

and concern of Americans everywhere. Our Nation's strength does not lie in her military might but rather in the collective compassion of its people.

Since the September 11th terrorist attacks, the patrons and organizers of the Southside Fall Festival have raised and contributed more than \$1,500 to assist the grieving families and rescue workers. The patriotism and persistence of the patrons and organizers of the Southside Fall Festival is a lasting memorial to the thousands of victims who perished in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania.

Through the days, weeks, and months ahead, all Americans must come together and do what they can to assist the Nation's war effort. Whether it is giving blood, sending donations, praying for the thousands of grieving families, or simply saying thanks to the brave men and women who put their lives on the line each and every day so that we may be free, it is important that the American people are vigilant in their efforts to overcome this evil. Though our Nation has witnessed unspeakable horror, America's virtues, determination, and faith continues to shine brightly on the world.

I am confident that the United States will seek out those that harbor hatred, terror, and depravity in their hearts; and we will defeat them. This is a war that we must, can, and will win. May God bless the families and children grieving across this great Nation and may God bless America.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF ART
COOK

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 4, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, when someone is stranded in the backcountry and a search and rescue team is called into action, dedicated and brave individuals respond to the call of those in need. Today I would like to rise and honor the service and contributions of Art Cook, a 14-year veteran with the Mesa County Search and Rescue, whose service has led him to be one of the most respected members of his squad and who was recently recognized by the Lions Club in Grand Junction, Colorado for his selfless acts.

In the vast terrain of Colorado, the vehicles needed for search and rescue differ from region to region. However, the need for four-wheel drive vehicles always seems to be a necessity and Art established the four-wheel-drive division of the Mesa County Search and Rescue. Not only did he implement this crucial component to the service, Art also created a unique and very effective mechanism for rescuing someone out of the backcountry. His innovation has been appreciated tremendously and has served to make the Mesa County Search and Rescue a better operation.

Art began his volunteer service in 1987 after retiring from Mountain Bell. Now 67 years of age, Art has helped to save numerous lives and has extended a warm and helping hand in numerous instances. At times, his dedication worries his family but that does not halt his volunteering. This award from the Lions Club was accompanied with a check to be given to the Search and Rescue team.

Mr. Speaker, Art Cook has offered himself and his expertise to others on many rescues. His honorable and commendable service is greatly appreciated. I would like to take this moment to congratulate Art on his recent recognition and extend my warmest regards and best wishes to him and his family in many years to come.

IN HONOR OF CHARLES G. OFIESH

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 4, 2001

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring this great chamber's attention to a distinguished decorated military veteran recently elected state commander of the Department of Pennsylvania Disabled American Veterans (PADAV). Mr. Charles G. Ofiesh, a resident of Altoona, Pennsylvania, located in the 9th Congressional District, served honorably during WWII and the Korean War. After his return from the Korean War, Mr. Ofiesh enlisted with the 341st Medical Company, Army Reserve, Altoona, and quickly rose to the rank of first sergeant—a position to hold for years. Mr. Ofiesh was then transferred to the 99th Army Command where he was soon promoted to command sergeant major where he served until his retirement in November 1984.

During his distinguished military career, Mr. Ofiesh received over 24 awards and decorations, most notably the Legion of Merit and the Meritorious Service Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster. Mr. Ofiesh is a member of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, has served as a member of the Altoona City Zoning Appeals Board for over 24 years and is very active in the Civil Air Patrol program.

The tragic incident of September 11th reminds all of us to honor our military, both past and present. Mr. Ofiesh is a person who believes in America and fought admirably to protect our country. Mr. Ofiesh deserves the recognition from Congress and we should take notice and acknowledge all of heroes like Mr. Ofiesh. I look forward to working with him in his new role as state commander of PADAV and joining the fight to ensure that all veterans and their families receive the respect and benefits that they have earned.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to place a copy of the article from the Altoona Mirror into the RECORD.

[From the Altoona Mirror, Sept. 30, 2001]

LOCAL MAN ELECTED TO HEAD PA. DISABLED
AMERICAN VETERANS

(By Mark Leberfinger)

Charles G. Ofiesh has worn many hats over the years: government official, parade marshal, businessman and decorated military veteran.

Now he has a new hat to wear as state commander of the Department of Pennsylvania Disabled American Veterans.

"He's a guy whose feet never stop," department adjutant John W. Neeves said. "He's always on the go. "He has all the attributes a leader should possess."

Ofiesh was elected to his new role during the Disabled American Veterans' Pennsylvania convention in June. DAV was founded in 1920 and chartered by Congress in 1932. It is the official voice of America's service-connected disabled veterans.

Ofiesh said he joined the organization because he felt he could do more directly helping veterans than he could in other organizations.

"The DAV takes care of members of the Legion and VFW, everybody," he said. "You don't have to be a DAV member to be served."

"I couldn't do near what I could do in the other organizations what I can do in the DAV," Ofiesh said.

He has been working on several goals for the organization including improving the transportation system that takes veterans to area VA medical centers and doctor appointments and increasing membership in the nearly 53,000-member organization.

"The DAV is lobbying all the time for veterans," the new state commander said. "We're trying to tell them 'you made promises and you need to keep those promises'—to take care of the veterans for life after they came home."

In addition, the state Disabled American Veterans is seeking more grant money from the Commonwealth to purchase more vans for the James E. VanZandt VA Medical Center and the seven other VA centers in the state.

Before taking the reins of the state DAV, Ofiesh served as the organization's junior vice commander and senior vice commander.

He already has represented the state organization at various statewide veterans meetings.

"There are so many organizations and they're all working toward one goal: to support the veterans," he said.

Ofiesh served in the 24th Infantry Division during World War II and the Korean War. After his return from Korea, he enlisted with the 341st Medical Company, Army Reserve, Altoona. Ofiesh rose to the rank of first sergeant, a rank he held for 16 years.

He was transferred to the 99th Army Command in Oakdale, where he was promoted to command sergeant major. He retired at that rank in November 1984.

During his military career Ofiesh received many military awards including the Legion of Merit and the Meritorious Service Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster.

Ofiesh and his wife, Helen, have three children and three grandchildren.

He is a member of the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Ofiesh has served as a member of the Altoona City Zoning Appeals Board for 42 years. He is also a member of the Altoona Blair County Development Corp. and Blair County Industrial Development Authority.

Ofiesh has been grand marshal for parades in Altoona during the past 20 years.

"I would call the commander's honor the crowning glory, my final salute," he said, "because all the other things I've done aren't of the magnitude of state commander of an organization like the DAV."

TRIBUTE TO LEONARD WADE
FAULK

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 4, 2001

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Leonard (Wade) Faulk of Julesburg, Colorado. Wade was one of only 51 high school students nationwide selected for a \$20,000 Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation Scholarship. For this, Mr. Speaker, the United States Congress commends him.

Wade is a recent graduate of Julesburg High School in Julesburg, Colorado. He and