

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FRANKLIN COUNTY BECOMES A PURPLE HEART COUNTY

This week, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners will designate Franklin County a Purple Heart County, honoring the courage, patriotism and personal sacrifice of the men and women who are wounded or killed while defending America's freedoms.

The Purple Heart Medal is the oldest military medal still given to U.S. military members and was established in 1782 by patriot, and first President of the United States, General George Washington, and was originally named the Badge for Military Merit. Many years later, the badge was renamed the Purple Heart Medal.

"We may never be able to repay our brave military service personnel and their families for their sacrifices and bravery," said Commission President Marilyn Brown. "However we will continue to honor them, thank them and provide them with the support and services they need as a tribute to their commitment to protect the values Americans hold dear."

The Military Order of the Purple Heart, formed in 1932 and chartered by Congress, is unique among all veteran service organizations in that membership is comprised entirely of combat veterans who were wounded on the world's battlefields while serving our country in uniform. For this sacrifice they were awarded the Purple Heart Medal. Today, the Order now includes about 45,000 total members.

"My father-in-law, a World War II and Korean War veteran, received a Purple Heart for his service in the European theater during WWII. Characteristic of these veterans' selflessness, he always says, 'so many others deserved this more than me,'" Commissioner Paula Brooks said. "It is humbling to recognize all Franklin County Purple Heart recipients through today's action."

With this declaration, Franklin County joins Shasta County (CA), the first County in the nation to be designated a Purple Heart County in 2011; Licking County, Ohio, the first Ohio County to be named a Purple Heart County in 2011; and, the State of Ohio, the first state in the nation to become a Purple Heart State in 2012.

Commissioners will present the Military Order of the Purple Heart Buckeye Chapter 500 with a ceremonial resolution formally declaring Franklin County a Purple Heart County on August 6, 2014.

“Franklin County is proud of our rich heritage, especially the brave men and women who have defended our Country through their service in the military,” said Commissioner John O’Grady. “No single group of people deserves our gratitude and admiration more than our veterans. I am honored to be able to sign this resolution, declaring Franklin County a Purple Heart County.”

The Franklin County Courthouse (373 S. High St.) will be lit purple this week in honor of the new County designation and all the Military Service Members who have earned the Purple Heart in combat. On Friday, August 8, Franklin County residents are encouraged to participate in the first annual Purple Heart Run/Walk 5K which begins at 9 pm in Downtown Columbus. Visit <http://www.fallen15.org/purple-heart-run-5k/> for more information and to register for the 5K.

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