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TOP STORY

Retired Maj. Gen. Humble receives Patriot Award

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Oct 18, 2021



Retired U.S. Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Jerry Humble (left) received a copy of the Congressional Record containing an announcement receiving the Patriot Award from the Col. Benjamin Logan chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution. Kelley Paul U.S. Sen. Rand Paul, made the presentation.

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MORE INFORMATION



Retired general Humble enjoys grand marshal experience

RUSSELLVILLE – As a star linebacker for the Western Kentucky University football team in the 1960s, Jerry Humble dealt out more than his share of bone-jarring hits that ball carriers may not have seen coming.

As a military officer for 34 years, he's no stranger to sneak attacks that catch the enemy unawares.

Saturday night, though, was a first for Humble. The retired U.S. Marine Corps two-star general was himself blindsided in his hometown of Russellville.

Humble, a Bowling Green resident and WKU Hall of Distinguished Alumni member, showed up at the Logan County Career and Technical Center expecting to say a few words about patriotism.

Instead, he walked away with the first-ever Patriot Award given out by the Col. Benjamin Logan chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, a nonprofit organization dedicated to maintaining the institutions of American freedom and extending an appreciation for true patriotism.

In a room bedecked with 16 total flags, most from the Colonial or Revolutionary War eras, SAR members dressed in military garb from that era presided over a ceremony that was all about honoring Humble.

But, when Kentucky SAR President Steve Mallory presented the award to the Vietnam War and Desert Storm veteran, Humble looked a little shell-shocked.

“I’ve been tricked tonight,” Humble said, looking out over a crowd of 50 or so people that included family and friends. “I thought I was giving a speech.”

Humble, 73, was selected for the inaugural award for a military career during which he earned the Legion of Merit with two Gold Stars, the Defense Distinguished Service Medal and other awards.

“This is our first Patriot Award, and we thought it would be proper to recognize someone from the community who is a patriot,” said Adam Scales, president of the local SAR chapter that was founded in 2018.

While pleased to receive the honor, Humble remained true to his surname.

“I try to be a patriot,” he said, “but the real patriots are the 56 men who signed the Declaration of Independence.”



Like those signers, Humble will now have his name enshrined in Washington, D.C. Before Mallory presented the Patriot Award to him, Humble received a copy of the Congressional Record page in which his award and his military accomplishments are listed.

Russellville native Kelley Paul, wife of U.S. Sen. Rand Paul, presented the Congressional Record document to Humble and called him a “modern-day patriot.”

“It’s so important that we not forget our history and our founding documents,” Paul said. “I feel like we’re drifting farther away from what made us great.”

That reverence for our nation’s roots was evident throughout the evening as SAR members talked about the goals of the organization whose members must be direct descendants of someone who served in the Revolutionary War or contributed to establishing the independence of the United States.

“We’re wanting to promote patriotism and historical understanding of our past,” said Richard Holloman, the local chapter’s secretary.

Toward that end, said Scales, the local SAR chapter is involved in locating the burial sites of Revolutionary War veterans and “giving them the ceremony they never had.”

The group also plans to be involved in taking educational programs into schools to teach youngsters about our nation’s founding.

That reverence for our nation’s history is something Humble said he shares with the SAR group.

He recently purchased the Russellville home of Presley O’Bannon, a first lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps famous for his heroic exploits in the First Barbary War (1801-1805).

Humble is renovating the historic home and plans to open it to the public next spring as a venue for weddings and other events.

The O'Bannon home will also be used "to promote patriotism and American history," Humble said.

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