



DENVER — It's been more than 60 years since Tail Gunner Joseph Falconetti sat in a B-24 Liberator, but Friday he remembered every detail as he was honored with the Distinguished Flying Cross.

U.S. Congressman Mike Coffman honored Falconetti in a special ceremony in Lone Tree.

The 88-year-old bravely flew the B-24 during a mission to destroy an enemy oil installation over Romania in 1944.

Falconetti and his crew were wounded and the plane badly damaged, but he got everyone to safety.

"I just wish some of the crew were here, they deserve this more than I do," he says. "They're the ones who taught me how to fly."

Congressman Coffman says it's extremely important to remember the contributions of our war veterans and adds, "It's never too late to honor them. These awards were never given then they were earned so even after this very late date it's important to honor their memories and this is one way to do it."

Falconetti says that he empathizes with today's war veterans and makes a plea to the public to help them return to normal life after being at war saying, "What we have to do for them is teach them how to live in harmony with people. We teach them how to kill but we don't teach them how to come home and live with people...they're not given that chance to become human again."

The Distinguished Flying Cross is awarded to members of our military who show extraordinary bravery while fighting in the air.

By: Shaul Turner

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