

Roger Dawson



When Roger Dawson, 95, heard of the attack at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, he did what many young Americans did at the time - he stepped up and answered the call to service. In January of 1942, he joined the Navy and went through training in Dallas and Corpus Christi. During the war he served as a Navy pilot trainer, teaching other pilots how to fly. Today, Roger resides at Brookdale Victoria in Texas, and when asked what he wanted for his Wish of a Lifetime he didn't hesitate in saying that he wanted to fly the SNJ-4 Texan again.

Roger fulfilled his Wish when he traveled to Victoria Regional Airport and climbed into the cockpit of SNJ-4 Texan for a 30-minute flight. Roger hadn't flown in the aircraft in over 70 years and the experience took him back to his days as a cadet in Corpus Christi. "The flight was a lot fun," said Roger of his Wish experience. "It felt really good to hold on the controls again and feel the aircraft's movement."

Helping to train pilots took Roger all around the country. By the end of World War II he was flying supply missions over the Pacific Ocean and bringing injured soldiers back home. Granting his Wish was a way to honor his patriotic spirit. "I love my country and if I had to do it all over I wouldn't hesitate to serve again," said Roger.

In 2010, Brookdale Senior Living and Wish of a Lifetime formed a partnership to provide a helping hand in making some of the dreams of Brookdale's residents come true. To request a Wish, residents fill out a Wish application explaining an experience they would like to have fulfilled and how that experience relates to one or more dimensions of Brookdale's Optimum Life® platform. Optimum Life cultivates whole-person wellness through fulfillment in the six key dimensions: purposeful, emotional, physical, social, spiritual and intellectual. Since the partnership's inception, more than 800 Brookdale seniors have had their Wish granted.