

Good morning/afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

[Thank any VIPs/special guests/event hosts]

<PAUSE>

I'm honored to be here with you to celebrate those who wore the uniform in service to this country and to ***all*** the men, women and children who call her home.

If you're a veteran and are able, please stand or raise your hand.

<PAUSE>

Look around. These are the heroes we honor today.

<LEAD APPLAUSE>

I also want to thank the families of those who served. Their sacrifices are too often overlooked, but I assure you, they're just as worthy of our appreciation. If you're a spouse or child of a veteran, please raise your hand or stand to be recognized.

<LEAD APPLAUSE>

To be clear, none of those men and women ask for our applause. Regardless of how or why they got into the military, they served something larger than themselves — certainly larger than any recognition.

Take Ken David, for example.

Ken was drafted into the Army in August 1969 at the height of the Vietnam War. Within months, he was on the ground in the Republic of South Vietnam.

On May 7, 1970, Ken was serving as a radio-telephone operator when his element came under fierce attack from a larger force seeking to overrun the base.

The assault mortally wounded his platoon leader in the opening minutes of battle. In response, Ken unleashed a barrage of automatic weapon fire on the enemy.

He then moved to a position outside the perimeter and continued to fight, firing single shots from his rifle.

Ken made himself vulnerable to the enemy in an effort to draw fire away from wounded soldiers while they received medical care.

He refused treatment for his own wounds and remained deliberately exposed to protect medevac helicopters, ensuring the wounded could be rescued.

<PAUSE>

Think about that. A 20-year-old kid, drafted to serve in wartime in a foreign land. Before that day, Ken had already been welcomed to the country by enemy fire as his aircraft circled to land, wounded in combat and hospitalized once. His platoon's previous radio operator had been killed, putting Ken in that position on May 7, 1970.

And when the enemy came for him again, he didn't just fight back. And he didn't fight for *his* life.

He intentionally put himself in death's path to protect his fellow soldiers. The men to his left and to his right. And when the last helo dusted off from the firefight that day, Ken had saved *seventeen* lives.

<PAUSE>

For his actions, Ken was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross in 1971. But that honor didn't protect him from the lasting scars of war.

After his discharge from the Army in 1972, Ken struggled to adjust back to civilian life. He felt isolated as he dealt with symptoms of post-traumatic stress. His relationships suffered. He lived in pain from the physical toll of war.

And yet, there was another battle Ken would take on with bravery and selflessness. He found healing and purpose in *helping others*. Today, he remains an active veterans advocate with DAV, helping any veteran in need in his Ohio hometown.

He helps organize free dinners for veterans and has literally opened his own wallet to help hungry veterans and their families with a meal.

He is adjutant of his DAV chapter and a chapter service officer, making himself available for any veteran who needs help securing the benefits they earned through service.

In Ken's 40 years as a DAV member, there's no telling how many lives he's touched or even saved. When asked what he does with his free time, Ken once said, "I'm too old for boating, and I don't fish anymore, so I just help veterans."

<PAUSE>

Earlier this year, Ken was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions on that day in 1970. It was an overdue recognition, but again, veterans like Ken don't expect recognition. It doesn't guide them or define them.

And while Ken is an extraordinary human who did extraordinary things, as a veteran, he is not unusual in dedicating his life to service. *That* is the veteran way.

DAV's nearly one million members are proof of that. These men and women, who already sacrificed so much in service—everything from precious years with family to their mental and physical well-being—don't stop serving.

That includes those dedicated servants here in [local city/state]. [Insert anecdote of local veteran serving the community]

<PAUSE>

On Veterans Day, we don't just recognize what our men and women did while in uniform; we celebrate and honor their *continued* service and contributions.

So when you say thank you to a veteran, consider adding "for all you've done and all you continue to do."

And please, don't stop there. Join them! If you're a veteran yourself and looking for ways to continue your service, seek out your local DAV chapter and get involved.

If you're a family member or just someone who wants to put "thank you for your service" to action, talk to your local DAV chapter or DAV Auxiliary unit. All of us can walk in the footsteps of heroes like Ken David and [insert local anecdote name].

<PAUSE>

To those veterans here today, ***thank you—for all you do and all you continue to do.*** To the mothers, fathers, spouses and children of our military men and women, ***thank you.*** And to all of those who show your gratitude through thoughtfulness and action, ***thank you.***

It is my privilege to celebrate you all today.

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