

# Pride and tears at Veterans Day ceremony

By Tom Middlemiss

Duty, Honor, Country...

Nowhere were those immortal words of General Douglas MacArthur's farewell speech to the Corps of Cadets at West Point in 1962 more evident than at Aston Gardens, a senior living community in North Naples, where 70 former warriors were honored at a Veterans Day ceremony.

As Dr. Jake Young, a B-24 bomber pilot during WW II, read the names of each veteran and announced the conflict in which they served, they stood, some a little more slowly than others, and saluted with pride as they were recognized. Two of the distinguished WW II veterans were women. Joan Willes, 88, was an army nurse, and Doris B. Mamolen served as captain in the Eighth Army Air Force, and, at 96, is full of life.

The most moving moment of the ceremony came when a beautiful



Attendees look on during ceremony.

song called *Before You Go*, written by Dr. Dam Bierstock, a physician as well as a professional musician and entertainer, was played. It brought tears to all in attendance. Dr. Bierstock wrote the song as a tribute and

thank-you to the aging veterans of WW II. The song, as well as the story behind it, can be found at [www.beforeyougo.us](http://www.beforeyougo.us).

When asked how he liked it

Aston Gardens, Dr. Young replied, "I love it here. Everyone is friendly and we have lots of activities." Ninety-six-year old Doris Mamolen agreed: "It's a wonderful place to be."



PHOTOS BY TOM MIDDLEMISS

Doris B. Mamolen, 96, former Air Force Captain.