Repatriation of WWII Japanese artifacts
Ted Merrill in New Guinea.
Combs purchased by Ted from local artists on New Guinea
Japanese military items were collected by many U.S. soldiers off the battlefield or found in captured underground bunkers.
Paybook and personal ID card found by Ted after the Battle of Luzon in the Philippines in 1945.

Donated to our museum in 2006, Ted told us he took these items from one of the deceased Japanese soldiers.
Paybook belonging to Yonezou Sahara, Private 1st class in the Imperial Japanese Army with the Sora #9 936 Corps.
“To promote peace through mutual respect, understanding, & cooperation — one individual, one community at a time.”
Delegation from Ami-Machi, Japan visiting the Richard I Bong Veterans Historical Center
Superior city councilman Mike Herrick returning Private Sahara’s items to his son in front of Japanese press.
The repatriation of these items made news in several of Japan’s large newspaper.
Excerpt from our letter to the family of Private Sahara:

“It is everyone coming together to help in an effort like this that demonstrates the worth of international friendships and the value of the Sister City program. Although we have not actually met many of those who have helped this effort, we are now all ‘friends of friends’ and thus a little bit closer in a large world.”