

Board honors local Purple Heart recipients



Yolo County Supervisor Jim Provenza, newly named chairman of the Board of Supervisors, presents a Purple Heart resolution Tuesday morning to Billy Wagster, left, who earned a Purple Heart during his military service in Vietnam, and Francis Resta, who earned a Purple Heart during his World War II service. Gina Daleiden/Courtesy photo

The Yolo County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday declared Yolo an official “Purple Heart County,” honoring those servicemen and women from Yolo County who were wounded or killed in battle.

There to receive a copy of the resolution on behalf of local Purple Heart recipients was Davis resident and veteran Francis Resta, 86, who was awarded a Purple Heart for injuries suffered during combat in Germany during World War II.

Resta said the resolution honors “what all the real heroes did ... the ones that didn’t come back.

“They paved the way for the rest of us and it’s an honor to me to represent all them,” he said.

Originally from New York, Resta joined the U.S. Army at the age of 19 and was a member of the Army’s 102nd infantry division. He spent a total of three years in the Army, then went on to obtain an engineering degree, working over the years for Bell Telephone, General Motors, Chrysler and Aerojet.

He moved to Davis in 1986 when he took a job at Travis Air Force Base.

Since retiring, Resta has filled his life with other activities, including teaching ballroom dancing in Sacramento.

“It wasn’t until after I retired that I realized how much my job was interfering with my life,” he quipped.

He also now serves as post commander of Davis Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6949.

Joining Resta at the board ceremony was Billy Wagster, another Yolo County resident and Purple Heart recipient. Wagster, a former Marine, served in the Vietnam War and works as Yolo County’s veteran services officer.

The Purple Heart is awarded to any member of the armed services who is wounded or killed while serving. In honoring recipients, newly minted Board of Supervisors President Jim Provenza said these servicemen and women “have been vital in maintaining the freedoms and ways of life enjoyed by our citizens.”

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