By Jan Rahn
Managing Editor

Thousands of veterans around the country will be honored this week during annual Veterans Day observance.

For local veteran Ken Terwilliger, the day holds special significance. He was fortunate to be part of a World War II Honor Flight to Washington, D.C. in September where he got to view the monument that honors the multitudes who were his comrades in war several decades ago.

Terwilliger's health prevented him from traveling when the Nebraska Honor Flight took place—thus he flew with the Coloradans on Sept. 16.

Thirty-five veterans, 15 of whom were in wheelchairs, took the flight from Denver to visit the World War II Memorial along with all of the other memorials in the nation's capital.

"I didn't know there were so many," said the veteran who served in the European Theatre from 1942-46. Terwilliger was a B-26 pilot who flew 28 missions over Germany during the time he fought for his country in World War II. Among the many medals he received was a Distinguished Flying Cross.

Terwilliger's daughter Sonja O'Connor of Denver was his travel companion. Terwilliger was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2003 and has since taken 50 chemotherapy treatments intravenously. He continues to take chemo medication. His daughter served as a 'guardian' on the trip for those in wheelchairs, pushing the veterans as they viewed the memorials and Arlington National Cemetery.

Terwilliger and three others from the Honor Flight were chosen to assist in placing a wreath during Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.