SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION
No. 88

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 30, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator ANTHONY M. BUCCO
District 25 (Morris and Somerset)

SYNOPSIS

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

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

A JOINT RESOLUTION designating May 27 of each year as "Richard Rescorla Day" in New Jersey.

WHEREAS, Colonel Rick Rescorla, born as Cyril Richard Rescorla on May 27, 1939 in the Town of Hayle in Cornwall, England, United Kingdom, was a United States Army officer and decorated Vietnam veteran; and

WHEREAS, Prior to his military service in the United States, Rick conducted intelligence operations with the British Army while stationed in Cyprus and later became an inspector with the Northern Rhodesian Police; and

WHEREAS, Afterwards, Rick returned to London to serve in Scotland Yard's elite "flying squad" of detectives before enlisting with the U.S. Army in 1963; and

WHEREAS, Rick Rescorla, assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Calvary Division, led his platoon during America's first major battle of the Vietnam conflict, the Battle of Ia Drang; and

WHEREAS, In the book "We Were Soldiers Once…and Young," the commanding officer of the battle, Lieutenant General Harold G. Moore (Ret.), described Rick Rescorla as "the best platoon leader I ever saw"; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, The Battle of Ia Drang was not the last time this nation would require the service of Rick Rescorla; and

WHEREAS, 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, where he regularly drilled the Morgan Stanley employees in disaster preparedness and response, especially evacuation; and

WHEREAS, After the North Tower was attacked on that fateful day, 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; and

WHEREAS, With bullhorn in hand, Rick calmly directed people down the stairwell, ultimately saving the lives of all but six employees, with many of the survivors recalling him singing Cornish folk songs during the evacuation, assuring them, "Today is a day to be proud to be an American. Tomorrow, the world will be looking at you!"; and

WHEREAS, 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 to ensure everyone had escaped safely; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

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

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, Additional public memorials and accolades include 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, a passenger train operated by Great Western Railways in the United Kingdom commissioned in honor of Rick, a plaque honoring Rick at Mt. Soledad National Veterans Memorial, a 2009 induction into the Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame, a stone monument in Cornwall, England, and the Department of Homeland Security's highest honor the Distinguished Public Service Medal, awarded posthumously; and

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

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

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

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

1. May 27 of each year shall be designated as "Richard Rescorla Day" to honor the life and commitment to service of Richard Rescorla who valiantly and unselfishly served the United States with honor during the Vietnam conflict and on September 11, 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 Calvary 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,
- a passenger train operated by Great Western Railways in the United Kingdom commissioned in honor of Rick;

- a plaque honoring Rick at Mt. Soledad National Veterans Memorial;
- a 2009 induction into the Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame;
- a stone monument in Cornwall, England;
- the Department of Homeland Security's highest honor, the Distinguished Public Service Medal, awarded posthumously; and
- the Presidential Citizens Medal, the second-highest civilian award, award posthumously.

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