

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING ELLIE ROSENBLUM

HON. JOSEPH D. MORELLE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 28, 2024

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Jewish American Heritage Month and to recognize an extraordinary individual from Rochester, NY, who is making a profound impact on our Jewish community: Ellie Rosenbloom.

Ellie Rosenbloom is the President of the National Council of Jewish Women chapter and an active member of the Jewish Federation. She is a key leader in the partnership with Modi'in, connecting Jewish cities around the world with partner communities in Israel. Through that work, she spends a great deal of time with the young emissaries who come and spend the year here. Her leadership has profoundly enriched our region, fostering growth, unity, and a spirit of camaraderie that continues to benefit us all.

During Jewish American Heritage Month, it is my privilege to recognize Ellie Rosenbloom for her kindness, compassion, and commitment to serving others. We in Rochester are deeply grateful for her many contributions and look forward to seeing the outstanding work she will continue to do.

RECOGNIZING EDWARD GORCZYK

HON. RASHIDA TLAI

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 28, 2024

Ms. TLAI. Mr. Speaker, today I want to recognize United States Navy Seaman Edward Gorczyk for his service to our Nation, as he serves as Grand Marshal of the City of Dearborn's ninety-eighth Memorial Day festivities.

Mr. Gorczyk enlisted in the Navy in 1966. While serving, his ship was hit directly by rockets. Drawing on resilience and teamwork, Gorczyk and his crew were able to escape danger and reach safety. For their bravery and injuries sustained, Gorczyk and his fellow crew members were awarded Purple Hearts.

In 1968, after an honorable discharge, Gorczyk left the Navy as a seaman. He returned home to Michigan to study photography at Macomb County Community College after his service. He remains an active member of the Vietnam Veterans of America—James Huard Chapter 267 and The American Legion Post 364.

Please join me in recognizing Seaman Edward Gorczyk, for his commendable service to our Nation.

COMMEMORATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL ON THE NATIONAL MALL

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 28, 2024

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the following speech I gave commemorating the 20th anniversary of The World War II Memorial on the National Mall.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

It is a great privilege to introduce our next speaker whose persistence ensured this memorial took its place on the National Mall 20 years ago. Her commitment to this Memorial and the Greatest Generation is unparalleled. The longest serving woman in Congressional history, Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur. In 2014, Ambassador Williams called Congresswoman Kaptur, the mother of the World War II Memorial for her critical role in moving legislation through Congress and her devotion to World War II veterans.

Congresswoman Kaptur continues to support the Memorial, recently leading efforts for the United States Mint's 2024 Greatest Generation Commemorative Coin program to help fund Memorial's, maintenance and educational programs. It is my great honor to introduce the mother of the World War II Memorial: Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur.

CONGRESSWOMAN MARCY KAPTUR

Good Morning. As I was listening to the beautiful music, I was reminded of one of my constituents whose name was John Szymanski, used to look out over a crowd like this and say, "You look just beautiful." And you do.

Dear Americans and guests, respectfully, on this Memorial Day of 2024, we gather here in our nation's Capital at our National World War II Memorial centered along America's Mall of Democracy. Today, 235 years after the founding of our young Republic, we honor the memory of all Americans who are war dead, including unknown soldiers who rendered their dear lives in military service to Liberty. Our Republic's sacred historical journey of Liberty, Justice, and Equality for all rests on their strong shoulders of over 1,100,000 of our forebears in arms. They were our loved ones, our grandparents, our parents, our uncles, aunts, neighbors, friends. They lodged deeply in our minds and our hearts forever.

Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Space Force, Marines, Guard and Reserves, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines. We must honor their memory and meaning as we are today. Thank you all for coming. We recognize those who fought in the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Mexican-American War, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, the Korean Conflict, the Vietnam War, the Persian Gulf War, the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars, and here today, America remembers Pearl Harbor, the May 8th Victory Europe, the September 2nd Victory Pacific, Guadalcanal, Midway, Anzio, D-Day, Omaha Beach, Saipan, Battle of the Bulge, and Iwo Jima, to name a few.

Today, America bows to these heroes and heroines. They did not seek a Memorial Day. Originally known as Decoration Day, following the Civil War. It was widely observed starting on May 30th, 1868. In 1968, Memorial Day was authorized by Congress to designate the last Monday in May as the day of tribute and remembrance of those who died while serving in our armed forces.

Today at this place, we recall a more recent chapter of America's solemn history. The World War II Memorial was built to honor the human sacrifice that defines the 20th century's profound achievement: the victory of Liberty over tyranny. After Imperialist Japan bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7th, 1941, the United States declared war on Japan and its allies, Germany and Italy. In the immortal words of the Great American General, George Marshall, quote, "Before the sun sets, our flag will be recognized throughout the world as a symbol of freedom and of overwhelming force." More than 400,000 service members died in service to Liberty halfway around the world on three fronts, Europe, the Pacific, North Africa. And over the past two decades, more than 80 million visitors have traveled to pay homage at this Memorial to them. The visitors make the journey to honor the extraordinary valor and historic achievements by our forebears who bequeath Liberty to us.

This gathering place is designed as a vista for reflection, between the Washington Monument to the East that honors our nation's founding and General George Washington, our nation's first President. To our west rests the Lincoln Memorial and whose spectacular plaza honors President Abraham Lincoln. During the 19th Century, his heroic life-giving leadership preserved the American Union, following our nation's bitter civil war, upwards of 700,000 soldiers and civilians died, along with unknown numbers of civilians on our own territory. The United States of America was victorious, but the price paid in battle of brother against brother, state against state made the Civil War the costliest war in lives lost of any of America's wars. America will not go back.

The sacrificial patriots honored here are the awful price of taming the 20th century's vicious beasts of human annihilation. President Eisenhower described the fighting as "savagery" Our valorous heroes who survived the wars against Nazism in Europe and North Africa, the Holocaust, and Imperialism in the Pacific, then returned home. Recently, as I witnessed the address of Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, before the assembled Congress of the United States this year, my memory recalled the 79 years of history extraordinary that made that moment and what had been required. America had built and rebuilt a war-torn world, and though it was not until President Truman integrated the US military post-World War in 1948 that America proclaimed, as did Lincoln, that Liberty has no color. History records how African American foot soldiers and Tuskegee airmen fought hand in hand with enlistees not of color, but veterans all returned home, built their families, and communities. They intentionally created global institutions to promote dialogue and understanding, as well as to defend our Free World. They did not assume these tasks willingly, but of necessity. They did not shirk

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

their responsibility to the future. They aspired to a higher purpose to tame the demons of war.

The World War II Memorial is not named for a person, but for the 20th century's Greatest Generation. Here at this Memorial, 4,006 gold stars on the Wall of Heroes represent those 400,600 fallen Americans who offered their precious lives to Liberty. Learning from the grit of World War II, America's team who built this memorial never gave up. Former Chairman, as has been mentioned of the Battle Monuments Commission, Ambassador Haydn Williams never gave up. He would write of these patriots, and I quote, "If their silent stare could speak, Archibald MacLeish would have them say, 'we leave you our deaths, give them meaning'" Those that survived did just that.

They forged new alliances like NATO to defend our Free World. And they shaped a world in which the United States entered its longest period in history of relative peace between great powers. That architecture is being tested this very day.

The World War II generation triumphed over adversity. It vanquished the hateful cruelty exacted by the Axes of Nazi, Imperialists, and ultimately hateful cruelty in 1989 and 1991, with Soviet dictators who savagely had killed and starved millions upon millions upon millions more innocent human beings than ever before on Earth.

This coming June 6th, our nation will commemorate the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landing of 1944, the turning point in World War II. History notes, it was the largest military and naval operation ever conducted by any armed force in the history of the world. 400,000 US combat troops were led by brilliant US Army General Omar Bradley. US troops and 2,000 paratroopers joined with Britain, and Canadian allies in a total force numbering 1,200,000, in Operation Overlord, in a surprise attack that that enormous force traversed the English Channel beginning on D-Day on June 6th, 1944. Their mission was to defeat the deadly forces of Nazi tyranny that had invaded France and other European nations that adjoined. What transpired was the most harrowing, costliest battle in world history. Enemy planes bombed our valiant seaborne troops as Nazi platoons hidden in bunker nests arrayed across the high bluffs above the French coast, shot down as Allied troops in column after column after column scaled up the treacherous cliffs. The English Channel turned red with the precious blood of our fallen.

Our own Uncle, Stanley Rogowski, from Toledo, Ohio, was one of them. Forced to crawl over layers of corpses of his dead comrades as he and his army engineer buddies hauled heavy steel track up the embankment under heavy fire. Their valor allowed tons and tons of equipment to be hauled on that track. Tanks and ammunition. And ultimately the Allies kept persevering forward. Over the next two months would come the terrible battle of Saint Lo. There, America's soldiers under command of Army General George Patton would break the back of Nazi invaders as fierce fighting in the treacherous French hedgerows resulted in terrible losses. The Allies, U.S., British, and Canadian would slowly gain ground month after agonizing month of fighting. They continued to aim at the heart of the strategic edge of Nazi resistance in Germany itself.

Still fighting a year later, on March 7th, 1945, it would be an exceptional soldier from Holland, Ohio, Sergeant Alexander Drabik, who would lead the consequential spearhead charge for American forces with the 27th Armed Infantry Brigade of the 9th Armored Division. Under intense enemy fire, they dashed eastward across the Ludendorff Bridge over the Rhine River near Remagen

and toward the heart of Nazi Germany. Polish conscripts had cut the fuses that the Nazis had planted to blow up the bridge. It was the last bridge that the Nazis had not blown up to prevent Allies from crossing into the heart of German territory. Sergeant Drabik's bravery allowed troops to cross over within an hour. The first Allied Brigade across the Rhine River, led by Sergeant Drabik under the command of General John Leonard, also of Toledo, Ohio, would go on to be awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his extraordinary heroism, and that moment has been deemed the turning point for World War II on the continent of Europe.

They not only won the war but having faced the abyss of human annihilation. They went on to build the institutions for the architecture of a Free World.

In 1987, almost a half century after Allied victory in World War II, it was a U.S. Army veteran who had served at Saint Lo, France in Tank Command, who first approached his Congresswoman. His name was Roger Durbin of Berkey, Ohio, located in Lucas County's 9th Congressional District, and inquired of her in an open forum like this, why was there no World War II in Washington, DC, to which he could bring his grandchildren? That question inspired our 17 year-long shared quest to build this Memorial. May I recognize one of Roger Durbin's grandchildren joining us here today, Melissa Durbin Tsuji and her husband, Dr. Jun Tsuji from Berkey, Ohio. Thank you for coming.

With 24 public hearings heard over 17 years, legislation to build this Memorial was first introduced in the U.S. House in 1987 until the memorial was officially dedicated in 2004. The efforts span the terms of three Presidents and eight Congresses. As one sage name, Congressman Barney Frank of Massachusetts quipped, "it took longer to construct the Memorial than to conduct the war."

The extraordinary and generous effort to raise private funds to help construct this memorial was led by Frederick W. Smith, CEO of Federal Express. We were all blessed by the fervent support of then retired U.S. Senator and wounded World War II hero, Senator Robert Dole. He dedicated his last years to greeting veterans here almost every day on site and doing everything within his power to help the Memorial reach its full potential. It was heart rending to watch him greet his comrades here. One by one for many, and indeed for him, it would be their last call. Additionally, Senator John Glenn of Ohio, Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina, Congressman William Clay of Missouri, Congressman Sonny Montgomery of Mississippi, Congressman Jack Davis of Illinois were essential, and I extend my gratitude, and the gratitude of a nation for their patriotism and bipartisan support to accomplish something great for America.

And let me shout out a huge thank you to Holly Rotondi, the persevering Executive Director of the Friends of the National World War II Memorial. Where is Holly? There she is. Yay Holly! Your entire Friends Board, led by Jane Droppa, worked tirelessly to support this Memorial and to advance its historical interpretation, and it has touched the hearts and lives of tens of millions of our fellow citizens. You have spread the wings of Liberty for countless people to witness, and your unique, and ever-growing educational program is bringing more interpretation, and historical remembrance to our nation, and world, including the lesson of patriotic self-giving that encapsulates the World War II Generation.

While our efforts when our efforts began, we could not have imagined the citizen driven initiative that has selflessly helped over 200,000 veterans visit this Memorial, the

Honor Flight Program. Honor Flight was co-founded by Ohioan Earl Morse, a physician assistant and retired Air Force Captain, and Jeff Miller, a small business owner and son of a World War II veteran. Morse worked in a Department of Veterans Affairs clinic in Springfield, Ohio, and there he saw many patients who were World War II veterans. After the National World War II Memorial in Washington was completed in 2004, he asked many of his veteran patients if they were going to see it and most said, oh yes. Morse said, "I would see my World War II veterans, maybe three, six months later, and I'd ask them if they'd gone to see it. 300 of them I'd seen, and not a one had come to see the Memorial. Reality set in. They were never going "So, Mr. Morse then offered to personally fly the first two veterans to Washington to see the Memorial, after seeing them break down and cry upon visiting, he pitched his idea to a club of 300 private pilots at a local Air Force base, proposing that the pilots would pay for the flights for the veterans to Washington and personally escort them around the city. 11 volunteered, and history was made as that network was formed.

Fast forward 20 years, I'm proud to say that the Honor Flight program is a resounding success. It is now allowed veterans of any war to witness at no cost the national memorials marking their historic deeds. And I recently welcomed back an Honor Flight from our region of the Midwest, led by a 102-year-old wheelchair bound World War II veteran nurse named Gerri DeMeo. I was overjoyed to hear her response as they took her wheelchair off the plane and moved her into the room and the crowds were cheering and I had the opportunity to ask her, "Gerri, what did you think of the Memorial?" "Absolutely beautiful Beautiful." And she just beamed. She just beamed.

Most recently it has been the highest honor and privilege to introduce and gain passage of our new bipartisan legislation, H.R. 1057, the National World War II Memorial Commemorative Coin Act.

This legislation has authorized the minting of three new coins at the U.S. Treasury in commemoration of today, the 20th Anniversary of the National World War II Memorial here in Washington. These coins will serve as an important token of the spirit, sacrifice, and commitment of the brave Americans who fought for the triumph of Liberty.

The three distinct coins are now on sale through the U.S. Mint for the duration of this year. The net proceeds generated from the sale of these coins will ensure the Memorial is properly maintained for years to come. My hope is that improvements will include expanded educational and historical materials in collaboration with the American battle monuments Commission and the World War II Veterans History Project at the Library of Congress many years ago, championed by Congressman Ron Kind of Wisconsin, now retired. Additionally, with the advance of the Internet, I'm challenging each of you to share the information about the coins and think about friends you know, let them know the coins are on sale. With what we have now, with new social media apps, teaching opportunities, and commemorative programing for the millions of people who visit each year and others throughout our country who cannot come can really be advanced through the new electronic capabilities and embrace people across the country.

Let me just say, while the Greatest Generation saved the world from Nazi and Imperial domination and achieved the collapse of Soviet tyranny, beginning with Poland in 1989, and then all of Central Europe in 1991,

specters of the 20th century remain. Historian and author of *Bloodlands* Timothy Snyder urges us, "It is now up to us to preserve everything that the Greatest Generation fought and died for."

In my own judgment, eternal vigilance demands attention to strengthen our NATO alliance and allowing Ukraine to accede to the constellation of free nations of Europe. Meeting global strategic imperatives requires requisite weapons systems, naval, satellite, and air supremacy being tested every day by those who would do us harm. Liberty requires accelerating our nation's quest for energy independence in perpetuity. Ladies and gentlemen, let us remember the words of Franklin D. Roosevelt, who spoke on February 12th, 1943. "We have faith that future generations will know here, in the middle of the twentieth century, there came a time when men of good will found a way to unite, and produce, and fight to destroy the forces of ignorance, and intolerance, and slavery, and war."

May God bless those we honor here and their families. May blessings flow to those serving in posts at home and overseas. May everyone gathered here today draw strength from the words and works of the heroes and heroines of the Greatest Generation. And may God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

The Friends of the National World War II Memorial annually presents the Brigadier General Charles E. McGee Unity Award to individuals or groups that exemplify the spirit of unity and shared values prevalent during World War II. Named after Brigadier General Charles Magee, an original Tuskegee Airman, this award honors those who actively work for community betterment and embody the moral integrity of General McGee and the Greatest Generation. We're proud to present the fourth annual Brigadier General Charles E. McGee Unity Award to Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur. Representing Ohio's 9th District since 1983, Congresswoman Kaptur has dedicated her career to promoting unity and cooperation, focusing on economic development, veterans affairs, and environmental conservation.

In 1987, Congresswoman Kaptur recognized the need for a national tribute to World War II veterans and introduced legislation to create a Memorial. Her persistent advocacy led to the passage of the World War II Memorial Act in 1993. Dedicated in 2004, the Memorial has since welcomed 100 million visitors. Congresswoman Kaptur continues to teach the lessons of the war, and promote values of unity, and cooperation. Her legislative and community efforts foster bipartisan cooperation, emphasizing common ground and governance. Here to present Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur with the Brigadier General Charles E. McGee Unity Award is Yvonne McGee, daughter of the late General McGee.

YVONNE MCGEE

I just want to say it's an honor to be here to represent my father, and he would be here to represent, as this award is all the men and women of that generation. He used to love to talk with young people. He always gave him his 4 P's, I think you exemplify all of those, which is perceive, prepare, perform, and persevere, which I know you had to do to get this to happen. So, it's our honor, and thank you to Holly and everyone from the World War II Memorial. Thank you.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

Congratulations Congresswoman Kaptur.

RECOGNIZING HOWARD KONAR

HON. JOSEPH D. MORELLE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 28, 2024

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Jewish American Heritage Month and to recognize an extraordinary individual from Rochester, NY, whose accomplishments and contributions have left a lasting impact on our region: Howard Konar.

Howard Konar has a longstanding history of leadership in Rochester and has done extensive philanthropic work locally and across the country. He serves as a trustee for the William & Sheila Konar Foundation supporting Jewish life and culture and as a member of the Board of Governors for the Jewish Federation of Greater Rochester. In 2008, then-President George W. Bush named Howard to the council of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington. His positive influence can be felt across every facet of our Jewish community.

During Jewish American Heritage Month, it is my privilege to recognize Howard Konar. He has dedicated himself to honoring the history of the Jewish people and has worked tirelessly to strengthen the future of our local Jewish neighbors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MORGAN LUTTRELL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 28, 2024

Mr. LUTTRELL. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, May 22, 2024, I was unable to vote on Roll Call No. 122. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: YEA on Roll Call No. 122.

HONORING LEON'S TRIATHLON

HON. FRANK J. MRVAN

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 28, 2024

Mr. MRVAN. Mr. Speaker, it is with sincere admiration that I take this time to recognize one of Northwest Indiana's finest organizations, Leon's Heroes, as it will once again host the annual Leon's Triathlon, widely known as "America's Race." This outstanding display of patriotism and athleticism honors our veterans and active service members, with a special focus on those who have sustained injuries during their time in service. This year's event will be held at Wolf Lake in Hammond, Indiana, and will include static displays, festivities, and opening ceremonies leading up to the start of the race on Sunday, June 2, 2024.

Founded in 1983 by Leon Wolek, an avid triathlete and native of Hobart, Indiana, Leon's Triathlon has drawn participants from across the country and has been a source of immense pride for the Northwest Indiana community. Having grown up admiring his father who served in the military, and spending time with and listening to the stories of other veterans at American Legion Post 454 in New

Chicago, Indiana, Leon was compelled to ensure that the many brave individuals who have defended our nation throughout its history received the recognition they deserve. With this idea in mind, Leon's Triathlon emerged.

Originally, the race took place in Leon's hometown of Hobart at the Izaak Walton League before its popularity and corresponding growth required its relocation. The city of Hammond, Indiana, was inspired by the organization's unwavering commitment to those who serve and have served our country and proudly welcomed the special event to the city. Fittingly, a portion of the race now runs along the Gold Star Memorial Highway, a designation which Leon's Heroes was instrumental in securing, and is dedicated to Indiana families who have lost loved ones in service. Leon's Triathlon has seen immense growth in participation since its inception, and many of the participants are veterans and active military members. As participation has grown so too has the number of events, which now includes additional events throughout the year. Since 2021, Leon's Heroes has also hosted an annual obstacle course event which takes place every September at Indiana Dunes National Park. This event recalls the attacks of September 11, 2001, while honoring our veterans and the many first responders who came to aid our fellow citizens on that tragic day.

Mr. Speaker, throughout its history, Leon's Heroes has remained steadfast in its commitment to honoring the legacy of our military members, past and present. I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in commending the organization for its outstanding dedication to the community, to our veterans, to our active service members, and to our first responders. Leon Wolek and the many devoted volunteers involved with this extraordinary organization are truly worthy of our highest praise.

RECOGNIZING CHRISTOPHER KILLION

HON. RASHIDA TLAIB

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 28, 2024

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, today I want to recognize Sergeant Christopher Killion, resident of Dearborn in Michigan's 12th District Strong, for his service in the United States Army.

This year, Sergeant Killion, a three-time Purple Heart recipient, being honored by the City of Dearborn as a Grand Marshal in their annual Memorial Day events. Sergeant Chris Killion was born in Detroit and raised in Dearborn Heights. He joined the Army in 2001 and was deployed to Iraq in 2003, where he was wounded multiple times. Sergeant Killion left the Army with the rank of E-5. He currently lives in Dearborn and is a member of several veteran organizations, including the Military Order of the Purple Heart, the Dearborn Allied Veterans Council, the Polish Legion of American Veterans, and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Please join me in recognizing Sergeant Christopher Killion, for his outstanding service, and as Grand Marshal of the City of Dearborn's ninety-eighth Memorial Day festivities.