

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Daniel Crowe Speaks of “Our Honored Dead” at Korean War Memorial in Wilsonville**  
*Republican Attorney General Candidate Delivers Nonpartisan Speech on Memorial Day*

**Wilsonville, OR -**

West Point graduate and Republican Candidate for Attorney General, Daniel Crowe, spoke today at 10:00 am at the Korean War Memorial in Wilsonville at the invitation of the Korean War Veterans Association.

The nonpartisan speech concentrated on honoring service members who gave their lives in defense of our country, including Crowe’s fellow Mount Angelite, Private First Class Henry T. Rava, and his West Point Classmate, Major Bill Hecker.

“Our Service Members go to war because, by going,” Crowe said, “we believe we are preserving something to come home to ... even if we do not make it home ourselves.” Crowe was preceded by Wilsonville Mayor Tim Knapp and introduced by Korean War Veterans Association President, Bob Cassidy.

Text of Crowe’s speech follows.

For more information on his campaign go to [www.CroweForAG.com](http://www.CroweForAG.com) or to interview the candidate email your request to [team@oregonlawyer.org](mailto:team@oregonlawyer.org) .

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Bob, thank you for such a kind introduction. Mayor Knapp and Counselor Fitzgerald, thank you so much for the wonderful weather here in Wilsonville today. To my fellow Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsman, and to the families and loved ones of our honored dead, thank you for asking me to come on this most solemn and holy of days.

For those families who offered up to our Nation a loved one who fell in defense of our country, and for those of you who – like me – have lost buddies in combat, there is nothing I can say today that can make sense of why some of us made it and some of us fell. War doesn’t make any sense; it doesn’t need to. As Trotsky famously said, “you may not be interested in war, but war is interested in you.”

The fifth stanza of the Ranger Creed that I had to memorize in Ranger School includes this line: “I will never leave a fallen comrade to fall into the hands of the enemy.” Every person who has deployed in service of our country understands the intense and overwhelming desire to come home, even if it’s to be laid to rest. And everyone who has sent a loved one into battle knows an even more overwhelming desire

for that loved one to come home. I reckon that every one of us is here today because we are connected to someone who never made it home. 60,000 Oregonians fought in the Korean War; the names of the 287 who died there are inscribed here, as well as the 21 who are still missing. We must never, ever rest until the 21 who are still missing are accounted for, repatriated, and laid to rest back here in Oregon. We will never, ever forget; just as we will never, ever leave a fallen comrade behind.

We agree to go along with the unnatural idea of going to war for a lot of different reasons. In older times, it was because the girls were watching; but now the girls are serving in combat alongside us. But all of us go because, by going, we believe we are preserving something to come home to. If we're lucky, we've lived a while before going. For myself and my West Point Classmates, it has been an accepted occupational hazard for most of our adult lives. I entered West Point on the last day of June of 1987. We have seen almost three decades of war, and many of my buddies have seen more than their fair share of combat; but we are professional Soldiers and – for the most part – our families are career military families who accept our lot in life. To be honest, the prospect of getting killed doesn't bother us nearly as much as the crushing dread of having to send a letter home to a young Trooper's family trying to explain the impossible. Ours is a hard business, and I used to tell my guys that the Army is in the business of trading lives for victory—their lives for your victory. My guys weren't terribly enthusiastic about that message, but they appreciated a Commander who didn't try to blow sunshine up their backsides. Ours is a hard and unforgiving business; but it is the razor's edge upon which every one of our freedoms rest.

We are here at the Korean War Memorial, but today we honor all of our sacred dead. Today, in particular, I honor two men: my fellow Mt. Angelite, Henry Rava, and my West Point classmate, Bill Hecker.

Private First Class Henry T. Rava was an infantryman assigned to D CO, 2ND BN, 8TH CAVALRY, 1ST CAV DIV. Decades later, I served in the same unit. On 18 February 1970, in Tay Ninh Province, South Vietnam, PFC Rava was killed by friendly fire. He was 20. He was six years younger than my Mom, who is now 73. I have seen his grave at Calvary Cemetery in Mount Angel a hundred times. I visited it this morning to pay my respects. I was looking at his picture last night; he was a great looking kid.

On the other side of the spectrum, my classmate MAJ Bill Hecker was an English Professor at West Point from 2000-2003. Bill had a fascination with that strange place in our imaginations where poetry and our calling sometimes intersect. While teaching at West Point, Bill wrote Private Perry and Mister Poe, examining the effect of our Rockbound Highland Home on another former West Pointer, Edgar Allan Poe. Bill travelled to his final assignment in Iraq with Shakespeare and a poetry anthology. He was killed by an IED on 5 January 2006 in Najaf, alongside four of his men. He and Richelle had four children: Alexandra, now 20; Victoria, now 17; Cordelia, now 14; and William, who was 3 when he dad died. I want you to remember him, but Bill would be more interested in helping you understand why he went. "In the Valley of the Shadow," written by his fellow English Professor at West Point, Elizabeth Samet, after Bill's death comes closest to explaining:

Soldiers rise to emergencies. I don't mean that they like them or even secretly hope for them, but crises are what they train for. Presented with one, they immediately feel more at ease, more comfortable in their roles. They can do something, even if it is only surveying the wreckage. At other times [peacetime] they are like policemen in a city without crime, physicians in a kingdom of androids.

The cost of war is not being forgotten; we remember our honored dead for as long as we live: It is the life never lived for Henry; it is the second novel never written by Bill, the birthdays and marriages missed, those whom we've left behind and knowing how painful it will be for them to live on knowing that we

did not. They say that funerals are for the living, and maybe Memorial Day is a chance for us to remind ourselves all of the blessings life has given us, a chance to take stock and ask ourselves whether we've lived our lives in a way that honors the chance we've been given that they didn't get.

If there are any veterans of World War II here today, I want you to raise your hands ... or walkers ... or canes. Oregon is home to highest percentage of Veterans over 65 in the United States. Our WWII generation will not be with us for many more Memorial Days, so I'd like to close with words from another politician, Ronald Reagan, on the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day, honored the Army Rangers who scaled Pointe Du Hoc on that Longest Day:

You were young the day you took these cliffs; some of you were hardly more than boys, with the deepest joys of life before you. Yet you risked everything here. Why? Why did you do it? What impelled you to put aside the instinct for self-preservation and risk your lives to take these cliffs? What inspired all the men of the armies that met here? We look at you, and somehow we know the answer. It was faith and belief. It was loyalty and love.

The men of Normandy had faith that what they were doing was right, faith that they fought for all humanity, faith that a just God would grant them mercy on this beachhead, or on the next. It was the deep knowledge -- and pray God we have not lost it -- that there is a profound moral difference between the use of force for liberation and the use of force for conquest. You were here to liberate, not to conquer, and so you and those others did not doubt your cause. And you were right not to doubt.

You all knew that some things are worth dying for. One's country is worth dying for, and democracy is worth dying for, because it's the most deeply honorable form of government ever devised by man. All of you loved liberty. All of you were willing to fight tyranny, and you knew the people of your countries were behind you.

The Americans who fought here that morning knew word of the invasion was spreading through the darkness back home. They fought -- or felt in their hearts, though they couldn't know in fact, that in Georgia they were filling the churches at 4:00 am. In Kansas they were kneeling on their porches and praying. And in Philadelphia they were ringing the Liberty Bell.

Our Service Members go to war because, by going, we believe we are preserving something to come home to ... even if we do not.

For those who have gone before us, for those who have fallen on foreign shores or simply by the inexorable passage of time, and for all of us, God bless you and God bless the United States of America.