

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 187

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman BRIAN BERGEN

District 25 (Morris and Somerset)

Assemblywoman BETTYLOU DECROCE

District 26 (Essex, Morris and Passaic)

Assemblyman CHRISTOPHER P. DEPHILLIPS

District 40 (Bergen, Essex, Morris and Passaic)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman Dunn

SYNOPSIS

Designates May 27 of each year as “Richard Rescorla Day.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/26/2020)

1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** designating May 27 of each year as “Richard
2 Rescorla Day” in New Jersey.
3
4 **WHEREAS**, Colonel Rick Rescorla, born as Cyril Richard Rescorla on
5 May 27, 1939 in the Town of Hayle in Cornwall, England, United
6 Kingdom, was a United States Army officer and decorated Vietnam
7 veteran; and
8 **WHEREAS**, Prior to his military service in the United States, Rick
9 conducted intelligence operations with the British Army while
10 stationed in Cyprus and later became an inspector with the Northern
11 Rhodesian Police; and
12 **WHEREAS**, Afterwards, Rick returned to London to serve in Scotland
13 Yard’s elite “flying squad” of detectives before enlisting with the
14 U.S. Army in 1963; and
15 **WHEREAS**, Rick Rescorla, assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry
16 Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, led his platoon during America’s
17 first major battle of the Vietnam conflict, the Battle of Ia Drang;
18 and
19 **WHEREAS**, In the book “We Were Soldiers Once...and Young,” the
20 commanding officer of the battle, Lieutenant General Harold G.
21 Moore (Ret.), described Rick Rescorla as “the best platoon leader I
22 ever saw”; and
23 **WHEREAS**, Rick Rescorla’s leadership and bravery in Vietnam earned
24 him two Bronze Stars, a Silver Star, the Purple Heart, and the
25 Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry; and
26 **WHEREAS**, The Battle of Ia Drang was not the last time this nation
27 would require the service of Rick Rescorla; and
28 **WHEREAS**, On September 11, 2001, Rick Rescorla, a resident of
29 Morristown, New Jersey, was serving as Vice President of Security
30 for Morgan Stanley Dean Witter at their headquarters in the World
31 Trade Center, where he regularly drilled the Morgan Stanley
32 employees in disaster preparedness and response, especially
33 evacuation; and
34 **WHEREAS**, After the North Tower was attacked on that fateful day,
35 Rick Rescorla dismissed Port Authority announcements to remain
36 in the building and led a massive evacuation of Morgan Stanley’s
37 2,700-person workforce located in the South Tower; and
38 **WHEREAS**, With bullhorn in hand, Rick calmly directed people down
39 the stairwell, ultimately saving the lives of all but six employees,
40 with many of the survivors recalling him singing Cornish folk
41 songs during the evacuation, assuring them, “Today is a day to be
42 proud to be an American. Tomorrow, the world will be looking at
43 you!”; and
44 **WHEREAS**, After the last of the employees had evacuated the South
45 Tower, Rick Rescorla returned to the building, despite fears that the
46 towers would fall, to make a final sweep to ensure everyone had
47 escaped safely; and

1 **WHEREAS**, Rick Rescorla was last seen alive accompanying firemen
 2 up the stairwell on the tenth floor, shortly before the South Tower
 3 collapsed, moving toward danger much in the same way he had
 4 done 36 years prior at the Battle of Ia Drang; and

5 **WHEREAS**, Rick Rescorla perished in the South Tower and is survived
 6 by his wife Susan, his daughter Kim, and his son Trevor; and

7 **WHEREAS**, Although Rick Rescorla’s remains were never found, the
 8 brave military officer is forever memorialized at the Raptor Trust
 9 Bird Rehabilitation Center in Long Hill, New Jersey where his
 10 epitaph is enshrined at the bald eagle sanctuary that served as a
 11 place of solace for him and his wife; and

12 **WHEREAS**, Additional public memorials and accolades include an
 13 engraving at the South Pool, on Panel S-46 at the National
 14 September 11 Memorial and Museum, a statue of Rick on
 15 permanent display at the National Infantry Museum at Fort
 16 Benning, Georgia, along with a dedicated portion of the museum’s
 17 forthcoming exhibit covering the Global War on Terror, the Rick
 18 Rescorla National Award for Resilience created by the Department
 19 of Homeland Security, a passenger train operated by Great Western
 20 Railways in the United Kingdom commissioned in honor of Rick, a
 21 plaque honoring Rick at Mt. Soledad National Veterans Memorial,
 22 a 2009 induction into the Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame, a stone
 23 monument in Cornwall, England, and the Department of Homeland
 24 Security’s highest honor the Distinguished Public Service Medal,
 25 awarded posthumously; and

26 **WHEREAS**, In 2019, President Donald J. Trump presented the
 27 Presidential Citizens Medal, the second-highest civilian award,
 28 posthumously to the late Rick Rescorla, which was accepted on his
 29 behalf by his widow Susan Rescorla and his son Trevor; and

30 **WHEREAS**, By sharing Rick’s story throughout the world, Susan
 31 Rescorla continues to immortalize the heroes, first responders, and
 32 victims of 9/11/2001, as well as Vietnam Veterans; and

33 **WHEREAS**, It is fitting and proper for the State of New Jersey to
 34 designate May 27 of each year, Rick Rescorla’s birthday, as “Rick
 35 Rescorla Day” to honor a decorated Vietnam veteran who made a
 36 valiant and selfless sacrifice on one of our nation’s darkest days;
 37 now, therefore,

38
 39 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the*
 40 *State of New Jersey:*

41
 42 1. May 27 of each year shall be designated as “Richard
 43 Rescorla Day” to honor the life and commitment to service of
 44 Richard Rescorla who valiantly and unselfishly served the United
 45 States with honor during the Vietnam conflict and on September 11,
 46 2001.

2. The Governor is respectfully requested to issue a proclamation each year calling upon public officials and the citizens of this State to observe “Richard Rescorla Day” with appropriate activities and programs.

3. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This joint resolution designates May 27 of each year as “Rick Rescorla Day” in New Jersey.

Colonel Rick Rescorla, born as Cyril Richard Rescorla on May 27, 1939 in the town of Hayle in Cornwall, England, was a United States Army officer and decorated Vietnam veteran. Rick Rescorla, assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, successfully led his platoon during America’s first major battle of the Vietnam conflict, the Battle of Ia Drang. Rick Rescorla’s leadership and bravery in Vietnam earned him two Bronze Stars, a Silver Star, the Purple Heart, and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry.

On September 11, 2001, Rick Rescorla, a resident of Morristown, New Jersey, was serving as Vice President of Security for Morgan Stanley Dean Witter at their headquarters in the World Trade Center. Following the attacks on the World Trade Center, Rick Rescorla dismissed Port Authority announcements to remain in the building and led a massive evacuation of Morgan Stanley’s 2,700-person workforce located in the South Tower. After the last of the employees had evacuated the South Tower, Rick Rescorla returned to the building, despite fears that the towers would fall, to make a final sweep. Rick Rescorla was last seen alive accompanying firemen up the stairwell on the tenth floor, shortly before the South Tower collapsed, moving toward danger much in the same way he had done 36 years prior at the Battle of Ia Drang.

Although Rick Rescorla’s remains were never found, the brave military officer is forever memorialized at the Raptor Trust Bird Rehabilitation Center in Long Hill, New Jersey where his epitaph is enshrined at the bald eagle sanctuary that served as a place of solace for him and his wife. Additional public memorials and accolades include the following:

- an engraving at the South Pool, on Panel S-46 at the National September 11 Memorial and Museum;
- a statue of Rick on permanent display at the National Infantry Museum at Fort Benning, Georgia, along with a dedicated portion of the museum’s forthcoming exhibit covering the Global War on Terror;
- the Rick Rescorla National Award for Resilience created by the Department of Homeland Security,

- 1 • a passenger train operated by Great Western Railways in the
- 2 United Kingdom commissioned in honor of Rick;
- 3 • a plaque honoring Rick at Mt. Soledad National Veterans
- 4 Memorial;
- 5 • a 2009 induction into the Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame;
- 6 • a stone monument in Cornwall, England;
- 7 • the Department of Homeland Security’s highest honor, the
- 8 Distinguished Public Service Medal, awarded posthumously;
- 9 and
- 10 • the Presidential Citizens Medal, the second-highest civilian
- 11 award, award posthumously.

12 It is fitting and proper for the State of New Jersey to designate May
13 27 of each year, Rick Rescorla’s birthday, as “Rick Rescorla Day” to
14 honor a decorated Vietnam veteran who made a valiant and selfless
15 sacrifice on one of our nation's darkest days.