



NATIONAL VETERANS CREATIVE ARTS FESTIVAL

art • music • drama • dance • creative writing

Shirley Jeffries Therapeutic Arts Scholarship Recipient Music Division

Jack Tongen Fayetteville, Ark.

A true inspiration, Jack Tongen shared his poetry, played his guitar and sang an original piece that reflected how the creative arts are his lifeline for healing.

The need for written, emotional expression through poetry and music has saved his life. Tongen's difficult and emotional work evoke both the feelings of pain and the healing of war for anyone he allows to share it, two very powerful emotions. When he becomes distraught about the impact of war on his life, the benefit of writing poetry and playing music serves as an outlet to Tongen for thoughts and emotions he might not be able to express otherwise.

Tongen's confidence and overall health have improved. He receives traditional health care services at the local VA Medical Center in Fayetteville, and now, he is even more inspired as a blue ribbon winner in the facility's local creative arts competition.

Tongen says that singing, writing poetry and playing his guitar keep him alive and serve as an inspiration to others. The experience adds another layer of support and confidence deserving of this American Veteran.