

PRESERVING HISTORY: THE
GREAT WORLD WAR**HON. TED POE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 23, 2018

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the day was October 8, 1918, a century ago, when the events of the Meuse-Argonne offensive would be etched into history eternal. The largest operation of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEFs) was taking place with over one million American doughboys deployed.

Soldiers were tasked with a dangerous mission, penetrating the Argonne Forest, which was a force in itself to be reckoned with. Thick vegetation, jagged hills, and the entrenchment of German forces made this the single deadliest battle in American history. 125,000 American casualties were sustained, with over 26,000 deaths.

What was to be the final Allied push against German forces on the Western Front, October 8th proved to be a day that would always be remembered by all the nations that participated in the War.

United States Corporal Alvin C. York was in small squadron of about 20 fellow Americans, just boys really, a world away from home. Their task was to take German-held positions. The geography made this objective a difficult one, but York along with his men knew what had to be done.

Following orders, the group advanced, but was fired upon from a nest at the top of a nearby hill. The German gunners cut down nine men, including a superior officer, leaving York in charge of the squad.

Now in charge, and with little to no time to regroup, he fought to avenge the lives of the fellow soldiers that lost their lives. After it was all said and done, York successfully took the position while taking down 20 German soldiers, as well as taking 132 German prisoners. His honorable service in this battle earned him the Congressional Medal of Honor.

York described the events in his diary: "Those machine guns were spitting fire and cutting down the undergrowth all around me something awful. . . . I didn't have time to dodge behind a tree or dive into the brush, I didn't even have time to kneel or lie down."

As soon as the machine guns opened fire on me, I began to exchange shots with them. In order to sight me or to swing their machine guns on me, the Germans had to show their heads above the trench, and every time I saw a head I just touched it off. All the time I kept yelling at them to come down. I didn't want to kill any more than I had to. But it was they or I. And I was giving them the best I had."

The "best he had" was more than enough. The German commander, thinking he was grossly outnumbered, surrendered his garrison of nearly 90 men. Like many men of his time, York never made much of his accomplishments of that day, but his heroic actions did not go unnoticed. Promoted to the rank of sergeant, he remained on the front lines until November 1, ten days before the armistice.

The New York Times called York "the war's biggest hero." General John J. Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF), called him "the greatest civilian soldier" of World War I. The American doughboy born

in a log cabin near the Tennessee-Kentucky border became an American hero and his actions became the basis for the iconic movie, Sergeant York, starring Gary Cooper. Upon York's death in 1964, President Lyndon Johnson called him "a symbol of American courage and sacrifice" who epitomized "the gallantry of American fighting men and their sacrifices on behalf of freedom."

As we honor the 100-year anniversary for the Great World War, let us not forget the more than two million Americans that crossed the Atlantic to fight for freedom in Europe, and the 116,000 of them that never came home. One such soldier that answered the call was my friend, Frank Buckles. Frank died in 2011; he was the last living link to the story of the American Doughboy.

I introduced the Frank Buckles WWI Memorial Act, to restore the local DC memorial and to recognize the service and sacrifice of all the men and women that served in the Great World War. Finally, after 100 years a memorial will finally be built in the nation's capital for all of those who fought in the Great War. I was honored to work with my colleague, Rep. EMANUEL CLEAVER of Missouri in a bipartisan way to make sure that Congress did its part in authorizing the construction of the World War I Memorial on our National Mall.

I often talk about those of our Greatest Generation, but without the fathers from the Great World War, the Doughboys, the Frank Buckles—the rest wouldn't be possible. America goes to war to free, to liberate, to protect, and to bring justice to bear. We owe it to them and our future generations to honor our veterans in our nation's capital. Because, the greatest tragedy of war is to be forgotten.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING ELLENVILLE REGIONAL
HOSPITAL**HON. JOHN J. FASO**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 23, 2018

Mr. FASO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ellenville Regional Hospital in their efforts to develop a comprehensive, collaborative, community-based and region-wide initiative to help combat the opioid epidemic in Upstate New York.

In 2017 alone, this epidemic claimed more than 72,000 lives across the country. Ellenville Regional Hospital is working with local care providers including, the Columbia Memorial Health and Albany Medical Center and the Greene County Rural Health Network, to develop a model of dynamic care to better treat individuals who are shouldering the tremendous burden of opioid addiction.

Ellenville's plan focuses on providing patients who have overdosed an entry path to treatment that combines medical efforts to counter withdrawal and immediately connecting them with primary health care services, mental health, and addiction services as well as other basic services such as housing, transportation, and nutrition.

The opioid epidemic knows no bounds—spanning across all socioeconomic standings, in every state, in every district, and in every community throughout the country. I extend my sincerest thanks and appreciation to

Ellenville Regional Hospital for their dedicated efforts to spearhead this initiative, share their knowledge, and reverse the dangerous trend of opioid abuse and addiction.

Aside from trailblazing this pathway to more impactful care and treatment for the many struggling with addiction in our Upstate communities, Ellenville Regional Hospital is a leader of rural care in the greater Ulster County region, always innovating and finding ways to improve, and most importantly ensuring our friends and neighbors have access to quality care in the community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing Ellenville Regional Hospital for their dedicated efforts in addressing the opioid epidemic as well as their legacy of innovative and quality care.

HONORING HEIDI WHEELER WITH
CALIFORNIA'S THIRD DISTRICT
WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD**HON. JOHN GARAMENDI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 23, 2018

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Heidi Wheeler as a woman of the year. She is a hardworking and dedicated advocate for seniors in Yolo County. In her 22-year career at St. John's Retirement Village, Ms. Wheeler has helped provide care to seniors with kindness and compassion. She has grown professionally, seeking further education, and taking on multiple leadership roles. She is now the Skilled Nursing Administrator responsible for the Stollwood Convalescent Hospital within St. John's Village where she cares for some of her community's most vulnerable. Both her professional life and personal time have been dedicated to improving the lives of seniors throughout Yolo County. She lends her time, talent, and expertise to Woodland's Commission on Aging where she recommends and coordinates programs and services for seniors. Through her work on the commission she helps promote a better quality of life for aging individuals ensuring that critical support services are available. She is also a part of Leading Age, a network of nonprofit leaders committed to supporting and empowering seniors in their community. Through this organization, she helps fight for quality senior living and care. Ms. Wheeler is a passionate advocate on behalf of seniors, working to ensure a full and rewarding life for all people in her community.

HONORING THE NAACP-HOUSTON
BRANCH FOR 100 YEARS OF RE-
MARKABLE SERVICE AND EX-
TRAORDINARY CONTRIBUTIONS
TO THE CAUSE OF EQUALITY
FOR ALL**HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 23, 2018

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Houston Branch of the oldest, largest, most