

Rothman Presents Medals To Heroic Local Veterans

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Says Heroes of Past Conflicts Serve As Inspiration To All Americans

Hackensack, NJ – Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ9) today presented five local veterans and the wife of a deceased veteran with medals that were earned during their service in World War II, the Korean War, and the Lebanon Crisis of 1958. Rothman helped the veterans and their families cut through the bureaucratic red tape in order to finally receive their long overdue medals.

“These medals have great meaning because they represent the bravery and courage exhibited by these extraordinary veterans from Northern New Jersey,” Rothman said. “Throughout the intense fighting during the war in Iraq and as we continue to fight the global war on terrorism, we are inspired by the heroic stories and accomplishments of these and other veterans from past wars.”

The following veterans were honored with medals during a ceremony in Rothman’s Hackensack Office:

• John Balko of North Arlington for his service in World War II – Good Conduct Medal, American Defense Service Medal, Honorable Service Lapel Button, American Campaign Medal, European African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, and World War II Victory Medal.

• Robert Gertenbach of Fort Lee for his service in World War II – Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal, Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal, and World War II Victory Medal. (Note: Medals are replacements)

• H. Douglass Hansen of Ridgefield Park for his service during the Lebanon Crisis of 1958 – Expeditionary Medal and Bronze Star.

• John Laico of New Milford for his service in World War II – Purple Heart, Good Conduct Medal, European African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, and World War II Victory Medal.

• Arthur May of River Edge for his service in the Korean War – Good Conduct Medal, Korean Service Medal, Army Occupation Medal with Japan Clasp, National Defense Service Medal, Combat Infantryman Badge, and United Nations Service Medal.

• Robert Moran of Palisades Park (presented to his widow Florence Moran) for his service in the Korean War – Good Conduct Medal and National Defense Service Medal.

In recognition of the bravery and service exhibited by America's 25 million military veterans, Rothman has also been a leader in efforts to provide our former troops with the benefits they deserve and were promised for serving our country. In order to provide additional and better services to veterans, Rothman helped increase the level of funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs in the Fiscal Year 2003 budget to \$63.8 million, which is \$6.2 million more than President Bush requested.

Rothman is also recognized as a leader in Congress in the fight to reverse the Bush Administration's budget cuts and restore health care benefits to Priority 8 veterans – those who annually earn more than a geographically-mandated, low income threshold. Additionally, Rothman has been at the forefront of the battle to fix the injustice that more than 437,000 disabled military retirees face each month when their military pay is reduced by the amount of their disability benefit. Rothman is the cosponsor of legislation that would allow veterans who were wounded while serving their country to receive both veterans' disability compensation and retirement benefits at the same time.

“Our veterans helped secure America and make it the greatest country in the world today. I was pleased to offer my assistance to get the veterans the medals they rightfully earned,” Rothman said.

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[Go back](#)

