

I was raised here." Ross's son Greg is the eldest of his six children and travels with his father.

On October 30, 1944, Ross served as a private in Company G, 30th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division. This day Ross fought courageously, and 6 months later he received the highest decoration in the U.S. military, the Medal of Honor. After 55 out of the 88 men were lost in his company, Ross manned a machine gun alone holding off six German attacks.

Mr. Ross's bravery and courage while in service to his Nation is an inspiration to his fellow Kentuckians. His story is one that is told again and again to remind McCreary County residents of his dedication and liberty to our country. A local newspaper published an article on May 23, 2013, to celebrate 91 years of life for Mr. Ross and to retell his story while in uniform. I ask unanimous consent that the full article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to appear in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the McCreary County Voice, May 23, 2013]

#### COURAGE UNDER FIRE

STORY OF NATIVE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT IS WORTH REPEATING

(By Eugenia Jones)

As he does each year on his birthday, Wilburn K. "Wib" Ross makes the journey back from his current home in Dupont, Washington to the Bear Creek community in Strunk, Kentucky, to visit his birthplace and childhood home and to celebrate and reminisce with family and friends.

This year, with Ross turning 91 on May 12, was no exception. Arriving in McCreary County on the day prior to his birthday, the spry 91-year-old clearly was not weary from his cross-country travels. After spending the remainder of his McCreary County arrival day visiting with his brothers and other family members, "Wib" found time to visit the American Legion Post 115 for a night filled with jokes and conversation with fellow veterans.

On the following day, "Wib" once again visited the American Legion, where he was honored at a special luncheon with an American flag birthday cake.

The story of Congressional Medal of Honor recipient and McCreary County native Wilburn K. Ross, who was a member of the 2nd Battalion, 30th Infantry Division, and his bravery under fire during World War II has been told many times, yet it remains a story that is worth repeating, not only to remind us of the individual courage and bravery needed to protect the freedom we cherish but also to share, with our young people, the historical legacy surrounding a McCreary Countian's inclusion into the elite group of Congressional Medal of Honor recipients.

It is from McCreary County that Ross, as a young man, entered the U.S. Army during World War II. His service led him to be cited for "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at risk of life above and beyond the call of duty near St. Jacques, France" and to be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

According to the "U.S. Army Center of Military History," Ross's extraordinary feat of courage began at 11:30 a.m. on October 30, 1944, after his company had lost 55 of 88 men in an attack on elite German mountain troops.

Risking his own safety in order to absorb the beginning impact of the enemy counter-

attack, Private Ross placed his machine gun 10 yards in front of his leading support rifle-men. With machine gun and small-arms fire whizzing around him, Ross fired with deadly accuracy and managed to fend off the enemy force.

Surrounded by automatic fire and exploding rifle grenades, Private Ross, by himself, continued to man his machine gun and bravely held off six more German attacks. By the eighth attack, most of Ross's supporting riflemen were out of ammunition. As the American riflemen took positions supporting Ross from behind, they crawled, during battle, to Private Ross in order to slip a few rounds of ammunition from his belt. Throughout it all, Ross continued to fight on with basically no help, successfully pushing the enemy back despite the fact that enemy grenadiers crawled to within four yards of his position in attempts to kill him with hand grenades.

Finally, having used his last rounds of ammunition, Private Ross was directed to withdraw to the command post with the eight surviving riflemen. Instead, Ross, anticipating more ammunition, stood his ground. The Germans, realizing that Ross and his machine gun were all that stood between them and a major breakthrough, embarked on their last attack, bringing their fire and wrath together on Private Ross in an effort to destroy him. Just as the enemy was about to rush over Ross's position, he received fresh ammunition, allowing him to open fire on the enemy, killing 40 and wounding 10 of the attacking force.

Single-handedly breaking the attack, Ross killed or wounded at least 58 Germans in more than five hours of continuous combat, saving the last members of his company from devastation.

"I didn't really get tired," Ross commented when asked about the battle. "But they got awfully close to killing me."

Remaining on his post that night and the following day for a total of 36 hours, Ross proved that his upbringing in McCreary County, Kentucky, had served him well in preparing him to exhibit extraordinary courage and fortitude in protecting his comrades and his country under fire.

Six months later, on April 14, 1945, Ross proved that the same McCreary County upbringing had prepared him to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest military decoration given by the United States government to a member of the armed forces.

Years later, that same McCreary County man, who as a young adult worked in the local coal mines at Stearns, received congratulations from and shook the hand of President John F. Kennedy, just a few months prior to Kennedy's assassination.

In continuing his career with the Army, Ross reached the rank of Master Sergeant and received the Purple Heart, Bronze Star, Oak Leaf Clusters, Combat Infantry Badge, Good Conduct Medal, and the French Croix De Guerre. He was wounded four times and also served in Korea.

Today, at 91 years old, Ross will quickly tell everyone how much he enjoys his birthday visits home to McCreary County.

"Everybody here treats me well," Ross smiled. "They've named the highway [Private Wilburn K. Ross Highway] after me. I like coming back here because I was raised here."

Ross's son Greg, the eldest of six children, travels with his father and truly admires his father. "He's been a super man all his life," Greg commented as he smiled at his father. "He's always been helpful to everybody. It's fun to travel with him."

"Wib" says his life is "pretty good" now. With his son close by, Ross still lives by him-

self in Dupont and mows his own grass. He enjoys going out for his weekly visit to a local gathering spot to listen to music and sings along when the lyrics, "Put your sweet lips a little closer to the phone," ring out from the stage.

The Congressional Medal of Honor recipient is straightforward and direct when asked for his advice to the younger generation.

"I think the best thing is to always do what you think is right," Ross declared. "If you do that, you'll have nothing to worry about."

#### COLUMBIA FALLS, MAINE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, it is a great pleasure to wish the Town of Columbia Falls a very happy 150th birthday. Throughout this year, Columbia Falls will celebrate the generations of hard-working and caring people who have made it such a wonderful place to live, work, and raise families.

While this sesquicentennial marks Columbia Falls' incorporation, the year 1863 was but one milestone in a long journey of progress. It is a journey that began eons earlier, when the receding glaciers carved out the river known to Native Americans as the Wescogus and to those who came later as the Pleasant. In the decades before America won its freedom, the Pleasant River provided the wildlife that sustained the first settlers. In the years that followed, it became a great avenue of commerce in products from field and forest and a great shipbuilding industry thrived along its banks.

Natural resources are only the background for Columbia Falls' story. Such names as Judge Thomas Ruggles, Daniel Carleton, Elijah Hamlin, Henry Bucknam, and Mary Ruggles Chandler remind us of the determination, ingenuity, and hard work that built the town. The impressive representation of Columbia Falls landmarks on the National Registry of Historic Places and the town's ongoing effort to restore Union Hall demonstrate the high regard the residents of today have for those who came before.

In the year of Columbia Falls' incorporation, America was engaged in the Civil War. Many brave patriots from this community stepped forward to preserve our Nation and to secure the blessing of freedom for all, and they were remembered at the Columbia Falls Civil War Ball in April that launched this 150th anniversary celebration. Through their longstanding commitment to the inspiring Wreaths Across America Project, the people of Columbia Falls honor the heroes who have served our country throughout our history and bring distinction to our State.

This celebration is not just about something that is measured in calendar years. It is about human accomplishment. We celebrate the people who for more than a century and a half have pulled together, cared for one another, and built a great community. Thanks to those who came before, Columbia Falls has a wonderful history. Thanks

to those who are here today, it has a bright future.

#### RECOGNIZING WESTVIEW ORCHARDS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate Westview Orchards of Romeo, MI on its 200th anniversary.

Since its founding in 1813, the orchard has been a part of Michigan's way of life. It is where families go to pick their own peaches and strawberries in the summer, and where they go to pick apples, take wagon rides and enjoy the cider mill in the fall. It has been a source of fresh food since the War of 1812 was being waged from Michigan to New England to New Orleans.

Michigan was a prime battleground during the War of 1812, and the British were winning every major engagement. The Union Jack flew over settlements in Michigan from Mackinac Island to Detroit. By the summer of 1813, it seemed likely that when the war ended, the Michigan Territory would belong to the British Empire.

That all changed with the Battle of Lake Erie, when American forces defeated the British Navy and changed the tide of the war. One of the heroes of the battle was Michael Bowerman, who had come from New York to fight for his country. In gratitude for his service, the United States offered him a plot of land in Michigan.

And so it was that Michael Bowerman packed up his belongings and set out to start a new life for himself and an enduring legacy for his family. In his pockets, he carried a few peach pits from his father's farm in New York. He found his homestead in present-day Romeo, built a cabin and founded the farm that is today known as Westview Orchards.

It started with a small garden and orchard, with the family transporting the fruit by horse and wagon to Port Huron to sell at the farmers market. He later expanded the farm to include livestock and field crops. When a bear attacked one of his pigs, he came to the rescue and fought off the bear, earning him the nickname "Fearless Mike." As the years passed, his farm and his family grew, and in 1880, his son, Byron, planted 10 acres of peach trees that laid the foundation for Romeo's famous peach festival that is held every Labor Day Weekend.

For the last 200 years, the descendants of "Fearless Mike" have carried on his legacy. His sons, daughters, grandsons, granddaughters, great-grandsons, great-granddaughters and more—have worked tirelessly to build the wonderful orchard that serves thousands of families in Michigan every year.

One great-grandson in particular made critical innovations on the farm. Harvey Bowerman took over the farm from his father, Byron, and his brother, George. Harvey modernized the farm

and built the foundation on which it stands today. He built the white clapboard house that the family still calls home. He and his son, Armand, transitioned the farm from using workhorses to using tractors. Harvey sold the hog and dairy operations, focusing the business on growing fruits and vegetables. He also added a grading room and built a custom peach grader and de-fuzzer machine to improve efficiency. His greatest innovation, though, was forced upon him in August of 1930.

It was a typical August day in an unusually good harvest year, and Harvey was loading his truck full of peaches from his record harvest to sell at Detroit's Eastern Market 40 miles to the south. Harvey was not the only grower having a record year, though. As he was preparing to leave, he received a call from Eastern Market that said, "Don't come down, Harvey. The market is flooded with so many peaches we can't sell 'em all."

As every farmer knows, once you harvest your crops you have to get them to the market quickly before they spoil. In desperation, Harvey tried something different: knowing that the Detroit Urban Railroad trolley had a stop just down the street, he turned his truck around so the back was facing the road in front of the farmhouse. His success selling the peaches to passengers forever changed the way he and his descendants marketed their fruit.

Harvey passed the farm to his son, Armand, and when Armand suddenly passed away in 1981, Westview's fifth and sixth generations took over. Today, the family farm is in the hands of Katherine Bowerman Roy, her daughters Katrina Roy Schumacher and Abigail Jacobson, and Abigail's husband, Bill.

Westview Orchards is the oldest farm in Macomb County. It is a place where families from across the county and beyond visit to pick their own fruit, take wagon rides around the farm, and enjoy the corn maze, ice cream shop, cider mill and farmers market.

Westview Orchards is a true Michigan success story, born of hard work, dedication and a commitment to innovation. I congratulate the entire family—from "Fearless Mike" Bowerman to Katherine, Katrina, Abigail and Bill—on 200 wonderful years.

#### RECOGNIZING THE 90TH MISSILE WING

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the 50th anniversary of the 90th Missile Wing stationed at Frances E. Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne, WY.

For the past half century, the dedicated men and women of the 90th Missile Wing have served with unwavering dedication to the security of our Nation. Known to their fellow airmen as the "Mighty Ninety," this wing, with its five groups, displays excellence and commitment to the mission.

On July 1, 1963, the 90th Strategic Wing came into existence amid growing tensions with the Soviet Union. Protecting our national security throughout the Cold War and into present day, the 90th Missile Wing provides our Nation's best, most reliable, most accurate strategic deterrent. Tasked with deterring an attack, the missile wing has worked extensively with the Minuteman I and Minuteman III systems, as well as encompassing the full lifecycle of the Peacekeeper Missile. Today, these men and women maintain and protect our Minuteman III resources 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year—truly placing service to our country above all else.

The 90th Missile Wing has been named the best Intercontinental Ballistic Missile Wing the past 2 years, earning the Blanchard Trophy in 2011 from U.S. Strategic Command and the Williams Trophy in 2010 and 2012 from Air Force Global Strike Command. The men and women who serve in the Mighty Ninety are second to none. Airmen from the 90th have gone on to serve our Nation in the Pentagon and international conflict zones. Additionally, just this month, the wing was turned over to its first female commander, Col. Tracey Hayes. Colonel Hayes has committed to continuing the standard of excellence.

At this very moment, there are crewmen out in the missile fields, security teams on patrol, and support personnel of the 90th Missile Wing standing watch, ready to execute. They focus exclusively on their mission to "provide preeminent combat capability across the spectrum of conflict." The Mighty Ninety continue to be an integral part of America's national defense.

Congratulations and a profound thank you to the members of the 90th Missile Wing and their families.

#### TRIBUTE TO DOMNELIA "NELLEN" BUDD

Mr. BEGICH. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Nellen Budd, my longtime office manager and dedicated staffer whose patience, organizational skills and kindness have served the people of Alaska very well for many years. She has listened to thousands of Alaskans on the phone and in person, and directed many people toward help when they needed it most.

Nearly 40 years ago, a young professional named Domnelia "Nellen" Regal, traveled from the Philippines to the United States to realize a dream. Nellen married Larry Budd and raised three sons in Alaska: Earl, Don and Evan Budd. All three of her sons currently serve in the U.S. military, as does her daughter-in-law Kay. As a working mother, Nellen balanced home, social, church and career responsibilities with finesse and gained an excellent reputation as an esteemed professional.

For 25 years, Nellen greeted the people of Anchorage and kept city hall