

Lee's strong knowledge and passion for conservation issues has made him an invaluable leader of Save the River. In recognition of Lee's persistent and passionate advocacy of the St. Lawrence River, Freshwater Future named Lee a 2016 Freshwater Hero and Citizen Advocate of the Year.

I am thankful that I have had the privilege of working with Lee during his tenure at Save the River. On behalf of New York's 21st District, I want to thank Lee for his commitment to protecting the St. Lawrence River, and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JARED POLIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 23, 2018

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 205.

CELEBRATING OLD HICKORY, TENNESSEE'S CENTENNIAL

HON. JIM COOPER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 23, 2018

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to honor the wonderful small town of Old Hickory, Tennessee, on its Centennial Celebration.

Old Hickory's history is unique. When the United States entered World War I, our soldiers needed gunpowder, and lots of it. The U.S. government asked a giant American company, E.I. duPont de Nemours & Co., to build and operate a gunpowder plant on federal land near Nashville on the Cumberland River. Within months, 5,600 acres of land near Hadley's Bend were transformed into a self-sufficient village housing 56,000 workers and the largest factory the state had ever seen.

After the War, DuPont's chemical production continued for decades. If you came across someone on the street, chances are they worked for DuPont. Old Hickory was a "company town" with homes of similar designs, each one well-maintained. It was and is a model community with incredibly talented, hard-working, patriotic residents.

Although the factories and their owners have changed over the years, their footprints remain. Old Hickory remains one of the most storied towns in the South. Come visit and you will see the original mill town homes, friendly stores, and markets. It is a place where people know their neighbors, and where newcomers are welcomed with open arms. The hallmarks of hard work, faith, family, friends, and patriotism are just as important today as they were a century ago.

Old Hickory is truly one of Nashville's and the nation's "best kept secrets," and I know it will remain a treasure in Middle Tennessee for the next 100 years.

TRIBUTE TO LOU VOLK

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 23, 2018

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, a very special Vietnam Veteran in my district has continued his service to others decades after fighting in the war.

Mr. Lou Volk of the Cedar Bluff community of Knoxville, Tennessee has been walking along a busy road, picking up trash and praying for his neighbors every day for the past 30 years in spite of his injuries from the war.

He started this service when he was a teacher in Oak Ridge, and used it as an opportunity to teach his sons about doing for others without expecting anything in return.

At 71 years old, Lou has made it a priority to make the 2 mile walk each day in hopes of making our community better both physically and spiritually.

As he is cleaning up items that no one else might dare to touch such as used cigarettes, road kill, and food packages, he says prayers for cars that pass by.

He has gotten to know the challenges, suffering, and needs of the residents on Bob Kirby Road by saying hello and growing relationships with people out in their yards.

I want to recognize Lou for being such a dedicated caretaker of our community. I hope he inspires all of us to do a little more for others, without expecting anything in return.

If more people were out in the community instead of playing video games, watching television, or spending hours on social media, they could experience the blessings of serving causes greater than themselves.

I include in the RECORD the article that appeared in the Knoxville News Sentinel by Britany Crocker on May 7th, 2018, entitled "Every Day One Local Vietnam Veteran Picks up Trash and Prays for Everyone Who Passes Him":

Almost every day for more than 30 years, Vietnam veteran Lou Volk has donned his orange reflective vest and rubber gloves before leaving the house on a mission, armed with a trash grabber and a re-used Kroger bag.

He's a fixture in Cedar Bluff, where he's been walking his mile-and-a-half route along Bob Kirby Road since he moved there about 12 years ago, cleaning up the litter that seems to reappear almost every day.

You may have seen him in the mornings with his dog, Rosco. Rosco died in December though, so now Volk walks his route by himself, but not necessarily alone.

Volk can list the neighbors who live in the homes he passes. He can tell you the names of the dogs barking as he passes, or that the woman in the house on the left just lost her husband, or that the person in the passing truck is struggling with cancer right now.

Passersby wave or honk their horns at him, veering over the hilly road's median rumble strip to give him a little extra room.

What they might not know is that Volk prays for every one of them as they pass.

"I say a quick, 'Jesus, keep em' safe,'" Volk said, "so I know that each and every one of them has been prayed for that day."

His daily walks are a service he calls "Agape," a Greco-Christian term that has been interpreted to mean loving or serving while expecting nothing in return.

MAKING A HABIT

Volk started the habit when his children were young in Oak Ridge, where he taught

middle-school math and science after he returned from the Vietnam War.

Before the war, Volk had a bachelor's degree in business. He served as an infantryman from 1969 to 1971 in Vietnam, where he was exposed to agent orange.

A rocket-propelled grenade explosion left him mostly deaf, and he lives with post-traumatic stress disorder.

When he returned from the war, he started working in education. Peggy, Volk's wife of 41 years, said she thinks that taking care of children helped him adopt the unrelenting optimism he speaks with today.

"The kids were my little soldiers, and I had to take care of them," he said.

One of his favorite things was taking sixth-graders to the Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont. "I always tried to talk to them about the environment and how important it was, and well, you should lead by example."

So that's what he did. He started picking up trash around his neighborhood and at Cedar Hill Park, where he took his sons, Aaron and Max, to play on the weekends.

He continued the habit in Oak Ridge after his sons grew up and left home until he had to retire.

Volk said school shootings were becoming more common, kindling his post-traumatic stress, so he started thinking about retirement.

He recalled a school fire drill the teachers weren't informed of about a week after two Arkansas students pulled a fire alarm and opened fire on evacuating students and teachers.

Volk shut his students in their classroom and went outside to check the school's perimeter. "What if that had been a copycat?" Volk said.

He stayed in teaching for four more years but ultimately retired in 2002 after the Veterans Administration gave him a 100 percent disability rating for PTSD.

Four years later, he and Peggy moved to their Cedar Bluff condo to care for Peggy's mother.

RESPONSE AND ABILITY

Volk found a sense of continued service in his daily cleanup walks. "It's my Father's world out there, and I've got to take care of it," he said.

Tuesday was a "one-bag" day, but the weekends sometimes take two.

"Cigarette butts are by far the most numerous and the most annoying thing out here," Volk said, picking up a fluffed-out cigarette filter with his trash grabber. "I'm told it takes three to five years for one of these things to break down."

Food wrappers and plastic bottles are also pretty common sights for him. Plastic bottles filled with tobacco spit are the worst, he said, but he picks them up anyway.

He'll even pick up roadkill if it's lying where children can see it.

"It bothered my kids when they were little to see a squirrel lying dead on the street," he said. "And I'm not afraid of it; I grew up on a farm. So, I just pick it up."

By now, he knows the areas of the street that have the most poison ivy, and where the thin borders of the road drop off into steep hills.

He knows he'll usually find some broken glass bottles near people's mailboxes. He suspects people driving by at night make a game of trying to hit mailboxes with the bottles.

Speeding drivers aren't an uncommon sight on the short stretch of road, but Volk said he usually feels pretty safe. He checks both directions twice before crossing and tries to make sure drivers coming around blind hills can see him.