



**John  
Iseli**  
*Army*

## John Iseli

Feb 9, 1924 - Dec 27, 2020

**BIRTHPLACE:** Wakefield, Kansas

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### SOLDIER DETAILS

**HIGHEST RANK:** Technician 5th Grade

**DIVISION:** Army, Co. B, 382nd Infantry, 96th  
Division

**THEATER OF OPERATION:** Pacific

**SERVED:** Aug 3, 1944 - Oct 28, 1946

**HONORED BY:** The family of John Iseli, Jr.

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### BIOGRAPHY

John Iseli, Jr. was born February 9, 1924 on a farm south of Wakefield, KS. He was the first child of John and Elizabeth Iseli. In 1929, the family moved to a farm near Industry, KS. He attended Greenridge Grade School and graduated from Dickinson County Community High School in 1942. He did farm work until he was drafted into the Army on August 3, 1944. He began his Army training at Ft. Leavenworth. From there he went to Camp Hood, Texas, where he concluded his training in December of 1944. Following that, he reported to Ft. Ord, California in January 1945; then Ft. Lawton, Washington, where he shipped out on January 22nd. He arrived at the Hawaiian Islands on January 29 and remained there until February 16th. He landed in the Philippines on March 4th and joined the 96th Division, Company B, 382nd Infantry. After 22 days, on March 26, he left for Okinawa and made the invasion of Okinawa on April 1, 1945. Three days later, on April 4th, he was wounded by a Japanese machine gun. On April 5th, he left Okinawa on a hospital ship and landed in Saipan on April 15th, where he was treated at the 369th Station Hospital. After nearly two months in the Saipan hospital, John returned to active duty on June 12, 1945. On July 27th, he left Okinawa for the Philippines and landed in Mindoro in August 11th. In early January 1946, the 96th Division came home but John did not have enough points, so he stayed in the Philippines. On January 3, 1946, he left Mindoro and went to Luzon and joined the 786th Ordinance, 86th Division. On July 20, 1946, he went to the Repple Depple and on August 12th, he boarded a ship to come home. He landed at Camp Beale, California on August 28th and was discharged from the Army on October 28, 1946 with a rank of Technician 5th Grade. John spent part of his time overseas doing mechanic work as he had passed the mechanic test when he was first in the Army but at the time, infantry men were needed more than mechanics. He said that when there weren't things to fix, he and the men, he worked with, spent their time building cars and other vehicles out of spare parts. Although not all of his memories are good ones, he easily and fondly recalls the men that he lived and worked with. John received several

medals for his service during World War II including the Philippine Liberation Medal with a Bronze Battle Star, the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with a Bronze Battle Star, the WWII Victory Medal, the Good Conduct Medal, the Purple Heart, the Philippine Independence Ribbon, the Bronze Star, and a Combat Infantry Badge. In addition to these, he has recently received a certificate for a Unit Citation for the 96th Infantry Division. John's World War II service was a very important part of his life however he has also had a full life at home with his family. A few years after coming home, John met and married Imogene Robinett on May 15, 1949. They have spent their married life in the rural communities of Industry and Abilene, KS. They had four children: Nancy in 1951, Joan in 1954, Wilma in 1957 and Terry in 1969. John farmed after returning from the Army until 1964 when he started driving a truck in addition to farming. In 1970, he quit farming to drive a truck full time. In 1975, he started driving for Churchill Truck Line, where he continued until 1985 when he retired from trucking for health reasons. During his trucking days, he traveled all over the Eastern half of the United States. Since retiring John has spent time with his growing family. John and Imogene have four children, nine grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren. He is a lifetime member of several organizations, including the VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars), the American Legion and the DAV (Disabled Veterans of America). Part of his free time has been spent volunteering at the Dickinson County Historical Society, where he served as a member of the board of trustees for several years. Woodworking projects are also something that he is known for.