



Chippewa Manor President Jill Gengler with  
Harper Sweeney

## *“Angels of Life”*

*By Harper Sweeney • Chippewa Falls High School*

*I see a child play, with angels of life.  
A line of green plastic soldiers lay,  
on a grave marked by an honorable flag.*

*Such a child has yet to learn,  
how such toys represent  
people who seem to be angels sent.*

*Their halos marked by three colors;*

*Blue the color of our tears,  
red for all the bloodshed,  
white for all the light in the pain.*

*A flag of such honor - we pledge to it everyday.  
Taking a stand for those who can no longer;*

*Such glorious angels of life allow me the right  
to learn  
to speak  
to write.*

*To justice,  
to freedom*

*from the rights of their own - given up,  
for all, our own.*

*So, we may live a better life,  
even if it may cost their own.*

*This original work was submitted for consideration as part of a poetry contest sponsored by Chippewa Manor. It was selected for special distinction and read during the Veterans Salute celebration on Tuesday, November 9, 2021 at Chippewa Manor in Chippewa Falls, WI.*

Presented 11/9/21



Chippewa Manor President Jill Gengler with  
Angel Potts

## *“A True Hero”*

*By Angel Potts • Chippewa Falls High School*

*He said there'd be honor.  
He told tales of heroism.  
His office was so inviting,  
decorated with valour  
And a soon to be soldier bought it, every word.*

*This soldier fought through bootcamp  
He tore through their challenges.  
He became a man at that ripe age: 18.  
At least, that's what he's told.*

*That recruiter said he'd be a hero,  
but a hero is supposed to save.  
They didn't tell him he'd have to watch the life  
Leak from an enemy 8-year-olds' eighty year old eyes.  
They didn't tell him of the cities he'd shatter with a single blast  
and be forced to pick through pieces of the inhabitants left behind.  
They didn't tell him of the miles through active-mine-filled fields,  
Wingman slung, lifeless, over shoulder.  
They didn't tell him of the warpath carved into his conscious,  
Nor the death he'd constantly be knee deep in.*

*They didn't tell him he'd be sent home full of darkness,  
Turning to the bottle by his bedside  
to drown the demons filling his head.  
They didn't tell him the horrors that would wait for him every time he closed his eyes.  
And they didn't include the barrel that he would fire right betwixt them.*

*They couldn't tell you what they did,  
What they felt  
What they thought.  
But you can find them a reason to stay.*

*Welcome them home.*

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Chippewa Manor President Jill Gengler with  
Trenton Smith

## *“Veterans Haiku”*

*By Trenton Smith • Chippewa Falls High School*

*We knew and loved them  
gone, and lucky to have known  
family, friends, and brothers*

*Countless brave souls lost  
good people, gone in this life  
but not forgotten*

*Veterans sacrificing  
a piece of their soul  
so we have freedom*

*Respect veterans  
impossible to repay  
forever grateful*

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Chippewa Manor President Jill Gengler with  
Cole Derouin

## *“I Am Free”*

*By Cole Derouin • Chippewa Falls High School*

*I am free.*

*I, will never know the sacrifice,  
I, will never see my life flash before me,  
I, will never have that family,  
I, will never jump out of a plane into bullets  
zipping by, in a cadence of hell,*

*I, will never have to see what your eyes have seen,  
I, will never have the same mental pain,*

*or walk the same mountains  
or dig the same holes,  
I'll never train the same,  
or even hurt the same,*

*I will never have to stare down the grim reality of death  
with one eye and shoot with the other,  
I won't even have to eat the same food,  
So Thank you,*

*I will always be Thankful to the men and women,  
that you call brothers and sisters,  
I will always be Thankful to the heroes, no longer here to fight those battles,  
Because of you, and all of them,*

*I will always be grateful,  
Because I,  
Will always have freedom.*

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