

Korean War Veteran and Army Ranger Received Medal of Honor

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A VFW Life member and legend in the Army's Ranger community was awarded the nation's highest award for valor in May. Retired Army Col. Ralph Puckett received the Medal of Honor from President Joe Biden during a White House ceremony on May 21.

Biden recognized Puckett's actions on Nov. 25-26, 1950, when Puckett was leading the 8th Army Ranger Company, which consisted of 57 Rangers and Korean soldiers.

He and his men took, then defended, a strategic hill overlooking the Chongchon River in what is now North Korea.

"Those men who were there under 1st Lt. Puckett's command will never forget his bravery," Biden said during the ceremony. "They will never forget that he was right by their side throughout every minute of it."

According to the National Medal of Honor Museum, over the course of those "two bloody days," Puckett repeatedly placed himself "in mortal danger as he led his company, first under fire when they captured the unoccupied Hill 205, and then in defense of the hill when faced with six attacks by Chinese forces in which he was grievously wounded. Through it all, then-1st Lt. Puckett's selflessness and heroism were an inspiration to his fellow Rangers, who refused his order to leave him behind and evacuate the area."

The 94-year-old Puckett, a Life member of VFW Post 9864 in Lebanon, Virginia, also served in the Vietnam War.

He has been an inspiration to fellow Rangers, serving as the Honorary Colonel for the 75th Ranger Regiment from 1996 to 2006.

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