

Kemper Memorial Essay Contest celebrates 10th anniversary



Maximilian Gude's winning essay analyzed Roosevelt's Four Freedoms speech.



Patricia Cassidy wrote of her personal connection to American military history.

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The Richard M. Kemper Memorial Essay Contest celebrated its 10th anniversary on Tuesday, as members of the community and school district gathered to hear the views the winning students, Patricia Cassidy and Maximilian Gude.

The two winners wrote very different essays in a contest that was founded in 2000 to “motivate students to think about how to create a just and peaceful world where human rights violations no longer take place.”

Cassidy didn't have a very upbeat answer to the question, “Is America honoring her veterans?” She said that “among all the treasures of America, veterans are probably the most valuable natural resource that Americans take for granted.” She told of the view she has of America's history coming from a family that has served in nearly every armed conflict in which this country has been involved, reasoning that part of the problem may be that “without a personal frame of reference or sense of loss...it's difficult to understand and respect the sacrifices of our veterans -- and to honor them appropriately.”

Maximilian Gude analyzed President Franklin Roosevelt's ‘Four Freedoms’ speech, writing that it “clarified and redefined what people were really fighting for. No longer was it simply a fight against fascism, it was something much larger than that. It was a battle to preserve that which makes human life meaningful, the will to be free.” Gude concluded that Roosevelt was not only speaking to Americans, but also to human-



WWII veteran Tony Marsella helps raise the flag that returned from Italy draped over the coffin of his brother John, one of the 99 fallen heroes listed on the monument.

ity. Roosevelt was “speaking as a citizen of the world, conscious of the repercussions of American ideals on other countries and fully committed to creating a lasting peace for all nations,” he said. “True freedom is

simultaneously achieved and maintained if it is genuinely sought for all, and not just the few.”

Another student, Elizabeth Goodspeed,

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Caren Lee opens the ceremony with a rendition of "America the Beautiful."

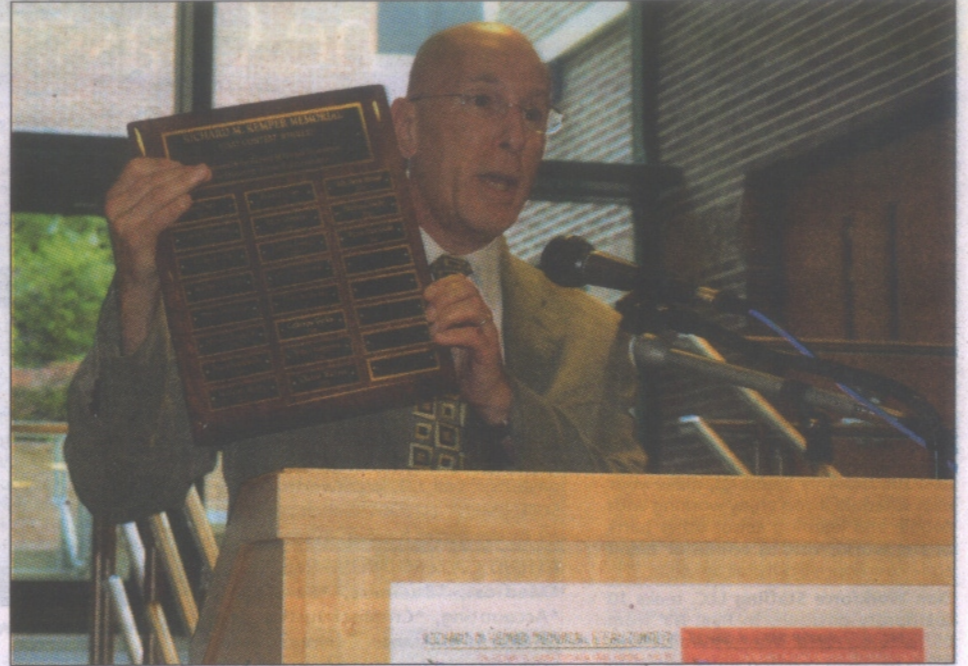
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address and solve the problems that lead to war and human rights violations across the globe, said Paul Cantor, nephew of Richard Kemper and the family's liaison with the school for the event.

Following the readings inside, the contingent of guests made their way outside to the memorial for the playing of "Taps" and singing of "God Bless America." Tony Marsella, himself a WWII veteran, is a mainstay at veterans' services at the park, where his brother's

was honored at the ceremony for her contribution to the contest – the winning poster created to publicize the contest. Goodspeed received a \$100 prize, and the essayists received \$250 prizes. The Richard M. Kemper Foundation for Promoting Human Rights Education, the non-profit which now sponsors the contest, hopes that the monetary prizes will spark in students an effort to apply their creativity and intellectual abilities to

name is listed. This year, Marsella added a special part to the ceremony, the ceremonial raising of the flag that covered his brother's coffin as it made its way back to the states and to his final resting place in a federal cemetery in Kentucky. "It's a flag from one of the 99. That's what makes it so special," Marsella said. "The one they took down you can buy at any hardware store."



MHS Principal Mark Orfinger shows off the new plaque listing the present and past contest winners.