EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

June 27, 2001

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Lloyd Oyster, a decorated soldier from World War II. I would like to acknowledge his bravery as a servicemember fighting on the front lines in Europe at the Battle of the Bulge. His many medals and awards demonstrate his bravery and patriotism. I am proud to stand and honor this outstanding citizen of the United States and would like to call his admiral actions to the attention of my colleagues in the House of Representatives.

I have attached for the record an article printed in the Ogemaw County Herald by Deanne Cahill about Mr. Oyster's experience as a World War II soldier.

Six decades ago, at the end of World War II, Lloyd Oyster was given a choice. The Lupton man had to decide whether or not to spend an extra few months in Europe and receive the medals he was entitled to, or return home to his wife and baby daughter.

Critically wounded in the Battle of the Bulge, Oyster didn't hesitate. He wanted to go home. He didn't regret that decision until recently, when he remarried his youngest son, Joe, that he wished he would have spent an extra few months in Europe and received the medals he was entitled to, or return home to his wife and baby daughter.

Without letting his father know, Joe went on a mission to grant his father's wish.
EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

"When your buddies got killed right along- side of you, you just want to finish it," he said. "You really didn't have time to think. You do what you have to do, and that was it."

Oyster added that fear was always present. "Anyone who says they weren't afraid, they're nuts," he said. "You have got guns and artillery aimed at you." In December 1944 as Allied forces were pushing their way into Germany, the Germans made a surprise counterattack and the Battle of the Bulge ensued. During heavy barrages, Oyster was showered with shrapnel. He was hit in the leg and a small piece of shrapnel struck him in the back.

He was taken to a field hospital for treatment. The hospital was located in the woods and consisted only of tents. Oyster underwent surgery and lay there for several days. The battle was still being waged and he couldn't be moved.

By the time Oyster got to a hospital in England, gangrene had set in. "They told me that I was going to take my leg," Oyster said. "I said no. At this time penicillin was just being introduced." Doctors administered penicillin to Oyster. "The infection cleared up and I got to save my leg," he said.

On Dec. 31, 1944, as Oyster lay in a hospital in England, Marie gave birth to their first child, Nancy. Oyster was then put into limited service and transferred to the Air Force. "I wanted to be in the Air Force in the first place," he said. "(It the Air Force) is the best place you can be, as far as I'm concerned. It was almost like sending me home, putting me in there."

For the remainder of the war, Oyster was stationed at the 8th Army Headquarters, located about 30 miles from London, taking care of three generals' vehicles. "They were going to send our division to Japan," he said. "But before we got shipped out, the war was over."

Oyster sailed home, this time on the Queen Mary. Upon arrival back into the United States, Oyster was given a choice. "They told me that I could go into the hospital for two to three months and get my disability," he said, looking at his wife lovingly. Oyster returned home to claim his bride, and the couple settled back into the Lupton area.

Two more daughters, Joyce and Susan, followed in 1946 and 1948. Oyster yearned for a son. "You take them as they come," he said. "But I wanted a boy."

In 1950, Marge delivered their first son, Larry. Another daughter, Jean, arrived in 1951, followed by Russell in 1954, Linda in 1956, and finally Joe was born in 1957. "I kept trying to have a good one," said Oyster teasingly. "If I couldn't do better than that, I thought I better stop." The Oysters now have 23 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Years later Oyster traveled to the veterans' hospital to receive his medical bene- fits, and the nurses told him he was discharged from the hospital in England, he was listed as a amputee.

Veterans records showed that he had a wooden leg. "They wanted to know where my wooden leg was."

For many years, Oyster worked construction for Strand Steel Construction and also as a welder. When he retired he said, "I retired on Social Security, but never stopped working."

In fact, at 79, Oyster still works full-time as a park ranger at the Riffle River Recreation Area in Lupton. He is expecting to finally retire later this summer after 20 years at the park.

In addition to working full-time, he also takes care of Marge, who is now confined to a wheelchair. "My day starts at 5 a.m. and ends at 9 p.m., seven days a week," he said. "I just do it."

A couple of years ago, Oyster was reading a VFW magazine and remarked that he thought he would have stayed in the service and received his medals.

His son, Joe, went home and told his wife. They contacted the Veteran's Affairs office in West Branch to determine how they would go about acquiring his medals.

They filled out a medal request form and mailed it to St. Louis, Mo. After six months, they heard nothing. Joe then mailed in a second request and still received no satisfaction.

A representative at Veteran's Affairs suggested they contact Camp, and within just a matter of a few months the medals were in Camp possession.

Camp hand-delivered those medals to a surprised Oyster at Joe's home on June 4.

Joe had invited his father to his home on the pretense of having a pizza party. Oyster patiently waited for the pizza to arrive. He was getting hungry and also a bit suspicious. "You don't very often surprise me," Oyster said. "But they did surprise me. It felt good."

"I didn't expect to get them. There are a lot of soldiers who deserve the same thing," he added. "I was just defending my country. I didn't do any more than anybody else did."

"I would do it again before I would send my grandsons to do it," he added.

KNOEBELS AMUSEMENT PARK CELEBRATES 75TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI
OF PENNSYLVANIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, June 27, 2001

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call the attention of the House of Representatives to the 75th anniversary of the formal opening of one of Northeastern Pennsylvania's primary tourist destinations, the Knoebels Amusement Park near Elysburg, which is also Pennsylvania's largest free admission amusement park.

In those 75 years, Knoebels has grown from a small local park to hosting more than a million guests each year. At the same time, the Knoebel family maintains a strong sense of tradition and family.

The land has been owned by the Knoebel family since 1828, when it was purchased by the Reverend Henry Hartman Knoebel. His grandson and namesake was the one who first envisioned the land's recreational potential. The younger Henry, better known as H.H. or "Ole Hen," farmed the land and pursued a lumbering business operating saw mills at several locations on the property.

Around the start of the 20th century, the Knoebel farm began to be visited by "tally-hos," Sunday afternoon rides with a destination, in this case people who came to sit by the creek banks, picnics in the woods and jump