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saw the smoke rising over the mountains from the harbor. We went on alert immediately. No one was expecting it. Even the Navy was surprised. The admiral in command of the fleet thought the Japanese planes were ours.”

The harbor, ringed by mountains, was a bowl of smoke and flame. In all, 21 American warships were sunk or damaged, and 2,388 American servicemen and women were dead, or dying.

Hancock, now 92, was an ordinance man who later served on the south Pacific island of Iwo Jima and witnessed the U.S. flag being raised on Mt. Suribachi. He said he remembers the fear more than the anger in the days and weeks following the sneak attack. “I was angry, sure, but I was mostly scared,” he said. “We carried tablets around to purify the drinking water because they thought the Japanese had poisoned the water supply, stuff like that. There were just lots of rumors. We didn’t know what was going on.”

Because martial law was declared on the island following the attack, Hancock stood guard the night of Dec. 7. He compared the nighttime sky to a July 4th fireworks display. “There were tracer bullets rising up from the harbor all night,” he said. “Everyone was nervous. We were expecting to see the Japanese army anytime.”

Hancock, who now lives in an Anderson, SC assisted living home, said his thoughts about that day 68 years ago revolve around the people who died. “I ain’t no hero,” he said. “I just survived the war. I’m 92 and I came home, had a family. I didn’t go through the horrors of the war. But there are a lot of men who didn’t come back, or who were wounded or became (prisoners of war) — those are the ones we should remember.”

The most recent data available from United States Department of Veterans Affairs projected there were about 2.6 million WW II vets still alive as of September 30, 2008, of whom about 900 die every day. As their numbers decline, so do the opportunities to document, and learn from, their experiences.

At the Richard M. Campbell Nursing home in Anderson, South Carolina, a black veteran shared how growing up in the segregated South and serving in a segregated Army impacted his view of the war as he lived through it. Fidi Giles, an 83-year-old from Chester, S.C., remembers his impression of Pearl Harbor when he arrived there as an Army sergeant in May 1945.

“The first time I saw the harbor I noticed the hulls of the ships still down in the water,” Giles said. “The first thing that came to my mind was the number of soldiers and sailors who were killed.”

Three months after the attack President Franklin D. Roosevelt referred to as “a date which will live in infamy,” he signed Executive Order 9066. The order called for the relocation of about 120,000 Japanese-Americans living on U.S. soil to one of 32 different camps located in 14 states. About 12,000 German- and Italian-Americans also were held during the war under the Alien Enemies Act of 1798.

Giles, who said he witnessed the destructive power of war while serving in post-war Japan with the American occupation forces, said his experiences as a young black man probably affected the way he felt about the internment camps. “Like everyone else, I was angry about the attack, but I didn’t probably feel the way a lot of folks did about the Japanese,” he said. “I grew up in a segregated situation,” he said. “Everything I knew had been segregated. When I learned about the internment camps, I didn’t feel too cool about them. I thought they were degrading to the Japanese citizens living here, because I knew what it felt like to be separated out.”

BBB Warns of New Pet Scams Targeting Popular Dog Breeds

French bulldogs, dachshunds & German shepherds lead the list of scam lures

French bulldogs, dachshunds, and German shepherds continue to be top favorites among pet lovers - and, unfortunately, among scammers. According to the Better Business Bureau (BBB), fraudsters are using fake websites and social media accounts featuring these beloved breeds to swindle unsuspecting buyers.

BBB Scam Tracker ([BBB.org/scamtracker](https://www.bbb.org/scamtracker)) reports thousands of cases of online pet scams in which scammers even steal legitimate business identities to fool potential buyers. Victims have reported median losses of several hundred dollars, and some fraudsters have gone so far as to claim an animal would be harmed unless more money was sent.

A BBB investigation, Found the perfect French bulldog online! BBB says it may not exist, highlights the ongoing patterns of fake pet sales. While the number of reports has dropped in the past two years, the issue remains widespread.

- Scam Tracker reports for pet scams have decreased over the last two years but remain a problem.
- Scammers operate globally, targeting U.S. citizens.
- Businesses can protect themselves through training and education.
- Fake pet-sale websites often rank high in search results, misleading buyers.

According to BBB Scam Tracker data, reports surged from 680 in 2022 to 2,899 in 2023 before declining slightly in 2024 (2,278 reports) and 1,632 through September 2025. Median losses hovered between \$600 and \$750.

In North Carolina, “Margaret” paid \$550 via Zelle for a kitten she found on a Facebook page called Cats Adoption Foundation. When she was later told to send another \$600 for shipping, she realized it was a scam. Another victim, “Anitra,” sent \$1,400 after being lured by a Facebook post advertising teacup poodles. Each time she paid, new “fees” appeared for shots, crates, and transport.

Red flags of a pet scam include:

- Unusually low prices for popular breeds.
- The word “teacup” used in ads.
- Sellers who refuse to meet in person or on video call.
- Extra charges for cages, vaccines, or shipping.
- High-pressure tactics suggesting the animal will be harmed.

BBB tips to avoid pet scams:

- See pets in person - an in-person visit or video call can expose most scams.
- Use reverse-image search to detect stolen photos.
- Know market prices - if the deal seems too good to be true, it likely is.
- Visit a local shelter - a sure way to adopt safely and avoid fraud.

Consumers can verify breeders or report scams at [BBB.org](https://www.bbb.org), use BBB Scam Tracker to submit incidents, and learn more at [BBB.org/scamstudies](https://www.bbb.org/scamstudies). For media inquiries, contact Juliana O’Rork at 704-927-8617 or jorork@charlotte.bbb.org.

SPCC Offers Free Education - the Anson Advantage

The "Anson Advantage" program provides free tuition and fees for Anson County residents enrolled in one of South Piedmont Community College’s short-term workforce training programs. These programs can be completed in less than a year and are designed to lead to immediate employment opportunities in fields including:

- Construction • Early Childhood Education • Healthcare
- Manufacturing • Truck Driving • Welding • More!

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