

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