

On this Veterans Day, we extend our thanks as a grateful nation to the men and women who have defended our freedom.

Each of the 22 million American veterans has a unique and extraordinary story. Today, I'd like to share one story about a remarkable veteran in our community.

Carl DeAngelis joined the Army in September of 1942, at the height of the Second World War. His training was a time of great sorrow: his mother died shortly after his enlistment, and Carl's service prevented him from attending her funeral. Yet it was also a time of surprising joys. One day, unexpectedly, a fellow soldier pulled a photo of his sister from his wallet and showed it to Carl. "I'm going to marry her," Carl announced – and sure enough, after the war, he did.

Carl fought in Normandy, dodging bullets that sped just inches away from him. Later, he served on guard duty in France, where he was assaulted one evening outside a bar. Carl was forced to shoot in self-defense, and only later did he learn that the FBI had been seeking his assailant for a long time: this man, Carl was told, was wanted in a series of deaths.

When the war ended, Carl came home and started a family with Flora Terranova DeAngelis, the girl in the picture, and they have been married for 65 years. Now Carl is 90 and living in a rehabilitation home on Staten Island. Yet even after so many decades, the story of his military service remains unfinished. Carl had earned seven medals for his faithful and dedicated service – but he never received any decorations at all.

A few months ago, Carl's daughter, who lives in East Brunswick, contacted me in an effort to right this wrong. Tomorrow morning, on Veterans Day, I will have the honor of presenting to Carl the medals he has so long deserved. You can watch live on WPIX 11, broadcasting from New York City, at about 8:40 a.m.

I hope you will join me in honoring our veterans tomorrow. And if you or someone you know is also due a medal or award that you have never received, please contact me so that our nation may properly honor our heroes.

An Update from a Nearby Fracking Site

Earlier this week, I visited a nearby site in Pennsylvania where a drilling company is extracting natural gas through a process called hydraulic fracturing – “fracking” for short. The practice is controversial, and for good reason: it involves injecting a solution of chemicals deep into the earth, and in some cases these chemicals can leach into our water supply.

Burning natural gas does create a lighter greenhouse gas burden than burning petroleum, but the gas bonanza in Pennsylvania seems to be getting out ahead of our knowledge of the consequences of fracking. If the developers are so sure that fracking doesn't have any deleterious effect, and if the revenue from these wells will produce the many, many billions of dollars that they say, then they shouldn't object to regulations that will protect public health and result in a restored environment.

Sincerely,

Rush Holt
Member of Congress