



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Senator Young Honors Three Bolivar Veterans in Medal Ceremony

CATHARINE YOUNG September 7, 2013

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Gerald Lynn Bonney, Ronald Scutt, and Leo Francis Coyle Receive Awards For Military Service

BOLIVAR - Recognizing their outstanding records of military service in Europe, Korea, and Vietnam, three local veterans have finally received the military decorations they earned by their service.

During a ceremony at the Kenyon Andrus American Legion in Bolivar today, Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I – Olean) presented Sergeant First Class Gerald Lynn Bonney and

Specialist 4th Grade Ronald Scutt with the military medals they earned while serving in Vietnam and Korea, respectively. Senator Young also posthumously honored Private First Class Leo Francis Coyle for his service in Europe during World War II. After being contacted by the veterans and their families, Senator Young was instrumental in obtaining the long overdue awards.

“Our veterans deserve our deepest appreciation and gratitude. The men being honored today selflessly left their homes and families to bravely serve their country a world away from everything and everyone they knew and loved. These men represent two generations of proud Americans who upheld the highest traditions of our armed forces,” said Senator Young.

Sergeant First Class Gerald Lynn Bonney gave 25 years of his life to serving in the U.S. Army Reserve, the Marine Corps, and the Marine Corps Inactive Reserve, before retiring in 1994.

Sgt. First Class Bonney’s military service began when he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Delayed Entry Program while a student at Portville Central School. He reported for duty on July 12, 1967, and was trained as a rifleman while assigned to the Fleet Marine Force.

After completing basic training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island in South Carolina, Sgt. Bonney undertook advanced training and went to sea school in Norfolk, Virginia, before going aboard aircraft carrier USS Independence in the Mediterranean Sea.

Sgt. First Class Bonney would later be deployed to Vietnam and serve in combat with the 2nd Combined Action Group, III Marine Amphibious Force, traveling from village to village near Hoi An.

After leaving active duty on September 3, 1971, he was transferred to the Marine Corps Reserve Force, Class III, for the remainder of his military service and was discharged on July

11, 1973, as a corporal, having served two years and four months overseas, either at sea aboard naval ships or in combat in Vietnam.

On November 11, 1975, Sgt. Bonney joined Company B, 2nd Battalion, 4th Brigade, 98th Training Division of the U.S. Army Reserve, serving in several Army Reserve units and different occupational specialties before being assigned a senior instructor with the Training Support Brigade, Company E, 2nd Battalion, 391st Regiment, 98th Training Division.

While in service, he completed the North Dakota National Guard Engineer School for bridge building, the U.S. Army Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course for Reserve Components and various other Army training courses.

Today he has received awards from the U.S. Marine Corps, the U.S. Army, and the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs.

From the Marine Corps, Sgt. First Class Bonney is honored with the Combat Action Ribbon, the Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation, the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal with Bronze Campaign Star, the Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Commendation Gallantry Cross Color with Palm, the Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Commendation Civil Action Color with Palm, and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal.

From the U.S. Army, he receives the Army Commendation Medal, the Armed Forces Reserve Medal, the Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal with Three Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster Devices, the NCO Professional Development Ribbon with Numeral 3, the Army Service Ribbon, the Army Overseas Service Ribbon, a Bronze Star Device, and the Sharpshooter Marksmanship Badge with Auto Rifle Bar.

In addition, from the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs, Sgt. First Class Bonney receives the New York State Conspicuous Service Cross and the New York State

Conspicuous Service Star.

“Coming from a long line of family members who have served in the military, from the Civil War to World War I to World War II, I am very proud to be receiving these awards and want to work with other veterans and their families to ensure they get the medals and awards they’ve earned. Senator Young and her office have done a great job of helping secure these medals, so I encourage other veterans to contact her and their county’s Veterans Service Agency to receive the honors they deserve but may have never received,” said Sgt. First Class Bonney.

Specialist 4th Grade Ronald Scutt, also a Portville native who now resides in Bolivar, enlisted in the U.S. Army Delayed Entry Program on June 27, 1967, and reported for active duty at Fort Dix, New Jersey on August 14, 1967. After completing advanced individual training as an engineering equipment repairman at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, Specialist Scutt was assigned to the 802nd Engineer Battalion (Heavy Combat) and with orders to report to Vietnam.

When USS Pueblo was captured off the coast of North Korea on January 23, 1968, half of Specialist Scutt’s 802nd Engineer Battalion was sent on to Vietnam while the other half, including Specialist Scutt, was deployed to Korea in support of forces near the Demilitarized Zone amid escalating tensions. Following a year spent in Korea, he returned to the United States with the 43rd Engineering Battalion at Fort Benning, Georgia. He was assigned to the U.S. Army Reserve Control Group (Reinforcement) on August 13, 1970, and honorably discharged on June 26, 1973.

From the U.S. Army, Specialist Scutt receives the Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, the Korean Defense Service Medal, the Expert Marksman Badge with Rifle Bar, the Sharpshooter Marksman Badge with Rifle Bar, and the Marksman Badge with Auto Rifle Bar.

From the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs, he receives the New York State Medal For Merit.

“I’m honored to have been able to serve my country when it needed me,” said Specialist Scutt.

Also being honored today, posthumously, is the late Private First Class Leo “Fran” Coyle of Richburg, who was drafted into the U.S. Army on August 5, 1943, and entered World War II’s European Theater on February 27, 1944.

Private First Class Coyle completed the Army Service Course for automotive mechanics in England in April 1944 and was assigned as a truck driver with the 383rd Military Police Battalion, General Headquarters, Military Railway Service, in Paris, France. With the 383rd MP Battalion, Private First Class Coyle was charged with safeguarding all United States mail and supplies being transported by rail throughout the theater.

With one year and eight months spent overseas, he was discharged and immediately reenlisted in Paris on November 25, 1945. Private First Class Coyle completed an additional nine months in the war’s European Theater as part of the 390th Military Police Service Battalion, Army of Occupation. Private Coyle returned to the United States on December 13, 1946, and was honorably discharged on January 3, 1947, at Fort Dix, New Jersey.

Private First Class Coyle, who formerly served as the Kenyon Andrus American Legion Post’s commander, passed away on June 7, 2013, and is today posthumously honored by the U.S. Army with the Good Conduct Medal, the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with One Bronze Campaign Star, the World War II Victory Medal, and the Army of Occupation Medal.

Private First Class Coyle’s wife, Pearl, who attended the medal ceremony to accept the awards in her husband’s place, extolled his humility and sense of duty in carrying out his

responsibilities while in the Army.

“He never talked about his experience in the war. He was humble about his service and never wanted to exploit what he and others went through. He just went over and did his job and came home, which these medals attest to. I am honored to be able to accept them for him,” said Mrs. Coyle.

“The commitment and sacrifice of these men is an inspiration for us all. As a nation we owe them an incalculable debt of gratitude. They are role models whose service to our country inspires and motivates us to commit ourselves to better serving our communities and country,” said Senator Young.

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