

"The manager came up to me one day and said, Billy, you've got to play with Bob Hope this afternoon." I said, What?!! I went out and played nine holes with him, and I beat him," Santor said.

Before he returned home after the war, Santor got in a lot of golf at Marienbad.

"I played every weekend with a captain, a colonel and a general, and here I was a staff sergeant," he said.

"They gave me the colonel for a partner, and he couldn't hit a bull in the ass with a handful of gravel. I'd have to take out \$6 every time we played."

Golf was also an integral part of Santor's civilian life.

Patty remembers that family vacations were usually golf destinations. Nettie also played in those days, so there was a family foursome.

Bill worked for a business equipment company for almost 50 years, and he did his share of schmoozing on the golf course. Ever the competitor, however, he never lost to a client on purpose.

"One guy asked me if I played customer golf." I said no, and I threw a 68 at him," Santor said, laughing.

While luck is a factor in getting a hole-in-one, there's skill involved, too, especially when you've had 10, Santor's running total. In 1999, he aced the par-3 fourth hole at Griffin Gate on May 3, and aced it again on May 14.

New technology in golf clubs and balls has helped Santor stay in the swing of things after 85 years in the game. His odd-looking interlocking grip his left thumb is tucked under the club still allows for a smooth stroke that can send a drive 175 yards.

"I can't swing too hard, but I can still hit it OK," Santor says proudly.

Patty Driapsa said golf "is basically what keeps my dad going. It's the world he lives in. It's been a game of a lifetime for him, that's for sure."

Tom Santor, who lives in Columbus, Ohio, said golf has been "one of the cornerstones" of his father's life "his family life, his business life, his social life. When he's on a golf course, wherever that might be, he feels like he's home.

"I think that's where he's most at peace."

And still fairly close to par.

TRIBUTE TO VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS POST 4075 HONOR GUARD

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a group of individuals who have been working to make a difference in the lives of local veterans in their community for over 60 years. The honor guard of Frankfort, Kentucky's Veterans of Foreign Wars Office Post 4075 has been providing an official military funeral ceremony for local veterans in the central Kentucky area since the 1950s.

Veterans K.B. Johns, Ralph Spooner, Bill Hampton, and Charlie Mauer founded the first VFW Post 4075 color guard over 60 years ago. The men worked together to increase the size of the color guard over the next decade into a full honor guard with 11 members: 2 flag folders, 7 riflemen, 1 bugler, and 1 leader. The honor guard takes any and all requests to play at a fellow serviceman's funeral, free of charge.

The honor guard is made up of veterans from World War II, the Vietnam war, the Korean war, Operation Desert

Storm, and Operation Iraqi Freedom. They may be from different generations, but they all share the same respect for one another. Charlie Mauer is the only surviving original member of the troop; he is 85 years old.

Mr. Mauer is joined by three other World War II veterans: Mr. Burnett Napier fought with the U.S. Marines in the Battle of Peleliu in the Pacific Theater at the age of 19. He is now 87 years old, and he is the recipient of the Purple Heart and the Silver Star, two of the highest honors awarded by the U.S. military. Mr. Charlie Hinds, who is 88 years old, served as a scout for GEN George Patton for 2 years. He enlisted in the Army at age 18. The youngest of the WWII veterans at age 84 is Jim Wolcott. He was stationed in Europe from 1944 to 1947.

According to Charlie Mauer, the honor guard is "a great bunch of guys." The men have conducted ceremonies for hundreds of funerals throughout the program's lifetime and expected nothing in return. They are driven by compassion for their fellow servicemen who have gone on and their families who are left behind with only the memories of their loved one. The men are honored to get the chance to pay tribute to Frankfort veterans who have passed away. When asked, all of the men say that they plan to stay involved in the honor guard as long as they are able to.

It is inspiring to witness others who truly receive joy and satisfaction from helping their fellow man. The men of Frankfort's VFW Post 4075 honor guard will sometimes perform at as many as three funerals a day, all for free. These men have all been involved in historic battles throughout our Nation's history, and they have served their country valiantly. And although they have already given so much, they are still far from done giving back to their community, State, and country.

Mr. President, at this time I ask that my fellow colleagues in the Senate join me in recognizing the valiant dedication to service shown by these brave individuals. There was recently an article published in the Lexington Herald-Leader that featured Frankfort's Veterans of Foreign Wars Office Post 4075. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that said article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

[From the Lexington Herald-Leader, Mar. 26, 2012]

FRANKFORT VFW'S HONOR GUARD MEMBERS
FEEL PRIVILEGED TO SERVE
(By Kayleigh Zyskowski)

When the phone rings at the Frankfort Veterans of Foreign Wars Post on Second Street, 85-year-old Charlie Mauer answers it.

On the other end is not a question about the day's soups or the next bingo night, but a request for the VFW Post 4075 honor guard to pay final respects to a fellow veteran.

It's a call Mauer, honor guard commander, has been answering for years, and he's honored to take it.

K.B. Johns, Ralph Spooner, Bill Hampton and Mauer the only living original member founded the first VFW Post 4075 color guard in the early 1950s.

Within the next decade they were able to support a full honor guard, which takes at least 11 members: two flag folders, seven riflemen, one bugler and one leader.

Four of the current members are World War II veterans, and the rest served in Vietnam, Korea, Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom. They are from different generations, but the men say they share the same respect for each other.

"We've got a good bunch of guys," Mauer said.

Mauer, a World War II veteran, says serving the community and paying tribute to Frankfort veterans is something he's glad to do. And because he grew up in Frankfort, he knows many of those who've died, which makes the job more important to him.

Several days after the call comes in, Mauer arrives at the post ready to greet the other members and prepare the equipment.

"We don't get paid," says World War II veteran Jim Wolcott, "other than a free lunch and a beer."

The men arrive wearing dark-blue uniforms decorated with gold cords, white gloves and polished black shoes.

They shuffle into the game room of the VFW where the rifles are stored in a locked cabinet.

After they are prepared to leave for the funeral service, the group stands in the doorway teasing each other about their weight and asking the kitchen crew what's for lunch.

There's no need for practice or rehearsal; each man knows his role because the group has done it so often.

The group has attended as many as three funerals in one day, Mauer says, but the number is usually several per month. Over the years, they have provided services for hundreds of funerals.

The men have braved every kind of weather for funerals, and this morning is chilly and rainy. Luckily, they've heard the sky will clear before the service starts.

The 11 men divide into separate vehicles and make their way up East Main Street to Frankfort Cemetery.

As they wait for the family to arrive at the cemetery's chapel, Charlie Hinds asks Burnett Napier, "What are you doing lately?"

"As little as possible," Napier jokes.

Both Napier and Hinds are World War II combat veterans—Napier in the Marines and Hinds in the Army.

By 19, Napier was fighting in one of the Marine's deadliest battles in the Pacific on Peleliu Island with the 1st Marine Division.

It was September 1944 when Napier ended up on the coral island fighting against the Empire of Japan. He was a corpsman, or medic, when he ran to the side of a fallen Marine, performed first aid on the man under machine-gun fire before carrying him to safety.

Shrapnel hit him later in the same battle, and he suffered a concussion.

Napier, an honor guard member for 15 years, received the Purple Heart and the Silver Star while in combat on the island, which is present day Palau Islands.

"They didn't stay in one place for too long. I was all over the Pacific," he said.

"According to the citation, a Marine was caught in crossfire with machine guns, and, according to the citation, I administered first aid under fire and carried him back to relative safety," Napier said.

Charlie Hinds, 88, has been a member of the honor guard for about 16 years.

He served in seven campaigns and was an Army scout for General George Patton for two years.

"He wasn't a really nice guy; he wouldn't ever come up and want to know about you personally," Hinds said about Patton. "He just wanted to tell you what to do, but he was a good general."

Hinds and his brother enlisted after graduating from high school because his father didn't have enough money to send him to school. He was 18 years old.

"With about two weeks left in the war, I was the only (one) left in my platoon," Hinds said.

Family members of the deceased begin to arrive at Frankfort Cemetery. Vince LaFontaine—who has played in hundreds of Frankfort funerals since he was a teenager—warms up with scales, and the men take their positions.

The weather predictions were correct. The sky clears, the sun comes out and the air warms in time for the ceremony to begin.

Mauer stands in the doorway of the cemetery chapel where about 15 members of the deceased veteran's family sits. He signals the riflemen after the flag is precisely folded.

"Ten-hut," he says sternly.

The seven riflemen fire three shots that echo over the cliff and around South Frankfort before silence takes over, and the bugler plays "Taps."

"I've heard Taps' over a thousand times it seems, but it's always emotional for me," Wolcott says back at the VFW over a lunch of beef stew and corn bread.

Mauer says he never gets used to hearing "Taps" played, either.

"There's something about Taps'; it hits an emotion you can't really describe," he says.

Wolcott, who at 84 takes claim as the youngest of the four honor guard World War II veterans, was stationed in Europe from 1944 to 1947.

The four men sit at the circular table over lunch for about an hour before they decide they need to get home. They agree their health will decide when it's time to hang up their duties with the honor guard.

"When you become our age you don't look ahead too far," Napier said.

"We go day by day, but we'll be here as long as we can."

TRIBUTE TO LANCE CORPORAL DAVID MAYS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I stand before you today to commend and pay tribute to a Kentuckian who spent time with the Marines serving in Afghanistan in 2009. Although he was far from home and a visitor in a foreign land, LCpl David Mays of London, KY, treated the Afghan people with the utmost respect, proving that he exemplified the characteristics the U.S. Marine Corps upholds: character, compassion, honor, courage, and the integrity to always do what is right. Lance Corporal Mays enlisted during his senior year of high school at the age of 18.

In May of 2009, just 2 days before his second deployment with the Marines, David's firstborn son, Landon, came into the world. David left for Afghanistan before his newborn son was able to leave the hospital in London. Although David was greatly saddened about having to leave his baby boy behind, he proudly answered the call of duty, and for the second time David returned to the Middle East. However, this time around, David was a different man: he was a father now. Fatherhood caused

him to take an interest in the local Afghan children. David felt that interacting with the children helped him to not miss his own son as much.

David missed his boy back home terribly, but he would play with the Afghan children and buy them gifts. In turn, the children would offer David and his fellow marines fruit as a token of their gratitude. The kinship David and his men built with the local children was the foundation of a successful relationship with the local Afghan tribe leaders.

During his time overseas, David had limited contact with his family in Kentucky, but his mother, Wanda Caudill, sent letters and care packages as frequently as possible. She would also send photos of Landon. The gifts from home and the relationships David made with the local people, local children, and fellow marines all helped to console him until he finally returned home just before Christmas in 2010.

It had been almost a year since David had seen his son Landon, who was only 2 days old at their last meeting. There was no way that the little boy could have remembered his father's presence. But when David first saw his son Landon at the airport that December, Landon reached for him as if he had never left and kissed him three times.

David has since joined the London-Laurel County Rescue Squad and London Fire Department. He is still in the Marines Active Reserve, but he plans to stay as involved as he can in his 2-year-old son's life. David decided that missing 1 year of his son's life is enough, and he is not missing any more.

Mr. President, an article appeared in the Laurel County publication the Sentinel-Echo: Silver Edition in November 2011 that profiled the upstanding character of LCpl David Mays. I ask unanimous consent that said article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

[From the Sentinel Echo, Nov. 2011]

FINDING FAMILY FAR FROM HOME (By Magen McCrarey)

He left his first-born son, Landon, at the hospital in May of 2009, born two days before his second deployment. David Mays, a lance corporal of the 1st Battalion, Fifth Marines, hoped to take Landon home for a warm welcome; instead he arrived in Afghanistan with one of his own.

"As we landed we heard bullets ricocheting off the helicopter," Mays said. "We were there, and there was no turning back."

The sweltering desert heat was in excess of 115 degrees as Mays and his squad walked three days with more than 100 pounds strapped to their backs heading towards Helmand Province. Their compound was far off from any city and water was limited.

With a shovel-like tool in hand, Mays began digging a hole for his bed and covered it with a tarp.

"Everybody dug their own hole, scattered, in case we got attacked by mortars," Mays said. "I told my buddy if we're worried about mortars, we dug our graves right here so it don't matter."

Mays always wanted to be a Marine. When Mays was in fourth grade at Cold Hill Elementary, his class received a visit from a U.S. Marine, a pilot shot down behind enemy lines and a Kentucky native. The Marine's recollection of brotherhood and camaraderie influenced Mays in more ways than just portraying an intriguing narrative.

"It was like a family away from your own family, and I'd get to see the world and meet people," Mays said.

He and a group of friends enlisted in the Marines their senior year of high school at 18 years old. They knew they may not be placed in the same company throughout their service, but they all had the same objective.

"We all had one thing on our minds: to become Marines together," Mays said.

The objective of the Marines within the Helmand Province was to win the hearts and minds of the Afghans. With the British recently vacating the country, Afghans were apprehensive about the Marines' arrival.

Tribe leaders would only converse with Marine commanders. They'd offer tips about the Taliban's whereabouts and when they were arriving in the area. The Taliban had a reputation for entering into towns at night.

Mays and his squad of four would respond to the information given and perform night operations to keep watch over a town. Walking 20 miles and back again to keep watch for suspicious travelers was a frequent and meticulous task.

"We did what we had to do. We were doing our job protecting each other," Mays said, "just like anybody around here will protect their family."

Contact with family via satellite while in Afghanistan was few and far between, but they received mail often. Mays's mother, Wanda Caudill, sent a letter every chance she got, and many care packages.

"She sent me newspapers and I knew exactly what was going on in London," he said.

Caudill also sent photos of Mays's son so he wouldn't feel as if he was missing out on his child's life. Away from his own child, Mays often thought about the children in Afghanistan.

"We'd give the kids rides on our shoulders, and we'd buy them stuff," Mays said.

The Afghan boys would offer fruit to the Marines and even allowed them to participate in their Muslim holiday of Ramadan. As the sun set, the day of fasting would cease and they would enter in an evening feast. They had offered a goat for slaughter to the men, and taught them how to give it a death without suffering.

"I think it made me think about when my son was going to get that age, and didn't make me miss him as much. But, of course, I missed him because he was my boy," Mays said.

After days of patrolling a foreign country, battling an unseen enemy, and losing men that were a part of his family away from home, Mays returned to his own. Days before Christmas 2010, Mays arrived at the Louisville airport greeting his family with one gripping hug after another, saving his son for last.

"I was scared he was going to cry and not recognize me," Mays said.

But Landon came right to him as if he never missed a beat. He reached for Mays and kissed him three times.

"My mom started crying and said, 'He never kissed nobody,' Mays recalled. "It was like I was gone only a minute or so."

After returning from deployment, Mays has learned to appreciate the small things in life and take advantage of every opportunity to serve the public, he said. He's joined the London-Laurel County Rescue Squad and London Fire Department. Mays has completed four years of active duty in the Marines and is currently in the four-year active