

Tactics Squadron. On January 17, 2017, the U.S. Air Force awarded Master Sergeant Miller, of Goshen, KY, its highest honor, the Air Force Cross. This award is presented “for extraordinary heroism while engaged in military operations against an opposing foreign force.” It is second only to the Congressional Medal of Honor.

In March 2002, Miller served in the Battle of Takur Ghar as part of Operation Anaconda in the Paktia province of Afghanistan. Their mission was to defeat Taliban forces hiding in on the Takur Ghar Mountain.

During the mission, two MH-47E Chinook helicopters took enemy fire as they attempted to land. The helicopter lurched in an attempt to evade taking damage. The quick maneuvering caused PO1 Neil C. Roberts to fall from the rear ramp out of the vehicle. Miller, a pararescuman, was in a third helicopter to rescue Roberts. However, his vehicle was hit with automatic weapons fire and rocket propelled grenades when it was 20 feet above the ground.

The enemy fire damaged Miller's helicopter and forced them to touch down on Takur Ghar. After a hard landing, Miller and his team formed a defensive posture despite five critical casualties. Through rocket propelled grenade, mortar, and small arms fire, Miller dragged the wounded helicopter pilot to safety. For the next 17 hours, Miller and his team engaged the enemy in intense fighting, and he displayed astonishing bravery as he helped the wounded and resupplied his comrades.

Through his heroic actions, Miller successfully brought 10 seriously wounded soldiers to medical treatment and recovered seven Americans killed in action.

For his service, the Air Force awarded Miller the Silver Star on November 1, 2003. However, as part of the Department of Defense's review of combat medals, the Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James upgraded the award to the Air Force Cross.

In a statement, James said “These are people whose lifestyle includes going above and beyond the call of duty and exemplifying the Air Force core values of integrity first, service before self and excellence in all we do.”

To further commemorate Miller's extraordinary service, the National Museum of the United States Air Force at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base has included his actions in the Battle of Takur Ghar in a permanent exhibition on battlefield airmen.

On behalf of a grateful nation, I want to extend my sincerest thanks to Master Sergeant Keary Miller for his service to the United States and the Kentucky Air National Guard. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring this distinguished Kentuckian. He has earned this prestigious award, and he is a true American hero.

#### TRIBUTE TO GEORGE FLYNN

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today it is my honor to celebrate

former Pulaski County circuit clerk George Flynn. Although he began his retirement last year, his community is still recognizing him for his three decades of public service. The Somerset-Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce presented the “Distinguished Community Service Award”—its top honor—to Flynn in recognition of his dedicated work to the people of Pulaski County.

In both his personal life and professional work, Flynn tirelessly tried to make his community a better place. He was first elected in 1987 because he “is [the] personification of a ‘one of us’ attitude necessary to attract votes in Pulaski County.” Because of his exemplary work as circuit clerk, the people reelected him four times. In his tenure, he worked with five circuit court judges and oversaw the modernization of all court records.

After a proud career of public service, Flynn said he is ready to spend his days sleeping in, enjoying time with his wife, Resa, his grandchildren, and his dogs. He has earned a relaxing retirement. I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to George Flynn for a notable career of public service and this much deserved award.

#### REMEMBERING WILLIAM “BILL” HOLEMAN

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of William Holeman. Preacher Bill, as he was known, came to eastern Kentucky in 1953 and almost immediately made a lasting impact.

For over 60 years, Bill travelled throughout eastern Kentucky, teaching around 40,000 schoolchildren each year about bullying, drug abuse, and his Christian faith with the Youth Haven Bible Camp. Although his family described him as a humble man, Bill had a real passion for his vocation.

To help teach the kids, Bill employed ventriloquist dummies named Henry and Homer. He developed their personalities and spread his message with laughter and fun.

Bill dearly loved eastern Kentucky and its people. He devoted his life to them, and many children were forever changed by his work.

Preacher Bill will surely be missed, and Elaine and I send our condolences to his wife, Joyce, and their children Susan, Gail, Gary, and Eddie.

#### REMEMBERING SHERIFF CHARLES EDWARD “FUZZY” KEESEE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today I wish to remember the life of the longest serving county sheriff in the history of Kentucky, Pike County Sheriff Charles Edward Keese. After more than 40 years of hard work, “Fuzzy,” as he was affectionately known, passed away at the age of 89.

A veteran of the Second World War, Fuzzy became a lasting icon in Pike County. Deputy Judge/Executive Brian Morris said “You can't serve for more

than four decades and not personally touch every household in Pike County.” He was a compassionate public servant, a dedicated law enforcement officer, and a good man. The community will surely remember Fuzzy's impact and miss him deeply.

Elaine and I send our condolences to Sheriff Keese's wife, Easter, his brother, Alben, and his sister, Nancy Jo.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### TRIBUTE TO LYLE BURGESS

• Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week, I have the distinct honor of recognizing Lyle Burgess of Ryegate. Lyle has been a dependable leader for the people of Golden Valley County for over a generation. He has contributed to the community in the fields of education and emergency services. Golden Valley County is located in the middle of Montana, and Lyle has been in the middle of events in the county for many years.

After graduating from Eastern Montana College, now known as Montana State University-Billings, Lyle began a 30-year career as a school teacher at Ryegate High School. A few years after he started teaching, Lyle began serving as a first responder with the Golden Valley County Emergency Medical Services. Although he is now retired from teaching, Lyle continues to serve his community: he went on to become the director of EMS. Today he still serves in that role. As director, Lyle is responsible for training new first responders and getting them ready to be Emergency Medical Technicians. The familiar saying “once a teacher, always a teacher” rings true for Mr. Burgess. Golden Valley County Sheriff Robert Pallas referred to Lyle and his colleague at EMS, Mary Ann Schladweiler, as the “staples” of the program.

Golden Valley County is home to just about 800 residents. The rural setting magnifies the necessity of having great folks like Lyle and Mary Ann offer their time and talent in the service of others. Montana is a State blessed with many treasures, and the greatest treasure of all is the people. Thank you, Lyle, for going above and beyond in the community and teaching others by your example. •

##### TRIBUTE TO EVELYN FRANCES STEARNS

• Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Evelyn Frances Stearns, who celebrates her 100th birthday on March 31, 2017. Evelyn was born in South Berwick, ME, the daughter of Perley and Helen Marshall.

She was a resident nurse graduate of Nashua Memorial Hospital in Nashua, NH, and was later a 3 and a half year veteran in the Army Nurse Corps, working as an operating room nurse in

the U.S. and South Pacific theatres during World War II.

During the war, she was part of the 9th General Hospital originating in Fort Devens, MA, and then shipped to Townsville, Australia.

In 1944, she was transported to the Southwest Pacific, where she served in New Guinea during the battles that took place. She was awarded a Bronze Star Medal for her service.

On February 18, 1945, she was promoted from second lieutenant to first lieutenant.

In June of 1946, she married Fred C. Stearns from Winchester, NH, and the two had four children: Linda, Diane, Gail, and Sally.

Evelyn raised her three girls while employed at the Valley Regional Hospital in Claremont, NH, as the operating room supervisor. There, she was known as "Our mother, the owl." Tough, but fair, Evelyn didn't miss a trick.

After 22 years there, she retired in 1982.

Evelyn is known around the city of Claremont for her daily walks, often in excess of 5 miles a day, up until the age of 98. She also found great joy in maintaining her home inside and out until the day she left, 6 months ago. Her work ethic exhausted her children and grandchildren, who were amazed at her tenacity.

She continues to be an avid bridge player, and enjoys crosswords and reading mysteries.

Among her family, Evelyn has seven grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.●

#### TRIBUTE TO WENDY DiVECCHIO

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Wendy DiVecchio on becoming the chief executive officer of the Greater Las Vegas Association of Realtors, GLVAR. It gives me great pleasure to recognize DiVecchio's recent success and her dedication to the great State of Nevada.

Founded in 1947, GLVAR has always led our State in professionalism. GLVAR, the Nevada representative for the National Association of Realtors, is the largest professional organization within southern Nevada, providing 13,000 of its members educational resources, professional training, and political representation. GLVAR has truly made an impact on our State, specifically in Las Vegas.

As a longtime resident of Las Vegas, DiVecchio has served in several different departments within the GLVAR for over 17 years, holding many of the company's crucial positions. Over the years, DiVecchio served as educational director, national chairwoman for local and State Realtor associations, and interim CEO. Recognizing her exceptional efforts, DiVecchio also earned the Realtor Certified Executive designation from the National Association of Realtors. While working full-time at GLVAR, she also earned a bachelor's

and master's degree in business management from the University of Phoenix.

In her new role, DiVecchio will oversee more than 30 employees and all other aspects of the GLVAR, including its move into a new headquarters located in southern Las Vegas. Although she will be faced with more responsibility, DiVecchio has proven she is up to the task and will succeed to her fullest potential.

As Nevada's senior Senator, I applaud DiVecchio's impressive feats and commend her for demonstrating such valuable commitment and loyalty to GLVAR. I am both humbled and honored by her hard work, and I am proud to call her a fellow Nevadan. Today I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Wendy DiVecchio on her recent promotion to GLVAR's CEO and wish her well in her future endeavors. I give my deepest appreciation for all that she has done for the Silver State.●

#### TRIBUTE TO STACEY ESCALANTE

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Stacey Escalante of Las Vegas. Stacey is a Nevada mother who battled cancer and won. Ever since she defeated cancer, Stacey has taken herself to new heights and translated her strength into action. Her story makes us all proud to call Nevada home.

Stacey Escalante was diagnosed with stage 3 skin cancer over 10 years ago when she was still a news reporter for KVBC, now KSNV-TV. Up until this point, she was a model for health, but as we all know, cancer is a disease of its own. After several medical procedures, constant trips to the doctor, Stacey had to endure years of screenings and follow-up medical procedures before the cancer finally went into remission. During this time, she was forced to take a leave of absence from her job in order to recover. Even worse, she had to spend an extended period of time away from her family and friends.

During this recovery, Stacey wanted to come back home. She knew she would recover if she got to be at home surrounded by her family and coworkers who cared deeply about her. Fortunately, Stacey was able to return home and be with her family and friends; there she continued to fight cancer tooth and nail.

After she recovered, Stacey didn't just go back to work and pick up where she left off. Instead, Stacey became a cancer survivor, willing to stand up for cancer patients and those unaware of the dangers that tanning beds can cause to the human body. Stacey also remains incredibly active, a hard-working single mom who is still dedicated to living a healthy lifestyle. Despite time away from her career, Stacey worked through the setbacks and is now a publicist at Orca Communications and continues to have an exciting career in public relations.

Stacey's battle with cancer and getting to where she is today is a testament to her determination. She has a passionate story to tell, and I believe that she will continue to inspire others to do the same. She epitomizes what it means to fight back and go even further by spreading the word about the dangers posed by tanning beds and advocate for other women's health issues. I am truly inspired by her story.

I am both humbled and honored to acknowledge Stacey Escalante for her perseverance and willingness to share her story and get involved to make the great State of Nevada an even stronger, healthier State. I wish her continued efforts the absolute best. I will continue to pray for her as well as her wonderful family and friends who stood by her side every step of the way.●

#### TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL MATT JONKEY

● Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate LTC Matt Jonkey on completing his master of arts degree in security studies at the Naval Postgraduate School Center for Homeland Defense and Security, CHDS. It gives me great pleasure to recognize him for his recent success and his continued dedication to serving the great State of Nevada.

CHDS is our Nation's epicenter for homeland security education located at the Naval Postgraduate School, NPS. Among the many programs CHDS offers, its masters program is exceptionally prestigious and provides its graduates with a vast array of useful skills. Additionally, the program offers extensive analysis of the security operation within the United States. To complete this intense 18-month program, CHDS graduates must exercise unconventional critical thinking skills, advanced leadership tactics, and develop a comprehensive understanding of security policy and operations.

In addition to graduating from the University of Nevada at Reno with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice, lieutenant colonel Jonkey also managed to build an impressive career within the Nevada National Guard. He has held several positions with many responsibilities, ranging from aviation management to weapons of mass destruction response. Currently, lieutenant colonel Jonkey serves as commander of the 92nd WMD-CST where he oversees the Nevada National Guard's response to weapons of mass destruction and other HAZMAT-related disasters in support of civil authorities. Furthermore, lieutenant colonel Jonkey is also an outstanding father to his two daughters and a loving husband to his wife, Ashley.

During his time in the CHDS program, lieutenant colonel Jonkey engaged in strategic and organizational debate with high-level, national security operatives across the country. Additionally, lieutenant colonel Jonkey