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St. Johns High School

Home of the Redwings!

Bob Zuker

Interviewed by Emily Simon

Bob Zuker was born on May 6, 1924, in St. Johns, Michigan. Mr. Zuker graduated from Rodney B. Wilson High School in 1941. His father was a farmer, and his mother a house wife, who raised chicken, geese, and sold eggs and cash crops. At the beginning of the war, Mr. Zuker was living in St. Johns. At the age of 18 in 1943, Mr. Zuker was drafted into the war with no choice. He went to St. Petersburg, Florida, which he referred to as tent city, Madison, Wisconsin, and Sioux Falls, South Dakota. He entered the Army Air Corps, which was part of the Air Force. His highest rank was Sergeant. He worked at an airfield in India. Mr. Zuker worked fifty to sixty feet up in a tower, overlooking the entire airfield. He was a radio operator mechanic, operating the radios to contact planes or other airfields, so if something went wrong, they were able to prepare quickly. Mr. Zuker then went to China to work. The only bad thing he ever saw was when Japan dropped a bomb in India. When Mr. Zuker was in Detroit, visiting relatives, he heard on the radio that Japan had attacked Pearl Harbor. He thought it was so unbelievable because Japan was very small compared the United States, and they had such little resources, he did not know how they could do such a thing. Japan was sneaky in bombing Pearl Harbor. He said it was uncalled for and unprovoked, and that the United States gave Japan the impression that we were not going to fight. Mr. Zuker's impression on D-Day was the thought it was a necessary thing to do. If D-Day did not happen, the United States would not have had to stay in Europe and fight a defensive war. He thought German was aggressive also. He knew that nobody should be attacked like Hitler attacked the Jews. Mr. Zuker was in favor of the atomic bomb. He wanted anything that could shorten the war. Japan was the aggressor and wanted to take over a lot of places, so he thought they should have known the bombs were coming, and that they were going to shorten the war. Mr. Zuker came back to the United States and was discharged in February, 1964. He got a job at a gas station.

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