

Kentucky soldier’s heroism documentary to air on KET

By AL CROSS UK
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As Americans honor patriotic sacrifice on Memorial Day, KET will premiere the story of a Kentucky soldier who repeatedly put his life on the line for his country – but wasn’t fully honored for it until 73 years later. From Honor to Medal: The Story of Garlin M. Conner, airing at 8/7 p.m. ET/CT Monday, May 25, tells the story of one of the most decorated soldiers of World War II – who received the nation’s highest military award, the Medal of Honor, only after a 20-year campaign by his widow and friends. Their campaign ended June 26, 2018, at the White House, when President Trump presented the medal to Pauline Conner, who still lives on their small farm near Albany, just down the road from their son Paul. She said in a speech at the Pentagon the next day, “This is what Murl would want me to say: God bless these United States of America.” Murl Conner served more than two years in the Third Infantry Division, suffering many wounds and earning four Silver Stars. On Jan. 25, 1945, he volunteered to be a forward observer for artillery that was needed to stop a German attack – an attack that came so close he finally called

in artillery on his own position, offering his life for his country. Conner survived that day in a ditch in the French province of Alsace, and came home to a Kentucky farm with no electricity or running water. He had a family, gave them a good life, and was a leader of his fellow farmers and veterans. He suffered in body and mind from his Army service, but said very, very little about it. Only after Conner died in 1998 was his story told – first by a rank stranger who became his greatest advocate and inspired others to join his campaign to get Conner the Medal of Honor. Led by a neighbor who wouldn’t take no for an answer, they struggled for 20 years to break through Army bureaucracy, losing at every turn – but remaining inspired by Murl Conner’s battlefield examples of determination and resolve. In the end, in an amazing turn of events, they won. And now their story is being told, along with the story of Lt. Conner, who now may be the most decorated American soldier of World War II. “He was a combination of Kit Carson and Davy Crockett,” says Walton Haddix of Albany, who took up the campaign begun by Richard Chilton, a Green Beret veteran from Genoa City, Wisconsin. He met Conner and learned his story while researching

the service of his uncle, who died at Anzio under Conner’s command. “He cared about his men more than anybody I ever knew,” Chilton says. “If you want to save your life, go out with Murl. Don’t go out with anybody else.”

The documentary was produced by Lexington filmmaker Jeff Hoagland and the Institute for Rural Jour-

nalism and Community Issues at the University of Kentucky. **See Conner, page 8A**



Remembering Our Veterans on Memorial Day

Today we honor the memory of the brave soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice to protect our nation and our way of life. Their dedication to country and freedom makes us proud to be Americans, and we owe them a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid. On Memorial Day, we salute our nation’s fallen and the families who carry on without them. Their heroic spirit and sacrifice will never be forgotten. We will always remember that freedom is not free.



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A Tribute to Our Heroes

Making Kentucky Even More Military Friendly

House Bill 24

Funds design and pre-construction costs for the Bowling Green Veterans Nursing Home. **State Rep. Brandon Reed co-sponsored House Bill 24.**

House Bill 357

Allows those who served as military paramedics to use their training toward civilian paramedic certification.

House Bill 266

Allows military personnel to count a home they are buying or building as a residence for public school enrollment purposes, helping military families transitioning to retirement or a new post.

Brandon Reed

Brandon Reed
State Representative
24th District

