

Two Pearl Harbor survivors in N.J. to speak at Brookdale Community College

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Ralph Jeffers of Ocean Township is one of the few remaining Pearl Harbor survivors from New Jersey.

LINCROFT — Two former crewmen of the USS Curtiss will be featured speakers at a Pearl Harbor 70th anniversary commemoration at Brookdale Community College today.

Thomas Mahoney, of Union, and Ralph Jeffers, of Ocean Township, are expected to speak on their experiences on Dec. 7, 1941. They are two of 10 living members of the now-defunct New Jersey Pearl Harbor Survivors Association.

"It's something that will be an honor to do," said Jeffers, a Navy aviation machinist.

On Dec. 31, the national Pearl Harbor Survivors Association, founded in 1958, is expected to dissolve with many of the remaining 2,700 members in their late 80s or older. Bill Muehlib, president of the national organization, estimates there are only 8,000 remaining Pearl Harbor survivors in the U.S.

Today's events at Brookdale will commence at 11 a.m. at the school's Warner Student Life center and go all afternoon.

In addition to speeches by Mahoney and Jeffers, Col. Joseph E. Whitlock, Deputy Base Commander of Joint Base McGuire-Dix in Lakehurst and Capt. David J. Harrison, Commander of U.S. Naval Weapons Station Earle are also expected to speak.

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