



## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

### *Commonwealth Transportation Board*

Shannon Valentine  
Chairperson

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*Agenda item #3*

### RESOLUTION OF THE COMMONWEALTH TRANSPORTATION BOARD

October 17, 2019

#### MOTION

**Made By: Mr. Stinson, Seconded By: Mr. Miller**  
**Action: Motion Carried, Unanimously**

#### **Title: Bridge Naming: “Grat Albert Keen Memorial Bridge”**

**WHEREAS**, the Buchanan County Board of Supervisors wishes to honor and memorialize the life and ultimate sacrifice of Corporal Grat Albert Keen. Mr. Keen was born in 1945 in Whitewood in Buchanan County. He was drafted into the United States Army and served during the Vietnam War, beginning his tour on July 31, 1967. Mr. Keen obtained the rank of Corporal serving in the Field Artillery, 54<sup>th</sup> Artillery Group, 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 8<sup>th</sup> Artillery, Battery A; and.

**WHEREAS**, while engaged in combat in Long An province, South Vietnam, Corporal Grat Albert Keen was killed in action on March 31, 1968, from wounds sustained from hostile artillery rocket mortar fire. Corporal Keen either received or may have been qualified for the Purple Heart, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Distinguished Unit Citation, Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation, and the Good Conduct Medal. Additionally, Mr. Keen is honored on the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial in Washington, D.C. with his name inscribed at VVM Wall, Panel 47e, Line 23; and

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with § 33.2-213 of the *Code of Virginia*, the Buchanan County Board of Supervisors has requested, by resolution dated September 9, 2019, that the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB), to honor and memorialize the life of Mr. Keen, name the bridge on Route 635, Brown Mountain Road, over Laurel Creek, Buchanan County as the “Grat Albert Keen Memorial Bridge”; and

**WHEREAS**, § 33.2-213 provides that the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) shall place and maintain appropriate signs indicating the names of highways, bridges, interchanges, and other transportation facilities named by the CTB and requires that the costs

Resolution of the Board

Bridge Naming: "Grat Albert Keen Memorial Bridge"

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of producing, placing, and maintaining such signs shall be paid by the localities in which they are located or by the private entity whose name is attached to the transportation facility so named; and

**WHEREAS**, by resolution, Buchanan County has agreed to pay VDOT for the costs of producing, placing, and maintaining the signs calling attention to this naming.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, pursuant to § 33.2-213 of the *Code of Virginia*, the CTB hereby names the bridge on Route 635, Brown Mountain Road, over Laurel Creek, Buchanan County as the "Grat Albert Keen Memorial Bridge"; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that VDOT is directed to produce, place, and maintain the signs calling attention to this naming, and secure payment from Buchanan County for these costs as required by law.

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## **CTB Decision Brief**

### **Bridge Naming: “Grat Albert Keen Memorial Bridge”**

**Issue:** Commemorative naming of the bridge on Route 635, Brown Mountain Road, over Laurel Creek, Buchanan County as the “Grat Albert Keen Memorial Bridge”.

**Facts:** Buchanan County enacted a resolution on September 9, 2019 to honor and memorialize the life and ultimate sacrifice of Corporal Grat Albert Keen. Mr. Keen was born in 1945 in Whitewood in Buchanan County. He was drafted into the United States Army and served during the Vietnam War, beginning his tour on July 31, 1967. Mr. Keen obtained the rank of Corporal serving in the Field Artillery, 54<sup>th</sup> Artillery Group, 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 8<sup>th</sup> Artillery, Battery A.

While engaged in combat in Long An province, South Vietnam, Corporal Grat Albert Keen was killed in action on March 31, 1968, from wounds sustained from hostile artillery rocket mortar fire. Corporal Keen either received or may have been qualified for the Purple Heart, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Distinguished Unit Citation, Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation, and the Good Conduct Medal.

Mr. Keen is honored on the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial in Washington, D.C. with his name inscribed at VVM Wall, Panel 47e, Line 23.

**Recommendations:** The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) recommends this request be approved.

**Action Required by CTB:** The *Code of Virginia* requires a majority of the CTB members to approve a resolution naming a highway or bridge, as appropriate. A resolution will be provided for the Board’s consideration.

**Result if Approved:** The bridge on Route 635, Brown Mountain Road, over Laurel Creek, Buchanan County will be named as the “Grat Albert Keen Memorial Bridge”. In accordance with law and by local resolution, Buchanan County agrees to pay the costs of producing, placing, and maintaining the signs calling attention to this naming.

**Options:** Approve, Deny, or Defer.

**Public Comments/Reactions:** VDOT is not aware of any opposition to this proposal.

**Resolution**

**RE: Bridge Naming on Route 635 "Brown Mountain Road", over "Laurel Creek" in "Buchanan County" as the "Grat Albert Keen Memorial Bridge".**

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Grat Albert Keen was born in Whitewood, Buchanan County, Va. on January 22, 1945;

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Keen was drafted into the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War having begun his tour on July 31, 1967. Mr. Keen obtained the rank of Corporal serving in the Field Artillery, 54<sup>th</sup> Artillery Group, 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 8<sup>th</sup> Artillery, Battery A; and

**WHEREAS**; Mr. Keen while engaged in combat in Long An province, South Vietnam, died on March 31, 1968 from wounds sustained from hostile artillery rocket mortar fire; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Keen either received or may have been qualified for the Purple Heart, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Distinguished Unit Citation, Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation, and Good Conduct Medal; and

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Keen is honored on the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in Washington, DC with his name inscribed at VVM Wall, Panel 47e, Line 23; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 33.2-213 of the *Code of Virginia* authorizes the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) to give suitable names to state highways, bridges, interchanges, and other transportation facilities and change the names of any highways, bridges, interchanges, or other transportation facilities forming a part of the systems of state highways; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 33.2-213 provides that the Virginia Department of Transportation shall place and maintain appropriate signs indicating the names of highways, bridges, interchanges, and other transportation facilities named by the CTB and requires that the costs of producing, placing, and maintaining such signs shall be paid by the localities in which they are located.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that Buchanan County Board of Supervisors, in accordance with the requirements of Section 33.2-213 of the *Code of Virginia*, does hereby request that the Commonwealth Transportation Board name the bridge on Route 635, "Brown Mountain Road", over Laurel Creek in Buchanan County as the "Grat Albert Keen Memorial Bridge";

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that Buchanan County agrees to pay the costs of producing, placing, and maintaining the signs calling attention to this naming.

This resolution was adopted this the 9<sup>th</sup> day of September 2019 by the Buchanan County, Va., Board of Supervisors.

Recorded Vote:

Moved by: Harold H. Fuller

Seconded by: Craig Stithner

Yeas: 7

Nays: 0

J. Carroll Branham  
J. Carroll Branham, Chairman of the  
Buchanan County, Va. Board of Supervisors

ATTEST  
Robert Craig Horn  
Robert Craig Horn, County Administrator





Notes

**Location Reference**  
 Route 635 Mile Marker: 6.80  
 VA Structure #6054  
 37.2344 Latitude  
 -81.8627 Longitude

BUCHANAN COUNTY (013)  
 Route 635 Bridge Naming  
 "Grat Albert Keen Memorial Bridge"  
 Bridge over Dismal River







Virginia Department of Transportation  
Maintenance Division  
CTB MEETING: October 17, 2019

Buchanan County

Proposed Bridge Naming:  
**"Grat Albert Keen Memorial Bridge"**