

November - December 2018, Issue 83
 Contact: rto173@att.net

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http://corregidor.org/VN2-503/newsletter/issue_index.htm

2/503d Photo of the Month ~ 1968



Court

Ed

Captain Gary Prisk (Colonel Ret), seen here in center of photo in 1968, when he served as CO (C/D/2/503), enjoying coffee with SFC Oscar Cruz, just north of the Tiger Mountains during a brief respite from battle, with a couple of his "Hill People" in background taking a needed break. His fellow officers good-naturedly called him "The Teenage Captain", and his men to this day affectionately call him "Cap". His older brother Court served as CO of C/3/319th Artillery in Vietnam, and their father, Major Ed Prisk served as a Tactical Liaison Officer on the staff of Field Marshall Montgomery during WWII landing on Omaha Beach (west) on June 6 during the last wave.

We salute Cap and his brother and father and their military families. *ATW Sir!*





We Dedicate this Issue of Our Newsletter in Memory and Honor of the Young Men of the 173d Airborne Brigade & Attached Units We Lost 50 Years Ago In the Months of November & December 1968



"What you; the comrades, colleagues, companions, friends, and family offer is insight and experiences that can complete empty memory. This virtual wall is a place (for me) to find missing understanding of this man's soul.

Thank you for sharing and thank you for serving."

Harold Wissell, excerpt from tribute to his father,
Lawrence J. Wissell, CPT, C/2/503, KIA 12/21/68,
posted on the *Virtual Wall*.

Frederick John Annesley, 22 **TCPL, 1RAR & 7RAR, 11/24/68**

"From Sydney NSW. Annesley was killed in action on 24th November 1968 in the May Tau Hills after extending his service by six months. Buried Eastern Suburbs Crematorium NSW."



Donald Imlay Benseremann **LCPL, RNZIR, 11/16/68**

"Killed in action, 16 November 1968 – gunshot wound to throat in contact. Buried Omaka, Blerheim."



William Leroy Brown, 19 **PFC, A/3/319, 12/29/68** (Virtual Wall states C/3/319)

William Brown's Final Mission

On 29 December 1968, 3 individuals were returning in a 1/4 ton (Jeep) to Qui Nhon - SSG Glen E Rountree, PFC Netter, and PFC William Leroy Brown - on Highway #1, south of FSB Ollie, when they were ambushed by an unknown size enemy force. PFC Brown was killed and SSG Rountree was seriously wounded with the first volley of fire received from enemy automatic weapons and small arms positioned on both sides of the road. PFC Nutter could not get the vehicle restarted and SSG Rountree refused help and sent Nutter for help to a nearby South Vietnamese outpost while Rountree stayed behind and engaged the enemy. SSG Rountree, although wounded in pelvis and legs, and while trying to contact A Battery, 3rd Battalion, 319th Artillery for help, emptied the jeep's M-60 machine gun and his M-16 Rifle on the enemy. He continued to fight until a rescue force arrived and SSG Rountree was evacuated and PFC Brown was recovered.



Lanny Joe Burdette, 21 **SGT, D/1/503, 11/6/68**

20 Jan 2003 *"I barely knew Lanny.*

He was 5 years older than me and lived down the street. He was the cutest boy I ever saw and he drove a motorcycle. I had a huge crush on him. He barely knew who I was but after walking by his house a thousand times, I caught him at the right moment and he took me for a ride on that motorcycle to the local drive thru restaurant where all the teenagers hung out. I was in heaven and I thought I would die from excitement. I got in so much trouble when my parents found out (I was 13 years old), but it was all worth it. He was drafted and I went to high school. I was dreaming of the day he would come home and I could see him again. Then I heard that the day he was coming home, he stepped on a land mine and was killed. A little part of me and my childhood died with him. I never forgot him. I am 50 years old now. Lanny, it's been a long, long time. Putting your name on this The Virtual Wall is the only thing I can do for you. Your forever puppy love!" Shelley



Shelley Clair Harmon

(Tributes continued....)



**Billie Byrd, 20****SGT, C/4/503, 12/29/68**

11/24/10: "We Remember. Billie is buried at McKinnon Cemetery in Oakland, Robeson County, NC. BSM PH-OLC."

Robert Sage**Elton Bradley Collins, 20****CPL, D/4/503, 12/30/68**

12 Jun 2001: "I got to Nam in June of 1968 and Elton had been there a few months already. He used to get great 'care' packages from home. I can still see his smiling face, tan, he had a real deep voice. I jumped on a chopper to go to Bangkok for R&R on New Year's Eve of '68 and we were just leaving a fire support base so we could go to Ban Me Thuot and build another one. I couldn't wait to get out of there. I returned about the 5th of January, 1969 and couldn't believe it when I heard that he and Stephen O. White of Chicago, the two guys I assigned my job, were both killed instantly when a mortar round landed in the 81mm mortar 'gun pit.' I think of him all the time, and Stephen. For years I felt guilty that it was them instead of me. I will always honor and regard their friendship and the ultimate sacrifice they made for this great country."

From a comrade-in-arms

The MACV Summary for December 1968 contains the following entry for 30 December:

"I FFV (Binh Dinh Prov): At approx. 1800, a 173rd Abn Bde fire spt base 19 mi NNW of An Khe rec approx. 30 rds of 60mm mort fire. Counter mort arty msns, hel gunships & AC47 gunship fires were dir onto suspected en firing psns with unk res. US cas were lt while no mat dam was repted."

The "light casualties" included two dead: SGT Stephen O. White, Chicago IL, and CPL Elton B. Collins, Fort Wayne, IN.

Michael Brendan Counihan, 22**SGT, 173d LRRP, 11/1/68**

"To Mike from all your friends at B.C High and Boston College...You've been long remembered and long missed. I'll see you again at the top of Heartbreak Hill and we'll run the last 6 miles together soon. You were always an inspiration." **Kinch**

**Raymond John Cox, 22****PTE, 1RAR, 12/28/68**

"Goulburn NSW. Cox was killed in action in Phuoc Tuy Province 28th December 1968. He had 6 weeks left to serve. Buried Goulburn Cemetery NSW."

**Robert Alan Desrochers, 20****SP4, E/17th Cav, 11/19/68**

12/1/10: "We Remember. Robert is buried at St Mary's Cemetery, New Bedford, MA." **Robert Sage**

**William Wayne Donnelly, 19****PTE, 1RAR, 11/24/68**

"Dubbo NSW. Donnelly died at the 24 US Evacuation after being shot during a contact in May Tau Hills on 24th November 1968. Buried Rookwood Cemetery NSW."

**Garry Michael Forkum, 19****SGT, D/4/503, 12/22/68**

11/14/01: "He was always the big brother, always the protector. He took the heat for me many times with our parents. He was not only willing to serve but welcomed the opportunity to serve our nation. Always remembered, always missed."

Wayne P. Forkum**Robert Charles Fox, 29****CPT, B/2/503, 12/5/68**

6/29/14: "Sky Soldier Honored. On behalf of myself and all your fellow para-troopers who served with the 173rd "herd" Brigade in Vietnam, we offer our respect and regrets for your sacrifice. May you rest in peace and never be forgotten." **Mike Switzer**

**Vernon Robert Fyall, 19****CPL, A/4/503, 11/6/68**

2/29/04: "We Remember. Vernon is buried at Beaufort Nat Cem, Beaufort, SC." **Robert Sage**

**Ronald James Gaffey, 21****PTE, 9RAR, 12/16/68**

"Mudgee NSW. Gaffney with 7 Section 9 Platoon C Company was killed in a clash between friendly platoons in Phuoc Tuy on 16th December 1968. He had been in Vietnam less than one month. Buried Mudgee Cemetery NSW."



(Tributes continued....)



John Garrigan, 40**WO2, AATV (RAA), 12/27/68**

"England. He drowned when his APC struck a submerged object during a river crossing and overturned in the Cua Viet River, Quang Tri Province on the morning of 27th December 1968. He had seven children. Buried Terendak Military Cemetery Malaysia."

**Ian James Gibbs, 21****PTE, 1RAR, 11/18/68**

"Fremantle WA. Gibbs was killed accidentally when a sentry mistook him for a Viet Cong and shot him at Phuoc Tuy at 5pm on 18th November 1968. Buried Wanderling Cemetery WA."

**Lloyd Rolland Greene, 19****PVT, HHC/4/503, 11/5/68**

4/18/06: "My uncle is a hero. Dear Uncle Sonny, I wish I could have met you, you seem to have been an amazing man. My mom and uncle talk about you all the time and so did Grandma (your mommy) well I love you and maybe I will get to see you one day...Thank You."

Ashleigh Dunn**Michael John Hannaford, 21****TPR, C Sqd 1 Armo Reg, 12/14/68**

"Trooper Michael John Hannaford 21 Hampton VIC. He was injured in November and three weeks later died when the tank he was driving hit a large enemy mine in Bien Hoa Province on 14th December 1968. Buried Lilydale Cemetery VIC."

**Richard Thomas Havel, 19****SGT, E/2/503, 11/17/68**

6/17/17: "Remembering the Day. Havel, I was there for you that day. I hope you enjoyed your R&R. I watched your ship get hit and go down. I know you left instantly so you were denied the opportunity to defend yourself but I want you to know that that instant has haunted me since that day. I have thought of you and the others every day since. It was an NVA anti-aircraft cannon on the ridge firing down as your ship passed that brought you, Roy May and Gerald Rock down as you approached your insertion point. I saw the whole thing. I am so sorry it happened to you an hour after returning from Kuala Lumpur R&R. You should not have been assigned that mission that day. Danny Osborne, Lenny Beckett, Jimmy Tuttle, Roy Grondal, Thomas Dvorak and I watched you go down



and we were there as soon as we could get on another Slick. Pappy was there too and he cried for you in front of everyone. You were his favorite. He lovingly named you Chicken, not for cowardice but out of the love of a son he never had. Danny Osborne, Leonard Beckett, Jimmy Tuttle, Roy Grondal, Thomas Dvorak and I were supposed to have that mission but we had just returned from a three-day mission turned into an almost five. We had hardly slept or eaten, we were dehydrated and tired. I protested but 1st SGT White said to saddle up and go. As we waited seated in the insertion ship waiting for another Slick to return to be the Chase Ship, First Sergeant White said, 'Foiles team just called that they just landed, and they'll take the mission. Stand down and RTB.' The rest you know. I am sorry for what happened. I should have taken the mission. I am 70 now and I will join you soon." **Geo**

**Thomas Hayes, 21****SGT, A/4/503, 12/27/68**

2/13/15: "My Uncle. There isn't a day that goes by that I wish I could meet you. I hear so many stories and hearing Nali and dad mention how you were makes me proud. Sister and I help dad put your flag up every year. I'm told I have your eyes. Someday I will see you. Love you uncle." **Unsigned**

**Rodney Donald Hughes, 20****PTE, 1RAR, 11/17/68**

"Bowen QLD. Hughes was fatally wounded by a sniper during a search and destroy operation in Phuoc Tuy 17th November 1968. Buried Bowen QLD."

**Eddie Claude Kimble, 20****SGT, A/3/503, 11/16/68**

6/8/17: "Loving Uncle. I want to say thank you for your service and I wish I had the opportunity to meet you. Love you always uncle Eddie even though we never actually got a chance to meet!!" **Sheneka Kimble**

*(Tributes continued....)*

Terrence Edward Langlands, 23
2LT, 1RAR, 11/24/68

"Wallsend NSW. Platoon commander, Langlands died from two gunshot wounds during enemy contact 24th November 1968, in a bunker system in the foothills of the MAY TAU mountains on Operation Capitol. Buried Beresfield Crematorium NSW."



Stephen Douglas Langler, 19
SP5, HHC/4/503, 12/11/68

12/11/09: "We Remember. Stephen is buried at Sunrise Memorial Gardens in Muskegon, MI." Robert Sage

Charles Clifton Mann, Jr., 20
SGT, B/4/503, 11/5/68

(Virtual Wall states HHC/4/503)

5/26/15: "Good buddy. Charles, sorry I wasn't with you when you were hit. Think about you and Greene a lot. Next time I get to Malven, Ark, will stop at the VFW and have a beer for you. RIP old buddy," Jack



 John Edgar Marason, 19
CPL, B/2/50th, 12/2/68

2/12/13: "Though the loss of John many years ago still burns a searing remembrance to all that grew up with John, it gives me solace that after all these years, when I put John's name in Google Images, his high school picture is as bright as ever. I obtained it from his mom and dad in 2000. His dad has since passed away to be with his fallen son, we honor John always in memory and prayer. 19 years old is hardly enough time to understand the unfairness of life's lessons." Capt. R.W. Zimmerman USMC (Ret)



 Roy Edward May, 19
SGT, E/2/503, 11/17/68

7/5/14: "Roy you came home on a short leave from the Army and you made sure you visited with each and every one of your family & friends. I always thought you did the visits for just in case. Sadly you were correct. I remember the road trip with you and Bill to LA, we listened to all the good songs on the radio. What a fun memory. I think of you often, love and miss you." Letha Desimone

[See a buddy's tribute to Roy on Page 22]



 Kenneth Wayne Molton, 20
CPL, A/2/503, 12/7/68

9/1/01: "Remembering You Kenny. Kenny, we had some great times growing up back in Birmingham. I have never forgotten you or, that great smile. You were the greatest. Always Your Pal," Willie J. Ramsey

 Thomas W. Morris, 20
CPL, C/1/50th, 11/13/68

5/1/18: "PFC Thomas W. Morris was an infantryman serving with C Co. 1st Battalion, 50th Infantry, 173rd Abn Bde based at Camp Radcliff. During late 1968, a flurry of attacks on the huge base and nearby bridges on Highway 19 resulted in Charlie Company being sent out to prevent any further enemy strikes. On November 13, 1968, while just outside the base, PFC Morris was mortally wounded when he was being handed a .45 caliber pistol by a fellow platoon member. The safety was released in the exchange and the trigger accidentally pulled, resulting in a severe wound to Morris's head. He died instantly. A medical evacuation helicopter was there within minutes, but there was nothing that could be done to save him."

[Taken from coffeltatabase.org and ichiban1.org]



 James Joseph Morrissey, 20
CPL, B/1/50th, 12/29/68

12/29/08: "Well today marks 40 years since your death. If I let myself go back, it is just like no time has passed. On New Year's Eve morning, at 8:10 it will be 40 years since that fateful knock on the door. The soldier that came was just about the same age as you and I. When I replay it in my head it is like a bad movie. No matter what I've done in my life, I will love you forever." Marie

[See a buddy's tribute to Jim on Page 30]



 Philip Larry Nichols, "Doc", 24
2LT, D/1/503, 11/2/68

11/4/13: "You were and always will be a part of me. I love you! I felt your pain the day you died. I knew I'd never see you again. A piece of me died with you. There is not one day that goes by that I don't think of you. We had wonderful memories, and I keep them in a special place in my heart. I have stayed close with your family through the years which keeps me close to you. I know I'll see you again someday."

Joey Grose Bauman



(Tributes continued....)



Philip L. Nichols

Distinguished Service Cross

Awarded for actions during the Vietnam War

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 9, 1918 (amended by act of July 25, 1963), takes pleasure in presenting the Distinguished Service Cross to Specialist Fourth Class Philip L. Nichols (ASN: RA-1379xxxx), United States Army, for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam, while serving with Company B, 2d Battalion (Airborne), 327th Infantry, 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division. Specialist Four Nichols distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 20 June 1966 while serving as a medic with a company conducting a heliborne assault on Hill 258, near Trung Luong. While debarking the helicopters, the first assault wave received intense hostile fire from entrenched Viet Cong on the higher portion of the hill. On several occasions, Specialist Four Nichols, with complete disregard for his safety while exposed to hostile machine gun fire, treated many wounded and carried them from the killing zone. When Specialist Four Nichols learned that one of the other platoons had suffered several serious casualties in an effort to outflank the Viet Cong positions, he immediately went to the aid of the platoon. Again, he braved intense hostile fire while treating and evacuating his fallen comrades. On his fourth trip into the killing zone, he was struck in the thigh by a hostile bullet. Despite his wound, he dragged a wounded man to safety. When he crawled back into the killing zone to aid another wounded comrade, he was hit in the same leg by two more bullets. Although bleeding profusely, he continued to treat the wounded until ordered to return to the medical extraction point. Refusing any assistance, he hobbled to the evacuation area. While awaiting medical evacuation, Specialist Four Nichols continued to administer first aid to his wounded comrades. Through his unimpeachable valor, he personally carried or dragged 10 wounded men from the killing zone and administered life-saving first aid to many comrades while receiving intense hostile fire. Specialist Four Nichols' extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

General Orders No. 5952 (October 6, 1966)

Note: It seems apparent Phil returned for a second tour in Vietnam, this time as a 2LT with the 173d. (Ed)

Albert Lee Peggs, 23

CPL, A/2/503, 12/4/68

11/11/08: "The uncle I never met. I've only seen you in pictures, because you died fighting for our country before I was born. Many people have spoken so highly of you...what a great man. Too bad I never had a chance to meet you. Love your niece," Sherry Peggs

Anthony Vincent Quigley, 21

CPL, 3RAR, 11/5/68

"Adelaide SA. He recovered from a bout of malaria in October but died on 5th November 1968 during enemy contact on night patrol. Buried Centennial Park Cemetery SA."



Laszlo Rabel, 29

SSG, 173d LRRP, 11/13/68

8/26/10: "Laszlo came to the United States from Budapest, Hungary in 1957, during the Hungarian Revolution. He loved this country. In April 1970, he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor by President Nixon. It was received by his wife Eva and his daughter Eve." Eva Rabel



To Mrs. Eva Rabel
With esteem, admiration and deepest appreciation
on behalf of a grateful Nation,

[Read Laszlo's MOH citation, Page 11]

(Tributes continued....)



John Milton Rands, 22**L/CPL, 1RAR, 12/12/68**

"Coffs Harbour NSW. He was killed in action on 12th December 1968 during an enemy contact in Bien Hoa. Buried Temora Cemetery NSW."

**Raymond Stanley Reeves, Jr., 21****SGT, 173d LRRP, 11/19/68**

(Virtual Wall states B/1/503)

6/23/14: "Never Forgotten always in my thoughts and my heart...Ray, I have missed you and your humor since I last saw you in 1966 and now that our class of 66 is coming up on our age of 66 I miss you even more than I did before. I have seen your name on the Wall and cried when I thought about what you had been and all that you will never get to be. I know that you were a son and brother, a great and loyal friend but am sad that you will never know the joy of being a father or grandfather. You were taken along with all your Nam brothers much too soon. I would like to let you know that another friend is gone and I hope that you two reunite where all heroes go, to the streets of glory basking in the sunshine. Steve entered the Kingdom Of Heaven to be with you on June 13, 2014. Welcome him as you would a brother and I will be waiting my turn to reunite with you and he." Lyle A. Mack (Bub), US Navy

**Joseph Lester Rinehart, "Doc", 20****CPL, D/2/503, 12/2/68**

(Virtual Wall states HHC/2/503)

5/1/00: "Doc. In response to an email announcing a reunion of Company B (Medical) of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (SEP), I asked that during their reunion when they took time to pause and remember absent medics that they include Joseph Rinehart from Washington, DC. Doc Rinehart was a relatively new 'Band-Aid' assigned to our platoon. He was a soft spoken guy and unfortunately, like too many others of that time, wasn't around long enough for any of us to get to know very well. He was KIA on 2 Dec 68 somewhere in the Hoai An area. Speaking for myself, I believe that it would give me some comfort to know that someone, other than my family, remembered for a moment that I existed. If there is a consciousness after death then I'm certain that he would appreciate this small gesture, as well as, anyone who took the time to read this message about this soldier who died in service to his country."

**George "Squirrel" Gaguzis, D/2/503 Inf, 173d Abn Bde****Gerald Francis Rock, 19****CPL, E/2/503, 11/17/68**

(Virtual Wall states A/2/503)

12/11/07: "Jerry, you were my best friend in high school. I found out about your death just before I got out of Marine Corps boot. You were too young buddy."

Jim Schmidt**Christopher William Roost, 22****PTE, 4RAR, 12/23/68**

"Perth WA. He was killed in action at lunchtime on 23rd December 1968 in Bien Hoa. Buried Karrakatta Cemetery WA."

**George Clayton Rowland, Jr., 31****1SG, D-Maint Spt., 11/17/68**

6/5/10: "Top. I was there the day you gave your life to protect those with you. I will never forget the look in your eyes, that said 'I have to go on'. Your etching hangs on my wall, in my home, & always will, until I meet you again, on the other side. May the Lord's peace be upon you."

James (Jack) R. Barber**Timoteo Munoz Santiago, Jr., 21****CPL, B/4/503, 11/5/68**

(Virtual Wall states A/4/503)

4/3/14: "Tito, un gran camarada. Tito, we had some great times in San Bene. You were like a brother to me. Will always miss you."

S.R. Garcia "La Rola", Hue 1968 USMC, Alpha 1/1**John Fenton Suggs, Jr., 23****PFC, B/4/503, 11/5/68**

(Virtual Wall states A/4/503)

6/1/07: "MY HERO.....MY FATHER. I was only 5 when my father was taken from my mother and I. I only have a few memories of him, but he has been and always will be my hero... If anyone who served with him is still alive please contact me at SuggsBunny@yahoo.com I would deeply appreciate any stories or pictures you might have to share... Thanks to every Nam Vet out there both living and deceased, you all are heroes. I also want to thank everyone who has posted a Remembrance to my father."

John Fenton Suggs, III

(Tributes continued....)



**Allen Walker Thomas, 20****CPL, C/1/50th, 11/8/68**

2/19/15: "Never Forgotten. Every time I think of you it's hard to believe it's been that many years. I remember the times when you were teaching me to drive and you used to let me drive up to my girlfriend's house. And the times I would come home beaten and bruised from being jumped by bullies and you would show me how it's done. When bullies used to see you coming, I guess they used to say, 'oh, oh'. And in your death I know you fought your country's battle just like you fought for me, and taught me courage. For the people that didn't know him my brother was known on the streets as 'Big Joe', he didn't like bullies and he always told me they are not as tough as they pretend to be. He had a body like Booker T all he did was workout, and he died a 20 year virgin because he felt that you shouldn't sleep with a woman until you are married. How can you not admire a man like that.....And then give that life for his country. I LOVE YOU, BROTHER." **Leroy J. Walker**

**Stephen O'Meara White, 21****SGT, D/4/503, 12/30/68**

12 Jun 2001: "I had been there since June of '68 and Stephen got there around September I recall. I remember him telling me he was drafted and was from the south side of Chicago. I was from Minnesota. We were on an operation one day and he told me that he wasn't going to make it home, it must have been late November of '68. On December 30th I got on a chopper to head for Bangkok for R&R. Little did I know that I would never see him again. A few minutes after the chopper resupplied us and let me aboard, the fire-support base was mortared and the first round landed in the 81mm mortar gun pit and killed both he and a fella from Fort Wayne, IN, named Elton Bradley Collins. When I returned from Bangkok I couldn't believe my ears. I felt terrible because I had assigned them my job of FDC (fire direction center) for the mortar. They were where I would have been, in the gun pit returning fire. I have since learned that he was from Beverly, a south-side Chicago neighborhood. I have also learned that he was quite a character in school. Once when the moving wall came to Chicago I was told that I just missed his parents, apparently they left just before I got there. I'll never forget Stephen, I kind of took him under my wing when he got there. I reassured him that he would get back to 'the world' and everything would be fine. He didn't. I miss him. I think about him often and totally appreciate the ultimate sacrifice that he and Elton made for our great country. Rest in peace my friend." **From a comrade-in-arms.**

**Kenneth Allen Tuttle, 19****CPL, C/1/503, 12/31/68**

12/31/15: "You are not forgotten. The war may be forgotten but the warrior will always be remembered!!!! All gave Some--Some gave All. Rest in peace Kenneth. :-(**" Jerry Sandwisch, 173d Abn '69-'70**

**Willie C. Walker, 20****CPL, B/4/503, 12/12/68**

1/15/05 "We Remember. Willie is buried at Mobile Nat Cem." **Robert Sage**

**Gary Allen Warner, 20****PFC, C/1/50th, 12/14/68**

11/18/15: "I remember. Gary and I sat together on the bus from Bowling Green to Columbus to take our physicals for the service - Gary brought along a copy of Playboy jokes and we read them and laughed all the way down. You have been honored at every Elmwood Class of 66 reunion - Rest in Peace Gary." **Bob Kreienkamp**

**Lawrence James Wissell, 23****CPT, C/2/503, 12/21/68**

12/21/01: "Thank you, Sir - to my Father and Thank you, Sir (or Miss) - to those that offer remembrances. It is most appropriate and reassuring that the first remembrance posted (Wall of Faces) came from a Military man that knew and appreciated Lawrence James Wissell. For me remembering is a challenge, I am the oldest child and first son, born January 1965 and my brother March 1966. What you; the comrades, colleagues, companions, friends, and family offer is insight and experiences that can complete empty memory. This virtual wall is a place (for me) to find missing understanding of this man's soul. Thank you for sharing and thank you for serving....

**John Stephen Wasilow, 19****CPL, B/2/503, 11/24/68**

12/15/16: "Never forgotten, forever remembered."
Bill Nelson, Nam Vet, 101st Airborne

(Tributes continued....)



....Living up to the legacies and standards...Mom sustained us and eventually found and married a great man that took us in as his own; reinforcing the values that a man would want his children to engender. As for representing the values of these United States, my brother and I both fought - competitively in 1988 on Karate-do teams across the Atlantic (with maybe some practice on each other growing up, smile). The event was a Good Will Tournament to benefit a European Boys Club which happened to be just before graduating with our respective college degree(s). The teacher/trainer that prepared us for the tournament had been a special forces man and our coach had served aboard a

submarine. I wish to express gratitude, respect, and love - the real values - for and of my family; specifically to my Dad, Mom, and Father. What I have as an interpreted lesson from my Father's life is how very fleeting each moment is and that any choice or chance is only as good as what is put into it. Today marks 33 years since my Father's passing while serving his country. Many of us honor Jesus Christ on the 25th of December A.D. for his coming into and changing the world in his 23 years of living service. May everyone know and share in the value of earning and showing respect, celebrate freedom, and truly appreciate their family. God Bless America." Harold Wissell



A prayer service in memory of our fallen, in front of Milton Olive Chapel, at the 2/503's Camp Zinn, Bien Hoa, Republic of Vietnam, circa '65-'67. Over 50 years later, we still remember.





INCOMING!!!



~ Timothy Porter, KIA ~

I was reading this latest newsletter and for the first time found out how a friend of mine, **Timothy Porter**, a (local kid) died. I left VN in June of '68 and he died months after I came home. I had no idea he was in the 173d until he came home KIA.

Could you possibly give me the e-mail of Jeff Mazer who wrote that message about Tim being in his arms when he died? That SS Citation is the first I've seen addressing his death (Issue 82, Page 8).

Bob Fleming
A/D/2/503

Note: We hooked-up Bob and Jeff. Ed

~ He Remembers His Buddies ~

Thanks for the memory of **Sgt. Joe Barbarick** (Issue 82, Page 70). I was at Bragg when that Golden Knights accident happened, very sad time. And of course the memory of Medal of Honor recipient **Milton (Skipper) Olive**, B/2/503 (Pages 63-64 same issue); there's a park named after him in Chicago.

John "Top" Searcy
HHC/2/503



Joe



Skipper



Milton L. Olive III Park in Chicago

~ Missing Photos of Our KIA ~

2018 began with 3,993 missing photos of our KIA. The arithmetic shows that 1,885 pictures have been located so far this year.

On 1 September, 2,108 pictures were missing at the Vietnam Memorial Wall of Faces, down from 2,263 on the last day of July.

Nationwide, 155 pictures were located during the month of August.

Many photos of our fallen are still missing including from the following areas:

New York 611
California 255
George 204 (down from 246 last month)
Virginia 151
District of Columbia 47
Massachusetts 35
New Jersey 38
Connecticut 18
West Virginia 6
Virgin Islands 2

One picture at a time – our fallen must not be forgotten.

Ken Smith, Col. (Ret)
CO A/D/2/503 RVN

Kudos to



More Than 100,000 No-Cost Flu Shots Issued To Veterans

"The Walgreens-VA partnership began in 2013 with a pilot program in Florida. The program provided more than 2,000 flu shots that year, according to James Wood of Walgreens, who served during *Operation Desert Storm* from December 1990 to April 1991 with the Air Force Reserve's 711th Special Operations Sqdn., as an electronic warfare officer. The nationwide program provided 100,000 shots in 2017, he said."

Source: VFW Magazine, September 2018





RABEL, LASZLO



Rank and organization: Staff Sergeant, U.S. Army, 74th Infantry Detachment (Long Range Patrol), 173d Airborne Bde
Place and date: Binh Dinh Province, Republic of Vietnam, 13 November 1968
Entered service at: Minneapolis, Minnesota
Born: 21 September 1939, Budapest, Hungary

Medal of Honor Citation:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. S/Sgt. Rabel distinguished himself while serving as leader of Team Delta, 74th Infantry Detachment. At 1000 hours on this date, Team Delta was in a defensive perimeter conducting reconnaissance of enemy trail networks when a member of the team detected enemy movement to the front. As S/Sgt. Rabel and a comrade prepared to clear the area, he heard a incoming grenade as it landed in the midst of the team's perimeter. With complete disregard for his life, S/Sgt. Rabel threw himself on the grenade and, covering it with his body, received the complete impact of the immediate explosion.



Through his indomitable courage, complete disregard for his safety and profound concern for his fellow soldiers, S/Sgt. Rabel averted the loss of life and injury to the other members of Team Delta. By his gallantry at the cost of his life in the highest traditions of the military service, S/Sgt. Rabel has reflected great credit upon himself, his unit, and the U.S. Army.



Face of Defense:

Vietnam Native Finds Success in U.S. Army

Aug. 13, 2018

By Army Spc. Alleea Oliver
49th Public Affairs Detachment

FORT BRAGG, N.C. -- Full of fear and anxiety, a 10-year-old Vietnamese boy sailed across the South China Sea for 10 days, in 1986, with the expectation that a better life awaited him across the ocean.



Army Command Sgt. Maj. Thinh Huynh runs stairs during physical training at Fort Bragg, N.C., Aug. 1, 2018.

(Army photo by Spc. Alleea Oliver)

In his mind, the only way he could live a full and prosperous life was by coming to the United States. *"If it was not for America, I probably would be dead long ago,"* said Army Command Sgt. Maj. Thinh Huynh, the senior enlisted advisor for the 1st Battalion, 504th Infantry Regiment here. *"If I didn't escape, my life wouldn't be like this."*

Born in a small village in Southern Vietnam, Huynh and his siblings spent most of their youth in poverty, fighting for their daily survival.

"We were so poor that we used to watch people eat," he said. *"We were barely eating. We would eat only two or three times a week."*

While recalling the struggles he faced growing up in post-war conditions, the infantryman relates to images of children suffering from chronic malnutrition.

"When I see those TV commercials where they show the kids that have bloated bellies, to me, that was how I grew up in Vietnam at that time," he said.

War, Loss, Escape

Huynh believes the Vietnam War, along with other wars, determined the outcome of his family's future. Before the war, his family were rice farmers. After the war, they were forced to share their harvest with the communists, he said.

"Not only that, but they took away our home," he said.

It was then that his family decided to escape Vietnam in hopes of a better life.

Packed like sardines in a tiny fishing boat, Huynh and his family sailed across the South China Sea.

"I looked at old slave-boat drawings and I would compare us to that," he said. *"We were all packed in tight with no space to spare."*

Being hungry, thirsty and tired for an extensive amount of time altered the other passengers' character.

"When people think they are about to die, they will do just about anything to survive," Huynh said. *"This brought out some of the worst behavior from people that I ever witnessed."*

Huynh said he observed a lot of things that kids shouldn't have seen. *"I saw greed, fear and anger,"* he said. *"Some people were so greedy they would drink as much water as they could while the rest of us had about a shot glass per day."*

After ten days of sharing the small space with 86 others, they arrived at a refugee camp on Pulau Bidong Island. Huynh's hope finally became his reality.

American, Soldier

"One of the happiest days of my life was the day I escaped out of Vietnam," he said. *"I didn't know if I was going to make it or not, but I was happy and very excited."*

Huynh and his family lived in the camp for nearly two years before coming to the United States. He spent his time learning how to read and write, and studying America's culture.

On Sept. 28, 1989, Huynh and his family moved from the refugee camp to a small town in Iowa. Being interested in the military throughout grade school, he chose to focus his first American homework project on the U.S. Army.

(continued....)



Huynh enlisted in 1996, at age 22, but waited to tell his loved ones because of his fear of disappointing his mother. *"When I joined the Army, I didn't tell my parents until two days before I went to basic,"* he said. *"My mom was really upset, because I was in college at the time,"* Huynh added. *"Nobody wanted their kid to escape out of Vietnam and go through all that just to join the military."*

In spite of their fears, he believed there wasn't anything better than serving the country he now calls home. *"Ever since I was in the refugee camp, I wanted to be a U.S soldier,"* he said. *"Every day I would say, 'I need to be in the Army.' So that's what I did. I joined the Army. I don't have any regrets."*

Twenty one years and six combat deployments later, the paratrooper says he's gained resilience, honor and a profound love for the United States.

Caring for Soldiers

Although he has led many soldiers, Huynh never predicted he would become a command sergeant major in the 82nd Airborne Division. *"I never had the goal of being a command sergeant major,"* he said. *"My goals were to always take care of my soldiers. Now that I'm a command sergeant major of an airborne infantry battalion in the 82nd, I'm enjoying every minute of it. It is such an honor to be in a unit that is filled with so much history, pride, tradition and some of the best soldiers and leaders in the Army."*

According to his youngest sister, Thanh Huynh, he always possessed the qualities and had the desire to be a soldier. *"The characteristics that helped him become a command sergeant major are leadership, loyalty, initiative and courageousness,"* she said. *"Growing up, that's all he ever wanted to be."*

At a young age, he demonstrated selfless service by putting Thanh first in every situation. *"When we would come across a river while going fishing, he would always make sure I got across safely by finding anything that would float because I can't swim,"* she said.

Huynh believes his experiences in Vietnam developed his appreciation for the freedoms he has as a U.S. citizen. *"I would never take America, or the freedom I have here, for granted,"* he said. *"I know what it's like growing up without freedom [and] fearing for your life on a daily basis."*

Nearly 30 years ago, Huynh left Vietnam and found a place he could call home. *"I realized once I set foot in this country, that this was now my country,"* he said. *"I was born in Vietnam, but I escaped. America is now my country."*



CSM Tinh Huynh
an All-American

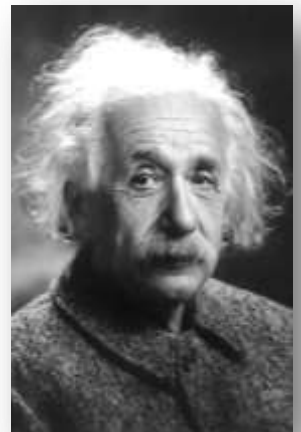
2/503 "D" Zone Extraction (Or, the blurriness of war?)



We were waiting to be extracted from the "D" Zone in '66, perhaps in September, when I took this photo. The distortion of the picture, I believe, was caused by prop blast of Huey's nearby. Was originally going to discard the photo but instead kept it all these years as it does seem kind of unique.

Lew "Smitty" Smith
HHC/2/503, '65/'66

***"I know not with
what weapons
World War III
will be fought,
but World War IV
will be fought with
sticks and stones."***



Albert Einstein



VA announces \$200M in funding for Grant and Per Diem Program to support homeless Veterans programs nationwide



WASHINGTON — Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced it plans to provide approximately \$200 million in fiscal year 2019 funding to support more than 13,000 transitional housing beds for its **Grant and Per Diem (GPD) Program**.

The list of community partners who will work with VA to provide transitional housing for homeless Veterans can be found on the VA's homeless Veterans website.

VA intends to award about \$2.7 million to renew 12 Special Need grants for support services for homeless Veterans who have chronic mental illnesses, women Veterans and Veterans who must care for dependents under age 18.

"The Grant and Per Diem program gives our homeless Veterans an important source of support," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. *"We appreciate the U.S. Congress providing this funding because every homeless Veteran deserves the opportunity to move from living on the streets to a safe and supportive environment."*

To receive the grants, which were published in the federal register and other public sources, each bidder submitted an application and underwent a performance review. Through this process, each applicant determined the resources it would need and the housing model for which it qualified to help Veterans transition out of homelessness.

Some housing models include:

Bridge Housing — short-term stay in transitional housing for homeless Veterans with pre-identified permanent housing destinations, when that housing is not immediately available.

Low Demand — to accommodate homeless Veterans experiencing chronic homelessness, who were unsuccessful in traditional housing/residential programs.

Hospital to Housing — addresses the housing and recuperative-care needs of homeless Veterans who have been hospitalized and/or evaluated in an emergency room.

Clinical Treatment — provides residential substance use and/or mental health treatment in conjunction with services to help homeless Veterans secure permanent housing and increase income through benefits and/or employment.

Service-intensive Transitional Housing — residential services that facilitate stabilization and transition to permanent housing.

Transition in Place — provides support services in the Veteran's living unit, phasing out over time, as the Veteran adjusts to permanent housing.

Established in 1994, GPD provides needed support and services to a number of programs across the country that care for homeless Veterans to help them achieve residential stability. To learn more about VA's programs for homeless Veterans, visit

www.benefits.va.gov/PERSONA/veteran-homeless.asp

VFW Endorses New Veteran's Creed *The Veterans' Creed*

1. I am an American Veteran.
2. I proudly served my country.
3. I live the values I learned in the military.
4. I continue to serve my community, my country, and my fellow Veterans.
5. I maintain my physical and mental discipline.
6. I continue to lead and improve.
7. I make a difference.
8. I honor and remember my fellow comrades.

The Veterans' Creed is a list of principles to promote continued service and leadership by Veterans in their communities and to their country.

Source: VFW Magazine, September 2018

SP4 LEONARD A. LANZARIN, A VETERAN A Company, 3rd Platoon, 2/503d, KIA 11/4/70 Bronze Star, Army Commendation & Purple Heart

"Larry was 'gung-ho' and the first to volunteer for missions. He is missed by those who fought and served with him.

Airborne!"

A buddy



The Life and Death of Clyde the Queer Monkey



Here are two photos, one of me with Clyde and the dog Mort (above); the other of Mort and Clyde with Richard Childress (above right).

I think Jack Schimpf called Clyde "the queer monkey" 'cuz he was always humping Mort, et al.

Childress succeeded me as company clerk and was my assistant most of the months I was in Vietnam. We'd alternate on operations so someone always was back at Camp Zinn to do morning reports, casualty reports, Article 15s and everything else.

RTO Larry Paladino
B/2/503, '65/'66



As a matter of fact, Clyde did belong to Paladino. I think he got him in Saigon.

Another Sgt. went back to Okinawa to send family home and brought his family dog, Mort, back to Camp Zinn with him. When those big artillery pieces in the field just west of B Company fired their first mission, Mort took off for the jungle and was AWOL for a couple weeks. When he finally returned he looked like he had fought with a platoon of tigers and was never as fast as he used to be. That's when Clyde first showed his true love.

Clyde would sit on top of a squad tent and wait for Mort to walk by. He would then jump on Mort and have his way with him.

One night I heard funny noises coming from Sgt. Hoods' bunk. All of a sudden, Hood screamed and jumped out of bed, tearing the mosquito net and ran for the tent door with Clyde in fast pursuit. Clyde disappeared soon after that episode.

Jack Schimpf
B/2/503, '65/'66

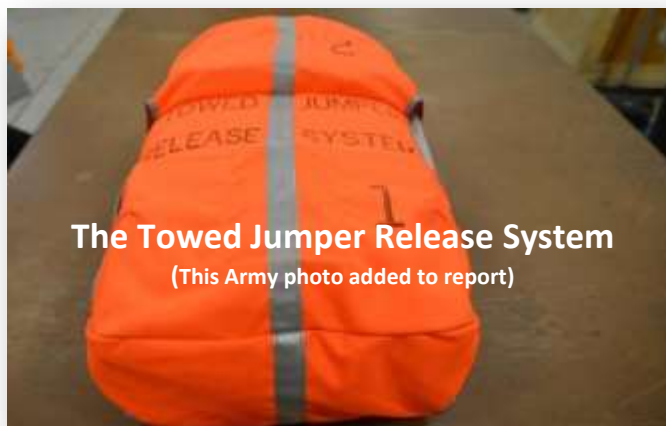
Rest in piece, Clyde.



New airborne system to save Soldiers' lives

By Argie Sarantinos-Perrin, RDECOM

August 14, 2018



The Towed Jumper Release System

(This Army photo added to report)

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. -- Jumping out of a plane may be a routine part of an airborne Soldier's training, but if the equipment doesn't function properly, it can be deadly.

"Generally, there are a handful of towed jumpers per year, which can be potentially dangerous situations," said Samuel Corner, project manager for the U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command Soldier Center Aerial Delivery Directorate.



A simulated towed jumper scenario is created during U.S. Army testing with a mannequin that is towed behind an aircraft. The Army is investing in new technology that will help prevent a towed jumper situation from occurring.

(Photo Credit: U.S. Army photo)

Until recently, there were two ways to help a towed jumper, which occurs when the static line attached to the aircraft anchor cable becomes tangled with the jumper and/or the equipment and the parachute is not released -- cut the jumper's static line so the Soldier can deploy his or her reserve parachute or pull the Soldier back into the aircraft. Both scenarios are dangerous because the Soldier is dragged alongside or behind the aircraft until he is either released or pulled into the aircraft.

In March 2017, in an effort to eliminate the possibility of a towed jumper situation, the Aerial Delivery Directorate's Airdrop Technology team submitted a project proposal to the U.S. Army Foreign Comparative Testing Program, which is embedded in RDECOM's Global Technology Office, as part of their annual call for proposals. The proposal was selected, enabling the Airdrop Technology Team to purchase ten Hung Up Parachutist Release Assemblies, or HUPRA, from the United Kingdom company, IrvinGQ (formally Airborne Systems Europe) for tests and evaluation.

The HUPRA, which includes an emergency parachute that is released once the Jumpmaster cuts the aircraft anchor line cable, is manufactured by IrvinGQ in the UK. The HUPRA is used by the UK as well as other nations on C-130 and other military aircraft.

By purchasing the system from the UK, the Army saved approximately \$500,000 in non-recurring engineering costs and additional costs to develop, integrate and validate a new recovery system.

"Testing, which includes aircraft time and manpower to design validation tests, is very expensive," Corner said. "We built on efforts of the UK by using their lessons learned to accelerate our process and decrease our costs."



The Towed Jumper Recovery System deploys during U.S. Army testing. The new system includes an emergency parachute that is released once the jumpmaster cuts the aircraft anchor line cable. (Photo Credit: U.S. Army photo)

The tests, which were conducted at Yuma Proving Ground, Arizona, used mannequins that "jumped" out from the aircraft's side doors and ramp. The testing was conducted on C-130 aircraft and divided into seven phases; minor changes were made to the system after the first phase was completed.

(continued....)





A fully deployed Hung Jumper Release System safely carries a test mannequin to the ground during U.S. Army testing on a new system to help prevent issues with towed jumps.

(Photo Credit: U.S. Army photo)

Before a Soldier jumps out of an aircraft, a Jumpmaster conducts a personnel inspection of the Soldier's attaching, jumping and releasing equipment. Jumpmasters must complete a rigorous training program before they manage airborne jump operations.

A complete developmental test was performed on the **Towed Jumper Recovery System** (the Army name for the slightly modified HUPRA) at YPG, including aircraft procedures development, safety evaluation, rigging procedure development and performance testing.

One of the goals of the tests was to ensure the system recovered with an All Up Weight maximum of 400 pounds, slightly above the UK's fielded version of the HUPRA systems capabilities. AUW includes the weight of the Soldier, the weight of the parachute system, which is approximately 40 pounds, and the weight of the equipment that Soldier needs for a mission -- rucks, guns, ammunition, food and water.

While Standard Operating Procedures were developed based on the C-130 aircraft that was used during testing, another set of SOPs will be developed for C-17 aircraft, which is a much larger aircraft that the Army uses.

"The TJRS program has been positively briefed to the Army Airborne Board," Corner said. "The next step is to work with the board and TRADOC to develop a formal requirement for a jumper recovery system. After that, the project will transition to PM Soldier Clothing and Individual Equipment, under PEO Soldier."

The Foreign Comparative Testing program is a congressionally authorized program that is executed for the Army by the RDECOM Global Technology Office, which receives oversight from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Comparative Technology Office. The FCT Program provides an avenue for Army engineers, scientists and program managers to acquire, test, and evaluate items and technologies from foreign industry allies and other friendly nations that may fill an Army capability gap or other urgent need.

Source:

www.army.mil/article/209863/new_airborne_system_to_save_soldiers_lives



Air Force Assists Army During Saber Junction 18

Sept. 21, 2018

By Air Force Airman 1st Class Milton Hamilton, Air Force Staff Sgt. Jimmie Pike and Air Force Airman 1st Class Alexis Schultz / 86th Airlift Wing

HOHENFELS, Germany -- U.S. Air Force aircraft engines roar through the air, as pilots look for the marked drop zone.



U.S. and Italian soldiers wait to load onto a C-17 Globemaster III as part of Exercise Saber Junction 18 at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, Sept. 19, 2018. Allies and partners use the opportunity provided by the exercises to work through their own training objectives while also working on interoperability solutions.

(Air Force photo by Senior Airman Alexis Schultz)

And, in the back of the aircraft, U.S. Army paratroopers, along with paratroopers from four other nations, eagerly wait for the exit signal to appear above the cargo door.

"GO! GO! GO!" a jumpmaster screams as the jump light changes from red to green.

The airborne service members are participating in Exercise Saber Junction 18.

Saber Junction 18 is part of an annual U.S. Army Europe-directed exercise series that's designed to assess the readiness of the U.S. Army's 173rd Airborne Brigade to execute unified land operations in a joint, combined environment and to promote interoperability with participating allies and partner nations.

While USAREUR led the charge during the exercise, U.S. Air Forces in Europe provided the airlift capability with C-130H Hercules and a C-17 Globemaster aircraft to assist the Army in completing their training objectives.

An Italian soldier carries his gear to board a C-17 Globemaster III as part of Exercise Saber Junction 18 at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, Sept. 19, 2018.

(Air Force photo by Senior Airman Alexis Schultz)



"The Air Force has been a huge help," said U.S. Army Maj. J. Christopher Giorgi, Saber Junction 18 lead planner. *"You can't do joint force entry without the airlift component."*

With aircraft support from USAFE, thousands of troops from the 173rd dropped within a few hours to commence a large-scale exercise.

"Airmen have been integrated since day one of planning to assist," Giorgi said. *"With this integration, we can put an air brigade behind enemy lines within 18 hours. I don't believe many others can do that."*

The American service members will be exercising alongside 19 ally and partner nations to increase operational efficiency.

Source:

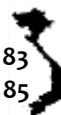
<https://dod.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1641390/air-force-assists-army-during-saber-junction-18/source/GovDelivery/>

Additional Saber Junction 18 Photo



U.S. Soldiers of Chosen Company, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), discuss the engagement area during Saber Junction 18 live fire exercise at the Grafenwoehr Training Area, Grafenwoehr, Germany, Sept. 11, 2018.

(U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Randis Monroe)



10 Best U.S. Cities In Which To Retire For Ex-Military

An unscientific study...

TONGUE N CHEEK

By Lew "Smitty" Smith, HHC/2/503, '65/'66
Editor, 2/503d Vietnam Newsletter

The golf courses around Cocoa Beach here on the Space Coast of Florida during winter months are routinely overrun by snowbirds, most whom it seems seldom fix their divots. I know this because I'm often paired with them by local starters at Cocoa Beach Country Club, the links at Patrick Air Force Base and other area courses. More often than not it seems, these fellow hackers are retired military escaping the northern frosty climes for the warmth and open tee times here in the Sunshine State, to include the many conveniences offered at PAFB for visiting retirees.

On more than a few occasions I've sensed jealousy masked in the voices of these former soldiers, sailors and Marines, from privates to full birds, upon learning I am a full-time resident of this tropical paradise, and have heard their repeated refrains, *"If it weren't for the grandkids we'd move here in a flash,"* and *"We love our four seasons,"* yeah, right.



"We love our four seasons!"

(web image)

On a number of occasions club starters have teamed me up for a round with former military dudes and dudettes who've taken the plunge by selling their northern chalets including their heating oil, tire chains, snow shovels and downy parkas, then moved lock, stock and golf clubs to the Space Coast. This has caused me to wonder which other states and cities might be attractive to these retired military carpetbaggers looking to profiteer from our affordable greens fees?

It's difficult to believe any other state in the union could possibly match the many amenities Florida and Cocoa Beach in particular have to offer retired military, including our very own ocean and Gulf Coast waters normally set at bathing temps (don't believe those shark attack stories, they're fake news).

FAKE NEWS



So, we conducted the following unscientific study for your edification and entertainment. This researcher is hereby indemnified should you find yourself relocating to one of these locales only to learn you're incompatible with mosquitoes, 100+ degree heat with 100% humidity weather, alligators in your back yard, or roadways during wintery months filled with Canadian drivers....*the horror!* Or worse yet, *Texans!!!!*

Spending almost many minutes this morning compiling these data, here are the results listing the top 10 best U.S. cities to where ex-military might retire.

Gentlemen and ladies, start your packing!

In order from the 10th most attractive military retirement city to the 1st, these organizations ranked them this way:

	<u>Military.com</u>	<u>Livability.com</u>	<u>Forbes</u>	<u>Military-Money</u>
10	Manchester, NH	Cheyenne, WY	Boise, ID	Syracuse, NY
9	Omaha, NE	Tucson, AZ	San Diego, CA	New Orleans, LA
8	Raleigh, NC	Kenner, LA	Seattle, WA	Pittsburgh, PA
7	Philadelphia, PA	Syracuse, NY	Fremont, CA	Madison, WI
6	Madison, WI	Topeka, KS	Tampa, FL	San Angelo, TX
5	San Antonio, TX	Madison, WI	Plano, TX	Harrisburg, PA
4	Austin, TX	Carlisle, PA	Raleigh, NC	College Station, TX
3	Richmond, VA	San Angelo, TX	Virginia Beach, VA	Austin, TX
2	Norfolk, VA	Colorado Springs, CO	Colorado Spring, CO	Oklahoma City, OK
1	Oklahoma, OK	Fayetteville, NC	Austin, TX	Waco, TX

Sources:

www.military.com/military-transition/retirees/10-best-places-for-military-retirees.html

<https://livability.com/topics/community/10-best-cities-for-veterans>

www.forbes.com/sites/jeffkaufflin/2017/11/10/the-25-best-places-for-veterans-to-live/#623db21869ed

www.military-money-matters.com/best-places-to-retire.html

(continued....)



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Our Methodology To Select The Best Overall City For Retirement By Former Military Personnel:

Given the diverse nature and order of the cities named above by those distinguished organizations, we've pared-down the options as follows:

- a. Any city in Texas is eliminated from consideration because, well, too many Texans live there. (*"You can always tell a Texan, but you can't tell him much"*).
- b. Cities in states such as WY, NE, KS, OK and ID are cut as you'd have only a couple neighbors within 100 miles from whom to borrow tools.
- c. VA (while a good stop-in for a quickie) plus WI, CO, WA and NH didn't qualify as these are the home states of the very people coming to FL to golf in the winter, but especially because there's just too damn much snow there!
- d. Next out is CA and NY. They are scratched from the list of potential retirement states and any cities therein simply because, they're CA and NY. Lots of people live there, but they wish they lived somewhere else.
- e. Sorry AZ, you're gone...too many cacti, rattle snakes and too damn hot, even hotter than FL.
- f. NC came close as our choice to be the overall best state for military retirees, except those damn paratroopers wake you up every morning at 5 a.m. running by your house and hollering about some asshole named Jody, and dying on the old drop zone! *Can we get some sleep here!!*
- g. LA was never in the running because none of us here speak French, altho they have great Cajun food, blues and jazz. *"The French don't care what they do necessarily, as long as they pronounce it correctly."* (Innry Iggins)

Thru this process of elimination from the list above the sole city and state remaining in the running is Tampa, FL. Unfortunately, we are L.A. Rams and not Tampa Bay Buccaneers fans, so Tampa....*you're fired!*

Following our extensive and exhaustive multi-minute research, we've come to the conclusion COCOA BEACH, FLORIDA (and almost any nearby jurisdiction) is the best city in the country for former military personnel to retire in, particularly if they golf or enjoy 4 p.m. senior citizen discounts at beachside restaurants like IHOP, but those are not requirements.

And why, you ask, did we select Jeannie's former t.v. city above all others? Well, here are a few reasons:

- Cocoa Beach (CB) has the friendliest VFW in the whole wide world and almost sitting right on the shoreline, plus great Friday night steaks.



- Did we mention the golf courses? Gads of golf courses.
- Weather? We have lots of it, but summer months are just a tad warm....be sure to use tanning lotion and keep your car A/C working.
- Shopping and eating establishments....oodles of restaurants and they serve alligator too, just like our golf courses.
- Patrick Air Force Base with all its conveniences. In fact, upwards of 75,000 military vets have chosen Brevard County as their place to retire.
- Water, water everywhere, includes the Atlantic Ocean (which we own) and rivers stocked with countless fishies of all stripes waiting for you.... other creatures reside in there too, *caution*.
- From the beach or your backyard you get to enjoy watching and hearing rocket launches almost every week it seems.
- Orlando with all its tourass traps is only an hour away from CB, and we like to keep it that way.
- CB can be a laid back seaside vill offering a superior quality of life to all vets, even Marines.
- CB was host to two 2/503 reunions, where fun and beer was had by most.

So there you have it. Research proves Cocoa Beach, FL is clearly the best city overall for ex-military to retire in. Don't believe it? Come on down and try it, you might like it. Oh, and fix your damn divots!



(web photo)



Mary Ellis, WWII Pilot, dies at 101

Mary Ellis (née **Wilkins**; 2 February 1917 – 24 July 2018) was a British ferry pilot, and one of the last surviving British women pilots from the Second World War.



Early life

Mary Wilkins was born on 2 February 1917, in Leafield, Oxfordshire, to a farming family. She developed a fascination with aviation from a young age, as her family home was located near Royal Air Force bases at Bicester Airfield and Port Meadow. At the age of 11 her father paid for her to have a joy ride in a biplane at a flying circus, and she decided she wanted to learn to fly. When she was 16 she started having lessons at a flying club in Witney, successfully gained a private pilot's license and flew for pleasure up until the start of the Second World War in 1939, when all civilian flying was banned.

Second World War

In October 1941, she joined the Air Transport Auxiliary, and was posted to a pool of women flyers based in Hamble in Hampshire. Over the course of the war she flew over 1,000 planes of 76 different types, including Harvards, Hurricanes, Spitfires and Wellington bombers. Some of her flights were to relocate planes from Royal Air Force airfields to the frontline, and others were to ferry new planes from factories to airfields.

Post Second World War

After the war the Air Transport Auxiliary was disbanded. However, Ellis was seconded to the Royal Air Force and continued to ferry aircraft. She was one of the first women to fly the Gloster Meteor, Britain's first jet fighter. She later moved to the Isle of Wight.

In 1950, she became the manager of Sandown Airport, and Europe's first female air commandant.

Ellis managed Sandown for twenty years, during which time she also founded the Isle of Wight Aero Club. A former ATA colleague, Vera Strodl, was hired by Ellis as the chief flying instructor.

In 2016, Ellis published her autobiography: *A Spitfire Girl: One of the World's Greatest Female ATA Ferry Pilots, ATA Ferry Pilot Tells Her Story*.

Recognition

In 2017 a plaque was unveiled at RAF Brize Norton in recognition of Ellis' and fellow pilot, Molly Rose's, "contribution to ATA". In 2018, Ellis was granted the Freedom of the Isle of Wight.

Ellis was featured on the BBC in 2018 highlighting, among other achievements, solo flights where other teams consisted of eight crew.

Personal life

She married fellow pilot Don Ellis in 1961, and they had a house next to the runway at Sandown. Don Ellis died in 2009.

Ellis died at her home in Sandown, Isle of Wight, on 24 July 2018 at the age of 101.



(web photos)

[Thanks to Bob Warfield, B/2/503, for bringing the story of Mary Ellis to our attention]



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A Buddy's Tribute to His Buddy....

E/2/503d Inf Abn Recon Wildcats All The Way

By George L. Rivera
January 16, 2013



Roy Edward May saved the lives of an entire team one day the month before he was killed by hostile action during a LRRP insertion in the Tiger Mountains East of Landing Zone English. It was late in the afternoon.

Our team had been tasked with an insertion for a Long Range Recon Patrol in place of the team Roy Edward was a member of because their team was late in returning from R&R. As we waited to load onto our Helicopters, I received a call from our First Sergeant, 1st SGT White, to abort the mission and return to the company because Foile's team had arrived at the base and were on their way to our unit. I never saw them because we left for downtown Bong Son to get haircuts.

I had been on Foiles' team a month earlier on a night ambush mission. We were hiding in a clump of 10-12' tall elephant grass waiting for darkness when a LOH OH-6 hovered over us totally exposing our position and revealing our presence. We looked up and tried to motion him away, but the door gunner began to lean outward from his ship and he was beginning to point his mini-gun downward. I knew he was about to open fire on us. I have black hair, and was dressed like an enemy soldier so I knew what the door gunner was seeing through the grass from 30 feet up. I must have looked like an enemy. I knew he was about to open fire and I saw no way to stop him, so I grabbed Roy's hat from him exposing his golden colored blonde hair. The door gunner immediately let go of the mini-gun and continued their low altitude patrol. That was the day Roy Edward saved our lives.

As I was sitting in front of the barber shop waiting a turn, I noticed a pair of Cobras in the ground attack followed by a UH-1. I observed the UH-1 go below the ridgeline and then a large orange ball of fire. I yelled, "Chopper Down!" and ran for our 34 ton truck; by the time I jumped into the back, everyone else was there, and we took off for our base. When we arrived at the company area, our Platoon Sergeant MSG Roy Baumgartner saw me and yelled, "Chicken's ship is down!" Chicken was his favorite. Chicken was the nickname given to MSGT Baumgartner's favorite.

We grabbed our combat packs and headed for the waiting ships at the Crap Table. The Crap Table was so named because the unit that was stationed there all used two dice in combinations of 7 painted on the noses of their ships. We boarded and headed for the crash area, and landed. I was tasked with southern security. Their ship had been hit on the left side and burned into white to gray ash. Roy had not been burned, but died of a massive injury to his crotch. Death was instantaneous.

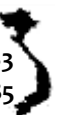
I feel it is important to say the whole story. He was a great guy and he had saved all our lives. We all had a good laugh about it, and chided him for it.

He has been missed. May the Lord have mercy on him. He was so young, and so innocent. A paratrooper, and a LRRP. What more can be said in his honor.

Source: *The Wall of Faces*



Jump School photo of Roy Edward May, #202.
1/31/1949 ~ 11/17/68
Sacramento, CA



Following is an English translation of an enemy document captured by the 173d Airborne Brigade in March '66, in the vicinity of the "D" Zone during Operation Silver City. Description of document: *Techniques on Capturing Americans*. (Declassified)

HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES MILITARY ASSISTANCE COMMAND, VIETNAM
Office of The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence
APO U.S. Forces 96243

MACJ21 23

March 1966

TRANSLATION REPORT
ENEMY DOCUMENT

USMACV DEC
Doc Log #03-1270-66

Capture Date
Mar 66, vic "D" Zone, YT, 3Y
173d Airborne Brigade

"KIN"*
SPCI REPORT

U2 POLITICAL SECTION
MILITARY PROSELYTING
SUB-SECTION

TO: Legion
Enemy-Military Proselyting Section

This is to report to you that the slogans in American and Allied Forces languages have been studied and disseminated to various Battalions and Districts but the result was far from satisfactory because our men could not read them and there was no one with enough English capability to teach the men how to read.

We also have studied the slogans and read the instruction letter but it was to no avail. If we could not do it, how could our men?

Accordingly, we request that further assistance be furnished from higher echelons so that we could put those slogans to good use.

We have had some experiences with the recent DA GIANG battle; the reason we were unable to capture many Americans alive was because they could not appeal to them to surrender in their own languages, so they shot and killed them all.

As regards the military proselyting policy, we were unable to comment whether it was a success or failure in this battle, because we did not participate in it, by order of the military affairs committee. This also held true for the critique session.

The only phase we could follow up is the phase of POW escort. Our men were good. I personally conducted the investigation on the enemy situation as required by the Military Affairs Committee. The job was well done.

The most concrete evidence is that the kindness of our men have won over the confidence of the prisoners; they were without fear and were very enthusiastic about the clemency policy of the National Liberation Front.

PS: Finally I wish CHINH and all the men in the Section a New Year full of Energy.

25 January 1966

Signature: LAM

***KIN IS A VIETNAMESE CLASSIFICATION
EQUIVALENT TO CONFIDENTIAL AND WILL BE
HANDLED ACCORDINGLY**

Source: National Archives



This photo (not part of the archival record shown here) was taken from a dead Viet Cong soldier following the battle at LZ Zulu Zulu on 16 Mar 66, in the "D" Zone jungle during Operation Silver City. (From Tom Faley, CO C/2/503)



Nearly Eleven Years After His Brother's Death, Soldier Returns to Afghanistan



A 14-year-old Ethan Wilson is pictured with his brother Thomas R. Wilson following the latter's graduation from boot camp at Fort Benning, Ga. U.S. Army Pfc. Wilson was later killed in action in Paktika, Afghanistan in 2007. His brother, U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Ethan Wilson, is currently serving with the 1st Security Force Assistance Brigade (SFAB) at Advisor Platform Lightning, only kilometers away from where Pfc. Wilson was killed.

(Courtesy photo of U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Ethan Wilson)

28 MAY 2018

By: U.S. Navy Lt. Matt Chandler

Resolute Support Public Affairs

ADVISOR PLATFORM LIGHTNING, Afghanistan –

Since it happened, he has carried the memory of his brother emblazoned on a silver bracelet he wears on his right wrist. It has been nearly 11 years since U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Ethan Wilson, a 1st Security Force Assistance Brigade (SFAB) advisor and Maurertown, Va. native lost his older brother, but he's never felt closer to him than now.

Wilson's brother, U.S. Army Pfc. Thomas R. Wilson, died of wounds sustained when insurgents attacked his unit only kilometers from here during combat operations on August 27, 2007 in Paktika, Afghanistan. At the time, Pfc. Wilson was assigned to 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment (Airborne), 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team.

"My brother was a huge influence on me and my siblings," said Wilson. "For me, being so close to Paktika has added to the excitement and importance of this mission."

This is Staff Sgt. Wilson's third deployment. He first deployed to Afghanistan in 2012 with 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, the same brigade his brother was deployed with when he was killed. He later deployed to Iraq in 2015 with the 82nd Airborne Division. This time, however, the mission is different.

"The last time I was here, it was a lot more kinetic and we would go out on joint missions with the Afghan National Army (ANA), but they would turn into our missions," explained Wilson. "Now, it's definitely more of the Afghan National Army leading and doing the work. My team is attached to the training center here in Task Force-Southeast and giving individual classes to the Afghan National Army at the corps level to develop skills."

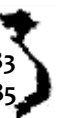
The deployment of 1st Security Force Assistance Brigade marks the first time the U.S. Army's newest unit — specially designed to train, advise, assist, enable and accompany host nation conventional forces — is being operationally employed. 1st Security Force Assistance Brigade, part of the additional forces authorized by the U.S. South Asia Strategy, is augmenting the existing advisory capability that resides in the NATO-led Resolute Support mission.

Like Wilson, the majority of 1st Security Force Assistance Brigade soldiers have experienced previous Afghanistan combat deployments, are culturally astute, and after undergoing special training, have now volunteered to return closer to the conflict's front lines than trainers have done in recent years. With focused teams dedicated to specific units, commanders are tailoring support to Afghan National Army kandaks — the equivalent of a battalion — in each of the NATO Train, Advise and Assist Commands (TAACs) and Task Forces (TFs) in Afghanistan.

For the Wilson brothers' mother, Julie Hepner, this deployment is not without obvious stress. She is tremendously proud of both her sons' service and tragically aware of the sacrifice of many families like hers.

Read entire story with additional photos at:

<https://rs.nato.int/news-center/feature-stories/2018-feature-stories/nearly-eleven-years-after-his-brothers-death--soldier-returns-to-afghanistan.aspx>



VA Disability for Heart Disease

There are a couple of items I wish you could forward to your mailing list. One report I received included those that passed. Looking at the ages (Issue 82, Page 86) I noticed that all were late 60's early 70's. It was strange because of the grouping of the age group. Does this seem to happen frequently?

The second item is concerning disability ratings. I have shortness of breath just walking fast. I am not overweight and in pretty good shape for my 71 years. I am seeing a heart doctor for this problem. The stress test lasted two minutes -- heart rate over 150 and blood pressure 210/ 160. I was out of breath.

I share this with you to help others with similar breathing problems. Any feedback from others would be appreciated. ATW!

Roger Wittenbrook
C/2/503

Our reply:

Hi Roger. Regarding the passing of our buddies in their late 60s and early 70s, it seems to occur much too often, and most of us fall within that age range. Don't know how many we lose due to heart ailments. The following information by the VA about heart conditions is offered. We recommend any vet experiencing heart discomfort immediately seek emergency treatment.

Thanks Roger! Ed

VA and heart disability Ischemic Heart Disease and Agent Orange

Veterans who develop ischemic heart disease and were exposed to Agent Orange or other herbicides during military service do not have to prove a connection between their disease and service to be eligible to receive VA health care and disability compensation.

About heart disease



Ischemic heart disease is also known as coronary artery disease or "hardening of the arteries."

Cholesterol plaque can build up in the arteries of the heart and cause "ischemia," which means the heart is not getting enough blood flow and oxygen. If the plaque blocks an artery, a heart attack can result.

Up to 90 percent of heart attacks are due to: smoking, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, abdominal obesity ("spare tire"), not eating enough fruits and vegetables, lack of exercise, drinking too much alcohol, and stress.

Visit **Medline Plus** to learn about treatment for coronary artery disease, the latest medical research, and more from the National Institutes of Health.

LOWER YOUR RISK OF HEART DISEASE

Here's how: Exercise at least 30 minutes a day. Get help to quit smoking. Limit alcohol. Eat more fruits and vegetables. Learn more about healthy living.

VA benefits for ischemic heart disease

Veterans with ischemic heart disease who were exposed to herbicides during service may be eligible for disability compensation and health care.

Veterans who served in Vietnam, the Korean demilitarized zone or another area where Agent Orange was sprayed may be eligible for a free Agent Orange registry health exam.

Surviving spouses, dependent children and dependent parents of Veterans who were exposed to herbicides during military service and died as the result of ischemic heart disease may be eligible for survivors' benefits.

Research on ischemic heart disease and herbicides

The Health and Medicine Division (formally known as the Institute of Medicine) of the National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine concluded in its report "Veterans and Agent Orange: Update 2008" released July 24, 2009, that there is *"suggestive but limited evidence that exposure to Agent Orange and other herbicides used during the Vietnam War is associated with an increased chance of developing ischemic heart disease."*

As a result, VA recognized ischemic heart disease as associated with exposure to Agent Orange or other herbicides during military service. VA's final regulation recognizing this association took effect on October 30, 2010.

View more research on health effects of Agent Orange.

www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/research-studies.asp



VA study on cholesterol genetics could lead to new treatments for heart disease, diabetes

October 10, 2018 -- WASHINGTON — In the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) drive to help improve lives of Veterans through health care discovery and innovation, a team led by VA researchers recently identified three genetic mutations that govern cholesterol levels, which could lead to the development of new drugs to treat cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

Detailed results of the study can be found in the Oct. 1 issue of *Nature Genetics*, a scientific journal. *"This is fantastic news, not just for Veterans, but for all Americans suffering from these diseases,"* said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. *"VA researchers have been improving the lives of Veterans and all Americans through health care discovery and innovation for decades. Their groundbreaking research has resulted in three Nobel prizes and numerous other national and international honors."*

Using data from VA's Million Veteran Program (MVP), the researchers found that three genes — PDE3B, PCSK9 and ANGPTL4 — could be targets for treatment of heart disease, abdominal aortic aneurysm and diabetes, respectively. VA research showed that those with specific mutations to the genes had better cholesterol and triglyceride levels than those without the mutations.

The PDE3B mutation appears to protect against heart disease. A mutation in PCSK9 seems to decrease the risk not only of heart disease, but also abdominal aortic aneurysm — a condition in which the aorta is enlarged, which could lead it to rupture and cause life-threatening bleeding. The ANGPTL4 mutation was linked to lower risk of Type 2 diabetes. The research was supported by VA, the National Institutes of Health and Stanford's Department of Medicine.

MVP is a national, voluntary research program funded by VA's Office of Research and Development. MVP partners with Veterans receiving care in the Veterans Health Administration to study how genes affect health. As of late September 2018, MVP had enrolled more than 700,000 Veterans. It is already one of the world's largest databases of health and genomic information.

The *Nature Genetics* publication is one of the first major papers describing scientific findings from MVP. The publication highlights the power of researchers

having access to data from large numbers of individuals. In this instance, researchers were able to identify several novel genetic factors that affect people's blood lipid [cholesterol and triglyceride] levels. Such findings may lead to new approaches to diagnose people at risk for cardiovascular disease, as well as identify candidate therapeutic targets.

To learn more about VA research, including MVP, visit www.research.va.gov



The Air Force Will Replace Its Long-Serving UH-60 Huey Helicopters With a European Import

The \$2.4 billion contract will supply up to 84 new helicopters.

Boeing MH-139 to Replace U.S. Air Force UH-1N Huey Fleet

Sep 24, 2018



Boeing will provide its MH-139 helicopter and related support to the U.S. Air Force to replace the fleet of UH-1N "Huey" helicopters used to protect America's intercontinental ballistic missile bases.

(Photo: Fred Troilo, Boeing)

(continued....)



National Center for PTSD

Overview

The PTSD Consultation Program offers consultation, continuing education, and other resources to healthcare providers who treat Veterans with PTSD in the community or in VA.

Consultation is free and is consistent with evidence-based practices for PTSD and consensus statements such as the VA/DoD Clinical Practice Guideline for PTSD.

Contact us by email or phone to request a consultation. We are normally able to respond within one business day. We'll respond by email or set up a time to talk by phone at your convenience.

Our team responds to thousands of consultation requests a year. No question is too big or too small.

Our Services

Communicate directly via email or phone with expert clinicians from the National Center for PTSD about:

- Evidence-based treatment
- Medications
- Clinical management
- Informational resources about PTSD Assessment
- Education & training opportunities
- Collaborating with VA on Veterans' care
- Developing a PTSD treatment program
- Our Mission and Scope

The mission of the National Center for PTSD is to advance the clinical care and social welfare of America's Veterans and others who have experienced trauma, or who suffer from PTSD, through research, education, and training in the science, diagnosis, and treatment of PTSD and stress-related disorders.

The goal of the PTSD Consultation Program is to improve the care available to all Veterans with PTSD regardless of where they access services. We offer expert guidance on general issues that come up in the course of caring for Veterans with PTSD.

We cannot, however, provide direct guidance or consultation regarding or assume clinical responsibility for specific patients; any potential liability would be only in accordance with the Federal Tort Claims Act.

Contact us, Phone: 866-948-7800 or Email: PTSDconsult@va.gov

Source:

www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/consult/works.asp



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"The PTSD Consultation Program is staffed by experts who are responsive and provide on target responses and references. I feel absolutely confident whenever I reach out to them for answers."



PHILADELPHIA, Pa., Sept. 24, 2018 — Boeing [NYSE: BA] will provide its MH-139 helicopter and related support to the U.S. Air Force to replace the more than 40-year-old UH-1N "Huey" helicopters used to protect America's intercontinental ballistic missile bases.

The program awarded today is valued at \$2.4 billion for up to 84 helicopters, training devices and associated support equipment.

"We're grateful for the Air Force's confidence in our MH-139 team," said David Koopersmith, vice president and general manager, Boeing Vertical Lift. *"The MH-139 exceeds mission requirements, it's also ideal for VIP transport, and it offers the Air Force up to \$1 billion in acquisition and lifecycle cost savings."*

The MH-139 derives from the Leonardo AW139, which is used by more than 270 governments, militaries and companies worldwide. Leonardo will assemble the helicopters at its northeast Philadelphia plant, with Boeing integrating military-specific components at its facility south of that city.

The contract also includes operations, maintenance, training systems and support equipment for the MH-139 aircraft.

"We're proud to provide the U.S. Air Force with solutions across the entire services ecosystem," said Ed Dolanski, president of U.S. Government Services, Boeing Global Services. *"With the AW139 platform's more than 2 million flight hours and established supply chain, we look forward to applying our expertise to drive cost savings while supporting mission readiness."*

For more information on Defense, Space & Security and Global Services, visit www.boeing.com. Follow us on Twitter: @BoeingDefense and @BoeingSpace.



So long old girl. (AF photo by Sr Airman Jonathan McElderry)



***Don't try to run, you'll
only die tired. Hey!
There's a snake!!!!!!***



It's reported this Alabama Army National Guard sniper during a training exercise at Eglin AFB didn't budge as a snake made its way across the barrel of his weapon.

(Photo by SSG William Frye/U.S. Army)



History

The term "Sniper" originated from the British occupation of India in the 1800's. The primary mission of a sniper is to deliver long-range precision fire on key selected targets and targets of opportunity. The secondary mission of a sniper is the collection and reporting of battlefield information.

Revolutionary War

Revolutionary War sniper in a tree position. During the revolutionary war a British sniper, Maj. Patrick Ferguson, was known for "The shot not taken". General David Morgan's snipers were known as Morgan's Riflemen.



Civil War

During the Civil War, COL Hiram Berdan was the first to recruit and organize Union sharpshooters. Their key targets were officers, NCOs, Right Guides, Enemy Scouts, Sharpshooters and Spies.

World War I



WWI Troops

During WWI a stealthy riflemen emerged, whose mission was to exact his toll with the well-placed single shot, to gather intelligence and to demoralize the enemy as much as possible. Along with the continuous dread of Army Sniper Assn – WWI sniperdeath-dealing artillery fire and poisonous gas, the specter of the sniper preyed on the infantryman's psyche in the trenches of WWI. German Sharpshooters dominated the trenches and "No Man's Land" between the lines. The term "Sniper" replaced "Sharpshooter" during this period. Major H. Hesketh-Pritchard, DSO, MC, (shown in the photo at right) commanded the first sniper, observation and scouting school for the British Army during WWI.



World War II

The Germans dominated sniper operations during WWII. The German motto, during WWII, for their snipers: "CAMOUFLAGE 10 times-SHOOT ONCE". These snipers were the first to start fielding specialized equipment. Matthias Hetzenauer was credited with 345 KIAs and Sepp Allerberger with 257 KIAs.

(continued....)



The Soviet Union was the first to employ Snipers in



two-man teams. Vassili Zaitsev (left) and two sniper comrades observed German positions in Stalingrad, Jan 43. He had 400 KIAs by war's end. The Soviets also fielded

female snipers. Over 2000 were trained as snipers.

Although the US Army set up an advanced marksmanship course at Camp Perry, Ohio, the Army had no official sniper course during WWII. Between wars, the USMC sustained limited sniper training but not enough to compete with other countries during WWII.

Korean War

With the outbreak of hostilities on the Korean peninsula in 1950, the upper hand was initially with the Communist forces. The Soviet Union and China trained and equipped North Korea's snipers. Korean snipers used the Moisin Nagant Model 1891/30 rifle.



During 1955-1956, the Army Marksmanship Training Unit operated the first US Army Sniper School at Camp Perry, Ohio. Unfortunately a lack of understanding, and appreciation for the effectiveness and potential that snipers could add to the fight, caused sniper training to be abandoned after this short training period.

Vietnam

In Viet Nam, on July 1968, the US Army began centralized training in-country. The 9th Infantry Division established one of the first in-country Sniper Schools. The course, run by Major Willis Powell, lasted 18 days with the failure rate being 50%. In December 1968, a full complement of seventy-two snipers were ready for action.



The 6th Bn, 31st INF RGT of the 9th INF DIV, killed thirty-nine VC from 12 April to 9 May 1969, in the Mekong-Delta.

In November 1968, 8 enemy KIA's were recorded by Army Snipers; December 1968, saw 11 kills. During the period Jan 7 to July 24, 1969, Army Snipers accounted for 1245 enemy killed.

Present Day

The US Army Sniper School was established in 1987, at the Infantry Center at Fort Benning, GA, and continues to produce top-notch snipers today. Its' continuous existence reflects the longest sniper training course in the history of the US Army and is a testament to the high priority sniper training now enjoyed among the Army's leadership. Following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center buildings, the U.S. military entered into combat operations in Afghanistan under Operation Enduring Freedom. Snipers proved themselves as an invaluable asset due to their ability to engage targets at great distances in a mountainous battlefield.

Soon after O.E.F. and the fall of the Taliban, Operation Iraqi Freedom commenced. Again, Army snipers were in high demand mainly due to their abilities to use precision fire to engage high value targets, to destroy Vehicle and Suicide-borne Improvised Explosive Devices. Snipers also provide over watch with their high powered optics (day/night) and demoralize the enemy forces. Coalition snipers are the most hunted soldiers on today's modern battlefield. Currently Army Snipers are deployed: Kosovo, Bosnia, Egypt, South America, Africa and Korea.



Visit the Army Sniper Association at
<http://www.armysniper.org/>



Remembering Jim Morrissey

B/1/50th

by Frank Huffman

"Morrissey", as we called him, was our APC (Armored Personnel Carrier) driver; I was the 50 "gunner." One month we "humped", 2nd month we lived on the APC's and pulled road security, and the 3rd month we spent on one of the bridges in our AO, then the cycle started over again.

We were working out of LZ Schueller outside of Camp Radcliff in An Khe doing our 2nd month of mechanized stuff. To tell you what kind of guy "Morrissey" was, in Dec '68 we were told that one person from the Company could go to the Bob Hope Christmas Show and the Company elected "Morrissey." The closest the "Show" was coming to us was 50 miles away. His only assignment was that when he returned he had to tell the whole Company all about the show. He returned and joined us on the 29th of Dec during one of our operations on the APC's in the "boonies" looking for "Victor Charles."

We were leaving LZ Schueller on the APC's that evening, the 29th, and heading to the bridges on Highway 19 to help with night security. It was dusk and we had a long haul, 12-15 miles to reach our assigned bridge for the night, needless to say we were all very edgy. We were traveling in a line of 10 to 12 APC's and as we crossed a bridge the last "track" in line would stop and spend the night at that bridge. The last 2 bridges were the most dangerous....like something out of "Apocalypse Now."

We had 3 tracks left....one to stop at bridge 19, and the last 2 to go to bridge 18....the "Apocalypse" bridge. Before we reached bridge 19 one of the 3 remaining "tracks" broke down and had to be towed to 19. We decided to leave those 2 tracks there and head out to 18 alone. BIG MISTAKE....."Victor Charles" was waiting. We were half-way between bridges 19 and 18, approximately 3 miles, and we were ambushed.....Intel said we were hit by a B40, RPG 7, and possibly a LAW.

We were going up a slight incline at about 30 mph and at the crest the road made a gradual right turn and started down a long straight stretch of about 1/2 mile. As the 50 gunner I had the best view from the track. As we exited the turn I thought I saw something like a 4th of July sparkler coming out of the tree line towards

us.....in a matter of seconds we were hit.....left rear at the fuel tank.....thank God we only used diesel. There was a bone jarring impact as the B40 went through but no explosion...just a huge fire. Immediately after impact I felt the APC accelerate...."Morrissey" was getting us the "Hell out of there."

I was looking down and inside of the track to locate the release for the turret so I could turn the 50 and fire when we were hit again.....this time through the side and into the left side of the engine. This explosion blew

the top vent hatch off of the engine and the barrel of the 50 straight up. I leaned over to my left and looked in the driver's hatch and did not see anyone....also to my left usually sat my Sgt., but he was missing; I looked to the rear and did not see any of my buddies; we always rode on top for safety reasons. I decided it was time for me to "di di mau." (Vietnamese for "Go...Fast").

I climbed up on the turret and did a "PLF" to my right, off a burning track traveling around 30 miles mph, hit the ground and came up running and looking for cover. Thank God for all the training at Jump School. I watched the track continue on down

the highway, was hit again by another rocket, and then run off the side of the road and stop. We were also under constant small arms and automatic weapons fire from the time the 1st rocket hit and the track finally stopped.

Help arrived shortly and I was medi-vaced to a Mash unit. When they wheeled me into the Operating Room I saw my buddies and everyone had made it except "Morrissey." We were told that evidently just before the 2nd rocket hit us everyone was evacuating the track. "Morrissey" had climbed out of the driver's hatch and was getting ready to jump when the 2nd impact and explosion knocked him off the front of the track and he was crushed.

The next day in post-op we were asked if any of us would identify the remains. Two of us went.....it was "Morrissey." I firmly believe that what he taught me, and how he drove that night is one of the biggest reasons I'm here today and writing this. May God continue to bless him and his wife that he left behind that night. As it is said "All Gave Some.....Some Gave All."



Two 2/503 Sky Soldier memories which missed the cut for 'Amusing' Jump Stories in our last issue....

~ Captain Marvel? ~

The last jumper in the last plane in the formation was headed straight for the tallest trees at the end of the DZ. My Squad Leader said to me, "Look at that asshole! He ain't even slipping!"

Off course the guy hit a tree and got hung up. My Squad Leader and I ran to the tree and after the jumper was chewed out by my SL, the guy in the tree said, "This is Captain Marvel, and you men better get me down ASAP!"

Then my SL said to me, "Get ready to run, Schimpf," and shouted to the guy stuck in the tree, "Captain Marvel, SHAZAM Mother Fucker!" And run we did!

Jack Schimpf
B/2/503, '65/'66



SHAZAM!...maybe the best jump story of them all. ☺ Ed

~ Another Amusing (?) Jump Tale? ~

While with the 101st at Campbell, we'd occasionally have fun with the newbies fresh out of Jump School at Benning during their cherry blast (we learned this on our own cherry jumps). Once we heard the **STAND IN THE DOOR!** command we'd pull a handful of silk out of the pack of the cherry jumper in front of us and drape it over his shoulder just as the green light came on and the **GO!** command was given. It scared the hell out of the young jumpers and, at the time, seemed funny... but not to them!

A Sky Soldier



Outboard Personnel Stand Up!

Inboard Personnel Stand Up!

Hook Up!

Check Static Lines!

Check Equipment!

Sound Off For Equipment Check!

Stand In The Door!

Pull Silk Out Of The Cherry's Pack In Front Of You!

GO!!!!!!

DETROIT BOWLING HALL OF FAME ELECTS FOUR NEW MEMBERS



August 27, 2018

The Detroit Bowling Hall of Fame Committee, a committee of the Metro Detroit USBC (MDUSBC), has elected four new members to its Hall of Fame and named three others for special awards. This will increase the number of hall of fame members to 271.



Bowling RTO

Nicole Edwards of West Bloomfield, Scott Bowersock of Dearborn Heights, Edwin Peart of Southfield and **Larry Paladino** of Warren earned their place in the prestigious Hall.

Congratulations to our very own bowling RTO

Larry Paladino, B/2/503!

###

Construction of 2/503 Barracks on Sukiran



This is an AP photo from my files of Sukiran under construction. It's a 1952 picture from AP photographer Max Desfor. Of the detailed story that went with it is this one paragraph: "This photo shows new U.S. Army barracks at Sukiran on Okinawa. Built to hold 165 men each, they are widely placed to provide the best light and air. Each unit has its' own kitchen, recreation room and other amenities."

The story said that the island's biggest industry was the U.S. military establishment and nearly 75,000 Okinawans worked on Army and Air Force activities, including construction.

Larry Paladino

B/2/503



James Sumner Healy

A/2/503, RVN

November 8, 1942 ~ September 7, 2018

Jim was born on November 8, 1942 in Bangor, Maine to Richard W. Healy and Arline Woods Healy. He passed peacefully September 7, 2018 at his residence in Sanford, North Carolina at the age of 75.

Jim served in the US Army as an infantryman with Company A, 2/503d, 173rd Airborne Brigade in Vietnam. He was discharged from the Army as a Sgt. and after being discharged; he continued his education and

graduated from Mars Hill College with a BA degree in History. He went on to receive a MA degree in History from the University of Maine in 1970. Although he was a teacher for a few years, the bulk of his career was spent working as a Benefits Counselor for the Veterans Administration. He was an involved father and encouraged his daughters to become strong independent women. He enjoyed music, reading, woodwork and golf.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Sandra Healy. James is survived by his two daughters, Laura Catherwood of Concord, NC and Mary Manning of Boulder Creek, CA; his sister, Carol Healy of Chiefland, FL.; brothers, Richard Healy of Mechanicsville, VA, Maurice Healy of Gainesville, FL; his three granddaughters: Kelsey Catherwood of Winston-Salem, NC, Avery Catherwood of Greensboro, NC and Marilyn "Maggie" Catherwood of Concord, NC and a host of other relatives and friends.

In lieu of flowers or donations he asked that any who mourn his death please make their love clear to those they hold dear. His daughters ask if you feel moved to make a donation, please donate in his name to Operation Homefront operationhomefront.org

Arrangements by Knotts Funeral Home, Sanford. Service subject to change due to inclement weather.

*Jim...rest easy our friend and brother.
A good man, a good soldier.
We'll miss you buddy.*



2/503 Trooper

David W. Feltman

Passes

Oct. 17, 1942 - Aug. 30, 2017

David W. Feltman, loving husband, father, grandfather and true friend, who was known for his intelligence, quick wit and heart of gold passed away Aug. 30, 2017, in Sonoma, Calif., at 74.

David was the son of Harold and Dorothy Feltman of Elgin, Ill. Early years were spent in Woodstock, Ill., before moving to Elmhurst, Ill., where he attended Willowbrook High and graduated from Parsons College in Iowa.

David proudly served in the U.S. Army and spent two tours in Vietnam with the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Upon his honorable discharge, David began his career in the equipment finance industry in the Chicago area. In 1979, David moved to the San Francisco Bay Area where he worked for some of the leading companies in the industry: Security Pacific Leasing, Bank of America Leasing and Mellon Capital. He was employed with U.S. Bank Equipment Finance in Portland at the time of his death.

David is survived by his best friend and devoted wife, Valerie; daughter, Jessica Potts; granddaughter, Cadence; stepdaughter, Cara Gerard (Rob); and step-grandchildren, Chloe and Kellan.

David was an avid car guy, owning many classics over the years. He leaves behind a legacy of love, memories and a lifetime of inspiration for leading a life well-lived.

Donations to Pets Lifeline of Sonoma, Calif., to honor David's love of animals would be appreciated. A private celebration of David's life will be held in October.

Please sign the online guest book at
www.oregonlive.com/obits



Rest Easy Brother



173d Airborne Chemical Operations in Vietnam

From 5 Aug 68 thru 29 Oct 68

In our ongoing search for records, photos and historical documents pertaining to our battalion and brigade in Vietnam, we uncovered a declassified army report entitled “Operational Report – Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 173d Airborne Brigade” covering the period of 1 August 1968 and ending 31 October 1968. We are planning to compile a special edition of our newsletter for release in the early months ahead which will focus on topics reported in the document involving the 2/503. Following, however, is an excerpt from the document which lists chemical operations of the brigade during the period cited (web photos added). Ed



CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE/SCMHD

SUBJECT: Operational Report Lessons Learned

15 November 1968

10. Chemical Operations: The 51st Chemical Detachment of the 173d Airborne Brigade provided chemical support on a standby basis whenever requested by elements of the Brigade. The following missions were accomplished:

a. Herbicide Missions:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>METHOD</u>	<u>AREA</u>	<u>TARGET</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
5 Aug 68	UH-1D with Jerryrig	AO Bolling NW of Tuy Hoa	Rice paddies	2	220 Gal BLUE
15 Aug 68	UH-1D with Jerryrig	AO Bolling North of Cung Son	Rice paddies & Corn	1	75 Gal BLUE
19 Aug 68	UH-1D with Jerryrig	An Khe	Green Line of Camp Radcliff	1	110 Gal BLUE
22 Aug 68	UH-1D	An Khe	Green Line of Camp Radcliff	1	55 Gal BLUE
23 Aug 68	Ground Spray	An Khe	Green Line of Camp Radcliff	1	55 Gal BLUE
26 Aug 68	UH-1D with Jerryrig	AO Cochise FSB Correlgidor (sp)	Perimeter	1	110 Gal BLUE
18 Sept 68	CH-47 with 600 Gal Bladder	LZ Schueller to LZ Action along QL 19	High Grass/Ambush Sites	4	2400 Gal WHITE
18 Sept 68	Ch-47 with 600 Gal Bladder	An Khe Pass Along QL 19 AO Walker	High Grass/Ambush Sites	1	600 Gal WHITE



(continued....)



19 Sept 68	Ch-47 with 600 Gal Bladder	An Khe Pass Along GL 19 AO Walker	High Grass/Ambush Sites	4	2400 Gal WHITE
19 Sept 68	Ch-47 with 600 Gal Bladder	Camp Radcliff An Khe	Grass Along Green Line	3	1800 Gal WHITE
20 Sept 68	Ch-47 with 600 Gal Bladder	Camp Radcliff An Khe	Grass Along Green Line	3	1800 Gal WHITE
20 Sept 68	CH-47 with 600 Gal Bladder	LZ Schueller to LZ Action along QL 19 in AO Walker	High Grass/Ambush Sites	3	1800 Gal WHITE
21 Sept 68	CH-47 with 600 Gal Bladder	Southwest of LZ Action in AO Walker	Tree Line used by Snipers	2	1200 Gal WHITE
6 Oct 68	CH-47 with 600 Gal Bladder	41st Signal Bn Install, Vung Chaw Mtn	Shrubs & Grass in Perimeter	2	1800 Gal WHITE
28 Oct 68	CH-47 with 600 Gal Bladder	Strong Points Between LZ Schueller & LZ Action	Grass Used as Ambush Sites	2	700 Gal WHITE
29 Oct 68	CH-47 with 600 Gal Bladder	Strong Points and Bridge from LZ Schueller to Top of Mang Yang Pass	Grass Used as Ambush Sites	6	1200 Gal ORANGE 2100 Gal WHITE



(2) One MPD operator from the 51st Chemical Detachment supported the 1/50th Mechanized Infantry in AO Walker, flying 31 missions and a total of 45 hours and 25 minutes during August, September and October 1968.

(3) One MPD/APD operator from the 51st Chemical Detachment supported Task Force 173d Airborne Brigade in AO Cochise, flying 67 missions and a total of 94 hours and 30 minutes.

Source: <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/500664.pdf>



US Public Health Service, CDC and VA

Publications by the Public Health Service have shown that Vietnam veterans, overall, have increased rates of cancer, and nerve, digestive, skin, and respiratory disorders. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention notes that in particular, there are higher rates of acute/chronic leukemia, Hodgkin's lymphoma and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, throat cancer, prostate cancer, lung cancer, colon cancer, Ischemic heart disease, soft tissue sarcoma and liver cancer.

With the exception of liver cancer, these are the same conditions the U.S. Veterans Administration has determined may be associated with exposure to Agent Orange/dioxin, and are on the list of conditions eligible for compensation and treatment.

Military personnel who were involved in storage, mixture and transportation (including aircraft mechanics), and actual use of the chemicals were

probably among those who received the heaviest exposures. Military members who served on Okinawa also claim to have been exposed to the chemical but there is no verifiable evidence to corroborate these claims.

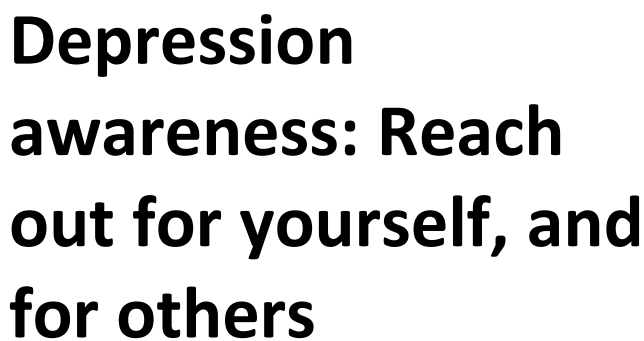
More recent research established that veterans exposed to Agent Orange suffer more than twice the rate of highly aggressive prostate cancer. Additionally, recent reports from the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences show that Agent Orange exposure also doubles the risk of invasive skin cancers.



(continued....)



By April 1993, the Department of Veterans Affairs had compensated only 486 victims, although it had received disability claims from 39,419 soldiers who had been exposed to Agent Orange while serving in Vietnam.



By: Retired Army Master Sgt. Guillermo "Bill" Leal, Jr.

Behavioral health experts say frequent deployments and other aspects of military life can contribute to clinical depression, a condition that negatively impacts mood and behavior. Depression may be more common in the armed forces community than among the civilian population, but it seems to me we still have a culture that may prevent service members from seeking help.

A man with grey hair, wearing sunglasses and a light blue polo shirt, is kneeling on a grassy field. He is leaning his arms on a white, upright gravestone. The gravestone features a cross at the top and the following inscription: "RUBEN E. LEAL", "U.S. ARMY", "PERSIAN GULF", "JAN 1947", "DEC 2014". The background shows a chain-link fence and trees.

(Courtesy photo)

Ruben considered me, his older brother, to be his hero. But truthfully, Ruben was mine. Both of us had come a long way from our troubled childhood.

By December 1991, I was a senior ROTC instructor in San Antonio, and Ruben was a platoon sergeant at Fort Hood. He'd returned from a deployment in the Gulf War several months earlier. We were less than 200 miles apart, but it might as well have been 2,000. We were both so busy that we didn't see each other as often as we should have.

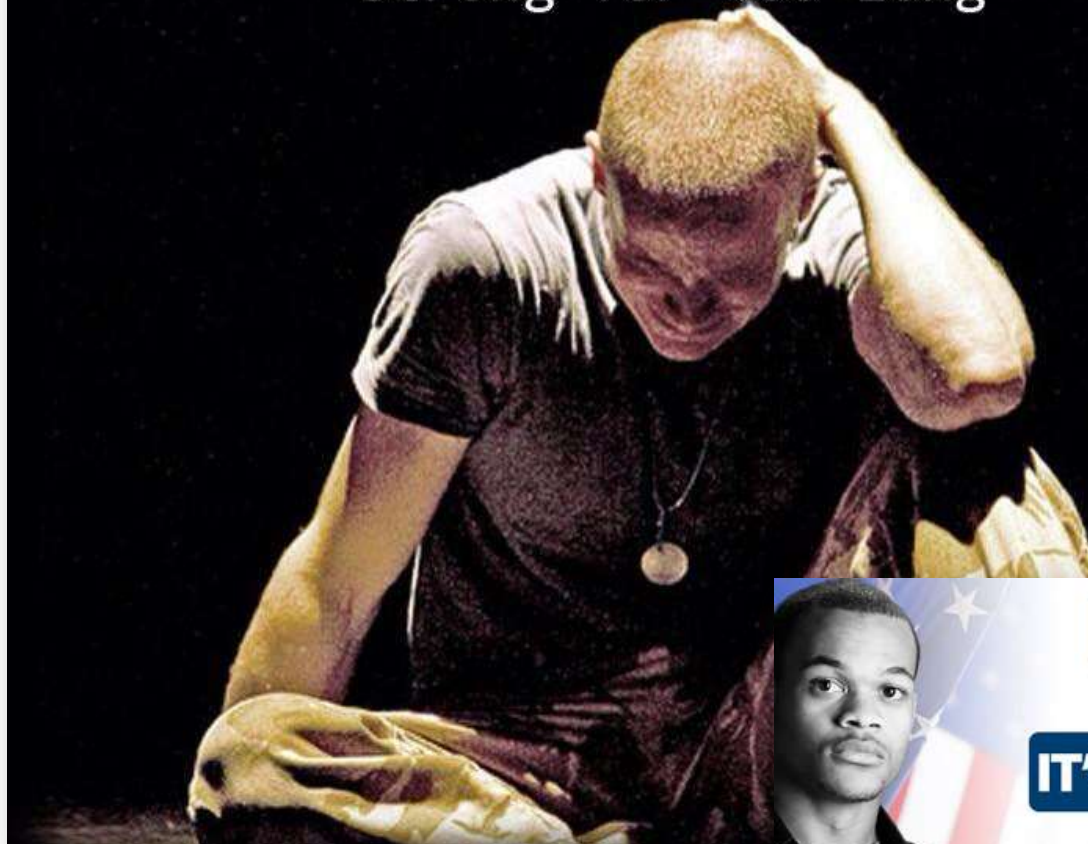
During our telephone conversations, my brother never talked about struggling with depression. Ruben was a proud man, and back then, it wasn't really the Army's way to focus on behavioral health issues after deployment – or really, ever.

Still, I was a trained medic, and Ruben was my brother. When he died by suicide Dec. 4, 1991, I felt tremendously guilty. I realized the signs of depression were there, and I had missed them. I'd missed all of them.

(continued....)



“Depression is not a sign of weakness,
it is a sign that you have been
strong for too long”



I don't blame the military for Ruben's death. I recognize his combat deployment experiences may have been a contributing factor in triggering a clinical depression that had roots in our dysfunctional upbringing. Since his death, I've struggled with depression, too. But I've gotten help, and I want to encourage others to do so as well.

Three years after my brother's death, I retired from the Army and used my GI benefits to earn accreditation as a licensed vocational nurse. Then I completed a two-year registered nurse program. I've dedicated the past eight years of my career to helping patients in the Warrior Transition Unit. A lot of injuries we're seeing today aren't only physical injuries, they're also behavioral health injuries.

This is my mission now: to encourage everyone to recognize the signs of clinical depression so they can get help -- for themselves or for others. Those signs include feeling negative, worthless, or guilty; loss of interest in previously enjoyable activities; sleeping too little or too much; or feeling restless or anxious.

Today, my eyes and ears are open to people who are struggling. I ask them, *"Do you want to talk to me about it? If you do, I'm ready to listen. But if you don't, let's find someone for you to talk to, now. I'll walk with you. I'm here to help."*

I tell people with depression that there's hope. There are a lot of things we can do as health care providers, as senior leaders, as clergy. We can help you, we can get you to the right people. Please let us help you. Opening up is the first step.

We're all in this together. I ask you to reach out to help someone else. I ask you to reach out to help yourself.

Source:

<https://health.mil/News/Articles/2018/10/17/Depression-awareness-Reach-out-for-yourself-and-for-others>

*See Issue 80, Pages 29-31 of our newsletter for details about the *Sergeant Audley Murphy Club*. Ed

(Web images on this page added)



Rest Easy, Commander in Chief Knows How To Prevent WWII

President Trump says he knows more about the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) than Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis.

"Frankly, I like Gen. Mattis. I think I know more about it than he does...And I know more about it from the standpoint of fairness, that I can tell you."

"Trump made the comments when asked whether Mattis, a former four-star Marine general, explained to the commander in chief that NATO was crucial to preventing World War III."



Many believe our country and the world are safer places because of this commander ... while others believe the opposite.



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Readout of Secretary of Defense James N. Mattis' Meeting with Vietnam Minister of National Defense Ngo Xuan Lich

Oct. 17, 2018

Pentagon Chief Spokesperson Dana W. White provided the following readout:

Secretary of Defense James N. Mattis met with Vietnam Minister of National Defense Ngo Xuan Lich for the fifth time today to reaffirm the long-standing defense relationship between the United States and Vietnam.

The leaders discussed a broad range of defense issues, to include increasing cooperation in the areas of maritime security, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and peacekeeping.

They also confirmed close cooperation on addressing legacy of war issues and accounting for U.S. personnel missing from the Vietnam War. Secretary Mattis noted his visit to Bien Hoa Air Base earlier in the day, where he reaffirmed the United States' commitment to clean up dioxin contamination.



James Mattis at Bien Hoa AFB.
(web photo)

The two leaders agreed that a strong and comprehensive partnership promotes regional and global security, including in the South China Sea. This partnership is based on mutual respect and common interests and principles, particularly freedom of navigation, respect for international law, and recognition of national sovereignty.

Source: U.S. DoD





"Cap" in center of photo with SFC Oscar Cruz and a couple of Caps' "Hill People" in '68 just north of the Tiger Mountains taken just before "Packrat" was killed.

Chapter Thirty-Two

Stubbs

Rice Paddies North of Landing Zone English

Morning brought three cloverleaf patrols and Leech Dick inspecting the speed bump on his hog. In time, a tracer would have grazed his pecker and shattered his radio. The veterans at the American Legion Hall would laugh on cue, demanding a picture to verify the account.

"Captain, Uncle's on the hook."

"Charlie Six, this is Five Yankee." Uncle was stretching a serious tone, a cautious base with precise enunciation, casting pictures in a magic lantern.

"Hello, Uncle. Why don't you steal a slick and bring out some of the good times?"

"Here's a good time, Stud. One of your medics got word to the Old Man that you've got seventy-eight cases of advanced jungle rot."

Well, big fuckin' deal, Hardin thought. How about the ass rot, the foot fungus, the boils, the dysentery, and the memory rot? Hell, I have to wipe the back of my hand before I can wipe my ass.

So fuckin' what?

"My medic did that?" Either Doc Taylor or Doc Cosmo was a whore. "Any of the rest of these assholes talkin' to you?" Hardin was goin to butt-stomp the quisling bastard into a fucking whisper for creating this backwash.

"Extraction in thirty minutes, you're in near the beach north of the Tigers. Saltwater and sun should dry things out." A stitch of caution came clumping in Uncle's voice.

"That vill's been hot before," Hardin said.

"Starblazer's got the gunship lead. Intell says it's cold."

Rear-echelon foreplay between the Tiger Mountains and the mouth of the An Lao River. Staff weans were stalking the company at a leisurely pace. The landing zone was one village north of the old woman's hootch.

"Does anybody at higher-higher know about this insertion?" A silence extended itself into some off-mike grumbling as Uncle waited for his RTOs to handle an artillery request.

"No, this is my operation. Be on a pickup zone in thirty minutes."

Hardin gave Stubbs a nod. "Find Doc Taylor."

Packing a face you could never quite remember, his face bound by wire-rimmed sunglasses, and his cock at grips with a foe, Doc Taylor ambled through his day. He did not care a wit about the war, or what Hardin wanted.

"What's happenin', Chuckles?" With a slight pause Hardin smiled. Only a slow dog would hand a handle like Chuckles on his company commander.

Hardin nodded through the steam off his coffee, centered his stare on his latest love child, and said with a grin, "You hippie fuck. Tell me a story about jungle rot."

"Seventy-nine cases: boils so deep we're usin' Tampax to plug the holes."

"You told Uncle we had seventy-eight cases."

"Yeah, well, you're supposed to know better. Some of the dudes have it pretty bad, need to dry out. I slid a note to the resupply pilot."

"You bought the boys a beach party, Doc: South China Sea, white sand, surf."

"Far out." Hardin was thankful that Taylor had cheek and angry that Taylor had not given him a heads-up.

(Pages 442-443, Tiger Mountains)

* * *

The northern slopes of the Tiger Mountains lay muted in dust. The rice paddies were dry. Lost in the boredom of yet another chopper ride, the pagoda's white spire caught his eye.

Listening for the bell, he noted the location of the night ambush, and the kill zone that took Andy's leg.

With outposts in place, joyful dolts, deeming the day to be the best day ever, dug foxholes in the scrub grass near the fringe of the beach. Sandbags blossomed, as if the whole affair was so obvious. Staring with unfocused eyes, Hardin could barely see the surf.

(Digger Dogface Brownjob Grunt continued....)



Curious to know how a three-month man named Norman Ballick had been chosen to replace Tennessee, Amps warned that Norman required remedial wiring to treat his conspicuous wandering. Amps asked Fish to shoot the man so that Packrat could take the radio.

That's when Fish laughed and told Amps that Packrat didn't now a handset from a hand-job, and that Amps should go fuck himself.

Stubbs liked Norman Ballick because he was nearly underfoot and never spoke. He was a studious sort, the type of GI who found significance in any decision, then agonized over the difference. Incremental analysis was his cup-of-joe -- taking words as he might from a broad basket, then gauging them with a caliper so fine his conclusions brought zits to his forehead.

Armed with the most valiant disregard for logic, he would be crazy within a week, uncertainty badgering even his well-founded conclusions.

At length, the thing being done, Hardin decided to mess with the professor. "Tell the platoon to get fifty percent of the studs into the pool, Bull-lock."

Reacting with indignation, Ballick began working a finger into his ear and looking at a map of the new area of operations. His body leaned backward until he adjusted his feet and assumed a brace. He was so stiff an AK round would blow him right out of his boots.

"Fifty percent?" He asked, promoting an impossible tone with a wrinkled brow.

"The last RTO who stood around me pickin' his ass got shot." He sank into a full squat, questioning Hardin's order. "Here's the way combat works, Bull-lock. You do what I tell ya, or I kick your ass. Now, fifty percent in the pool."

"Yes sir." Hardin tapped on the RTO's map, causing Ballick to wait for a question. Relieved, as if a problem had been solved, he stared at the bottom of his foxhole.

"Everything you see on that map belongs to Chuck. His favorite targets are GIs carryin' radios, that's you, and GIs readin' maps, that's also you." Ballick laid his map in the sand, looking for a reason to pick it up.

(Pages 443-444, Tiger Mountains, photo added)

* * *

Cap Prisk (C), with a couple of his men in Chuck's territory, keepin' low.



At 1523 hours, after seven hours of busting dry brush, the point squad mounted a bald, thirty-foot plateau, overlooking rice paddies on three sides.

"Tag, stop the parade. Lima's got a busted ruck."

"This place don't feel good, Captain." Amps had started chewing tobacco.

The company dug in contrary to habit. First Platoon took the northern sector at the finger end of the plateau facing the An Lao River.

Sitting against the trunk of a palm tree on the western rim of the plateau, talking with the Missouri contingent of Second Platoon, scanning the rice paddy, Hardin spotted the field where Andy lost his leg. As he said good-bye again, the image of the dog handler's outstretched arm appeared on the face of the palm grove, the man's hand cinched around the leash.

It was Stubbs' stories that kept this image fresh.



Some of Cap Prisk's Hill People

Jerking the leash from the handler's fist, as if separating him from his dead scout dog might somehow wake him, Hardin found himself dragging Dig-it's body, all the while listening to Shadow sing "The Shadow of Your Smile." When the muffled concussion of a buried 105mm artillery shell pushed across the plateau, he ran toward the billowing dust. Jungle boots never weighed so much.

(Digger Dogface Brownjob Grunt continued....)



Packrat lay shredded in the bottom of the shell crater, charred with black powder. Reynolds stood without moving, stunned, his frame covered with scraps of his friend. As if awakened he began screaming into the depression, "Oh, God! Oh, God!" gasping and throwing his rage.

Doc Taylor threw a piece of bone fragment into the air. Packrat didn't notice. He was a lacerated tangle of meat, blood, torn limbs, and blackened flesh. Two medics worked to stop his death – morphine, tourniquets and a poncho.

Stubbs pushed GIs away from the crater – booby traps came in pairs. "Get back to your positions, goddammit!" He yelled again, this time pushing LeCotte and Boyle.

Reynolds placed a cigarette between Packrat's charred lips and said good-bye. The cigarette waited for him to look away, then fell into the confusion. As if miming the explosion, Reynolds threw his hands into the air. Talking, he lingered near the crater.

"He's fucked, ain't he, Doc?"

"Shut up, Reynolds," Stubbs said, continuing to clear GIs from around the crater.

When the medics pulled Packrat out of the hole, his lifeless body gliding on a poncho, Grumpy screamed and threw his arms into the air. Grumpy had been standing between Packrat and Reynolds negotiating radio watch schedules. When the booby trap exploded Packrat set sail, flying, waving his limbs and throwing his boots, his helmet arcing from his head.

Struck by the odor of blood, Hardin confronted Stubbs, his voice quietly strained. "Stubbs, if you know I'm makin' a mistake, ya gotta do somethin' about it."

Stubbs lit a cigarette and waited for the smoke to clear his mouth before he spoke. "God damn you, Captain. Shit is gonna get dealt our way and you ain't gonna stop that. We're all gonna die. Just that some of us jokers will still be walkin' when it's over."

"Give me a cigarette, Stubbs." Stubbs gave Hardin the finger and walked away.

(Pages 446-448, Tiger Mountains, photo added)

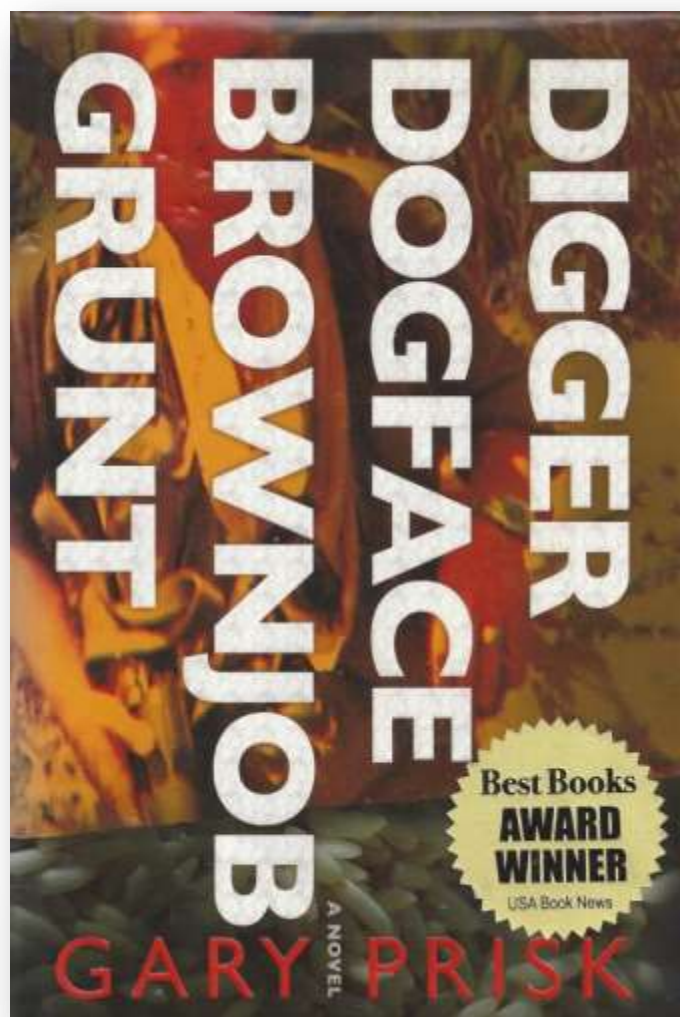
GARY PRISK didn't research the Vietnam War, he lived it. His six years of active duty as a regular army infantry officer took him through Vietnam as an army paratrooper and ranger as well as to Germany and a teaching stint at the University of California, Davis. Though he became a successful businessman, contractor,



and home builder in 1970, with some side trips into teaching college classes in finance, he served in the early 1990s helping coordinate deployment to Saudi Arabia for Desert Storm.

Gary holds degrees in engineering and finance from the University of Washington. He has been married since 1966 and he and his wife settled on Bainbridge Island, Washington, in 1972. He began writing in 1988 and is currently working on two high action novels, both about aspects of WWII.

"Take a full-immersion dip into the hellhole of 1960's Vietnam. Crawl inside the head of Lt. Edward Hardin and walk the tightrope between sanity and the surreal reality that surround and envelop him. Live with the never ending tension of waiting for the one little mistake that will end it all for you or the men you have sworn to get through today...and the next day..."



Available on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)



Saluting our brothers of the 1/503d

In 1996, our former brigade commander, the late Major General Ellis W. 'Butch' Williamson, put the word out to his troopers he wanted personal accounts of Operation Hump and the battles of November 8, 1965, to be recorded for all time in the archives of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep). Here is an accounting from our 1/503 good buddy, John 'Dutch' Holland, detailing his own harrowing experience and the great sacrifices made by him and his buddies during that fateful operation in November 53 years ago. Related photos from Dutch's collection have been added to his report.

ATW Dutch! Ed



MG Williamson

When we arrived at the LZ the Hueys were unassisted in the normal chaotic fashion for an area assumed to be hot or full of enemy. But in short order the troops had formed into their respective units and vacated the landing zone for the security of the jungle.



Dutch



Hitting LZ King

MY RECALL OF OPERATION HUMP

3 September 1996

By John 'Dutch' Holland
Co. 'B' 1/503rd Inf, 173d Abn Bde
3rd Squad, 2nd Platoon, 1965-66



"SSG Theodore Shamblin (in Combat Gear) 3rd Sqd, 2nd Plt Ldr, B/1/503rd (1965), discussing landing of Hueys at The Snake Pit (Bien Hoa, VietNam)"

When the companies had assembled we began the tedious task of patrolling the dense, hot, and very humid jungle in search of Viet Cong. We patrolled for a couple of days with no enemy contact at all. At night we'd sit into defensive perimeters with half on full alert while the other half slept. This kind of routine will quickly wear down the best of soldiers because we stayed on edge expecting to fight the enemy instead of the difficult elements presented by this unforgiving terrain.

Then on the morning of November 8, while we were patrolling our area of operation all kinds of automatic weapons fire resounded from over the ridgeline where one of our sister companies was operating. We began joking about Charlie Company finding a sniper in the trees and blowing the branches out from under him. Little did we know that they had stepped into an ambush and were getting their shit shot away while fighting for their lives....

(continued....)



... We were ordered to advance over the ridge and support them but as we began to move, artillery started bursting in the tree tops and raining frag down on us. A few of our platoon were wounded by shrapnel and couldn't be evacuated because of the denseness of the jungle -- so the platoon was split leaving some of us behind to care for and defend the wounded while the rest advanced to Charlie Company's support.

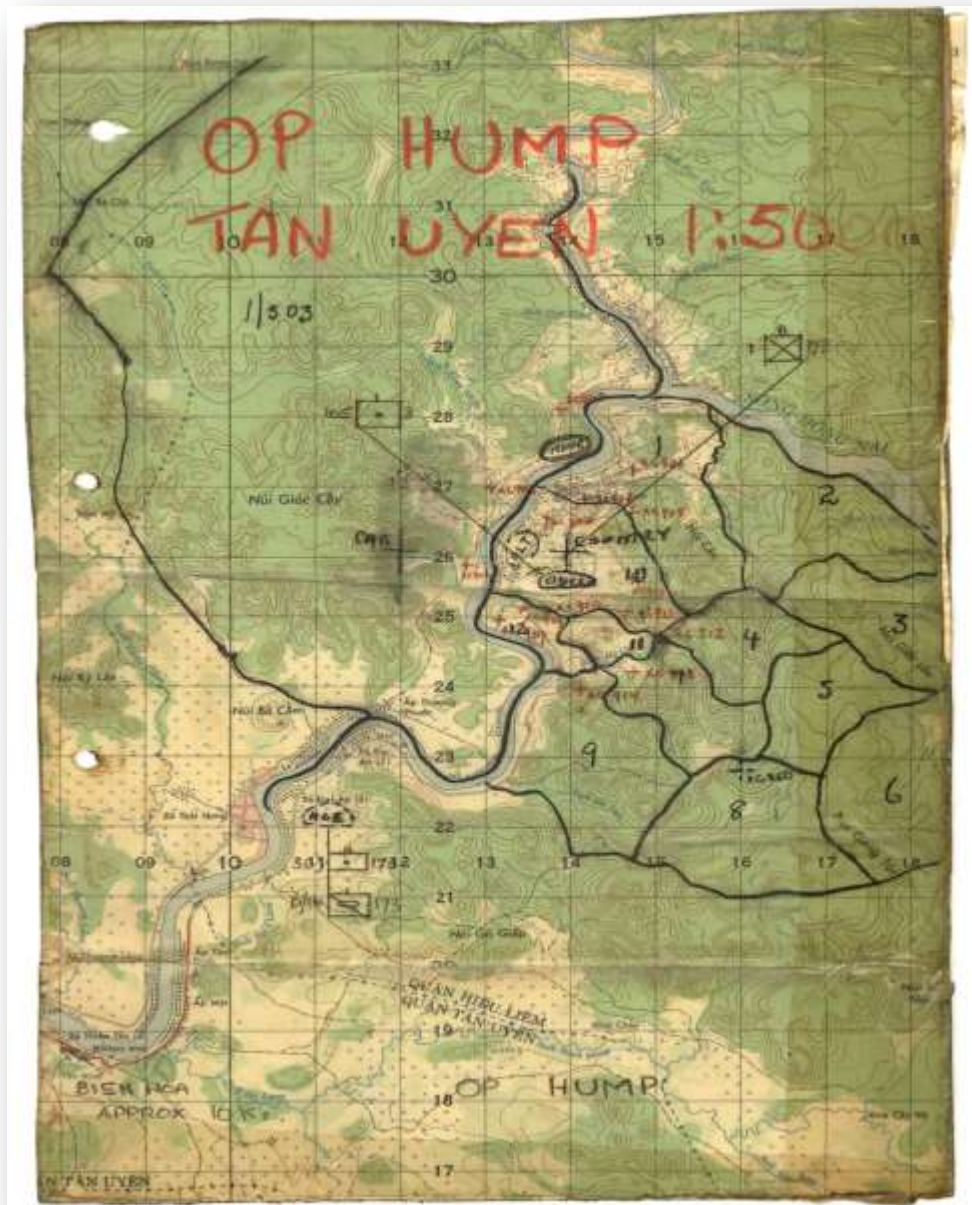
I was to the right of the trail we'd come up with dense undergrowth partly hiding me when I saw what looked like Americans coming up the trail. These bastards were wearing fatigues, helmets, backpacks, and walked as though they were expecting friendlies in the area. I whispered to my squad leader, SSgt. Theodore Shamblin, that it looked like friendlies were coming up on our rear. He looked through the

undergrowth and also mistook them for our troops and hollered "*B Company, Second Platoon,*" and it was a deadly error on both our parts. While facing back down the trail that put the rise to our left, that's where the enemy immediately set up their RPD on the top of the slope with the others flanking it on each side of us.

The first to die was a young kid whose name I can't recall...he was no more than a couple of meters from their machine gun when it cut him down. Even as he laid there dead the sons of bitches continued to fire into his body literally tearing him apart. No more than two to three meters behind him was Everett Goias and I behind a small log but directly in the RPD's field of fire. I heard Goias kind of grunt as the first round struck him, and as I looked over I could see smoke from a WP round coming out of his right shoulder yet he continued to fire around the end of the log. I knew that this dead tree wouldn't stand up to much more of this intense small arms fire and that we were too close for a frag grenade when the inane thought hit me of tossing the tear gas canister I was carrying. When I threw it a small branch to our front interrupted its flight and it

burst rather close to us. No matter what anyone says, concentrated tear gas will make you move regardless of the event. No way could we remain there so I started helping Goias down the hill and to our advantage the RPD stopped, probably to relocate from the gas.

(continued....)



AO Operation Hump

We had set into a small clearing about twenty by thirty meters in area. It elevated to our right and was densely surrounded by foliage with a dry ravine at the bottom of the elevation. This ravine would be the assembly point of the few left living. Security was placed facing the trail we'd just come up and forward where the rest of the platoon had gone to support Charlie Company.



We weren't more than a few feet from the log when an enemy grenade hit me right on the side of my helmet and with all the firing still coming in from our flanks there wasn't much I could do but turn my head and wait for it to blow, but luckily it was a dud as so many of their mortars and grenades were. As we continued our slow and dangerous trek down the hill another grenade hit and rolled right up to us and after an eternity of waiting it also failed to detonate.

When we reached the main group most of them were dead with the remainder pouring heaving volumes of fire into the enemy's positions and the only reason they had survived was because the dead were sheltering them with their bodies. About the time we reached them my blood nearly turned to ice as Charlie blew that damned one-note bugle and they charged into the clearing camouflaged with small tree branches and screaming their fuckin' heads off. Us left living fired everything we could find to stop this suicidal mad assault and thanks to the ammo of the dead it was a temporary success. I mention the ammo of the dead being essential in surviving their fanatical charge because at that time each trooper took five hundred rounds of ammunition to the field but only seven magazines because of a supply shortage and in the heat of battle reloading is next to impossible.

After we stopped their attempt to overrun us they went back to firing from the jungle. Then heavy small arms fire started coming in from behind us on the other side of the dry ravine and it wasn't hard realizing they were Americans by the sharp crack of the M-16 rifles. The automatic fire didn't last long, then all fire ceased by both sides, and during the lull I hollered "*B Company over here!*" Again it was a deadly mistake because the patrol poured automatic fire into our position. Between these volleys fired on us by one of our patrols I told Goias he was on his way home with the million dollar wound but he never made it. When the second burst was fired in on us I was holding this brave man's head and looking into his eyes, and unlike action movies there was no cry of pain, distortion of features or animated facial expressions...instead, his eyes just lost their glow of life and I knew he was dead from friendly fire.



Sp4 Everett Goias, KIA

It's a shame that some died from what's referred to as 'friendly fire' but I for one found nothing friendly about it. But after all these years I feel no one person is responsible, we all tried our damned best to protect our fellow soldiers as well as ourselves but in a situation as we had that day errors occur...it's a sad fact of war.

At one point I thought I was the only one left alive and began slowly crawling back down toward the dry ravine when Jerry Langston came inching up from that direction. I was sure he'd lost his mind going back toward the area that had been the main field of fire. But of the two of us Jerry was the only one thinking rationally at the time and was going to the field radio which by some miracle was still operational after so many had died while trying to use it. He did make contact and led a patrol in by firing a .45 caliber pistol for them to guide in on. The patrol arrived in record time and checked out the jungle from where the enemy had been firing, and I heard one say that dead Charlies were everywhere. I later thought that was a small tribute to the gallant men who gave their all in the short but very intense battle for survival.

The patrol was small and needed some for security while others removed the wounded, so the more seriously wounded were taken first, such as Russo and Shamblin. I knew Russo was still alive because when the patrol arrived he was screaming, "*Give me some water I'm dying!*" The troopers who took Russo returned rather quickly so I thought the battalion perimeter couldn't be far away. I opted to put my arm around a trooper's shoulders instead of tying up two with a makeshift stretcher to get out of there. I had a small piece of my scalp shot away, the flesh over the end of my right shoulder blade was loaded with a piece of frag, and my right buttocks was mostly gone from a round out of the RPD. But, I hadn't lost so much blood that I couldn't move myself with some support.

A very short distance from our battle site a sniper fired on us and I was dropped to the ground. I then realized why they had returned so fast after taking Russo because there he lay. He died and the troops left him to return for the living but his body was later recovered with all the rest.



PFC Michael Russo, KIA

(continued....)



The soldier who dropped me as the sniper fired I never saw again but I was aided the rest of the way to the battalion perimeter by SSgt. Bernoski.

When the companies were united it was too late in the evening for a crew to cut out a MEDAVAC landing area so it meant a long night in an unsecured jungle. By then I was really keyed up and almost came unglued at every sharp noise, especially recon by fire from inside our perimeter. When the first light of day came I really realized the extreme of the battle as I lay among the wounded and dead, and watched the medics in their futile efforts at keeping some of the very seriously wounded alive.

It was some time before a clearing could be cut to get the Hueys in but the Air Force brought in a little ugly helicopter with off-set rotors that could remain stationary in flight. This little chopper also had a power winch which they utilized to get a few of our dying soldiers out and to emergency surgery.

Finally, a clearing was cut through the very unyielding foliage and they started bringing in the single runs of Hueys to evacuate the wounded. I remember getting on the craft but I can't recall any of the trip back to Bien Hoa, so I guess that much-needed sleep finally overcame me. When they off-loaded us at the surgical unit in Bien Hoa we received immediate life-saving surgery, then we were shipped to Saigon where follow-up operations and infection control were performed before most of us were sent out of country for final recuperating procedures.

As you read my description of our isolated battle you're probably thinking we had a force larger than we did, but in reality we had only eighteen men. Of those eighteen only five were living when the patrol arrived and of those five two died leaving only three survivors.



SSgt. Bernoski

I've thought of that fight for life many times over the years and to this day don't realize how any of us lived against such odds. They were in the wood line while we were in a clearing, they had the high ground with a machine gun above us, they drastically out-numbered us, we had no mortar or artillery support, and they put a suicide charge on us in a confined area, but we did have one huge advantage over them, we were American paratroopers who wouldn't say die!

While in the Saigon hospital, General Westmoreland came in to present our wounded with Purple Hearts and tell us the 1st Battalion had been put in for a Unit Citation, but the excitement wasn't to last for long before I learned that SSgt. Theodore Shamblin, my squad leader, died in surgery after overcoming all the damned odds of making it out of hell alive.



SSgt. Shamblin, KIA



Inscription: After the battle of Hill 65 (8-Nov-65). This photo was taken by Sam Scriminger inside the battalion perimeter probably on the morning of the 9th of Nov.

[Provided by Craig Ford, C/1/503d]



Operation Hump

November 8, 1965

~ Presidential Unit Citation ~

DISTINGUISHED UNIT CITATION. Award of the Distinguished Unit Citation by the President of the United States of America to the following units of the Armed Forces of the United States is confirmed in accordance with paragraph 194, AR 672-5-1. The text of the citation as announced by President Lyndon B. Johnson on 20 June 1966 reads as follows:

By virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States I have today (20 June 1966) awarded the Distinguished Unit Citation (First Oak Leaf Cluster) for extraordinary heroism to:

**THE 1ST BATTALION (AIRBORNE), 503D INFANTRY,
173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)**

**UNITED STATES ARMY
and the Attached Units....**

**HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS COMPANY,
COMPANY A, COMPANY B, AND COMPANY C
of the**

**1ST BATTALION (AIRBORNE), 503D INFANTRY,
173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE),**

**THE 1ST TEAM OF THE 3D RADIO RELAY UNIT,
THE COMPOSITE SQUAD OF THE
173D ENGINEER COMPANY**



The foregoing companies of and units attached to THE 1ST BATTALION (AIRBORNE), 503D INFANTRY, 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE) distinguished themselves by extraordinary heroism in action against hostile forces in the vicinity of Bien Hoa, Republic of Vietnam on 8 November 1965. The morning after the

Battalion had conducted a search operation and learned from patrols that a strong hostile element was in the general area, COMPANY C, the lead Company, encountered a well-entrenched Viet Cong force. When the insurgents opened fire with a volume of automatic weapons fire, the United States forces retaliated. As the battle grew in intensity and it became evident that COMPANY C had engaged a battalion-size Viet Cong element which attempted to surround the flanks of this American unit, COMPANY B was committed to secure the right flank of COMPANY C. Simultaneously, elements of COMPANY A attacked the left flank of the insurgent force. Although COMPANY B met strong resistance and fought at close range in a dense jungle area, it succeeded in penetrating the hostile circle around COMPANY C. Then, as COMPANY B's open flank was being enveloped, the brave men of this Company broke a hostile encirclement for the second time. Despite the constant casualties sustained by the American units, the gallant and determined troops of the 1ST BATTALION (AIRBORNE), 503D INFANTRY repulsed the Viet Cong and inflicted severe losses upon them. After a battle which raged throughout the afternoon, elements of THE 1ST BATTALION (AIRBORNE), 503D INFANTRY defeated a numerically superior hostile force and on the following morning, counted four hundred and three Viet Cong dead in the immediate area. The devotion to duty, perseverance, and extraordinary heroism displayed by these members of THE 1ST BATTALION (AIRBORNE), 503D INFANTRY and the attached units are in the highest traditions of the United States Army and reflect great credit upon themselves and the armed forces of their country."

Note: An error was made in the administrative command during the issuance of the Presidential Unit Citation (PUC) to the 1/503d for Hill 65. The Distinguished Unit Citation (DUC), at the time, was rated above the Presidential Unit Citation, until it was abolished making the PUC the highest award a unit could receive. The action to do so was done shortly before the 1/503d was awarded the citation yet the effective date of the change was overlooked. As the DUC no longer existed, the award to the 1/503d and attached units reverted to the PUC. Captured enemy documents later indicated over 800 Viet Cong perished in the battle.



Craig Dwight Ford

C/1/503, '65/'66, RVN

April 9, 1945 - September 16, 2018

Craig Dwight Ford died peacefully at home on Sunday 16 September 2018. Craig was born in Canaan, CT on 9 April 1945 to Barbara Osborne Ford Gales and Kenneth C. Ford. He lived through high school in Clayton, MA, Canaan and Madison, CT. Shortly after graduating from high school, he joined the Army completing his basic at Fort Dix, NJ. He graduated from Airborne School at Fort Benning, GA in 1964 and was sent to serve fourteen months in Okinawa in the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep).



On 5 May, 1965, his brigade was sent to Vietnam where he served until April 1966. He was the Radiotelephone Operator (RTO) for 1/503 Charlie Company on Hill 65 during Operation Hump in November 1965. This operation was memorialized in a song by Big and Rich – “The Eighth of November”.

Returning home and leaving the Army as an E5, he started his career in construction in CT, PA, and WA. He worked for Washington Natural Gas and retired from Puget Sound Energy in 2010 after 29 years.

Craig loved nature and finally bought his home away from home in Eastern WA where he loved to go. He also loved the members of his former Army Airborne Brigade and was very active in the local WA chapter of the 173d. He was also very instrumental with other board members in building a Memorial for the 173d just outside Fort Benning, GA. As the 173d has never been stationed on US soil, the Board felt they needed a place in the United States. The Memorial was started in 2006 and completed and dedicated in 2010.

He also loved Youth Hockey and was very active with Seattle Junior Hockey Association. In the early 1980's Fred Chomos, Kip Voorhees and Craig spent many hours working on the Beginner Hockey Program and coaching, managing, traveling and acquiring equipment for the boys and girls who wanted to play hockey. He was a member of the Board of Directors for many years and was Vice President for a number of years. He loved his time being part of youth hockey.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his step father, Thomas Gales and his younger sister, Cheryl Ford. He leaves behind his loving wife of 47 years, Pat Trefny Ford, his son Ian Ford and his daughter Jessica Ford Hofman (Kyle) and four grandsons – Damian and Noah Ford and Carter and Kaden Hofman. He also leaves behind an extended family and friends.

A Celebration of Life was held for Craig on October 21, in Edmonds, WA. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the 173d Airborne Memorial for an Endowment Fund to maintain the memorial.

<http://www.173dairbornememorial.org/funding/> Where it says “Add Special Instructions to the Seller”, you may add In Memory of Craig Ford.

To us he will always be **“1st Bat Guy”**

From His 2/503 Buddies:

In February 2001, Craig was the only trooper of the 1/503d to join a group of his brothers of the 2/503d on a return trip to Vietnam. It was there we gave him the nickname “1st Bat Guy”, which he always got a kick out of.



Craig is in third row second from right in striped shirt in this photo taken during a day trip to the tunnels of Cu Chi, Vietnam.

Craig was one of a kind, a good man, a good husband and father, a good friend and good soldier. We'll always remember you 1st Bat Guy. *ATW Craig!*

Rest easy with your fellow warriors brother.





Edwin "Doc" Pepping, left, and Albert "Al" Mampre, right, both served as combat medics attached to Easy Company during World War II. (Photo courtesy of Matthew Pepping)

D-Day through the eyes of a combat medic, 73 years later

6/6/2017

By: Military Health System Communications Office

Military Medical History

They trained with infantry soldiers, carrying first aid kits instead of weapons. They dodged bullets to tend to wounded soldiers, sometimes with whatever supplies they could find. And even in the midst of thick combat, they remained steadily focused on their mission of saving lives. They were the combat medics of World War II.

No amount of training or planning could have prepared them for the casualties inflicted during the largest amphibious assault in history: the Allied invasion of Europe, commonly known as D-Day.

"Boy Scouts was the closest thing to medical training I had before that," said Private First Class Edwin Pepping, who was just 21 years old at the time. *"But you didn't have a chance to be nervous."*

In preparation for ground combat after Pearl Harbor, the United States Army hurried to create a ready force.

Medical units made up of individuals of both military and civilian background were gathered and trained. Their duties included treating minor injuries, applying splints and tourniquets, and bandaging wounds. Known as "band-aid bandits" to their comrades, Pepping and Staff Sgt. Albert Mampre were attached to Easy Company, 2nd Battalion of the 506th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division also known as the *"Band of Brothers."*

Seventy-three years ago today, the U.S. took part in the invasion of Normandy, which would ultimately be the turning point of the war in Europe. More than 13,000 aircraft and 5,000 ships were used in the D-Day landing, which was part of Operation Overlord. In the early morning hours of June 6, 1944, Pepping boarded a C-47 transport for the big jump. But as often happens in combat, the plan didn't go as expected.

"We were supposed to be dropped at 700 feet at 95 miles per hour, which was enough to get our parachute to open and get our equipment down safely, but they dropped us at 300 feet at 165 miles per hour, which is almost impossible to survive," said Pepping, who turns 95 in July.

(continued....)



As Pepping jumped, he was hit by a high speed gust of air that ripped 125 pounds worth of supplies off of him. His parachute opened at the same time, causing him to violently spin before falling to the ground. He hit the ground so hard that his own strapped helmet flew back and knocked him in the neck, leading to a concussion and three cracked vertebrae.

After landing near the town of Angoville-au-Plain behind Utah Beach, Pepping spent the next several hours helping another medic, Willard Moore, bring severely combat-wounded soldiers to a makeshift aid station in a nearby church. Moore drove the jeep while Pepping loaded his wounded and nursed them until they got back to the church, he said.



(Image added from National Archives' website)

"There were so many catastrophic wounds that a lot of the time it was beyond us to do anything except to see if we could get a doctor to help,"
said Pepping.

Two other medics treated patients at the aid station. They used whatever medical supplies they could find after losing most of theirs in the jump, and they treated whomever they found – American, French, and German alike. Together, they saved more than 80 lives that day.

"When we flew into Normandy, we met some very, very serious cases and a lot of the time we didn't know exactly how to handle them," said Pepping, adding that it taught him perseverance. Today, the church serves as a memorial. The blood stains where the wounded were laid remain on the pews.



One of the blood-stained pews at Angoville-au-Plain church.
(Web photo added)

"A sense of humor is really what saved us," said Pepping, who said the biggest lesson he learned as a medic was to duck. *"You couldn't make it through the war without it."* Although medics were unarmed, they were identified by the Red Cross symbol on their helmets and arm bands. Even so, they weren't always spared as a target.

Mampre, who had to miss the jump on D-Day after coming down with a severe infection just a few days before, went on to receive the Purple Heart for action in Holland. After spotting a wounded lieutenant in a field, he was told the soldier was dead and best left alone. Mampre ran out to him through heavy gunfire and found him alive. Despite being shot through the leg, he and the lieutenant made it to safety and survived.

"I'd do it all over again," said Mampre about being a combat medic. *"But if they need me again at 95 years old, boy we're in trouble."*

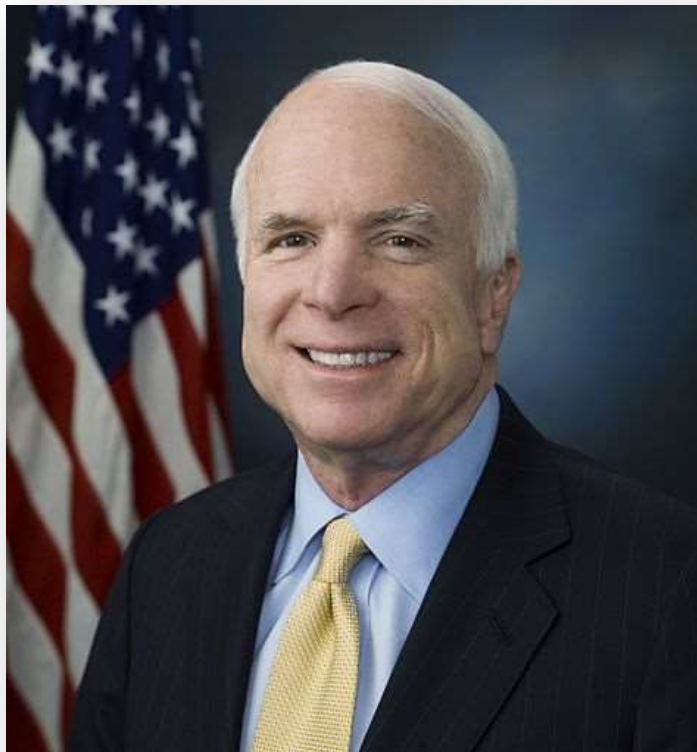
Source:

<https://health.mil/News/Articles/2017/06/06/DDay-through-the-eyes-of-a-combat-medic-73-years-later>



"My name is Joe Biden. I'm a Democrat. And I loved John McCain."

Aug 30, 2018



Senator John McCain

"My name is Joe Biden. I'm a Democrat. And I loved John McCain. I have had the dubious honor over the years of giving some eulogies for fine women and men that I've admired. But, Lindsey, this one's hard.

The three men who spoke before me I think captured John, different aspects of John in a way that only someone close to him could understand. But the way I look at it, the way I thought about it, was that I always thought of John as a brother. We had a hell of a lot of family fights. We go back a long way. I was a young United States Senator. I got elected when I was 29. I had the dubious distinction of being put on the formulations committee, which the next youngest person was 14 years older than me. And I spent a lot of time traveling the world because I was assigned responsibility, my colleagues in the Senate knew I was chairman of the European Affairs subcommittee, so I spent a lot of time at NATO and then the Soviet Union.

Along came a guy a couple of years later, a guy I knew of, admired from afar, your husband, who had been a prisoner of war, who had endured enormous, enormous pain and suffering. And demonstrated the

code, the McCain code. People don't think much about it today, but imagine having already known the pain you were likely to endure, and being offered the opportunity to go home, but saying no. As his son can tell you in the Navy, last one in, last one out.

So I knew of John, and John became the Navy liaison officer in the United States Senate. There's an office, then it used to be on the basement floor, of members of the military who are assigned to senators when they travel abroad to meet with heads of state or other foreign dignitaries. And John had been recently released from the Hanol Hilton, a genuine hero, and he became the Navy liaison. For some reason we hit it off in the beginning. We were both full of dreams and ambitions and an overwhelming desire to make the time we had there worthwhile. To try to do the right thing. To think about how we could make things better for the country we loved so much.

John and I ended up traveling every time I went anywhere. I took John with me or John took me with him. We were in China, Japan, Russia, Germany, France, England, Turkey, all over the world. Tens of thousands of miles. And we would sit on that plane and late into the night, when everyone else was asleep, and just talk. Getting to know one another. We'd talk about family, we'd talk about politics, we'd talk about international relations. We'd talk about promise, the promise of America. Because we were both cockeyed optimists and believed there's not a single thing, beyond the capacity of this country. I mean, for real, not a single thing.

And, when you get to know another woman or man, you begin to know their hopes and their fears, you get to know their family even before you meet them, you get to know how they feel about important things. We talked about everything except captivity and the loss of my family which had just occurred, my wife and daughter, the only two things we didn't talk about.

But, I found that it wasn't too long into John's duties that Jill and I got married. Jill is here with me today. Five years, I had been a single dad and no man deserves one great love, let alone two. And I met Jill. It changed my life. She fell in love with him and he with her. He'd always call her, as Lindsey would travel with her, Jilly. Matter of fact, when they got bored being with me on these trips, I remember in Greece, he said, 'Why don't I take Jill for dinner?' Later, I would learn they are at a cafe at the port and he has her dancing on top of a cement table drinking uzo. Not a joke. Jilly. Right, Jilly?

(continued....)



But we got to know each other well and he loved my son Beau and my son Hunt. As a young man, he came up to my house and he came up to Wilmington and out of this grew a great friendship that transcended whatever political differences we had or later developed because, above all, above all, we understood the same thing. All politics is personal. It's all about trust. I trusted John with my life and I would and I think he would trust me with his. And as our life progressed, we learned more, there are times when life can be so cruel, pain so blinding it's hard to see anything else.

The disease that took John's life took our mutual friend's, Teddy [Kennedy's] life, the exact same disease nine years ago, a couple days ago, and three years ago, took my beautiful son Beau's life. It's brutal. It's relentless. It's unforgiving. And it takes so much from those we love and from the families who love them that in order to survive, we have to remember how they lived, not how they died. I carry with me an image of Beau, sitting out in a little lake we live on, starting a motor on an old boat and smiling away. Not the last days. I'm sure Vickie Kennedy has her own image, looking, seeing Teddy looking so alive in a sailboat, out in the Cape. For the family, for the family, you will all find your own images, whether it's remembering his smile, his laugh or that touch in the shoulder or running his hand down your cheek. Or, just feeling like someone is looking, turn and see him just smiling at you, from a distance, just looking at you. Or when you saw the pure joy the moment he was about to take the stage on the Senate floor and start a fight.

God, he loved it. So, to Cindy, the kids, Doug, Andy, Cindy, Meghan, Jack, Jimmy, Bridget, and I know she's not here, but to Mrs. McCain, we know how difficult it is to bury a child, Mrs. McCain. My heart goes out to you. And I know right now, the pain you all are feeling is so sharp and so hollowing. And John's absence is all consuming, for all of you right now. It's like being sucked into a black hole inside your chest. And it's frightening. But, I know something else, unfortunately, from experience. There's nothing anyone can say or do to ease the pain right now. But I pray, I pray you take some comfort knowing that because you shared John with all of us, your whole life, the world now shares with you in the ache of John's death.

Look around this magnificent church. Look what you saw coming from the state capitol yesterday. It's hard to stand there but part of it, part of it was at least it was for me with Beau, standing in the state capitol, you knew. It was genuine. It was deep. He touched so many lives. I've gotten calls not just because people knew we were friends, not just from people around the country, but leaders around the world calling. Meghan,

I'm getting all these sympathy letters. I mean, hundreds of them, and tweets.

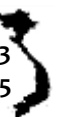
Character is destiny. John had character. While others will miss his leadership, passion, even his stubbornness, you are going to miss that hand on your shoulder. Family, you are going to miss the man, faithful man as he was, who you knew would literally give his life for you. And for that there's no balm but time. Time and your memories of a life lived well and lived fully.

But I make you a promise. I promise you, the time will come that what's going to happen is six months will go by and everybody is going to think, well, it's passed. But you are going to ride by that field or smell that fragrance or see that flashing image. You are going to feel like you did the day you got the news. But you know you are going to make it. The image of your dad, your husband, your friend. It crosses your mind and a smile comes to your lips before a tear to your eye. That's who you know. I promise you, I give you my word, I promise you, this I know. The day will come. That day will come.

You know, I'm sure if my former colleagues who worked with John, I'm sure there's people who said to you not only now, but the last ten years, 'Explain this guy to me.' Right? Explain this guy to me. Because, as they looked at him, in one sense they admired him, in one sense, the way things changed so much in America, they look at him as if John came from another age, lived by a different code, an ancient, antiquated courage, integrity, duty, were alive. That was obvious how John lived his life. The truth is, John's code was ageless, is ageless. When you talked earlier, Grant, you talked about values. It wasn't about politics with John. He could disagree on substance, but the underlying values that animated everything John did, everything he was, come to a different conclusion. He'd part company with you, if you lacked the basic values of decency, respect, knowing this project is bigger than yourself.

John's story is an American story. It's not hyperbole. It's the American story. Grounded in respect and decency. Basic fairness. The intolerance through the abuse of power. Many of you travel the world, look how the rest of the world looks at us. They look at us a little naive, so fair, so decent. We are the naive Americans. That's who we are. That's who John was. He could not stand the abuse of power. Wherever he saw it, in whatever form, in whatever ways....

(continued....)



....He loved basic values, fairness, honesty, dignity, respect, giving hate no safe harbor, leaving no one behind and understanding Americans were part of something much bigger than ourselves.

With John, it was a value set that was neither selfish nor self-serving. John understood that America was first and foremost, an idea. Audacious and risky, organized around not tribe but ideals. Think of how he approached every issue. The ideals that Americans rallied around for 200 years, the ideals of the world has prepared you. Sounds corny. We hold these truths self-evident, that all men are created equal, endowed by their creator with certain rights. To John, those words had meaning, as they have for every great patriot who's ever served this country.

We both loved the Senate. The proudest years of my life were being a United States Senator. I was honored to be Vice President, but a United States Senator. We both lamented, watching it change. During the long debates in the '80s and '90s, I would go sit next to John, next to his seat or he would come on the Democratic side and sit next to me. I'm not joking. We'd sit there and talk to each other. I came out to see John, we were reminiscing around it. It was '96, about to go to the caucus. We both went into our caucus and coincidentally, we were approached by our caucus leaders with the same thing. Joe, it doesn't look good, you sitting next to John all the time. I swear to God. same thing was said to John in your caucus.

That's when things began to change for the worse in America in the Senate. That's when it changed. What happened was, at those times, it was always appropriate to challenge another Senator's judgment, but never appropriate to challenge their motive. When you challenge their motive, it's impossible to get to go. If I say you are doing this because you are being paid off or you are doing it because you are not a good Christian or this, that, or the other thing, it's impossible to reach consensus. Think about in your personal lives. All we do today is attack the oppositions of both parties, their motives, not the substance of their argument. This is the mid-'90s. It began to go downhill from there. The last day John was on the Senate floor, what was he fighting to do? He was fighting to restore what you call regular order, just start to treat one another again, like we used to.

The Senate was never perfect, John, you know that. We were there a long time together. I watched Teddy Kennedy and James O. Eastland fight like hell on civil rights and then go have lunch together, down in the Senate dining room. John wanted to see, "regular order" writ large. Get to know one another. You know, John and I were both amused and I think Lindsey was at

one of these events where John and I received two prestigious awards where the last year I was vice president and one immediately after, for our dignity and respect we showed to one another, we received an award for civility in public life. Allegheny College puts out this award every year for bipartisanship. John and I looked at each and said, 'What the hell is going on here?' No, not a joke. I said to Senator Flake, that's how it's supposed to be. We get an award? I'm serious. Think about this. Getting an award for your civility. Getting an award for bipartisanship. Classic John, Allegheny College, hundreds of people, got the award and the Senate was in session. He spoke first and, as he walked off the stage and I walked on, he said, Joe, don't take it personally, but I don't want to hear what the hell you have to say, and left.

One of John's major campaign people is now with the senate with the governor of Ohio, was on [TV] this morning and I happened to watch it. He said that Biden and McCain had a strange relationship, they always seemed to have each other's back. Whenever I was in trouble, John was the first guy there. I hope I was there for him. We never hesitate to give each other advice. He would call me in the middle of the campaign, he'd say, 'What the hell did you say that for? You just screwed up, Joe.' I'd occasionally call him.

Look, I've been thinking this week about why John's death hit the country so hard. Yes, he was a long-serving senator with a remarkable record. Yes, he was a two-time presidential candidate who captured the support and imagination of the American people and, yes, John was a war hero, demonstrated extraordinary courage. I think of John and my son when I think of Ingersoll's words when duty throws the gauntlet down to fate and honor scorns to compromise with death, that is heroism. Everybody knows that about John. But I don't think it fully explains why the country has been so taken by John's passing. I think it's something more intangible.

I think it's because they knew John believed so deeply and so passionately in the soul of America. He made it easier for them to have confidence and faith in America. His faith in the core values of this nation made them somehow feel it more genuinely themselves. His conviction that we, as a country, would never walk away from the sacrifice generations of Americans have made to defend liberty and freedom and dignity around the world. It made average Americans proud of themselves and their country.

(continued....)



His belief, and it was deep, that Americans can do anything, withstand anything, achieve anything. It was unflagging and ultimately reassuring.

This man believed that so strongly. His capacity that we truly are the world's last best hope, the beacon to the world. There are principles and ideals more than ourselves worth sacrificing for and if necessary, dying for. Americans saw how he lived his life that way, and they knew the truth of what he was saying. I just think he gave Americans confidence.

John was a hero, his character, courage, honor, integrity. I think it is understated when they say optimism. That's what made John special. Made John a giant among all of us. In my view, John didn't believe that America's future and faith rested on heroes. We used to talk about, he understood what I hope we all remember, heroes didn't build this country. Ordinary people being given half a chance are capable of doing extraordinary things, extraordinary things. John knew ordinary Americans understood each of us has a duty to defend, integrity, dignity and birthright of every child. He carried it. Good communities are built by thousands of acts of decency that Americans, as I speak today, show each other every single day deep in the DNA of this nation's soul lies a flame that was lit over 200 years ago. Each of us carries with us and each one of us has the capacity, the responsibility and we can screw up the courage to ensure it does not extinguish. There's a thousand little things that make us different.

Bottom line was, I think John believed in us. I think he believed in the American people, not just all the preambles, he believed until the American people, all 325 million of us. Even though John is no longer with us, he left us clear instructions. *'Believe always in the promise and greatness of America because nothing is inevitable here.'* Close to the

last thing John said took the whole nation, as he knew he was about to depart. That's what he wanted America to understand. Not to build his legacy. He wanted America reminded, to understand. I think John's legacy is going to continue to inspire and

challenge generations of leaders as they step forward and John McCain's America is not over. It is hyperbole, it's not over. It's not close.

Cindy, John owed so much of what he was to you, you were his ballast. When I was with you both, I could see how he looked at you. Jill is the one, when we were in Hawaii, we first met you there and he kept staring at you. Jill said, go up and talk to her. Doug, Andy, Sydney, Meghan, Jack, Jimmy, Bridget, you may not have had your father as long as you would like, but you got from him everything you need to pursue your own dreams. To follow the course of your own spirit. You are a living legacy, not hyperbole. You are a living legacy and proof of John McCain's success.

Now John is going to take his rightful place in a long line of extraordinary leaders in this nation's history. Who in their time and in their way stood for freedom and stood for liberty and have made the American story the most improbable and most hopeful and most enduring story on earth. I know John said he hoped he played a small part in that story. John, you did much more than that, my friend. To paraphrase Shakespeare, we shall not see his like again."



Rest easy Sailor



Hỏa Lò Prison



Aerial photo of The Hanoi Hilton. (web photo)

Hỏa Lò Prison (Vietnamese: [hwǎ: lỏ]) was a prison used by the French colonists in French Indochina for political prisoners, and later by North Vietnam for U.S. Prisoners of War during the Vietnam War. During this later period it was known to American POWs as the **Hanoi Hilton**. The prison was demolished during the 1990s, although the gatehouse remains as a museum.

During the Vietnam War, the first U.S. prisoner to be sent to Hỏa Lò was Lieutenant Junior Grade Everett Alvarez Jr., who was shot down on August 5, 1964.

From the beginning, U.S. POWs endured miserable conditions, including poor food and unsanitary conditions. The prison complex was sarcastically nicknamed the "Hanoi Hilton" by the American POWs, in reference to the well-known Hilton Hotel chain. There is some disagreement among the first group of POWs who coined the name but F8D pilot Bob Shumaker was the first to write it down, carving "*Welcome to the Hanoi Hilton*" on the handle of a pail to greet the arrival of Air Force Lieutenant Robert Peel.

Beginning in early 1967, a new area of the prison was opened for incoming American POWs; it was dubbed "*Little Vegas*", and its individual buildings and areas were named after Las Vegas Strip landmarks, such as "*Golden Nugget*", "*Thunderbird*", "*Stardust*", "*Riviera*", and the "*Desert Inn*". These names were chosen because many pilots had trained at Nellis Air Force Base, located in proximity to Las Vegas.

American pilots were frequently already in bad shape by the time they were captured, injured either during their ejection or in landing on the ground.

The Hanoi Hilton was one site used by the North Vietnamese Army to house, torture and interrogate captured servicemen, mostly American pilots shot down during bombing raids.

Although North Vietnam was a signatory of the Third Geneva Conventions of 1949, which demanded "decent and humane treatment" of prisoners of war, severe torture methods were employed, such as rope bindings, irons, beatings, and prolonged solitary confinement. When prisoners of war began to be released from this and other North Vietnamese prisons during the Johnson administration, their testimonies revealed widespread and systematic abuse of prisoners of war.

Regarding treatment at Hỏa Lò and other prisons, the communists countered by stating that prisoners were treated well and in accordance with the Geneva Conventions. During 1969, they broadcast a series of coerced statements from American prisoners that purported to support this notion. The North Vietnamese would also maintain that their prisons were no worse than prisons for POWs and political prisoners in South Vietnam, such as the one on Côn Sơn Island.

Mistreatment of Viet Cong and North Vietnamese prisoners and South Vietnamese dissidents in South Vietnam's prisons was indeed frequent, as was North Vietnamese abuse of South Vietnamese prisoners and their own dissidents.

Beginning in late 1969, treatment of the prisoners at Hỏa Lò and other camps became less severe and generally more tolerable. Following the late 1970 attempted rescue operation at Sơn Tây prison camp, most of the POWs at the outlying camps were moved to Hỏa Lò, so that the North Vietnamese had fewer camps to protect. This created the "Camp Unity" communal living area at Hỏa Lò, which greatly reduced the isolation of the POWs and improved their morale.



Coming home. (web photo)

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/H%E1%BB%8Fa_L%C3%B2_Prison



Some of the history of our war...

Bùi Tín, Colonel Who Accepted South Vietnam's Surrender, Dies at 90

Bùi Tín (December 29, 1927 – August 11, 2018) was a Vietnamese dissident and People's Army of Vietnam colonel.

Early life and education

Bùi Tín was born near Hanoi on December 29, 1927, and was educated in Huế.

Career

During the August Revolution in 1945, Bùi Tín became an active supporter to politically pressure the government of France to cede Vietnam its independence. He later joined the Việt Minh along with Chairman Hồ Chí Minh and General Võ Nguyên Giáp. He would fight on two sides of the line, using both weapons and his skills as a journalist for the Vietnam People's Army newspaper. He enlisted in the Vietnamese People's Army at age 18. He was wounded during the 1954 Battle of Dien Bien Phu.

Bùi Tín would serve on the general staff of the North Vietnamese army. During the Vietnam War, he had authority from Defense Minister Võ Nguyên Giáp to visit any of the camps where American POWs were held,



Bùi Tín meets with U.S. POWs

meet with the camp officers, look at the POW files, and interview the POWs. During at least one such occasion, he was involved in an interrogation of John McCain.

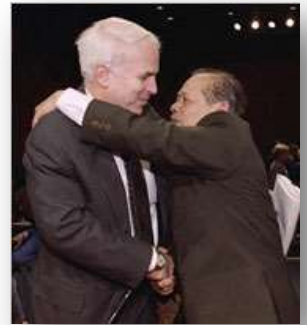
Bùi Tín claimed to have been with the North Vietnamese PAVN at the Fall of Saigon and to have personally accepted the surrender of Dương Văn Minh and his Cabinet, but this was disputed by the Vietnamese government following his defection.

After the war ended, he went on to serve as the Vice Chief Editor of the *People's Daily* (*Nhân Dân*, the official newspaper of the Communist Party of Vietnam), responsible for the *Sunday People's* (*Nhân Dân Chủ Nhật*). He became disillusioned in the mid-1980s with postwar corruption and the continuing isolation of Vietnam.

In 1990, Bùi Tín decided to leave Vietnam and live in exile in Paris to express his growing dissatisfaction with Vietnam's Communist leadership and their political system.

In November 1991, Tín became involved in the Vietnam War POW/MIA issue when he appeared before hearings of the United States Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs in Washington, D.C. He stated that, *"I can say that I know as well as any top leader in Vietnam and, in my opinion, I state categorically that there is not any American prisoner alive in Vietnam."*

After his testimony, he and former POW John McCain embraced, which produced a flurry of "Former Enemies Embrace"-style headlines. Tín's testimony was the subject of anticipation: when he had arrived at Dulles International Airport three weeks earlier, former U.S. Congressman Bill Hendon and a staff assistant to committee vice-chair Bob Smith confronted Tín and tried to convince him that there were live prisoners in Vietnam; Tín felt it was an intimidation attempt.



Tín subsequently published two books, *Following Ho Chi Minh: The Memoirs of a North Vietnamese Colonel* (University of Hawaii Press, 1995) and *From Enemy To Friend: A North Vietnamese Perspective on the War* (U.S. Naval Institute Press, 2002).

In a 2000 PBS American Experience forum, he maintained that no captured American soldiers had been tortured during their captivity in North Vietnam during the war. He conceded the same might not be true of captured American pilots, going so far as calling some of their alleged treatment *"a violation of [sic] the International Agreement on Prisoner of War"*.

He died in Montreuil, France on August 11, 2018.



Colonel Bùi Tín, dead at 90

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/B%C3%B9i_T%C3%ADn



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Remembering Dak To, 1967

All Web Images Purported to be 173d Airborne
During the Battles of Dak To



THE BATTLE OF HILL 875, ĐÀK TÔ

...War painted the living and the dead the same gray pallor on Hill 875. The only way to tell who was alive and who was dead amongst the exhausted men was to watch when the enemy mortars came crashing in. The living rushed unashamedly to the tiny bunkers dug into red clay of the hill-top; the wounded squirmed toward the shelter of trees that had been blasted to the ground. Only the dead didn't move, propped up in the bunkers where they had died in direct mortar hits, or facedown in the dust where they had fallen to bullets.

(From an Associated Press newswire report by Peter Arnett, November 1967)

(continued....)





(continued....)





(continued....)





(continued....)





Lest we forget...

See Issues 29 (The Slopes) & 47 (Hill 875) for Special Editions detailing the Battles at Dak To in 1967. Issue 47 will be recirculated in November.



Dear Aretha... (A Letter from a Vietnam Veteran)

August 17th, 2018



While biography forms the backbone of any obituary, it is the stories about a life that serve to illuminate it and give meaning.

The letter to Aretha Franklin below was originally written and mailed a few years ago by **Earle L. Jackson Sr.** — a medic for the 173rd Airborne. I publish it today (in slightly modified form by its author), with the thought that, perhaps, the story will help to illuminate the biography of her life that has been written and celebrated elsewhere

For context, the Vietnam combat below is the Battle of Dak To (Hill 875), some of the bloodiest fighting of that long ago, godforsaken but not forgotten, conflict. The letter below is from a soldier surrounded by death, to an artist that helped keep his spirit alive.

Today is one of those days I post something that has nothing whatsoever to do with law. I publish simply because it's one of these things that should not remain hidden.

Ken Laska

Dear Ms. Franklin,

Please accept my apology for this letter being some 50 plus years overdue. In 1967, I was a 22 year-old combat medic with the 173d Airborne Brigade, the most decorated army brigade in Vietnam. We were dug-in in a river valley next to the Dak Po river in Kontum Province, Republic of South Vietnam. The valley was named Dakto which was about 50 miles by dirt road from the closest mountain village, in the rain-soaked jungles of the Central Highlands.

At any time during the day or night, from the surrounding hills and mountains, the North Vietnamese Army would rain down mortars and rockets killing and wounding scores of paratroopers and destroying critical supplies. Dakto was an extremely dangerous place in 1967, over a four month period we had hundreds of troopers killed and another thousand or so men wounded.

We could never let our guard down in Dakto because the Cambodian border was just a few miles away where some 20,000 highly trained, battle-tested North Vietnamese soldiers were camped, poised to attack our position in the valley at any given moment. If we did come under a full attack and had to defend this valley, we would do so with a little better than 1,200 men. I don't mind admitting, and I'm not embarrassed to say that for this 22 year-old kid from Plainville, Connecticut it was a very stressful time and place to say the least.

Every day as dusk settled into night over the valley, you could hear the hum of generators being started that provided the only electricity for 50 miles around. The intermittent firing of our artillery into the surrounding hills and valleys kept the enemy off balance during the night and less likely to attack us.

It's Saturday night in death valley, the enemy is taking a break from shelling us and the boredom is almost thick enough to cut with a knife, when through the crisp Dakto night air, as the moon rose above the dark peaks of the mountains, there came the sweet sound of a familiar voice belting out the soulful words *"R-E-S-P-E-C-T find out what it means to me."*

Man, I say to myself, I'm missing home too much, could that be my girl way out here in this dusty hell-hole? I want to get closer to what I'm hearing so I follow the sound and it leads me to a rain poncho being used as a door to cover an under-ground bunker. In the bunker there are a dozen grubby, tired and home-sick paratroopers and they were partying in this hole in the ground like there will be no tomorrow. On one side of the bunker, several paratroopers are harmonizing the background lyrics, and rocking to the beat of the music, on the other side of the bunker are several other soldiers making up their own choreographed steps as they move to the rhythm of the music.

It's a scene now etched into my heart and mind that will never be erased. This will be the start of a night in my life that I will never forget and it's not over yet.

(continued....)



About 2:00 am in the morning I needed some fresh air so I stepped outside of that bunker. It wasn't long before my ears caught another familiar sound coming from the next bunker about 30 yards down the line of bunkers. *"You make me feel like a natural woman"*, man, oh man, there is another party going on in the next under-ground bunker too. In this bunker there are another dozen or so paratroopers partying in the candle light, dancing by themselves while singing along at the top of their lungs with our "Queen of Soul", Ms. Aretha Franklin.

There may be a war going on outside of the bunker, but inside the safety of this bunker there is a party going on and performing for us tonight is Ms. Aretha Franklin, no charge. In 1967 we spent many nights in some of the world's most dangerous places on earth and you Ms. Franklin were always right there with us, helping us get through another tough night or giving us comfort on a bad day. Even today when I hear your music I smile, a warm feeling comes over me, and I get carried back to those spirit lifting parties in that infamous river valley of death in the Central Highlands of Vietnam, in 1967.

Ms. Franklin you may never know the depth of the love we old veterans have for you and your music, or the impact that they had on us combat troops dug-in in the remote mountains and jungles of South Vietnam. When we were down and needed a double dose of love, you gave it to us in your music; through your music we were able to get through the hard times and terrifying moments that lay ahead of us.

Well Ms. Franklin, I'm 74 years old now and I don't think that I will ever get the chance to hug you and thank you personally for all that you did for me and the tens of thousands of other soldiers some 50 plus years ago, but please consider this, when you settle down to sleep and close your eyes please let your last thoughts for the night be about the tens of thousands of veterans who love you beyond words of expression and cherish those brief, precious moments when you single-handedly stopped the war and took us all home. God Bless you for that, and rest easy Ms. Franklin, long live the Queen of Soul....

Sincerely and with much love, Airborne All the Way,

Earle L. Jackson Sr.
Florida

(This publication is with the permission of its veteran-author, who maintains a copyright over the letter, so please do not re-publish without permission from his friend and lawyer, Ken Laska). *Thanks Earle!*



The Uncounted Enemy

The Uncounted Enemy: A Vietnam Deception was a controversial television documentary aired as part of the CBS Reports series on January 23, 1982. The 90-minute program, produced by George Crile III and narrated by Mike Wallace, asserted that in 1967 intelligence officers under General William Westmoreland, the commander of Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MAC-V), had manipulated intelligence estimates in order to show far fewer communist personnel in South Vietnam than there actually were, thereby creating the impression that the Vietnam War was being won.

In response, Westmoreland sued Crile, Wallace and CBS for libel. The trial, *Westmoreland v. CBS*, was approaching its end in 1985 when Westmoreland suddenly dropped his lawsuit, citing a statement by CBS that Westmoreland interpreted as an apology. CBS did not retract anything that had been said in the broadcast, but stated that it had *"never intended to assert, and does not believe, that General Westmoreland was unpatriotic or disloyal in performing his duties as he saw them."*



General Westmoreland visits 2/503 troopers at Camp Zinn.

CBS subsequently lost its libel insurance over the case. Additionally, serious, in-depth documentaries became produced far less frequently on CBS and the other two major networks of the time than had been the case during the 1960s and 1970s, a development that perhaps coincides with less aggressive investigative reporting on television on all news programs generally since the time of the suit.

Source:

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Uncounted_Enemy

(Photo added)



They were young and brave and paratroopers....

**HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM
APO San Francisco 96307**

**GENERAL ORDER
NUMBER 2083**

21 December 1965



AWARD OF THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL FOR HEROSIM

ECKERT, RICHARD E. 098XXX first lieutenant infantry United States Army Co B, 2d Bn (Abn), 503d Inf, 173d Abn Bde (Sep), APO US Forces 96250

Awarded: Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device
Date Action: 7 July 1965
Theater: Republic of Vietnam

For heroism in connection with military operation against a hostile force: First Lieutenant Eckert distinguished himself on 7 July 1965 while serving as weapons platoon leader in a search and destroy mission in "War Zone D", Republic of Vietnam. The weapons platoon received heavy automatic weapons and small arms fire which resulted in a breakdown of all internal communications within the company. With complete disregard for his own personnel safety, Lieutenant Eckert moved forward under heavy small arms fire, crawling from position to position and relaying orders and instructions from the company commander. Later Lieutenant Eckert again risked his life and moved under heavy Viet Cong fire to join the company's lead element in the assault against the heavily fortified enemy positions. His courageous and aggressive actions enabled orders to be passed to rifle platoon and resulted in a successful seizure of the village. Lieutenant Eckert's heroic actions were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

JOHN D. MCLAUGHLIN
Colonel, GS
Chief of Staff



Brigade Commander BG Ellis "Butch" Williamson awards LT Dick Eckert the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry during ceremonies at Camp Zinn, Bien Hoa, RVN, 1965.

Dr. Richard Eckert, Col. (Ret)
1941 – 2010



Note: If you served with the 2/503d and are the recipient of the Bronze Star w/V or higher valor award, please email a copy of the citation for inclusion in a future issue of our newsletter to rto173@att.net Ed





173d Brigade Commander BG Ellis “Butch” Williamson awards Vietnam Cross of Gallantry to 2/503 Troopers at Camp Zinn 1965



Here the General is awarding the medal to Capt. Bob Warfield, while to his left awaits LT Dick Eckert, both B/2/503. Bob states, *“Note the pristine parade ground ~ picture a bunch of grown men (mostly) carefully forming ranks among the hazards. Obviously, we were all walking on water.”* (From LTC George Dexter, [Col. Ret] photo collection)

The Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross also known as the Vietnamese Gallantry Cross or Vietnam Cross of Gallantry (Vietnamese: *Anh-Dũng Bội-Tinh*) is a military decoration of the former Government of South Vietnam (Republic of Vietnam). The medal was created on August 15, 1950 and was awarded to military personnel, civilians, and Armed Forces units and organizations in recognition of deeds of valor or heroic conduct while in combat with the enemy.

Individuals who received the medal, ribbon, and a citation were personally cited at the Armed Forces, Corps, Division, Brigade or Regiment level. The Republic of Vietnam authorized members of units and organizations that were cited, to wear the Gallantry Cross Unit Citation Emblem with Palm and Frame (no medal is authorized).

The medal is gold in color, 35mm wide. It consists of a Celtic cross with two crossed swords between the arms. The cross is superimposed over a wreath. The center of the cross contains a disc with the outline of the country of Vietnam between two palm branches joined at the bottom. A scroll is on top of the map and is inscribed "QUOC-GIA LAO-TUONG" (Reward of the State).

The suspension ribbon of the medal is 35mm wide and is made up of the following stripes: 9mm of Old Glory Red; 17mm center stripe in Golden Yellow. The center stripe has sixteen strands of Old Glory Red; and 9mm of Old Glory Red.

(continued....)



The Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross was awarded in four degrees, with a basic medal followed by higher degrees which were the equivalent of personal citations on an organizational level (also known as having been “mentioned in dispatches”). The degrees of the Gallantry Cross are as follows:

Gallantry Cross with Palm: cited at the Armed Forces level

Gallantry Cross with Gold Star: cited at the Corps level

Gallantry Cross with Silver Star: cited at the Division level

Gallantry Cross with Bronze Star: cited at the Regiment or Brigade level

Ribbon devices



The devices to the Gallantry Cross are not worn simultaneously but instead are upgraded to the next higher device which would replace the previous device for wear on the decoration.

U.S. Marine Corps uniform regulations in 2003, state the recipient should wear only one Gallantry Cross award (medal or ribbon bar) regardless of the number received. For multiple awards, wear as many authorized devices as will fit on one medal suspension ribbon or ribbon bar. Wear the devices for subsequent awards in order of seniority from the wearer’s right. The first palm is $1\frac{7}{16}$ inches on the suspension ribbon or $\frac{6}{8}$ inch on the service ribbon. Subsequent palms are $\frac{6}{8}$ inch on the suspension ribbon or $\frac{3}{8}$ inch on the service ribbon. Stars are $\frac{3}{8}$ inch.

Service versions

The Gallantry Cross was awarded to members of all military branches, as well as service members of foreign and allied militaries. The similarly named decorations were the Air Gallantry Cross and Navy Gallantry Cross. These decorations were awarded under a different authority, with different criteria, and were considered separate decorations.

Unit award

The Unit Citation Emblem of the colors of the Gallantry Cross is awarded to personnel in the South Vietnamese military and Allied military units that have been cited and presented a decoration which is prescribed to be awarded on a collective basis. Known as the Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation with Palm (Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm and Frame Unit Citation), the Unit Citation Emblem in the colors of the Gallantry Cross with Palm, was created on January 20, 1968 and was issued with the Gallantry Cross ribbon bar with a $\frac{5}{32}$ by $\frac{9}{16}$ inch

bronze palm and a gold frame. The former South Vietnamese military awarded the Gallantry Cross to specific military units that distinguished themselves to the same level as would be required for the individual award. Regulations for the issuance of the Vietnam Gallantry Cross permit the wearing of both the individual and unit award simultaneously since both are considered separate awards. The Gallantry Cross was awarded to every Allied nation which provided support to South Vietnam. The Gallantry Cross became the most commonly awarded Vietnamese decoration to foreigners, second only to the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal.

Fourragere

The South Vietnamese military Fourragere in the colors of the Gallantry Cross represented a military unit cited two times. It was a brilliant golden-yellow, with red intermixed. Department of the Army message 111030Z from April 1974, established the policy that only one emblem for a unit award was authorized to be worn at a time. This change resulted in the fourragere being no longer authorized for wear, as it was representative of multiple awards.

Source:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gallantry_Cross_%28Vietnam%29

###

“It ain’t what you don’t know that gets you into trouble. It’s what you know for sure that just ain’t so.”

Unknown



BRAVO BULLS ON OKINAWA

Photos courtesy of David Eckert, son of the late
Dr. Dick Eckert, Colonel (Ret), B/2/503 Okinawa/RVN



NADZAB, 1943

Parachute assault in New Guinea saved airborne concept for future operations

By **David Cordero**

Burdened by an abundance of equipment, Raymond Basham hefted himself into a C-47 airplane on the morning of Sept. 5, 1943, destined for a remote valley in New Guinea.

Basham, like the other men of the 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment, felt confident his training would allow him to withstand the rigors of battle against the Japanese. But what gnawed at the medic was the uncertainty of what lay ahead.

"I can't say it was fear because we were highly trained," Basham, a resident of Rockfield, Ky., wrote in a letter to the author. *"It was more a feeling of uneasiness in not knowing what was waiting for you on the ground."*

The objective was to secure the Nadzab airfield in the Markham Valley and lend assistance to the Seventh Australian Division. It was the first combat for Basham and the other paratroopers of the 503rd, although at the time, they had no idea they were fighting for more than victory over the Japanese.

The operation would have significant impact on whether high command would press forward with large-scale parachute assaults following the disasters in North Africa and Sicily. The airborne portion of the June 1944 Normandy invasion might have never materialized — at least on its scale, which was tremendous — had it not been for the successful airborne assault and capture of the Nadzab airfield 70 years ago this week.

The Road to Nadzab

Early airborne missions in North Africa and Sicily suffered badly. Bad weather and long distance (1,500 miles) conspired to ruin the attack in North Africa in November 1942. The troopers were badly scattered and ultimately irrelevant to Operation Torch.

In July 1943, troopers were not only dropped way off the mark in Sicily, but members of the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, in a follow-up wave two days later, served as target practice for the U.S. Navy, which evidently had not received or shared word of the oncoming wave of C-47s. The Americans were mistaken for the German Luftwaffe.

These were significant growing pains in the American airborne concept, which had started only three years earlier. Yet how much longer could the army sustain such losses?

The problem in the earlier jumps, as determined by the Swing Board, a committee led by Gen. Joseph Swing, was no unity of command. The holocaust in the Sicilian skies was the result of a communication lapse. Consolidating command appeared to be the answer. The next opportunity — perhaps the last chance to prove the worthiness of large-scale parachute assaults — would arrive soon enough, in the steamy jungles of the Pacific.

Heading In

Father Powers, the regimental chaplain of the 503rd, didn't have time to hear individual confessions before the jump, so in the searing heat of the Port Moresby sun, he offered a general absolution to the men. Half the men stood up to take it.



Paratroopers of the 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment disembark from trucks and prepare to board C-47 aircraft for their mission to the Nadzab airfield.

(Photo COURTESY OF THE DANIEL MACRAILD COLLECTION)

(continued...)



Certainly, fewer than 50 percent of the 503rd were Catholic. Yet the men felt the gravity of the situation and did what they could to soothe their nerves heading into their first battle.

Jim Mullaney, a 93-year-old Louisville man, recalls smoke — not conversation — filling his airplane. Most of them sat quietly, keeping thoughts to themselves as the airplanes made their ascent. They would have to clear a saddle in the Owen Stanley Mountains, an elevation of approximately 9,000 feet, and descend rapidly as the drop zone approached.

The green light inside the cabin was the paratroopers' cue. Soon, white canopies descended from the heavens, dropping down into what the troopers expected to be a soft, grassy knoll. They were half correct. Many did land on grass. Just not the type of grass they were accustomed to.

"It turned out the grass was about eight feet high," Mullaney said. "It was almost impossible to catch your breath."

Some of the troopers landed roughly, getting hung up in surrounding trees. One man, Rod Rodriguez of G Company, suffered a near fatal wound but lived to record the tale in his unpublished biography.

"I landed in a tall tree and drove a branch as sharp as a spear completely through my thigh, emerging in my groin area," he wrote.

Rodriguez's main artery had been grazed in the impalement. Had the artery been cut, he would have bled to death quickly.

Rodriguez was lucky he could get the medical help he needed without having to withstand a withering barrage from the enemy. The Japanese had scattered, and resistance was only sporadic.

Success

The three battalions went to work quickly. Within 24 hours, the airstrip was seized and the adjacent field cleared before the 503rd linked up with the Australian forces. The village of Gabsonkek was taken and troops were positioned to the northwest, north and east. A defensive perimeter from the Markham River to the east side of the airfield was also established. Each objective of the 503rd had been met.

In the coming days, the regiment faced occasional resistance and suffered few casualties. The regiment lost just 11 men to death, approximately 70 more wounded.

"More men were lost to heat exhaustion than actual combat wounds," Mullaney said.

The mission was an overwhelming success. Gen. Douglas MacArthur was beside himself with glee. So were the airborne advocates, who won an even greater victory.



The 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment jumps into Markham Valley with the objective to seize the Nadzab airfield.

(Photo COURTESY OF THE DANIEL MACRAILD COLLECTION)

[Printed courtesy of Paul Whitman, 503rd Heritage Battalion website]



The late Ray & Mary Basham honored guests at 173d reunion in Lexington, KY in 2012.



Soldier, Mexican immigrant earned Medal of Honor during WWII

By Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Jen S. Martinez
September 6, 2018

WASHINGTON -- As a people, Americans come from all different walks of life. The United States has made a lot of progress in civil rights over the years as we learn more about different cultures and backgrounds of its citizens.

Today, we pause to recognize Medal of Honor recipient **Army Staff Sgt. Macario Garcia**, who became the first Mexican immigrant to receive the Medal of Honor.



Garcia was born in Castanos, Mexico, in 1920. At the age of three, his family came to the United States in search of a better life and eventually settled in Sugarland, Texas, where they found work on a ranch.

Garcia spent much of his childhood missing school days to help the family with ranch work.

During World War II, Garcia, a non-American citizen with a grade school education, enlisted as an Army infantryman on Nov. 11, 1942. He said he felt a strong obligation to give back to the country he had called home for so many years.

Private Garcia landed at Normandy on D-Day with Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division. He was wounded during the beach landing and spent four months in recovery. He later rejoined his unit in Germany, where his actions would earn him the nation's most prestigious military honor.

On Nov. 27, 1944, Bravo Company came under fire near Grosshau, Germany. Serving as an acting squad leader, Garcia was badly wounded in the shoulder and foot. He refused evacuation and pushed on alone toward two enemy machine gun nests. With some grenades and his rifle, he wiped out the nests, killing six enemy soldiers and taking four more captive. He continued fighting with his Soldiers and was removed for medical care only after the company successfully seized its objective.

Garcia returned home as a staff sergeant in February 1945 and received the Medal of Honor from President Harry S. Truman later that year. He also received the Purple Heart, Bronze Star Medal and Combat Infantryman's Badge.

Soon after coming home, Garcia was refused service at a restaurant in Richmond, Texas, because of his ethnic background. A violent brawl ensued, and the police took a bruised and beaten Garcia to jail. He was let out the next morning, and assault charges were filed against him in the following weeks.



Garcia's case became a symbol of the Hispanic civil rights movement, and support came pouring in for his defense. Richmond County postponed the case and quietly dropped the charges against him.

Afterward, Garcia remained active in the community as an advocate for civil rights. He gained his U.S. citizenship in 1947 and his high school diploma in 1951. In the later years of his life, Garcia worked as a counselor at the Veteran's Administration offices in Houston.

In 1963, he went with a group of Hispanic veterans and civil rights advocates to a Houston gala, where President John F. Kennedy spoke about U.S. and Hispanic foreign policy. The event was viewed as a milestone occasion for minorities countrywide. Kennedy was assassinated the next day in Dallas.

Garcia died on Dec. 24, 1972, after he was injured in a vehicle accident. He was buried with full military honors at Houston National Cemetery. In the early 1980s, the city of Houston renamed a street and the local Army Reserve center in his honor.

Editor's Note: Many historical records and articles reference Garcia's name spelled either as Marcario or Macario. The latter is published on his tombstone, and for this reason we have chosen to refer to him as "Macario Garcia."

Source:

www.army.mil/article/210759/soldier_mexican_immigrant_earned_medal_of_honor_during_wwii



Scenes From The Taiwan Operation

Courtesy of Don Rice, HHC/4.2 Platoon, 2/503d, Okinawa/RVN



A town on Taiwan



Delivery of something on Taiwan



Waving to kids as we drive by



Our lovely baker lady



Don's buddy Kanehailua from Hawaii



Kanehailua with kids

(continued...)





People of Taiwan



Purchasing bananas



Residential life on Taiwan



Don and farmer sharing rice and tobacco



Bringing in the sheaves or Rice bringing in the rice



L-R: Frankie Guerro and Sgt. Joe Barbarick

(continued....)





Sharing a steel pot



Taiwanese basket weaver



L-R: Rice and Detrick shaving



Heading back to Okinawa



4.2 on Taiwan

(continued....)





Buddy Larry Albecker from Haines, Alaska waiting for the LST's



LST's taking us back to Okinawa



Who Was That Young Man, and Was it a Sniper's Deadly Drama?

By Lew "Smitty" Smith
RTO, HHC/2/503, '65/'66
Editor, 2/503d Vietnam Newsletter

The young soldier would have been humping the jungle when the shot rang out. It would have been a clear and immediate kill by who likely was another young soldier, a sniper with steady aim and clear purpose, a sniper in that thick jungle patiently poised and, no doubt, struggling to manage his own fear, while waiting for the right moment, the right target. Since hearing years ago it was a sniper who killed the trooper, I've often wondered what moved him to select the target he did – he could have just as easily chosen an officer or an RTO – the shot placement to the head, as reported, indicates he knew his craft well. But no, his target selection would have been random, the man he killed was simply a soldier, likely a rifleman, of whom we had many. His purpose you ask? It would have been nothing more than to burden us, terrify us, and slow our pace....he would have succeeded.

An RTO hooch buddy (HHC/2/503, '65/'66), remembers the slain trooper from that day:

"I think that was a hell of a shot. Ya gotta figure that our guy was moving and the sniper would have certainly had an exit strategy so he would have been maybe 200 meters out", he recalls.

By whatever means the trooper died, it was somewhere in Vietnam in the early months of '66, but regrettably and after 50 plus years, neither my hooch buddy nor I recall the operation, the date or his name, if we ever knew it, and I personally remain unsure of the cause of his death, altho by sniper seems logical. Aged old memories tell us he was young, we agree he was a black man and a rather large trooper.

As I recall, and following his death by means I can't recall, there was no following engagement, no firefight, no bombs or artillery shells fell to protect our flanks as we moved thru that rain forest of heat and sweat and leeches and death, and we didn't circle the wagons. If it was a sniper who killed the trooper, then we knew what it was, we understood the message.

My hooch buddy is sure the trooper died from a well-placed sniper round, I just remember he was dead before we moved out again. It may have been a sniper, but his death could have come from almost anything...a firefight, a booby trap, friendly fire, heat stroke, snake bite, I personally draw a blank when it comes to the precise cause of his demise.

On virtually every mission we embarked on, particularly from the 'Snake Pit' at Bien Hoa airbase where the choppers would be lined-up in a row and purring while awaiting boarding of 2/503 Sky Soldiers, sometimes by the hundreds, I would look at them and think, *"Some of you fuckers are not coming back alive."* Seldom was that prediction wrong. But most of us would attempt to comfort ourselves with the thought, *'it would never be me'* who would be that fucker.



The Snake Pit at Bien Hoa AFB, 2/503 off on another mission. *Some of you fuckers are not coming back alive.*
(Photo by LTC George Dexter, 2/503 Bn CO)

The young man, *our* young man just lay there, motionless; his family unaware in the early days ahead they would be receiving the dreadful news of their loss. But now, we look at him, and yes, we know the sniper, if it was indeed a sniper who took his life, could've named any one of us as the starring character in his soon and forthcoming deadly drama.

It was especially thick jungle we were cutting our way thru, likely the "D" Zone, offering little immediate hope of an air evac to remove our fallen buddy from that place.

(continued....)



Two troopers, hefty troopers I recall, prepared a litter using a poncho and a long sturdy tree branch with which they would struggle carrying the young, dead paratrooper...exactly what a sniper and those who would order such a kill would have hoped for.

Dividing up the weapons and equipment of the two litter-bearers and the belongings of their precious cargo, we moved out again, but slower this time. Somehow and without intent, I found myself walking immediately behind that threesome, gazing at the dead, half-closed eyes of the young man as his head swayed to the faltering footsteps of the hefty troopers carrying him on this trek, his final trek. He was our brother, and he was someone's son and possibly even a father to children, all soon to be weeping in their sorrowful grief. We are happy we are not him, and that those soon to be weeping will not be weeping for us.

We continued trudging forward for what seemed like forever, but in actuality it couldn't have been too long as neither my hooch buddy nor I recall a change of litter-bearers, as we looked for an appropriate opening in the jungle canopy where a chopper could land or a penetrator could be lowered to claim that precious cargo. But until then, he and I continued to look at each other for the longest time, neither of us having much to say to the other.

The dreams of him, mostly dreams of his eyes, have long since passed; it's been many years since his eyes would cause me to scream out in my sleep as other dreams of our war would often do...my wife knows this well...like many of your wives know that of you. Yet, the memory of him, his death by sniper or a different act, and our stroll in the rain forest together wordlessly peering at one another, remain vivid to this day.

I cannot count the times I've thought of him over the years. I so wish I could remember *who was that young man*, other than a brother of war? And yes, I can still see his eyes.

Postscript....

Since this story of our fallen buddy killed by sniper fire or other means was first written, I've confirmed some of the details with my hooch buddy who remembers him, i.e. he was a black man, two of our troopers, physically big men, carried him in thick jungle on a litter they constructed with a poncho and tree branch. In hopes of identifying the fallen trooper and collecting more detail about the mission and time of that mission, I requested input from a couple hundred 2/503 Sky Soldiers from that period in early '66. As of the release of this issue, the names of a number of our fallen buddies have been excluded, but we've yet to determine who he was. Rest easy brother. Ed

GENERAL MIKE HEALY'S FUNERAL SERVICES AT ARLINGTON

Major General Michael D. Healy (June 13, 1926 – April 14, 2018) was a general officer in the United States Army who spent 35 years serving in the military, completing tours in Korea and Vietnam. MG Healy began his career with parachute training in Japan, then attended a number of Army Colleges, including Ranger School. He entered the Korean War as a Company Commander with the Airborne Rangers, a newly formed unit of the Army. Most of his career was spent in Vietnam, where he served five and a half tours, leading the 5th Special Forces group for almost 20 months, and earning him his first Distinguished Service Medal, and command of 4/503 Airborne Brigade, RVN.



Distinguished Service Medal (3)

Silver Star (2)

Legion of Merit (3)

Distinguished Flying Cross

Bronze Star Medal (V)(6)

Air Medal (V)(4)

Purple Heart (2)

Army Commendation Medal (2)

Navy Commendation Medal (V)

Master Parachutist Badge

Parachutist Badges of: U.S., Cambodia, Iran, Korea, Pakistan, Thailand, Republic of Vietnam

The General's funeral was conducted at Arlington National Cemetery on October 5, 2018, with full military honors.

All The Way, Sir and Geronimo!



First female 'Sky Soldier' from 173rd Airborne graduates Ranger School

By Capt. Joseph Legros
September 7, 2018



VINCENZA, ITALY. 1st Lt. Anna Hodge proudly displays her Ranger tab on graduation day. She becomes the 15th female throughout the Armed Services to graduate from Ranger School, and the first Ranger qualified female Sky Soldier for the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

(Army photo by Capt. Joseph Legros)

FORT BENNING, Ga. -- "This is it. Number one on my list of worst days at Ranger School," 1st Lt. Anna Hodge thought as it started to rain again during day eight of Mountain Phase patrols. The blisters on her feet, the chaffing on her legs, and the prickly heat stung with the rain. She stuffed more pieces of MRE gum in her mouth, biting down hard to keep her mind off the pain.

"Your complaint has been duly noted and will be answered within 24 to 48 hours," she mentally responded to the pain, imitating an answering machine. "Now back to counting steps, 1,344, 1,345..."

"Our Mountain Phase experienced record-high rainfall, and I felt bad for my platoon mates who had chafed in some pretty uncomfortable places," says Hodge. "My legs looked like road rash; the blood and pus was sticking to my uniform. Shivering at night was the norm; yes, it was cold, but even more because of the pain."

But Hodge had one advantage some of her friends didn't. She decided to go to Ranger School without feeling pressured; the pain described above was something she had chosen, all simply to become a better intelligence officer.

"I wanted to focus on tactical intelligence," says Hodge. "It is impossible to know where the enemy will move, nor how to advise the commander if you don't know Infantry tactics." Military Intelligence is an Operations Support branch. If Soldiers don't understand what they are supporting, mission success is unlikely.

"I've always had a soft spot for the Infantry, and I learned so much about Infantry tactics at Ranger School," says Hodge. "After graduating, that respect grew even more."

Hodge wanted to attend Ranger School dating back to 2010 when she first joined ROTC. *"I loved patrolling, working as part of a squad and the challenge of pushing myself to perform on minimal food and sleep. I remember cleaning weapons one day and someone joked that I should shave my head and go to Ranger School. I thought it was funny, and secretly I really wanted to go. But it wasn't open to females at the time."*

That all changed in 2015 when, for the first time, a female graduated Ranger School.

The following year Hodge attended the Basic Officer Leadership Course for Military Intelligence. She listened to an instructor who recruited Military Intelligence, or MI, officers for the new 75th Regiment MI Battalion. *"The hardest part of Ranger School is deciding to go," the instructor said.*

Hodge remembers thinking, *"I've always been a religious person and when I heard the instructor, it was like God telling me, 'you better start preparing because you're going to go.'"*

(continued....)



It wasn't until she went to 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, "The Rock," part of the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Italy, that she got her opportunity.

"Slowly I expressed a desire to attend Ranger School and my chain of command believed in me," explains Hodge. *"They encouraged me and other lieutenants to go; they did an excellent job creating a command climate where mistakes and failure are accepted as long as you try. Leaders can have a profound impact on a unit's culture and I'm so grateful to serve in 'The Rock.' The unit is full of great leaders, past and present, serving as examples for the type of leader I strive to be."*

"There are a lot of things that get you through Ranger School, but two of the most important are 'wanting to attend' and 'not quitting,'" says Hodge's battalion commander, Lt. Col. Jim Keirse. *"1st Lt. Hodge wanted to go and earned her spot on the order of merit list. Once there, she didn't quit. Now she is a Ranger qualified 'Rock' Paratrooper."*

Hodge trained for Ranger School by herself, facing the difficulty of balancing work and training. Many times she wished she could have trained more, but battalion priorities came first. She was motivated to work out twice a day, doing countless ruck marches. Sometimes she carried a sledge hammer, simulating the weight of machine gun.

"I really thought I would struggle with the physical aspect, so I trained hard prior to school," Hodge explains. *"But instead, it was the Infantry stuff that was difficult for me. Coming from a Military Intelligence background, I didn't know the tactics very well, nor how the instructors wanted me to conduct patrols."*

At Ranger School, a student can repeat a phase for patrols, peer ratings or an observation report; this is referred to as "recycling." If a candidate fails the same thing again, they will be dropped from the course. Her first time through, Hodge was dropped during patrols.

"I was devastated. I didn't know why I worked so hard only to fail," shares Hodge. *"But ironically, I'm really glad I failed Ranger School my first time. Dealing with failure is one of the most important lessons you can learn."*

Being recycled is not uncommon. According to Ft. Benning, 61.2 percent of graduating Rangers were recycled at least once in 2017. This means less than 39 percent made it through without having to start any of the phases over again. No surprise here: Ranger School is tough.

"I definitely thought about heading home after I failed," says Hodge. *"To start again, it would have been colder, and mentally I was spent."* Despite those thoughts, she stayed.

"I wasn't ready to give up just yet," says Hodge.

"I was able to sign up for a Master Resiliency Trainer course in between Ranger classes and it was one of the best decisions I ever made. Thank goodness for resiliency because my second Ranger Assessment Phase week was one of the hardest of my life. It was so cold and miserable that I wanted to quit every day, but I told myself to just quit tomorrow. Before long I made it through the week."

"The same work ethic and 'never quit' attitude that got her through Ranger School is what makes 1st Lt. Hodge an asset to the unit," adds Keirse.

In Hodge's case, it was also helpful to have other female Ranger graduates to follow. She became the fifteenth female throughout the Armed Services to graduate Ranger School and the first Ranger qualified female Sky Soldier. However, this also proved to be challenging.

"I never wanted to be the first female graduate," says Hodge. *"I knew those who went first would deal with criticism and scrutiny. I am very grateful for the 71 females who attended Ranger School before me, the pioneers who overcame prejudice as they pursued their goals. They helped positively change opinions about female Rangers."*

Hodge shares, *"I remember reading negative comments about other female graduates, wondering if I would be judged, too. Would they question whether I truly earned my Ranger tab?"*

But the length of ruck marches has not changed, nor does the rain fall only on male candidates. Everyone carries their own weight.

"At Ranger School, everyone is held to the same standard," asserts Hodge.

During one of the phases, she was assigned to carry the machine gun or the radio, the two heaviest items, on a regular basis. The frequent assignments to carry heavy equipment ultimately made her grateful.

"It showed me and others that I could carry the heaviest items and keep up," says Hodge.

"I was an equal member of the squad, working together with my classmates to accomplish the mission. I formed friendships that will last a lifetime. I am especially grateful to the friends I made in my platoons, my unit and from Ranger Battalion. They taught me so much about the Army and the Infantry."

"My husband was also very supportive the whole time. He even helped shave my hair and showed me how to do it myself," shares Hodge.

(continued....)



When asked if she has any doubts of the results, Hodge responds, *"After persevering through school, I know, without a doubt, I earned my Ranger tab. It took patience and determination. I put in the effort. I met the standards."*



1st Lt. Anna Hodge stands tall as the first Ranger qualified female Sky Soldier of the 173rd Airborne Brigade. After persevering through a rainy Mountain Phase, road rash legs and blistered feet, Hodge becomes the fifteenth Ranger qualified female throughout the Armed Services.
(Army photo by Capt. Joseph Legros)

She also offers the following advice to anyone thinking of attending Ranger School: *"Appreciate the little things. You better learn to love patrols. Volunteer for the small, simple tasks that no one wants to do and make them your hobby, like emplacing claymores and camouflaging them. I loved that."*

She adds, *"Don't let little things get to you. Try to see the good. Yes, there were annoying bugs like mosquitoes and spiders, but there were also fireflies which were super cool. Yes, it rained, and everyone's skin was chafed. But the rain also cooled us down."*

The first Ranger qualified female Sky Soldier concludes, *"Whatever your goal, take it one step at a time and continue in patience."*

Source:

www.army.mil/article/210835/first_female_sky_soldier_from_173rd_airborne_graduates_ranger_school



Congratulations LT!
2/503 Rangers Lead The Way!!
###

PARACHUTE PATRIOTS



Members of the Patriot Parachute Team descend to a landing zone during the *Frontiers in Flight Open House and Air Show* at McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas, Sept. 9, 2018. The team, made up of veterans, performs precision acrobatics during their air show routine.

(Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Trevor Rhynes)



Airborne Creed

I am an Airborne trooper! I jump by parachute from any plane in flight. I volunteered to do it, knowing full well the hazards of my choice.

I serve in a mighty Airborne Force – famed for deeds in War – renowned for readiness in peace. It is my pledge to uphold its honor and prestige in all that I am – in all I do.

I am an elite trooper – a sky trooper – a spearhead trooper.

I blaze the way to far flung goals – behind, before, above my country's enemy's front lines.

I know that someday I may have to fight without support for days on end. Therefore, I keep my mind and body always fit to do my part in any Airborne mission. I am self-reliant and unafraid. I shoot true, and march fast and far. I fight hard and will excel in everything I do just in case of war.

I will never fail a fellow paratrooper. I cherish the sacred trust and the lives of men with whom I serve. Leaders have my fullest loyalty, and those who I lead will never, never find me lacking.

I have pride in being Airborne! I will never let it down! In peace, I do not shrink from the duller duty nor protest the toughest training. My weapon and equipment will always be combat ready. I will be neatly dressed, show courtesy and watch my behavior in a proper Airborne military manner.

In battle, I fear no enemy's ability, nor underestimate his ability, power or threats. I will fight him with all my might and skills – staying alert to avoid traps and try to escape if I should ever be captured. I will never surrender while I still have the means to fight, though I may be the last paratrooper.

My goal in peace and war is to succeed in any mission of the day or night, even though I may die doing so. For I belong to a proud and glorious team....The AIRBORNE, the ARMY, my Country – the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. I am its chosen few, I volunteer to fight where others may not want to go or serve.

I am a trooper of the sky! I am my Nation's best! In peace and war I will never fail, Anytime, Anyplace, Anywhere...I am Airborne!

I volunteered as a parachutist, fully realizing the hazard of my chosen service and by my thoughts and actions will always uphold the prestige, honor and high esprit-de-corps of parachute troops.

I realize that a parachutist is not merely a Soldier who arrives by parachute to fight, but is an elite shock trooper and that his country expects him to march farther and faster, to fight harder, and to be more self-reliant than any other Soldier. Parachutists of all allied armies belong to this great brotherhood.

I shall never fail my fellow comrades by shirking any duty or training, but will always keep myself mentally and physically fit and shoulder my full share of the task, whatever it may be.

I shall always accord my superiors fullest loyalty and I will always bear in mind the sacred trust I have in the lives of the men I will accompany into battle.

I shall show other Soldiers by my military courtesy, neatness of dress and care of my weapons and equipment that I am a picked and well trained Soldier.

I shall endeavor always to reflect the high standards of training and morale of parachute troops.

I shall respect the abilities of my enemies, I will fight fairly and with all my might, surrender is not in my creed.

I shall display a high degree of initiative and will fight on to my objective and mission, though I be the lone survivor.

I shall prove my ability as a fighting man against the enemy on the field of battle, not by quarreling with my comrades in arms or by bragging about my deeds.

I shall always realize that battles are won by an army fighting as a team, that I fight first and blaze the path into battle for others to follow and to carry the battle on.

I belong to the finest unit in the world. By my actions and deeds alone, I speak for my fighting ability. I will strive to uphold the honor and prestige of my outfit, making my country proud of me and of the unit to which I belong.

Airborne! All The Way!!



Continuing to Serve



Army Staff Sgt. Daniel Clark, right, swears the oath of reenlistment to Army 2nd Lt. Jack Barnett during airborne operations at Juliet drop zone in Pordenone, Italy, August 22, 2018. Clark and Barnett are assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade. (Army photo by Paolo Bovo)

Oath of Enlistment

I, _____, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the

orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God." (Title 10, US Code; Act of 5 May 1960 replacing the wording first adopted in 1789, with amendment effective 5 October 1962).



IMPORTANT!!

September 24, 2018,

VA researchers work to create 3D-printed artificial lung that may revolutionize treatment of Veterans with lung disease

WASHINGTON — U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) scientists at the VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System in Michigan recently announced that they are working to create a 3D-printed artificial lung that could potentially revolutionize treatment of Veterans affected by lung disease.

Though still in its infancy, VA researchers hope to build what they call the first artificial lung that closely replicates the natural lung, resulting in compatibility with living cells and a very small size for portable or wearable short- and long-term respiratory support.

In the near term, the device could be used as a temporary measure — a bridge to help patients waiting lung transplant or an aid for Veterans with recovering lungs. According to researchers, future versions could have longer-term applications.

"Our Veterans deserve the highest quality of care and the latest breakthroughs in medical science," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "This exciting project is the latest in a long string of incredible research and medical advancements developed by VA researchers over the years. The results of this project could change millions of lives for the better."



Secretary Wilkie

Exposure to burn pits, sand, diesel exhaust and chemicals are some of the most commonly cited factors that lead to lung problems for active-duty military. About 20 percent of patients with severe traumatic brain injury also have acute lung injury.

One lung disorder VA researchers hope to tackle someday with the 3D-printed artificial lung is chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), regarded as one of the most prevalent and costliest ailments in the Veteran population.

COPD affects 5 percent of American adults and 16 percent of the Veteran population. Most people with COPD have emphysema, in which the air sacs of the lung are damaged and enlarged, and chronic bronchitis, a long-lasting cough caused by chronic inflammation of the bronchial tubes. The disease is characterized by an airflow limitation that is often linked to an abnormal response of the lungs to noxious particles or gases, such as those in cigarette smoke.

For additional information about this study visit <https://www.research.va.gov/currents/0818-Researchers-strive-to-make-3D-printed-artificial-lung-to-help-Vets-with-respiratory-disease.cfm>



Fresh Ideas

From time-to-time we'll include "fresh ideas" sent in by fellow Sky Soldiers. This one is courtesy of a former 2/503 company commander of RVN vintage who always is on the lookout for new intelligence. Ed



SUBJECT: BACK-UP SENSOR

Lots of the newer cars have a Back-Up Sensor that warns the driver before the rear bumper actually comes in contact with something.

Who invented this sensor? Bet you think it was Ford, maybe GM, or how about Chrysler? No. Then how about Mercedes Benz, the French or Italians? Nope.

It was a Chinese farmer. His invention was simple and effective. It emits a high-pitched noise before the vehicle backs into something dangerous.

Here's his first prototype....

(continued....)



The Chinese *Backup Alert Lateral Landing System* (BALLS)



Thanks Cap!

Poke at Your Own Risk



Sent in by the 'old veteran', Roger Dick, C/2/503, RVN

VA achieves major milestone in effort to modernize claims processing

October 23, 2018

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently completed a significant modernization effort in which more than 7.8 million paper files were removed from 60 locations in fewer than 22 months, enabling rapid scanning into VA's electronic claims processing system by multiple third-party vendors. This will lead to faster claims decisions for Veterans.

"Improving the delivery of benefits and services to Veterans is central to our mission," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. *"This significant effort will not only improve VA's claims process, it will also lead to quicker decisions for Veterans because millions more records will be available electronically."*

This initiative removed more than 1.7 million paper claims files across 59 VA locations and contributed to reduced claims processing time by establishing more electronic records.

VA is currently working with the General Services Administration (GSA), which owns the Goodfellow Federal Center complex that houses the RMC, to return the RCD's leased warehouse space back to GSA. As a result, VA will save nearly \$1.8 million per year.

For more information about VA benefits, visit <https://benefits.va.gov/benefits/>

Golden Opportunity

10/26/2018 08:00 PM EDT



A member of the Golden Knights, the Army's parachute demonstration team, jumps out of an aircraft during a performance for the Thunder Over the Rock Air and Space Show at Little Rock Air Force Base, Ark., Oct. 27, 2018. (US DoD photo)



Smallpox

Smallpox was an infectious disease caused by one of two virus variants, variola major and variola minor. The last naturally occurring case was diagnosed in October 1977 and the World Health Organization certified the global eradication of the disease in 1980. The risk of death following contracting the disease was about 30%, with higher rates among babies. Often those who survived had extensive scarring of their skin and some were left blind.



A child with smallpox in Bangladesh in 1973

The initial symptoms of the disease included fever and vomiting. This was followed by formation of sores in the mouth and a skin rash. Over a number of days the skin rash turned into characteristic fluid filled bumps with a dent in the center. The bumps then scabbed over and fell off leaving scars. The disease used to spread between people or via contaminated objects. Prevention was by the smallpox vaccine. Once the disease had developed certain antiviral medication may have helped.

The origin of smallpox is unknown. The earliest evidence of the disease dates back to the 3rd century BC in Egyptian mummies. The disease historically occurred in outbreaks. In 18th century Europe it is estimated 400,000 people per year died from the disease, and one-third of the cases resulted in blindness. These deaths included those of at least five reigning monarchs. In the 20th century it is estimated that smallpox resulted in 300–500 million deaths. As recently as 1967, 15 million cases occurred a year.

By the end of 1975, smallpox persisted only in the Horn of Africa. Conditions were very difficult in Ethiopia and Somalia, where there were few roads. Civil war, famine, and refugees made the task even more difficult. An intensive surveillance and containment and vaccination program was undertaken in these countries in early and mid-1977, under the direction of Australian microbiologist Frank Fenner.

The global eradication of smallpox was certified, based on intense verification activities in countries, by a commission of eminent scientists on 9 December 1979 and subsequently endorsed by the World Health Assembly on 8 May 1980. ###

Commander in Chief approves appointment of four additional judges to VA's Board of Veterans' Appeals

October 11, 2018

WASHINGTON - Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that President Donald J. Trump recently approved The appointment of four new Veterans Law Judges to VA's Board of Veterans' Appeals.



Commander in Chief

"Bringing on additional judges means the Board will be better staffed to conduct hearings and decide appeals properly in a timely manner," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. *"Combined with procedural changes under the Appeals Modernization and Improvement Act of 2017 [AMA] and the hiring of more than 200 additional Board attorneys, this translates into better and faster service for Veterans."*

Veterans Law Judges are presidential appointees and go through a thorough vetting process. After an initial screening, the chairman of the Board recommends a list of candidates to the Secretary of the VA. If agreed to, the list of selectees is forwarded to the White House for final approval. Once approved, the selectees are notified by the chairman and officially sworn in.

The following Veterans Law Judges will assume their roles Oct. 14, and will begin holding hearings and signing decisions for Veterans and other appellants: Lauren Cryan, Evan Deichert, William Donnelly and Cynthia Skow.

In fiscal year 2018, the Board issued a historic 85,288 decisions to Veterans — 61.6 percent more than 2017. Expanding the roster of Veterans Law Judges will allow the Board to continue issuing more decisions for Veterans, as VA prepares for full implementation of the AMA. This law transforms a complex appeals process into one that is simplified, timely and transparent by providing Veterans with increased choice and control. The AMA will go into effect on Feb. 14.

For more information about the Board and its progress on appeals modernization, visit:

<https://www.bva.va.gov>



'More than a calling': 82nd Airborne rabbi leads by example

By Maj. Thomas Cieslak (82nd Airborne)
October 12, 2018



Capt. Yisahar Izak's drive to be a role model to fellow faith leaders and paratroopers in the midst of adversity spurred him to serve as a chaplain in the 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division.

(Photo Credit: U.S. Army photo by Maj. Thomas Cieslak)

FORT BRAGG, N.C. -- Capt. Yisahar Izak's drive to be a role model to fellow faith leaders and paratroopers in the midst of adversity spurred him to serve as a chaplain in the 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division.

"When I came into the U.S. Army, there was a lack of Jewish chaplains in active jump status, meaning we are not able to have a rabbi lead by example for our paratroopers," said Izak. "I was already a fan of the 82nd by virtue of studying its history and proud legacy. It was a win-win match with my high motivation to become an Airborne-qualified Chaplain."

Before his assignment to the 82nd Airborne Division, Izak globe-trekged through 40 different countries on four continents, growing up in six of them and spending over 17 years in developing regions.

"Having been a civilian, member of a non-governmental organization and soldier at war in other countries, I came to the conclusion the United States Constitution, Bill of Rights and Declaration of Independence are the most sacred human-written texts and the only ones that give humans a chance to co-exist in a civilized manner," said Izak. "To serve them would be the highest ministry I could achieve."

Orthodox Jewish by faith denomination, Izak previously served as a rabbi in Flatbush, New York, Izmir, Turkey, and in numerous locations in Israel. He first heard his calling to faith while involved in humanitarian relief and disaster response operations in South Asia and the Middle East between 1998 and 1999.

"The amount of suffering pushed me towards more and more self-reflection to the point that after the two large earthquakes in Turkey with over 50,000 casualties combined ... I could not reason with all what was going on all around me," said Izak. "All I knew was I needed to understand the balance in all what goes on."

"I set sails to go to seminary. Being concerned with volunteering, eager to address other's needs, and having a genuine concern to help others -- I ended up evolving into a faith leader," continued Izak. "More than a calling, it was a natural journey full of divine providence."

The transition from faith student to faith leader was natural for Izak. After seven years of full-time study, he was approached by his elders with the offer to study for the rabbinical exams. His drive to lead by example in the midst of adversity eventually led him to serve alongside paratroopers in the 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment at Fort Bragg.

Izak's kippa, the traditional brimless skull cap worn by Jews to fulfill orthodox requirements to keep their head covered at all times, is often the topic of conversation between him and paratroopers, along with his prayer shawl and other ecclesiastical items.

"One of the three main competencies of the Chaplain Corps is to nourish the living, requiring me to provide services for my religion while facilitating services for all paratroopers per their faith group," said Izak. "I love the concept of chaplaincy where a minister can care for everyone regardless what religion they are."



Good on ya Cap!





Reunions of the Airborne Kind 2018 ~ 2019



Charlie Airborne Arctic Paratroopers FWA Reunion, Las Vegas NV at the Luxor Hotel, May 31, 2019 to June 2, 2019. **Contact:** Dave Leiva, Phn/Fax: 623-512-5481, Eml: biffleiva@gmail.com



173d Airborne Brigade Annual Reunion, Charleston, SC, June 5-9, 2019. **Contact:** Wayne Bowers, Phn: 803-237-3169, Eml: bowway@aol.com



Company A 2/503 Mini Reunion, DoubleTree Reid Park, Tucson, AZ, September 19-22, 2019. **Contact:** Terry "Woody" Davis, A 2/503, '66-'67, Phn: (270) 792-8306



Casper Platoon Reunion, Tropicana Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, NV, April 23-25, 2019. **Contact:** Ned Costa, Phn: 562-682-3160, Eml: NCHuey721@aol.com, Web: <http://www.casperplatoon.com/2019.htm>



73rd Joint Reunion 11ABN & 187 ARCT, Clarion Hotel Conference Center, Lexington, KY, September 24-29, 2018. **Contact:** Phn: 856-233-0515



B/2/501st, 101st Airborne Reunion, Evansville Double Tree by Hilton, Evansville, IN, October 16-19, 2019.

Contact:

<http://b2501airborne.com/reunion.htm>

NOTE:

If you are aware of any upcoming "Airborne" or attached unit reunions, please email complete details to rto173@att.net for inclusion in our newsletter.



Web info: <http://dday-anniversary.com/>

173d Reunion Registration Form

SKY SOLDIERS DESCEND ON

Charleston, SC

JUNE 5-9, 2019 | HOSTED BY SC CHAPTER 30

Name _____ Phone () _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Unit served within the Brigade _____ Dates served _____

Guest 1 Name _____ Male/Female _____

Guest 2 Name _____ Male/Female _____

Guest 3 Name _____ Male/Female _____

Registration Fees

_____ \$173/Association member* (includes hospitality room, drink tickets, banquet, welcome meal, gift)

_____ \$173 per guest* (includes hospitality room, drink tickets, banquet, welcome meal, gift)

_____ \$55 per Gold Star Family member

_____ \$100 per Active Duty Soldier (NOT on orders)

_____ FREE - Active Duty Soldiers on orders (i.e. Command, Color Guard)

Optional Activity Fees

_____ \$30/person - Patriots Point trip (includes transportation and admission)

_____ \$20/person - Harbor boat tour add on (must also be registered for Patriots Point trip)

_____ \$20/person - Downtown Charleston Historic Market trip (includes transportation)

_____ \$40/person - Golf Outing (includes transportation, cart rental, and lunch)

_____ \$25/person - Welcome meal only (CAUTION: included with full registration)

_____ \$55/person - Banquet only (CAUTION: included with full registration)

_____ FREE - Ladies Event (must register to attend)

_____ FREE - Gold Star Luncheon - 173d Gold Star Families only (must register to attend)

_____ \$10 - Raffle ticket (winner will receive \$1,000)

_____ Donation to offset reunion costs (choose any amount)

Vendor Fees

_____ \$125 - Association member vendor registration fee (includes 1 table, 2 chairs)

_____ \$150 - Non-association member vendor registration fee (includes 1 table, 2 chairs)

_____ \$75 per additional table

_____ \$50 - electricity at vendor table

TOTAL COST

To register and pay online, visit www.173dreunion2019.com

Make checks payable to: 173d Airborne Brigade Association
Mail to: Wendell Satterfield, PO Box 525, Gray Court, SC 29645
For hotel reservations: Embassy Suites by Hilton Charleston Airport - 843-747-1882
For additional information: Wayne Bowers, 803-237-3169, bowway@aol.com

* Registration available online and by mail until 19 May 2019. Walk-ins welcome at \$199.
* You must be registered to participate in the 173d Airborne Brigade activities listed above.
Registration fee does not include any mini reunions (such as 4th Battalion).

Airborne... All The Way!



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Farewell to Troopers of the 173d Abn Bde & 503rd PRCT And Attached Units Who Made Their Final Jump



Richard "Dick" Childs, Jr., 75
Melbourne, FL
10/2/18
173d Abn Bde, RVN

David W. Feltman, 74
Sonoma, Ca
August 30, 2017
2/503, RVN

Craig Ford, 73
Edmonds, WA
September 16, 2018
C/1/503d, RVN
To his buddies in the 2/503, Craig
will always be our "1st Bat Guy"

Cory Adam Frank, 31
Fall Creek, WI
June 6, 2018
173d ABCT, B/Eng. Co.

Derek Brandon Hill, 36
Woodlawn, VA
September 11, 2018
173d ABCT

James Homer Hodge, Sr., 74
Huntington, WV
September 21, 2018
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Stephen Edward Manthey, 70
Renton, WA
August 19, 2018
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Danny Ray Mayfield, 67
Corner, AL
August 20, 2018
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Joe Garcia Morales, 72
Victoria, TX
July 30, 2018
173d Abn Bde, RLTW

Kenneth Robert Obendorf, 70
Versailles, IN
September 3, 2018
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Jimmy Dale Osbin, 68
Picayune, MS
August 13, 2018
335th AHC, RVN

Mark, A. Sevier, 68
Trafalgar, IN
July 9, 2018
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Robert H. Sickles, Jr., 69
Seaside Heights, NJ
August 28, 2018
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Nathan Teregeyo, 25
Vincenza, Italy
September 2018
1/503d, ABCT

Jeffrey L. Zimpel, 69
Madison, WI
September 4, 2018
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Rest Easy Boys



September Heat

An Army paratrooper descends to the ground at Rivolto Air Base in Udine, Italy, Sept. 26, 2017, during Exercise September Heat 2017. The soldier is assigned to the 173rd Airborne Brigade. (Army photo by Paolo Bovo)

