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12 speakers (Theo Mayer, Terry Hamby, Ted Poe, Emanuel Cleaver, Mark Milley, Bob Vogel, David Shulkin, Keith Harmon, Denise Rohan, Muriel Bowser, Doug Lamborn, Kevin Yoder)

[0:00:08]

Theo Mayer: Welcome to World War I Centennial News, the weekly podcast about World War I and the centennial commemoration of the war that changed the world. World War I Centennial News is brought to you by the US World War I Centennial Commission and the Pritzker Military Museum and Library. Welcome to our Thanksgiving Week special show. For this special week, where we traditionally celebrate with our families and give thanks for the bounty in our lives, we're bringing you a special episode of World War I Centennial News. We're celebrating with our now gone family of Americans who 100 years ago took up the challenge, the mission, and the fight to help end one of the most horrific periods in human history. We're going to take a moment to reflect and give thanks to their service and their sacrifice, whether they were soldiers, mothers, workers, men, women, children, even horses, mules, and dogs. We're inviting you to join us in giving thanks to a nation committed to a cause, not for territorial gain, and not to dominate another nation or to even stop other nations from directly dominating us, but rather for a cause embodied in an idea and an ideal, an ideal of liberty and freedom, ideas we must never take for granted, because we only have them courtesy of the commitment and the sacrifice of our forebears. Now if this all sounds schmaltzy to you, just take a deep breath and wrap your head around this. People died for you to have this. Think of your own family and those you love, and remember those who have lost their loved ones for you. On this Thanksgiving 100 years ago, literally millions of Americans, both here and on foreign shores, were united in preparing, training, building, transforming, fighting, and even dying, because our people by and large felt it was simply the right thing to do, in a cause of liberty and freedom for the people of the world. So let's all give thanks for what we have. Meanwhile, we, the World War I Centennial Commission, also want to give thanks to the many of you who've supported, sponsored, and donated to our work and our mission of bringing this rather amazing moment of our history out of its dusty trunk in the attic of our past and into the awareness of our present. During this week's episode, we're going to bring you highlights from the November 9th ceremonial groundbreaking for the National World War I Memorial at Pershing Park in Washington, DC. It was a watershed moment in our ambitious effort in building a memorial to honor the men and the women who served 100 years ago in the war that changed the world. Now by law, no tax dollars can be used to build this memorial. It must be built with private funds and donations. So in that regard, this truly is America's World War I memorial. We're asking you for your financial support with a tax-deductible donation to build this World War I memorial. We need your help to do it. We cannot do it without you. And it's easy. Just go to ww1cc.org/donate. Now, this is a really simple URL to remember. The letters "ww", the number "1," then the letters "cc.org/donate," ww1cc.org/donate. And in a little while, we're going to tell you how to donate by just sending us a text. But right now, from the ceremonial groundbreaking, here is the chair of the World War I Centennial Commission, Commissioner Terry Hamby.

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Terry Hamby: The World War I Centennial Commission is very honored by your presence here today, here in Pershing Park, the home of the commander of the American Expeditionary Force. We're both honored and humbled to be a part of building a national memorial to our World War I veterans, honored to have the unique opportunity to help memorialize the men and women who answered the call of their country and came to the aid of their fellow world citizens, humbled as we recognize the courageous actions of those brave veterans that forever changed the world. Their actions brought the United States into a leadership role on the world stage. These men and women were the first to deploy to a country that most had never visited, fight in a war that we didn't start, and if necessary, die for liberty and peace for people they'd never met. They fought for the causes that the US citizens have always held dear, freedom and liberty. Just as our doughboys did 100 years ago, American military men and women are deployed around the world today to places most have never visited, and fight for peace and liberty for people they've never met. This memorial is important. As a Vietnam veteran, it moves my soul when I see the names of my friends that are memorialized on that wall. It's a fitting remembrance by our nation to the veterans and families of those who gave their last full measure in service of the country in that conflict. Our 4.7 million World War I veterans and their families are no less deserving to be recognized with a memorial just as all veterans who have been recognized for their service in all of our other nation's conflicts and wars. Moreover, it's our responsibility as citizens of this great nation to build this memorial for them, 100 years after the war. Although there are no living World War I veterans to speak for themselves, it's incumbent upon us as Americans to speak for them. I speak for my grandfather, who never heard my voice because he lost his hearing in the service of his country in World War I. My great uncle, who I never met, because he gave his life at Saint-Mihiel. As Americans, we must remember their sacrifices and how their service changed the world forever. We as citizens of this great nation are benefactors for their service, and that deserves recognition. For 100 years, the 116,516 veterans who gave their lives... That's more than Vietnam and Korea together... The countless others who suffered horrible physical and emotional injuries, and the other millions who

answered the call of our nation have been forgotten by America. It's a national tragedy that the millions of veterans of the Great War, who were the parents of the Greatest Generation, have not been memorialized in our capital. Today this groundbreaking service starts a process of erecting a memorial here in Pershing Park alongside their leader, General John J. Pershing, the commander of the expeditionary force. This is America's memorial, and I hope all Americans join those of us here today in the centennial of the Great War to make this possible. In 1915, after the occasion of conducting a funeral for an officer in his command, Major John McCrae, I'm sure filled with emotion, penned the words to In Flanders Fields. As a veteran, the last verse has served as my inspiration to never forget the sacrifices of men and women in uniform who have defended and will continue to defend liberty and peace. McCrae finished that last verse of In Flanders Fields with a message from all of our veterans who have fallen, as he said, "Take up our quarrel with the foe: To you from failing hands we throw The torch; be yours to hold it high. If you break the faith with those who die We shall not sleep, though poppies grow In Flanders fields." Today with this ceremony, our nation starts the process of keeping the faith for our veterans of World War I.

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Theo Mayer: You can help keep the faith for those who died, so they can rest in Flanders Field. And you can do it with your tax-deductible donation to build their memorial. Of course, we want to make this as easy as we can, so since many of you listen to our podcast on smart devices, we've set it up so you can text a donation right from your phone. It's really easy. Go to your texting app and text the letters "WWI." That's "WWI" to the number 91999. WWI to 91999. Our text-to-give app is really easy, safe, and you can donate any amount you choose. You can even make your donation in honor of your family or your ancestor who served. From the ceremonial groundbreaking, here is Congressman Ted Poe of Texas with a little background about his and Congressman Cleaver's journey in getting congress to pass the law that established the memorial.

[0:10:12]

Ted Poe: I want to just make a few comments to you. My friend, Emanuel Cleaver, who is sitting to my far left, which is appropriate, and I several years ago decided that it was important that there be a memorial in Washington, DC for all of the men and women who served in World War I. He's from Kansas City, Missouri, and as you know, the World War I History Museum and a memorial is in Kansas City that was erected some years ago. We thought it was important there be another one here in Washington, DC for all those that served. So we started working together several years ago to get legislation passed to get congress to approve the building of the memorial, and it will be built at this location. It took 100 years to get that memorial approved by congress, and one of the inspirations to Congressman Cleaver and myself was a person by the name of Frank Buckles, Jr. He was the oldest surviving World War I veteran from the United States, and he died a few years ago at the age of 110. He was like a lot of doughboys in World War I. He lied to get into the United States Army. He was 15. Some say he was 14. I'm not sure how old he was. But he came into the United States Army. He went over there to a land that most Americans had never been to, to fight for people they did not know, to fight for liberty. And he drove an ambulance, and he rescued other doughboys that were left on the battlefield and made sure that they got medical attention. Not just doughboys, but any of the allies. After World War I was over with, World War II started. He found himself in the Philippines. He was captured by the Japanese and put in a prisoner of war camp for four years until that war was over, and he came back to America, and it was his desire and hope, as many, to have a memorial here in Washington, DC for us to remember those that served in the Great War. Thousands of young Americans, 18- and 19-year-olds were killed in that war. Many of them are still over in France in graves only known to God. After World War I was over with, America just kind of went on about the things that were pressing, and a World War I memorial just never got approved to be done. So I am honored here today to be among those who dedicate this memorial. One hundred years ago, April 6 of this year, United States declared war in World War I. And on behalf of members of congress, we had flags flown over the United States Capitol on April 6 of this year to recognize those men and women who served and to recognize this memorial that will be built, starting today.

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Theo Mayer: You know, it's really a personal pleasure to be able to report that the centennial commemoration of World War I and the establishment of a National World War I Memorial in Washington, DC has served as a precious and actually really rare area of bipartisanship in our national legislature. This is truly a sign of honor and respect that all Americans have for those who serve and for those who've served our nation. And we're appealing to you, whether your political leanings are republican or democrat, conservative or liberal, to help build the memorial to commemorate those who answered the call 100 years ago. Give your thanks and honor those men and women of the past by sending a tax-deductible gift of any size, either by going to the website at ww1cc.org/donate, or texting the letters "WWI" to the phone address at 91999. We'll send you a receipt for your taxes and our sincere gratitude for your heart. Here is Congressman Emanuel Cleaver with a little insight into the bipartisan collaboration that surround this worthy project.

[0:14:30]

Emanuel Cleaver: It is an honor for me to be here for the groundbreaking of the National World War I Memorial in Washington, DC. I've had the honor and pleasure of working on many facets of honoring veterans of World War I with my colleagues here in congress since becoming a member. Thirteen years ago, Congressman Ted Poe and I were elected. We are classmates. He and I've become friends. Regretfully they say he's going to retire, and we will miss him for many reasons, but one of them is for his willingness to help try to erase this poisonous partisanship that has infected congress and the nation, and so we all have worked jointly on this legislation. We also were able to draft legislation that created the World War I Centennial Commission, and Congressman Doug Lamborn and I drafted legislation to mint the World War I commemorative coin. Both of these congressmen, along with like-minded members like Congressman Kevin Yoder from Kansas on the other side of the state line... And I have to just say this, because his contribution is so important. He's a graduate of Kansas University, a subsidiary of Missouri University. And I appreciate the support in my amendment that designated this site where we currently stand as the National World War I Memorial. The fifth district of Missouri, which I proudly serve, includes Kansas City, a home to the National World War I Museum and Memorial, one of the metropolitan area's greatest treasures, and I'd like to just ask Matt Naylor, the director of the Liberty Memorial in Kansas City to please stand. More than 4.7 million Americans served during World War I, and of those brave men and women, more than 116,000 made the ultimate sacrifice. It's long overdue that our nation's capital has a memorial to honor their service and sacrifices. Let us always remember those who fought to disassemble tyranny and shape our great nation. No gift is complete until we say thank you. This memorial says thank you to the men and women and to their families, who helped make this nation great.

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Theo Mayer: Congressman Cleaver really said it well. No gift is complete until we say thank you. Please make a tax-deductible donation. Whatever you can, a dollar, \$11.11 for 11/11, \$50, 100, 1,000, whatever you can. Remember them all, and remember your own with a gift specifically in the name of someone who served our nation. Please go to ww1cc.org/donate or text to give. Text WW1 to the number 91999 now. Thank you. You know, it's really important to remember and to be absolutely clear. We're commemorating World War I. We're not celebrating it. War isn't something to celebrate. War is a terrible thing. And to give you some insight into that, perhaps from an unexpected source, is the 39th Chief of Staff of the Army, General Mark A. Milley.

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Mark Milley: You know, World War I 100 years ago, and like the Secretary, I too have grandparents and granduncles that fought with both the British and American armies in World War I. It was a horrible war, and at the beginning of that war, in that fateful summer of 1914, in a period of only six weeks, the kings and the queens and the czars and the kaisers and the presidents and the prime ministers of Europe, in sequence made a series of horrific decisions that they thought were not bad at the time, but it resulted four years later in an utter catastrophe, in which 38 million people died, where if you were a young male in Europe in 1914, you stood a one out of four chance of being dead by 1918. It was a war that ripped apart five empires and utterly destroyed economically, physically, infrastructure, and of course, from a humanitarian standpoint, all of the death and destruction. And it also set the conditions for the world that we live in today. The boundaries of the Middle East were set in 1918, 1919, and 1920, in the wake of World War I. So the struggles that we see today can be directly attributed to the first world war, and it's more than appropriate 100 years after the end of that war to finally begin erection of a monument to the American participation in that war. And there's many, many lessons to be learned from World War I. There are strategic lessons, there's operational lessons, there's tactical lessons, there's lessons of politics and government and economics. But if there's one lesson most of all to learn, it's the lesson, the vow never to let it happen again. And the way to prevent war is to maintain your preparedness for war, in the words of George Washington, our first president. The United States Army under Black Jack Pershing went to war, and in 1916, two years or so before the end of the war and a year before he entered into Europe, he was chasing Pancho Villa on the border of Mexico, riding a horse, leading horse-ridden cavalry troops, and he was a one-star at the time. And the Army at that time had less than 200,000 soldiers in it, spread out in mostly constabulary duties. A few years later, the Army went from less than 200,000 to 4 million soldiers and rapidly expanded and mobilized the entire nation. In that time, we also raised a navy and a marine corps and deployed them as well. But prior to 1917, we were in a complete state of unpreparedness. When Black Jack Pershing entered Europe, it took him nine months to train and equip the United States Army and the Marine forces to fight alongside the British and French allies. A state of unpreparedness led to many casualties in the battles of the Argonne and many others. And the Argonne was the bloodiest battle in US Military history. That preparedness was repeated again in World War II and then again in the Korean War. So if there's one lesson for us to learn as a nation, it's to be prepared. As the Chief of Staff of the United States Army, it's my deep honor to be here today and honor those soldiers and sailors and airmen and marines that perished in the first world war, and it's our duty to remember what they fought for, why the fought. It's our duty to carry on that legacy and ensure the peace goes into the future.

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Theo Mayer: You know, giving thanks is actually about caring, and participating in the ceremonial groundbreaking is a project partner who will be taking on that task directly. Here's Bob Vogel from the National Park Service, whose National Memorial role may not be something that you're familiar with.

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Bob Vogel: On behalf of the National Park Service, the caretakers of the future World War I Memorial, welcome to this very exciting groundbreaking ceremony. We are proud stewards of America's memorials to its veterans of the Armed Forces. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Korean War Veterans Memorial, the World War II Memorial, the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial, and we look forward to the day in the very near future that the World War I Memorial will be added to the sacred sites under our care. At its core, the National Park Service is a place-based organization. The historic resources we preserve and interpret provide people with a tangible connection to the stories of America's past, celebrating our greatest achievements and our most somber moments. As such, this is really the perfect place for the location of the World War I Memorial. Archival footage of the frenzied celebration in the nation's capital of the armistice on November 11, 1918 shows Washingtonians packed shoulder to shoulder across Pennsylvania Avenue, right here in front of the Willard Hotel. Ten months later, General John J. Pershing, whose statue will be a centerpiece of the new World War I Memorial, led the victorious American expeditionary force right here down Pennsylvania Avenue, turning north onto 15th Street, right here on its way to the reviewing stand on the north side of the White House. And on November 11, 1921, the very somber procession containing an American soldier known but to God passed right here en route to his final resting place in Arlington National Cemetery after lying in state in our nation's Capitol in the rotunda. This very site has been witness to some of the most important home front activities associated with America's armed forces during World War I, and the National Park Service is very proud to be the steward of their legacy. Today our national story is told in 417 national parks across America. The National Park Service has the privilege of being entrusted with this important story. We are the keeper of the American legacy in all its sweep and drama. We look forward to the dedication of the World War I Memorial and assuming the very solemn responsibility as its caretakers, and I promise you that we will be here every day of every year watching over this place, to keep it and protect it, to pass its story on to future generations of Americans. For it is not simply a memorial that we preserve here; it is our birthright as a nation, purchased at a staggering human cost, and one that we will care for with all of the reverence it demands.

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Theo Mayer: We want to remind you that the law specifically prohibits government funds from paying for this memorial, so none of this is possible without your help. We need your contribution to build the memorial. If you're listening on your smartphone, pause this podcast right now, then go to your texting application, type 91999 into the address field. Type the letters "WWI" into the message field and press send. You'll get a reply immediately that'll allow you to make a contribution of any size to help build your memorial to World War I in our nation's capital. Then come back here and listen to the rest of the show. We've got some really good stuff coming up, and you'll be feeling really good while you listen. We're a nation committed to honoring those who served. Our next three speakers live, breathe, service and support veterans. Starting with the administration's new Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the honorable David Shulkin.

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David Shulkin: Both of my grandparents served in World War I, so I'm especially grateful to be able to be here for this memorial. Just last week our historian at VA presented me with my grandfather, Joseph Shulkin's draft card for World War I, which was really terrific to see. Neither of my grandparents talked to me as a child about their experience in World War I, but I can tell you, I know that they both will be proud that we're here today honoring them, because I know how much they loved the country. Saturday is Veterans Day. I know all of you know that. And as Americans, we're going to celebrate those who had served and those whose duty it was to keep our nation free. We started that tradition 98 years ago on Armistice Day, and 54 years ago we changed the recognition to actually be Veterans Day, but it's a very special day, so it's so appropriate that we're doing the groundbreaking for this memorial today, just a few days before Veterans Day. Last week you may have seen President Trump proclaim the entire month of November Veterans and Military Families month, because there is so much going on and there are so many recognitions that we think are important for those who have served the country. Throughout this month, we're going to be focusing on important issues to veterans and military families like caregivers and ending veterans' homelessness. We're going to be announcing a new national ID card for veterans, never done before. The White House hotline will be launched, which is 24/7, answered by veterans for veterans. We're going to be expanding a National Cemetery in Los Angeles and releasing a public service announcement that Tom Hanks narrates on the importance of all of us getting involved and reducing veterans' suicide. I think we all know Americans benefit from veterans' service, so all of us have a role in this monument to memorialize those in World War I, and in remembering veterans, we cherish the liberties that they preserve for us. It gives us our right to be Americans and to speak our minds and to have the freedoms we have. As President Woodrow Wilson described, "They fought for the ultimate peace of the world and for the liberation of its peoples, for the rights of nations great and small and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their way of life. There is no more noble purpose." So we honor those Americans serving both today and those that we will remember for the years to come.

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Theo Mayer: Both the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars have stepped up on this project with significant contributions to the World War I Memorial. We want to thank them and their membership for supporting the project so generously. Here are Keith Harmon, Commander in Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Denise H. Rohan, National Commander of the American Legion.

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Keith Harmon: It is an honor to be here today to represent America's largest and oldest major combat veterans organization, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. The VFW was already 18 years old when our nation entered the so-called War to End All Wars, a youthful age we shared with the great majority of the 4.7 million American men and women who would be mobilized to fight or support the war both here in the States and over there. Serving over there is a relevance that every VFW member shares with every veteran of every war or conflict. It is a relevance that we all were younger once, and it is a relevance that we all have walked the talk. Corporal Frank Buckles was our nation's last connection to World War I when he passed away in 2011 at the young age of 110 years old. Mr. Buckles was VFW life member, who is buried not far from here on the top of Arlington National Cemetery. He's buried within spitting distance of a grave site of another VFW life member, General John "Black Jack" Pershing. That generation's voice is now quiet, but their memories will live on through this new memorial, which the VFW is proud to support in spirit and financially. One thing our organization is about is the proper recognition of all who have continued to wear the uniform of our great country. A World War I Memorial in our nation's capital is long overdue, but putting shovels in the ground today will finally recognize the service, sacrifice and accomplishments of all of those 18-year-olds. The Great War was won because of America's commitment when direct involvement which thrust the United States into the world leadership role that continues today. That is well worth remembering and properly recognizing here in our nation's capital. Thank you.

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Denise Rohan: Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests, they are gone now, but their legacy endures. It was not the War to End All Wars, but oh, how we wish it were. How we wish that those 116,516 fallen American heroes were the last to die in war. How we wish that none of the Americans who went over there would have to return to Europe and the Pacific a generation later to fight another great war, and how we wish that all political leaders from around the world would conduct themselves with the honor and the devotion of our brave military heroes, thus making future wars unnecessary. The legacy left by our doughboys, and yes the women who also served, is freedom, freedom from tyranny and fear. And while today's headlines often remind us that many parts of the world still are not free, the majority of the planet would look terrifically different if not for the brave men and women willing to lay down their lives for the liberation of others. World War I cemented American status as the leaders of the free world. It is a legacy that we must pass on to our children, our grandchildren, and to all generations that follow. Another legacy of the first world war is the organization that I am honored to lead, the American Legion. The American Legion was founded by World War I veterans in Paris, France just a few months after the armistice was signed. And in the Preamble of the Constitution of the American Legion, legionnaires commit to preserving the memories and incidences of our associations in the great wars, and this pledge is on the back of every American Legion membership card, and it is recited at all of our official meetings. While time has taken all of the World War I veterans from us, those of us who live in a free society, we are their living legacy, and we must remember them in this historic memorial, and they will serve as a perpetual reminder of their sacrifice and their heroism. Thank you for being here. God bless the heroes of World War I, our currently serving military, and God bless this great nation.

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Theo Mayer: Again, thank you both to the VFW and the American Legion national organizations for their substantial and really important financial support of the World War I Memorial in Washington, DC, a city that's currently run by the honorable mayor, Muriel Bowser. As you'll hear, she and the city are very supportive and looking forward to having this new and important commemorative feature as a part of the nation's capital.

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Muriel Bowser: Here in Washington, DC, we are very fortunate to have access to many of the nation's memorials, museums and monuments that tell our nation's history, and we know that the World War I Memorial will be a vital and long-awaited addition to this story here in Washington, DC. The National World War I Memorial here in Pershing Park will represent all of the sacrifices that were made, the lives lost, and the many families affected. Our country lost more than 100,000 American men and women during World War I, and 600 of them were Washington, DC residents. So although this memorial will represent the service of Americans from all across our great nation, I too want to thank all of the Washingtonians who participated in those battles. On behalf of us, I want to say thank you to the designers, the visionaries, the commission members who have steadfastly worked to deliver a project worthy of the memories of these great men and women. They taught us what it means to sacrifice for a larger cause and to put country before themselves. As we break ground today, let us reflect on the immeasurable contributions of these servicemen and women and their families. Today we are reminded of the core values we live by, freedom, equality and liberty, and we thank every member of the United States Military for going above and beyond to protect our American values and our

great democracy. I speak for our legislators on the Council of the District of Columbia, our National Guard, our men and women of Washington, DC in saying thank you for your hard work on this memorial, and we look forward to it opening next year.

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Theo Mayer: So we've been pretty direct with you today. We need your help and your contribution to build the World War I Memorial. And although congress did not allow for any tax dollars to help, here's Congressman Doug Lamborn, who's going to tell us about a World War I commemorative coin that congress did authorize, and with a portion of the proceeds available to help pay for the memorial.

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Doug Lamborn: Congress created the World War I Centennial Commission in 2013. The Commission was tasked with planning and executing activities to commemorate the centennial of World War I through the use of private donations and coin sales. I introduced the bill that allowed us to honor the memory, service and sacrifices of the brave veterans of World War I while all in the house and senate, including Representative Emanuel Cleaver, and Senators Roy Blunt and Claire McCaskill of Missouri, we authorized the World War I Centennial silver dollar in 2014. Two of these are allowed to be issued every year, and behind me you'll see a beautiful artist rendering of this coin, which will be minted next year. It shows a doughboy, it shows barbed wire, and it shows poppies. I want to urge all of you to go out and buy some, because it'll help the Commission. There's a \$10 surcharge with each coin that will be payable to the United States Foundation for the Commemoration of the World Wars. So this will help the Commission in commemorating the centenary of World War I. I also urge you to support the Commission and its work here in Pershing Park. When completed, the millions of annual visitors to our nation's capital will now be able to visit a memorial to every major military conflict in the US, including World War I, and to pay their respects to the patriots who so nobly served in World War I.

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Theo Mayer: And now to close out our Thanksgiving special fundraiser for the World War I Memorial, we have Congressman Kevin Yoder with some thank yous of his own.

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Kevin Yoder: I have three thank yous I'd like to offer in my brief remarks this morning. First of all, I'd like to thank the Commission, my colleagues Mr. Cleaver and Poe and Lamborn, and others in congress who stood together united to support the resources and the legislation to make this moment possible, the coin and the memorial. I represent the Kansas side of the line between Kansas and Missouri where the World War I Memorial and Museum is in Kansas City in Emanuel Cleaver's district. And this is a moment of unity, a moment of republicans and democrats coming together, and even Missourians and Kansans, Jayhawks and Tigers coming together, except for those remarks earlier that I was slandered by, but this is a moment of unity, and it's a great opportunity to be part of, I think for all of us. Second, like those who've spoken to you today, I want to just thank the families, the men and women who over 100 years ago stepped forward into the breach and defended liberty and freedom around the globe. It is a tradition that is part of our American history. It is a tradition that has been passed down from one generation to another, and it is a tradition that makes America the greatest nation in the world. And as a beneficiary of that, as we all are, we stand here, we sit here today because men and women were willing to go overseas and fight in the Great War to protect our freedom, to protect our allies, to protect our principles. But for those men and women doing that, we wouldn't carry that tradition forward. And so I guess my last thank you would be to the men and women overseas today who are away from their families, who won't be home for Thanksgiving, who won't be home for Christmas, who are putting themselves in harm's way to make sure that all of us and our children and grandchildren continue to benefit from the freedom that was sacrificed for by every generation of this country, and they continue to carry that baton and that torch forward. And so this is a tribute to veterans in the past, veterans and soldiers today, and men and women who will continue to serve this country for a long time. So thank you. God bless America. God bless our troops.

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Theo Mayer: So happy Thanksgiving to you and your family. And thanks for the time you've taken here today to reflect, to hear about, and to remember those who've served and those who've paid to make our American way of life possible. Thank you for your generous contribution to our effort to commemorate and honor the men and women who gave us so much 100 years ago in the war that changed the world. And just one last time, here's how you can contribute to the memorial and learn more about it. Using a web browser, go to ww1cc.org. Just type the letters "ww," the number "1," and "cc.org." That's the Commission's home page. When you get there, on the top left of the page is a panel about the memorial. You can click on the "donate today" button or the memorial design to learn about the details of the design, the location, the designers, and lots of stuff. It's a pretty interesting site. Or really fast and easy, you can text to donate. Simply send the text message "WWI" to the number 91999. You'll get a message right back that links you up with a donation page on your smartphone. Happy Thanksgiving to all of you. Thank you for listening. Thank you for giving. Thank you for caring. We do this work for the doughboys and for you. It's our privilege. World

War I Centennial News will be back next week with our regular programming. I'm Theo Mayer, the Commission's Chief Technologist, and your host. So long.

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