

HONORING DAN AGUILAR

HON. THOMAS J. ROONEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 22, 2011

Mr. ROONEY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I rise to pay tribute to a true American hero, Dan Aguilar of Palm City, Florida. Dan has been awarded the Silver Plaque International Alpine Solidarity Award, given to individuals who have risked their lives to save others in dangerous mountain accidents. Dan is a well-known mountain rescuer who deserves both the admiration and praise of this body.

Dan grew up in Dallas, Texas, where he resided for 18 years. After graduating from Crozier Tech High School, he served in the U.S. Army for four years. Upon returning to the United States, he moved to Vail where he began his renowned career in mountain res-

cue. Dan's love for the mountains has seen him travel the globe and conquer the most dangerous alpine trails in the world. What's more, his mountain climbing adventures have taken him to Mexico, Ecuador, Alaska and Argentina. But it is not his accomplishments as a climber or mountain hiker that have earned him this prestigious award, but rather it is his courage as a mountain rescuer.

In the early 1980s Dan suffered the crushing loss of a dear friend that completely changed his view of climbing. For some time he was unable to even fathom climbing again, but this experience eventually drove him to the line of work that has made him a living legend. Through his dedication and perseverance he became a valuable member of the Vail Mountain Rescue Group for nearly 2 decades.

For Dan, saving the life of another seemed to come naturally. In fact, the Silver Plaque International Alpine Solidarity Award is not the first time he has received recognition for his devotion to helping others. He has also been

awarded the Mountain Rescue Association's Outstanding Individual Service Award. In all, it is estimated that Dan has been involved in around 500 different rescue missions, since his involvement with Mountain Rescue. His advanced rescue skills have also been utilized in rescues on Mt. Rainier in Washington, the Pamirs in Russia, and the Aconcogua in South America.

Dan's commitment and incredible compassion to help others have earned him a legendary reputation and the admiration of people around the world. According to Tim Cochrane, a fellow member of Mountain Rescue, "Aguilar is the first volunteer rescuer in North America to win the award."

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the State of Florida and U.S. Congress, I congratulate Dan on this distinguished and well-deserved award. He is an American who deserves our gratitude and praise.

Dan, your community, State, and Nation are proud of you!