



Disabled American Veterans
Department of Oregon
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Phone: (503) 936-0494

February 2, 2020

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
United States Senate
121 SW Salmon Street, Suite 1400
Portland, OR 97204

Dear Senator Merkley,

I am writing on behalf of the Disabled American Veterans, Department of Oregon to express our support for proposed legislation to rename the Community Based Outpatient Clinic in Bend, Oregon as the “Robert D. Maxwell VA Clinic.”

Mr. Maxwell is well known in Veterans circles, especially in the city of Bend, not only as a Medal of Honor recipient from World War II, but as an active member of his community.

Having served in the 3rd Infantry Division in North Africa, Italy and France, Mr. Maxwell was wounded during the battle of Anzio where he earned his first Silver Star and Purple Heart. Shortly after recovering from that injury, he participated in Operation Dragoon – the invasion of southern France, in August 1944. In Besancon, France on September 7, 1944, Mr. Maxwell and 3 others were protecting his Battalion Headquarters. A German Infantry unit, outnumbering his unit 10 to 1, attacked his outpost. Mr. Maxwell threw his unprotected body on a German hand grenade which had landed amongst his group. By this selfless act, he saved the lives of 3 comrades but suffered severe wounds when the grenade exploded beneath him. For his unhesitating valor above and beyond the call of duty, Mr. Maxwell received his second Silver Star, a second Purple Heart and French Croix de Guerre. For his “conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call,” Robert D. Maxwell was awarded the Medal of Honor.

After discharge from the U. S. Army, Mr. Maxwell earned his teaching credentials and taught at the high school and college levels. He serves on several foundations as director and co-chair. Mr. Maxwell is a passionate promoter of the Medal of Honor Foundation’s “Character Development Program.” He is also the oldest surviving recipient of the Medal of Honor.

Other Medal of Honor recipients have been honored through naming military and Veteran facilities for them, specifically: *The Edward C. Allworth Veterans Home* in Lebanon, *Kingsley Field* in Klamath Falls, and *The Loren R. Kaufman VA Clinic* in The Dalles.

In addition to renaming the clinic in Bend, we support renaming of other VA facilities for Medal of Honor recipients, as follows:

Portland VA Medical Center – PRC Stuart S Stryker and PVT Elmer E. Fryar who were WWI Veterans who entered service from Portland. PFC Stryker as Killed in Action (KIA) and PVT Fryar remains Missing in Action (MIA)

Salem Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) – PFC Henry Schauer. A WWII Veteran laid to rest in Salem.

LaGrande VA CBOC – SGT John Noble Holcomb who is a Veteran of Vietnam laid to rest in Richland.

Eugene VA CBOC – MSGT Maximo Yabes, KIA in Vietnam.

As disabled Veterans and residents of the State of Oregon, we are very proud of the contributions made by our states' Veterans and the legacy of those who came before us.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 541-756-2390, or my Adjutant, Wanda Janus, at the address/phone number shown in our letterhead. Thank-you for your continued dedication to our nation's Veterans.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Owens', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kevin Owens
Commander
DAV Department of Oregon