

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 48th Legislature (2002)

SENATE
RESOLUTION 48

By: Reynolds and Dunlap

AS INTRODUCED

A Resolution praising the heroic life and mourning the loss of John Blue; and directing distribution.

WHEREAS, John Blue was born on May 21, 1923, in Fort Smith, Arkansas, the son of George D. Blue and Annie Deathridge Blue. In 1927 the family moved to Bartlesville, Oklahoma, and John Blue attended Horace Mann School. He quit school in the ninth grade in order to join the Civilian Conservation Corps where he worked in the Osage Hills, Oklahoma, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, and Guthrie, Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, John Blue left the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1937 to work in constructing pipelines. He traveled throughout the West seeking employment, but was drafted into the United States Army in January, 1942; and

WHEREAS, John Blue received his infantry and engineering training at Camp Swift, Texas. He was shipped to England on the British ship Mauritania, where he was fed a steady diet of marmalade and tea. In England he was assigned to the 146th Engineer Combat Battalion and began training for amphibious landings and destroy bunkers. While visiting London, a building where he was staying was bombed but he was uninjured. The area where his unit camped was hit by a V-2 rocket, but again, he escaped injury; and

WHEREAS, John and his unit hit Omaha Beach at 6:33 in the morning on June 6, 1944. The Engineer Combat Battalions were the

first Americans on the beach and their job was to clear the beach of obstacles. The Germans had welded steel railroad tracks into obstacles and the Americans were assigned to blow them up. Each soldier carried 80 pounds of explosives and the expectation was that 95% of them would be killed or wounded. According to John, they never blew up a single bunker, something for which they had been specifically trained; and

WHEREAS, it took four days to establish the beachhead. John and those in his unit who survived the landing were then assigned to repairing roads and constructing pontoon bridges across rivers. During that period John Blue met and got to personally know General Omar Bradley; and

WHEREAS, during the Battle of the Bulge, John Blue won the Bronze Star for partaking in an effort that saw 1,000 anti-tank mines laid in a single night. Wounded in battle, he was evacuated to England. John later returned to France and was assigned to guard German Prisoners of War who were repairing water systems and roads; and

WHEREAS, John Blue was discharged from the Army in October 1945 and returned to Bartlesville, Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, John Blue won his second Combat Infantry Badge during the Korean War. He was presented a Governor's Citation and a State of Oklahoma Commendation on Saturday, May 4, 2002, recognizing his military service; and

WHEREAS, John Blue, the last known survivor of the 146th Engineer Combat Battalion, died on May 5, 2002, at his residence in Bartlesville, Oklahoma.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THE 48TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

THAT the Oklahoma State Senate praises the heroic life and mourns the loss of John Blue.

THAT a copy of this resolution be distributed to his wife,
Velma; brother, Robert E. Blue; and grandchildren, Nick Skull,
Deborah Gustafson, Sam Skull, and Butch Skull.

48-2-3401

THC

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