Mom and Dad Remember Pearl Harbor Day

I asked Mom and Dad if they remembered what they were doing on Pearl Harbor Day. Here is what each had to say…

Mom:
"Yes, on December 7, 1941 I had been playing Monopoly with Mary Margaret Salz (Koster) at her house and was about to head home for dinner when the news came about Pearl Harbor."

Dad:
Dad graduated from boot camp at the US Naval Training Station in Great Lakes, Illinois, on November 8, 1941. He had a two-week boot leave which he spent at home in Waterloo.

Back at the Great Lakes facility, Dad and Frank Suchomel were part of the "outgoing unit." They took aptitude tests and Dad was assigned to aviation mate school in Chicago. On December 6, Dad was waiting to report to his assignment. He and Frank went on a tour of Chicago. They met two Polish girls who invited them to their home on the south side for a family gathering on Sunday.

The two men rode the streetcar to the house. The party was in the basement of the home with lots of relatives in attendance. There was beer, pop, food, music, and laughter. Everyone was having a good time.

The party came to an abrupt halt with the news that Pearl Harbor had been bombed. All military personnel were ordered to return to base immediately. Dad and Frank took a streetcar as far as the Loop, then hitchhiked the rest of the way. They were picked up by a man in a limousine who delivered them to the gates of the Great Lakes Training Facility.

Mary
December 2001