for military valor. Johnson, who died on May 13, 1998, received the medal for his actions in September 1944 in the mountains of Italy. He was a member of the U.S. Army's Company B 363rd Infantry, 91st Infantry Division during World War II. Several veterans organizations were also present during the ceremony and special recognition was given to the veterans of the Italian campaign during the ceremonies.



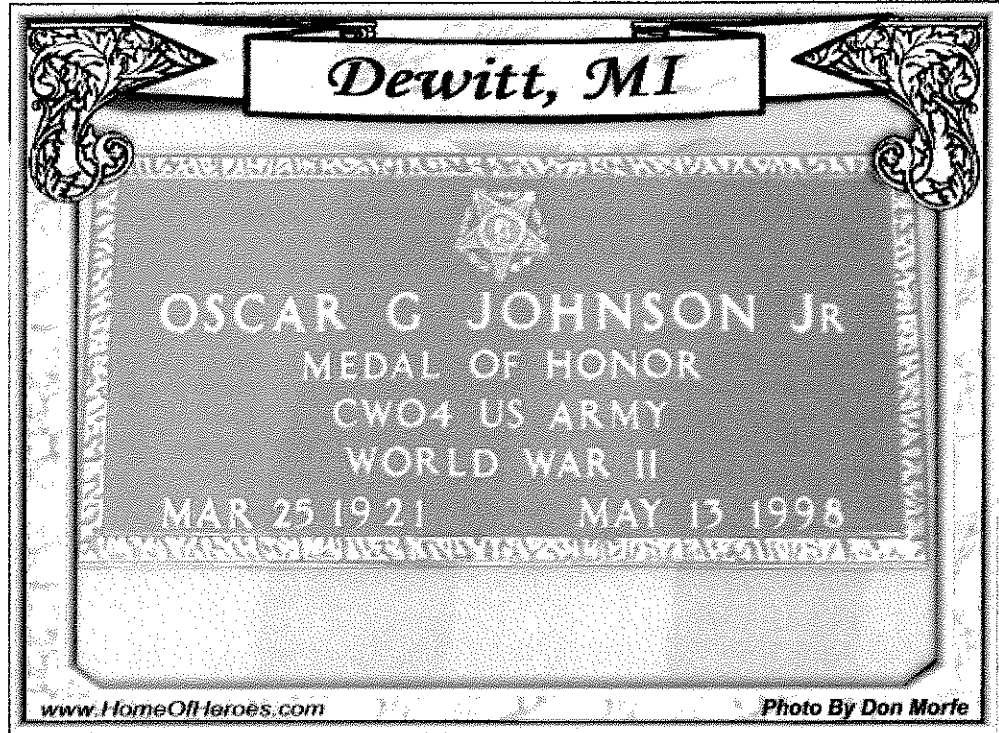
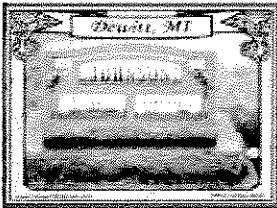
# Oscar Godfrey Johnson, Jr.

## TAPS

*Fading light dims the sight,  
And a star gems the sky,  
Gleaming bright.  
From afar drawing nigh,  
Falls the night.*

*Day is done, gone the sun,  
From the lake, From the hills,  
From the sky.  
All is well, safely rest,  
God is nigh.*

*Then good night, Peaceful  
night,  
Till the light of the dawn  
Shineth bright,  
God is near, do not fear,  
Friend, good night.*



## Dewitt Cemetery

**Born:** March 25, 1921 at Foster City, MI

**Entered Service in the US Army from** Foster City, MI

*Earned The Medal of Honor During World War II For heroism September 16  
- 18, 1944 at Scarperia, Italy*

**Died:** May 13, 1998 at the age of 77

*When the advance was stopped by heavy fire from Monticelli Ridge, Sergeant Johnson, a mortar gunner having expended his ammunition, assumed the duties of a rifleman. As leader of seven men he was ordered to establish a combat post 50 yards to the left of the company. Repeated counterattacks had by the afternoon killed or wounded all his men. Collecting weapons and ammunition from his fallen comrades, he held his position and inflicted heavy casualties upon the enemy. At night the enemy launched his heaviest attack putting his greatest pressure against the lone defender of the left flank. Sergeant Johnson stood erect and repulsed the attack with grenades and small arms fire. He remained awake and on the alert throughout the night, frustrating all attempts at infiltration. The next day 25 German soldiers surrendered to him. Two men, sent to reinforce him, were caught in a devastating barrage. Sergeant Johnson rushed to the shell hole where they lay half buried, covered their position, and assisted a Medical Corpsman in rendering aid. That night he secured their removal to the rear and remained on watch until his company was relieved. Twenty dead Germans were later found in front of his position.*

