

ISSUE
100

RED CLAY

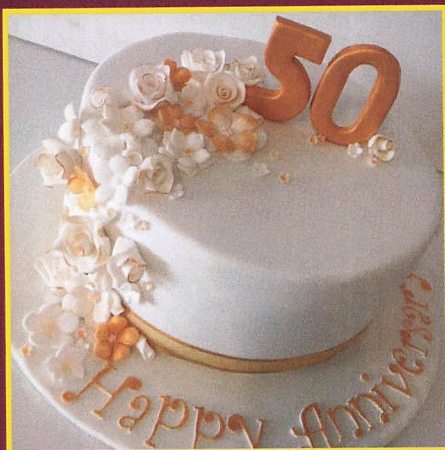
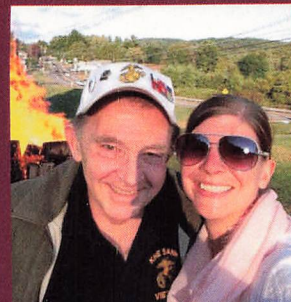
WINTER
2021

LEST WE FORGET





ED ZIMMERMAN F CO, 3RD PLT, AND HIS
LOVELY BRIDE CATHY, CELEBRATING
THEIR 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY



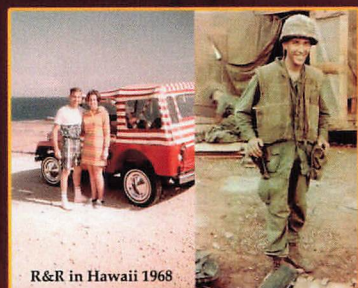
Journey Begins



55th ANNIVERSARY
Rod & Charlene Fink
1966 - 2016

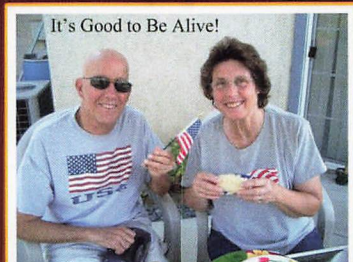
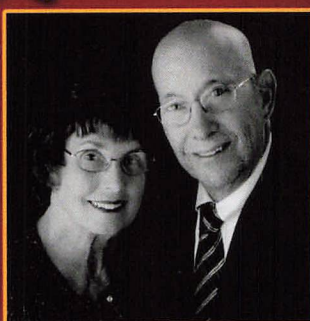


Half Way Point



R&R in Hawaii 1968

For Better or For Worse

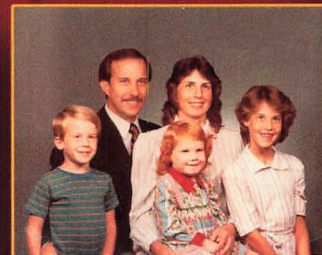
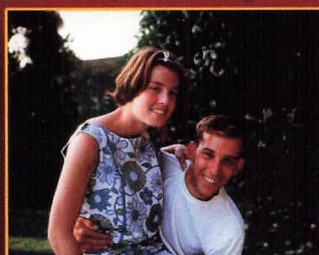


5 Years In Remission 2012

In Sickness and In Health

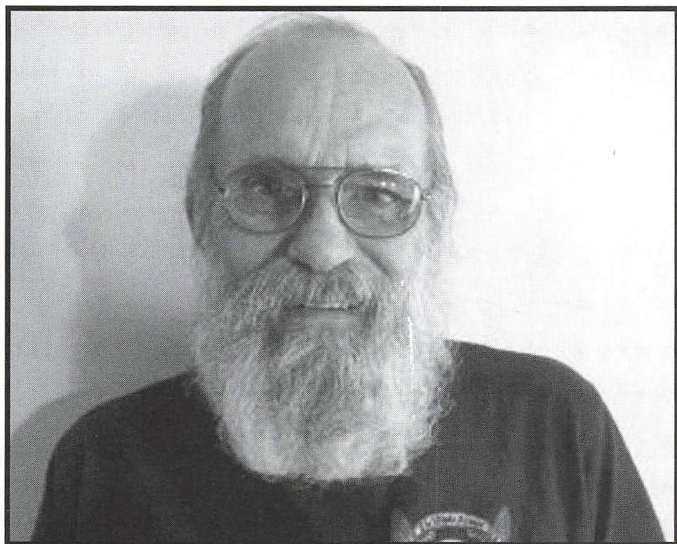
Two are better than one.

Because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, For he has no one to help him up. Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; But how can one be warm alone? Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.



OBIT

William R. "Bill" Cron, 73, was born March 15, 1948, and returned to heaven April 16, 2021.



In the years between he lived a wonderful life. He had an idyllic childhood in rural Belleville, provided by his loving parents, the late William E (Bill) and Marjorie (nee Johnson) Cron.

He joined the United States Marine Corps, surviving Khe Sanh, Vietnam siege and the Tet Offensive. Becoming a Marine was one of the defining moments of his life.

Bill returned home to achieve status of Journeyman Carpenter and was a member of The Brotherhood of Carpenters. He also enjoyed truck driving, bus driving and being a greens keeper.

After retiring he enjoyed volunteering and traveling throughout the United states. Accompanying him on these journeys was his adoring wife of 40 years Jeri C. Cron (nee Wetmore.). Finally he settled in Hecker.

Bill was proud of his son by marriage Ronald "Ronnie" Reed (Susan) of Collinsville and loved seeing his grandchildren Chelsey Reed of Collinsville and Emily Dively (Cory) of Moro, along with the great-grandchildren Caleb and Cooper Dively of Moro.

Bill's little sister Gwen Flach (nee Cron) was his biggest fan. He so loved her and her children, his niece Jennifer Flach and nephew Matthew Flash (Alyssa) both of Belleville and their children Andrew Flach and Clara Flach.

Bill was born again Christian and tried to live his life by the teachings of Jesus. He was so grateful to be a member of the New Life Church in Waterloo – the prayers of friends and church family have sustained him through difficult times.

He was buried April 22 in Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, St. Louis.

OBIT

SOERENSEN, THOMAS K., USMC, KHE SANH VETERAN, A BTRY 1/13, ALPHA 6 F/O TEAM, I CO 3/26

Thomas K. Soerensen
March 17, 1941 – May 3, 2021

Thomas K. Soerensen, longtime resident of Oroville, California, died at his home early on May 3, 2021 at age 80, after a more than 4 years-long battle with cancer.

Thomas was born in Poznan (German-occupied Poland), on March 17, 1941, to Edward and Anna Soerensen.

In January of 1945 Thomas and his mother, along with his older siblings Karin, Klaus and George, were forced to flee their home country from advancing Russian forces. His father was away at the time, serving in the German military, but he miraculously found them, and they fled to Bavaria where the American military forces had liberated Germany. Thereafter they lived in several displaced persons camps in Northern Germany. His youngest brother, George, was born in 1946. Eventually, the Soerensens were sponsored by a family friend in Long Island, New York and passage was arranged to the USA by Lutheran World Federation. They sailed from Bremerhaven, Germany on the naval transport ship, USS General W.C. Langfitt, which, over the war years, carried many immigrants to the USA. The family arrived in New York Harbor on January 9, 1956. Thomas was 14 years of age

Thomas thereafter graduated from Massapequa High School, Class of 1959-60 in New York. He then enlisted with the US Marine Corps in 1960 and served for 4 years. In 1966, when he was already discharged from the Marines, working and attending college, he re-enlisted.

Thomas K. Soerensen is a decorated veteran of the Vietnam War, and was attached to "A Battery 1st



Battalion 13th Marines” as an artillery forward observer during the infamous battle of Khe Sanh (January 21-July 9, 1968). On September 5, 1966, he was wounded in action, but declined medical transport and despite his injuries, continued to direct a successful night-long mission. He was the recipient of numerous military awards for his years of service and sustained acts of heroism in combat, including The Bronze Star, The Purple Heart, and a Marine Corps Commendation. He received the “1968 Presidential Unit Citation” which was awarded to the 3d Marine Division (Reinforced) for extraordinary heroism and outstanding performance of duty from March 8, 1965 to September 15, 1967. He proudly served our country for 6 years as an active duty Marine, achieving the rank of Sergeant. He was a member of the Khe Sanh Veterans Association and several other related military organizations.

In 1982 Thomas and his family moved to Oroville, California, where he and his wife, Evva, owned and operated the historic Miner’s Café restaurant on Oro Dam Blvd for more than 15 years.

Thomas loved the outdoors and was an avid hiker.

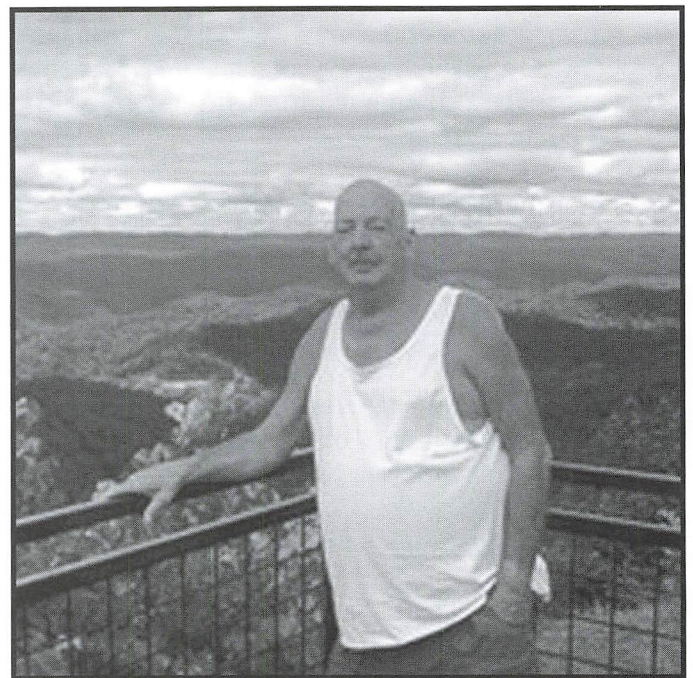
A lover of music, he appreciated a wide range of musical genres from classic rock to classical music. He was an industrious person and when he wasn’t working he spent much of his free time improving and maintaining his home Rose Hill, VA

OBIT

WINSTON, KELLY, USMC KHE SANH VETERAN

Winston Kelly, age 72, went home to be with his Lord on March 1, 2021 in Claiborne County Medical Center. He was a native of Harlan County, KY, the son of the late Millard and Ethel Mae Hall Kelly. He joined the United States Marine Corp in 1967 and was honorably discharged in 1969. **His tour of duty was in Vietnam where he served in the Battle of "Khe Sanh" on Hill #861 for the entire battle. Winston was the recipient of two Purple Hearts.** He was a retired coal miner spending twenty three and a half years with Arch of KY in the same mine #37, spending another three and a half years at another mine before his retirement. He moved from Harlan County and came to Virginia in 1995. Winston was of Baptist faith.

Survivors are his wife of 53 years Sandra Eldridge Kelly of Rose Hill, VA. Two sons; Winston Jr. Kelly and wife Tina of Jonesville, VA, Chris Kelly



and wife Michelle of Rose Hill, VA. Grandchildren; Winston Kelly III and wife Andrea, Alyssa Combs, Joshua Kelly and wife Emma and Grace Kelly.

Great-grandchildren; Colton Kelly and Samuel Combs. He was a wonderful father and a fantastic grandpa.

The family would like to thank Dr. John Michael Robertson and all the staff at Claiborne County Medical Center. He would want us to list all his close friends but there are far too many. The family will receive on Sunday, March 7, 2021 from noon until 2:00 pm at Sturgill Funeral Home in Pennington Gap with services following with Pastor Rick Phillips and Pastor Richard Long officiating. Interment will follow in Lee Memorial Park West in Rose Hill, VA. Pallbearers will be Bo Kelly, Danny Perkins, Ed Jennings, Wayne Marcum, John Douglas and Randy Eldridge. Social distancing and masks will be required due to the Corona Virus. To view obituary and sign guest book please visit www.sturgillfuneralhome.com. Mullins-Sturgill Funeral Home of Pennington Gap is in charge of the arrangements.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

By Michael Archer

Fifty-three years ago today, on July 6, 1968, Marine Lance Corporal Thomas Patrick Mahoney III, weary from the endless combat that had decimated his company, distraught at the final abandonment to the enemy of nearby Khe Sanh Combat Base just hours before, and having just received bad news from home, walked unarmed away from his platoon's tenuous defensive perimeter on the western sector of infamous Hill 881 South into an inevitable death by enemy soldiers waiting just a few yards away.

Tom's despair that afternoon reverberated over the subsequent decades in the heartbreak felt by family and friends and the gnawing sorrow and guilt among his fellow Marines who, though they had survived, were now left with a lifetime of lingering regret that they had not been tuned-in enough to his emotional state to avert the loss of such a well-liked colleague. Others, like myself, who had left Khe Sanh three months earlier, would nonetheless carry the burden of survivor guilt for very long time after the war.

The events leading up to that day—and after—are detailed in my book *The Long Goodbye*. Since my last update on this site in June 2020 ([Government at its Best \(khesanh-battle.com\)](http://Government at its Best (khesanh-battle.com))), I've made several attempts to gain information from the US Defense POW/MIA Accountability Agency about any re-



L/CPL TOM MAHONEY APRIL 1968

newed activity in the search for Tom's remains, but have gotten no new information.

As the years pass, and despite great advances in the science of identifying even minuscule remains, described in that June 2020 blog post, it is increasingly unlikely that an identifiable remnant will be found. In 2016, a DPAA field team, escorting Tom's platoon commander Frank Ahearn and another witness to the event, Tom Northrop, narrowed down the location of where Mahoney's body was last seen. What happens next, remains up to the DPAA command. Understandably, they have a responsibility to apply their resources to situations that will have a higher probability of success.

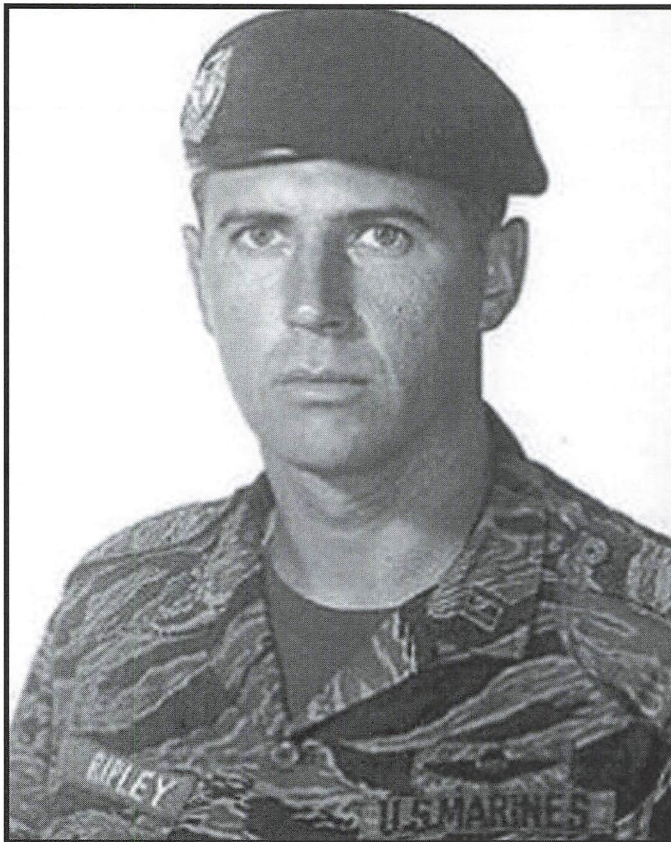
Had a search team been dispatched within a few years of his death, the chances would have been much greater, which brings us to an odd "what might have been" connection between Tom Mahoney and one of the Marine Corps' most revered heroes, Colonel John Ripley.

Then-Captain Ripley was involved in a number of daring incidents during his time in Vietnam serving with various reconnaissance organizations and, for about a year, when he led Lima Company, Third Battalion Third Marine Regiment, called "Ripley's

Raiders," during combat missions throughout the northern part of the country, including around Khe Sanh in 1967. During his tours in Vietnam, Ripley would be wounded several times, but only claiming one as a Purple Heart because he did not want to reach the magic number of three that would send him home. None of his exploits were more incredible—or legendary—than his destruction of a bridge over the Cua Viet River near the town of Dong Ha on April 1, 1972---singlehandedly stopping a vast North Vietnamese Army offensive consisting of nearly 30,000 troops and 200 battle tanks.

As advisor to group of well-disciplined South Vietnamese Marines, Ripley, and Major Jim Smock, immediately realized their M-48 tanks would be easily outgunned by the superior Soviet-made armor that the NVA were moving forward, and so had to determine how to stop this formidable tank column approaching the bridge. A successful crossing would lead them unhindered to their objective-- the old Imperial City of Hue.

The bridge was constructed of iron I-Beams, over-



CAPTAIN JOHN RIPLEY 1971

laid with steel decking, covered by two feet of timber, all sitting atop six-foot-thick concrete supports. The only way it could be brought down was with well-placed demolition. Ripley ordered explosives

be brought forward. Once they arrived Captain Ripley, who could not use the roadway of the bridge due to withering enemy gunfire from the north side of the river, went to work underneath, sliding 75 pound cases of TNT between the edges of the I-Beams to a point over the middle of the river. Because there were six such I-beams, the job would take two hours. The shape of the I-beam allowed Ripley to use the protective channel to shield him from the enemy gunfire that was raking the area in an effort to stop him. However, at times he was forced to dangle precariously from the bottom of the bridge, advancing hand-over-hand.

After all the explosives were in place, Ripley lit the primer cord with a match, but crawled out once more to set a backup detonator with electrical caps. He then raced toward a protective bunker 90 yards away. The bridge exploded before he got there. All he later remembered of that moment was lying on his back "as huge pieces of the bridge were hurtling and cartwheeling across the sky above."

His heroic actions bought time for a South Vietnamese Army counteroffensive to be organized and eventually the North Vietnamese were driven back. Three years later they would return—and overrun the entire country ending the war. Ripley would receive the Navy Cross for his actions and in an interview published by the US Naval Institute years later would say: "The idea that I would be able to even finish the job before the enemy got me was ludi-
crous."

What fewer people know about Ripley is that six months earlier, in September 1971, he and his South Vietnamese Marines, set out on a perilous mission to the slopes of Hill 950, about two miles from the abandoned Khe Sanh Combat Base, hoping to recover the remains of several American Marines killed there in a helicopter crash earlier in the year. The first two attempts resulted in Ripley's helicopters being badly shot up by enemy anti-aircraft fire and forced to glide down into hard landings on the nearby abandoned Khe Sanh airstrip. Each time the men were able to escape capture. After recovering from wounds received during the second attempt, Ripley, and his Vietnamese Marines, made a third try, this time landing on a nearby Hill 1015 and going overland, eluding the hundreds of North Vietnamese Army soldiers in the area, and successfully locating the American bodies.

As a chopper carrying them and the remains ascended from their make-shift landing zone on the slope

Hill 950 on September 20, 1971—in what would prove to be the final American military action at Khe Sanh—it passed directly over the deserted, shell-pocked, partially overgrown plateau where just over three years earlier the plight of thousands of besieged Americans had once captivated the world's attention.

Ripley's success in recovering those remains opened the possibility of other such missions to the Khe Sanh area. In a document I received years later (Joint POW-MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) Research and Investigation Team Research Report, Case 1224, 1993), I would learn that just two months after that mission, the accountability command considered the possibility of trying to recover Mahoney's remains just five miles southwest of Ripley's successful effort. However, they soon decided against it because "the continuing hostile threat in the area precluded any visits or ground inspections in his case."

The 1973 Paris Peace Accords would include provi-



IN THE DISTANCE, HILL 950 (LEFT) AND HILL 1015 (RIGHT) AS VIEWED FROM NEAR THE SPOT TOM MAHONEY WAS LOST ON HILL 881 SOUTH

sions for locating those still unaccounted for at the conclusion of hostilities, creating a joint military team with all signatories represented. The U.S. component, called the Joint Casualty Resolution Center (JCRC), was responsible for field searches, excavations, recovery and repatriation activities negotiated through these accords, but was often hampered by ongoing fighting in the south, and open and aggressive hostility from the North Vietnamese and VC soldiers in the potential search areas. With the fall of Saigon in April 1975, Americans lost all

access to the old battlefields.

For a decade afterward, most Americans sought to forget Vietnam in an effort to pull the nation together after a period of domestic unrest and violence that had bordered on civil war. While returned veterans were still considered pariahs by many, in the late-1980s President George H.W. Bush and Congress acted on growing public interest in locating missing Americans. This became the foundation for ending a nineteen-year trade embargo with Vietnam and establishing economic relations.

In 1994, American investigators returned to Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, interviewing former NVA and VC soldiers, conducting field searches and excavations, and sifting through military archives in Hanoi. The mission of the JCRC was reassigned to the Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (JTF-FA) located in Honolulu and soon most U.S. government documents pertaining to MIAs in South East Asia were declassified and available through the Library of Congress.

From those records, I learned that on July 12, 1993, twenty-five years to the day after the battle of Khe Sanh ended with the departure of the last Marine unit from Hill 689, a four-person JTF-FA team traveled for the first time to Hill 881 South in search of Tom's remains. The investigators had no one to interview, because there were no local civilians in the region at the time of his death, and Hanoi's antiquated record-keeping system still prevented them from identifying the NVA unit involved in the incident. They performed a perfunctory surface survey of the area where Tom was last seen and "found no evidence of remains or burial."

Had the decision been made in 1971 to try and duplicate Ripley's recovery mission at Khe Sanh, this time looking for Tom, this story might have had a different ending. We will never know. But what we do know is that what Chaucer wrote 700 years ago still rings sorrowfully true today in our effort to finally bring Tom home: "Time and tide wait for no man."

NIGHTMARE NORTH OF CAM LO 28 FEBRUARY 1967 PREFACE

In late February 1967, a Recon team patrolling northwest of Cam Lo near the DMZ made contact with a sizable NVA force. They killed one enemy soldier in the initial firefight, but they had actually



engaged the point element of a regiment sized unit from the 324B Division. Outmanned and outgunned, the Recon Marines withdrew to the south and radioed for help. During the subsequent 48-hour period that followed, at least 4 Marine rifle companies were sent out to rescue the Recon team and exploit the enemy contact, but they would pay a heavy price. By the time the fighting was over, the Marines would suffer 20 KIA, and at least 135 wounded. My dad, 1st Lieutenant Jim Ambrose, was the Artillery Forward Observer assigned to Golf Company, 2/3, the unit which linked up with the Recon team and fought through a hellacious NVA ambush near the base of hill 124. This is his recollection of that rescue patrol and the grim battle that followed.

Jim Ambrose, Jr., former Captain, USMC

DEPARTURE INTERRUPTED

"Where's Lieutenant Ambrose at? We need him up at the CP A-S-A-P!" Oh shit. I can still remember that young Marine running from hooch to hooch searching for me. Vietnam was filled with nightmares and this was usually how they started. It was the morning of February 27, 1967, and I had been in country for 7 months. On that particular day, though, my seabag was packed, and I was listening to records by the Animals and Dusty Springfield on a battery powered record player in our primitive bunker at Camp Carroll. My unit, Bravo Battery 1/12, was scheduled to rotate out of Vietnam for a month of training on Okinawa, and the trucks that would take us to Dong Ha were due to arrive any minute. The thought of four weeks away from the blood, mud and combat up in I Corps sounded too good to be true, and when things sounded too good to be true in Vietnam, they usually were.

Premonition of Death

"Vietnam was filled with nightmares and this was usually how they started."

On that same morning, Captain Carl Bockewitz made his way over to the 2/3 OPS bunker at Camp Carroll to ask the S-3 a question. Bockewitz was the CO of Golf Co., and he had recently volunteered to extend his combat tour in Vietnam. The tall, lean, former cop from Bourbon, Missouri wanted to



1ST LT JIM AMBROSE, ARTY F/O ON PATROL NORTHWEST OF DANANG.

know if his company would be patrolling north of the Cam Lo River that day.

The S-3, Major Robert Sheridan, dismissed his question and assured him that G Co. was not going anywhere. Like B/1/12, 2/3 was also scheduled for training on Okinawa, and more than half the battalion was already embarked on ships offshore. Bockewitz walked out of the bunker feeling quite relieved because the previous night he had dreamed that he would die if he went north of the Cam Lo River.

MY MISSION

My Mission Up at the CP, 1st Lt. Richard Brammer, the Battery Fire Direction Officer, briefed me

on the situation. He told me that our trip to Okinawa was on hold because a Marine Recon team had bumped into a large NVA force northwest of Cam Lo. After a short firefight, they broke contact but now they were surrounded and needed help. Lima Co 3/4 had been patrolling nearby with 5 M-48



CAPT. CARL BOCKEWITZ, CO OF GOLF 2/3, DREAMED HE WOULD DIE IF HE WENT NORTH OF THE CAM LO RIVER.

tanks, but thick vegetation in the area prevented them from reaching the Recon team. The only remaining unit available to help the Recon team was Captain Bockewitz' Golf Company, and they needed an experienced Arty FO for the mission. Brammer chose me.

I gulped hard and tried to hide my disappointment, then hustled back to my hooch to grab my helmet and flak jacket. I threw some C rats and .45 ammo into my light marching pack and then made my way up toward the 2/3 position near the plateau atop Camp Carroll. I had a list of on call targets prepared by Brammer in my cargo pocket along with a single lens binocular I had created with a hacksaw following Operation Hastings in August 1966. During my time in Vietnam, I had learned that being as inconspicuous as possible while calling in fire missions prolonged one's life expectancy as an Arty FO.

THE GRUNTS

The 2/3 CP was abuzz with activity as sergeants and corporals organized Golf Co for the rescue patrol. Young infantrymen were loading up magazines for their M-14's, while in the background the outgoing artillery fire was frequent and intense. Like me, these Marines were probably trying to suppress their shock and disappointment over the Okinawa trip being cancelled, and it had become increasingly obvious to everyone that this hastily assigned rescue mission was certain to bring us in direct contact with the NVA.

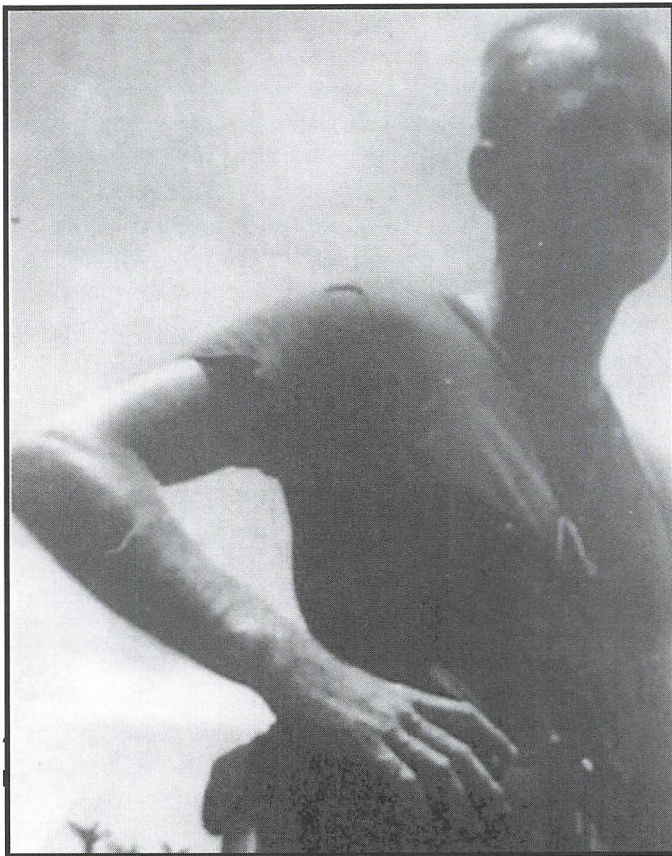
I didn't know any of the Marines in 2/3, but I did my best to find someone in charge. From the midst of the chaos came Lt. Col Victor Ohanesian, the Battalion CO. He greeted me with a smile and a handshake, then "thanked" me for reporting in. I wasn't aware that this was an optional mission, but his affable demeanor helped calm my nerves. It was obvious that he was an experienced combat leader who inspired confidence amongst his Marines. He handed me a couple of loaded magazines for my .45, then brought me over to meet Capt. Bockewitz who gave me a brief handshake just before issuing the patrol order to his rifle company.

My best guess is that there were approximately 75 Marines in the reaction force, about half the size of a fully manned rifle company. As far as other officers, I saw a 1st Lt. FAC and two 2nd Lt. platoon commanders. When Bockewitz finished his order, we mounted up on 6x6 trucks which took us from Camp Carroll down to Route 9. It occurred to me that these were probably the same trucks which were supposed to take us to Dong Ha for our trip to Okinawa. We convoyed east about 5 clicks east then disembarked to begin our march north into the DMZ

At some point I was introduced to Corporal George Schieder, a wiry Marine rifleman who had volunteered to be the radio operator for arty FO teams attached to Golf Co. We made small talk during the short truck ride, and he let out a chuckle when I told him I was from Boston because he was from upstate NY. Schieder was a squared away Marine, and I would soon learn that he was a cool customer under fire.

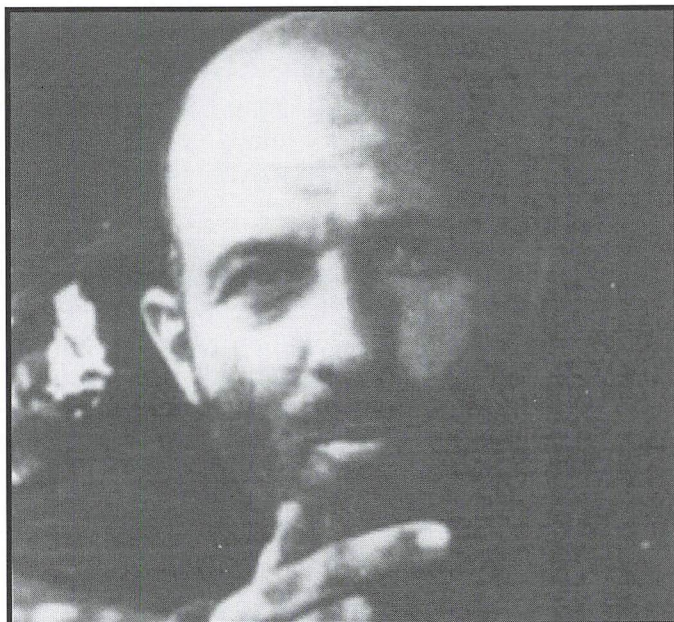
THE PATROL

It was late in the afternoon as we set out, and a cool, steady rain was falling. We marched swiftly north along a thin, narrow footpath which took us through dense jungle underbrush six to eight feet high in



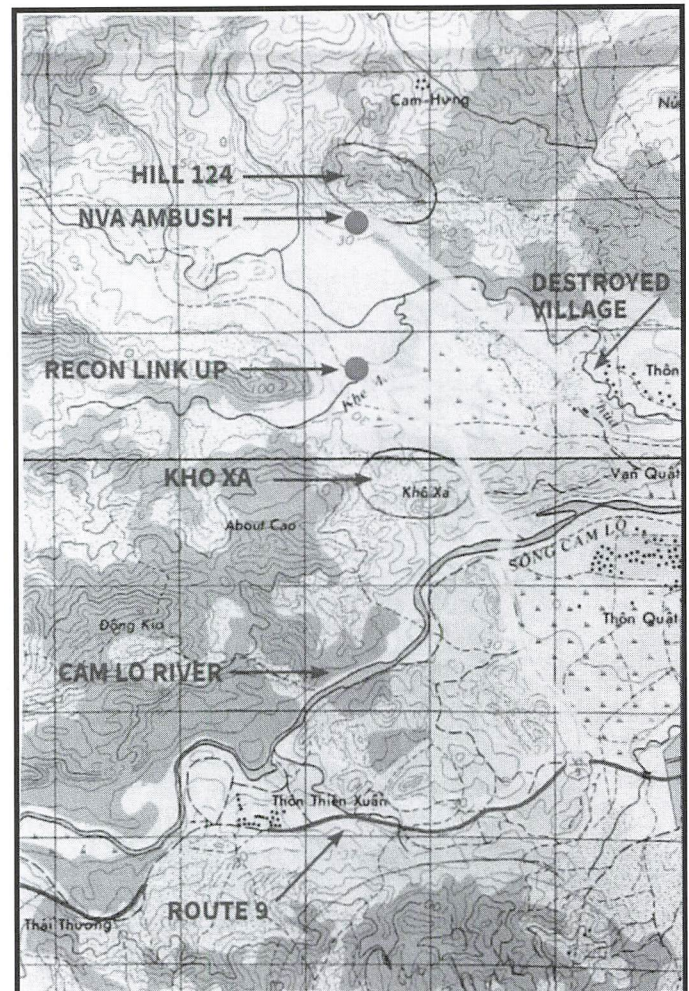
1ST LT. JIM AMBROSE

places. Each Marine in the column held onto the cartridge belt of the Marine to his front in order to avoid being separated in the dark. To the northeast we could hear the sounds of an intense firefight developing. After establishing a defensive position for



**LT COL VICTOR OHANESIAN 2/3
BATTALION CO**

the night, L/3/4 had come under attack from an NVA force who disabled one of their M-48 tanks with RPG's.



**HIGHLIGHTED GOLF 2/3 PATROL ROUTE
FEB 27-28, 1967**

Soon the dense vegetation gave way to a clearing and we were on the bank of the Cam Lo river. It was swollen from monsoon rains, and I had to hold my .45 and maps over my head as we marched across. At that particular moment I didn't know anything about Capt Bockewitz' ominous dream, but I can only wonder what ran through his mind as we marched across that river to where he told the S-3 he would die only hours earlier. The narrow trail we were following continued on the opposite bank of

**" I HAD TO GET SOME ARTY IN QUICK,
OR RISK BEING OVER-RUN OR ANNIHI-
LATED..."**

the river. In the distance and slightly west of our patrol route we could see the looming shadow of a large hill identified as "Kho Xa" on my map.



Bockewitz may have suspected there were enemy scouts on top because he ordered the company to halt, and then had me request a fire mission. Kho Xa was one of the pre-plotted targets prepared by Lt. Brammer so I was able to obliterate the hill top with 105mm howitzer rounds that screamed in from Camp Carroll within minutes. After the fire mission, Bockewitz told me to stay near him at the front of the column and track the company position on my map.

We moved further north into the DMZ and soon began hearing sporadic gunfire from the Recon team as they zig zagged south with NVA troops in pursuit. Bockewitz attempted to make radio contact to better determine their location, but the Reconners would only respond with clicks of their handset because they were so close to the enemy. With the use of white parachute flares as reference points, though, we eventually linked up with them at approximately 2300. They emerged from the darkness wearing huge packs and soft bush covers.

We took up defensive positions in the cold, rain soaked elephant grass while Bockewitz radioed the

higher ups back at Camp Carroll. Having accomplished our mission, I briefly hoped we would head back to route 9 with the Recon team, but the worst part of this patrol was yet to come.

One of the recon Marines had a Boston accent like mine, and he told me that they had been patrolling in the area north of Kho Xa for several days when they bumped into 4 unusually tall NVA soldiers with AK-47's on a narrow trail—they were wearing pith helmets and green utilities with red metal stars on their collars. They shot and killed one of them, but the others retreated back up the trail and into the jungle. Within minutes they were under attack and being pursued by what they estimated to be at least 100 NVA soldiers. That's when they called for help.

Bockewitz received orders to move a few thousand meters southeast and establish a defensive position in an abandoned village marked "destroyed" on my map. We arrived there sometime after midnight and set up a CP in an old church whose roof had been destroyed in a previous battle. I could make out some ornate sculptures depicting the stations of the cross which harkened back to my days as an altar boy at the Sacred Heart Church in Roslindale, MA.

"CAPT. BOCKEWITZ'S PREMONITION OF DEATH HAD COME TRUE."

Corporal Schieder and I spent the night shivering underneath a single poncho making periodic radio checks with the battery at Camp Carroll. We were bone tired, but adrenalin and fear kept us from sleeping. The battle between the NVA and Lima 3/4 raged through the night just a few thousand clicks northeast of our position. A steady bombardment of artillery from Camp Carroll helped them stave off several determined NVA attacks.

At first light we were ordered to move north about 2 clicks to establish a blocking position on top of hill 124. The Recon Marines told us that they had found numerous fighting holes and freshly used trails in and around the base of that same hill, and they estimated that at least a battalion size NVA force was in the area. However, intelligence reports would later reveal that it was a regiment sized unit (1000-2000 troops) from the 324thB Division which had recently returned to the Song Ngan Valley after being bloodied there by the Marines in Operation Hastings six months earlier.

With Lima 3/4 pinned down in a defensive position to protect their disabled tanks, Golf 2/3's under-

manned rifle company of 75 Marines was the only intact fighting force capable of maneuvering and undertaking offensive operations in the Cam Lo area at that particular moment in time. We were cold, wet, and weary of the inevitable contact with an NVA unit which likely outnumbered us by 10 to 1. But on the morning of 28 February, we stepped off toward hill 124 where a battle hardened and fiercely determined enemy force was waiting for us because we were U.S. Marines and we had orders to do so.

We marched in a staggered column, NCO's forcefully reminding the riflemen to maintain their interval and stay alert. Their heads were on swivels, scanning left and right with M-14's in jungle slings. Although we could hear the battle with L/3/4 to the east, the approach to hill 124 seemed eerily quiet. The terrain was flat and devoid of the heavy vegetation we had traversed the previous night while searching for the Recon team. For a brief moment I thought that maybe all of the NVA troops in the area had left to join the fight against L/3/4, but they had not.

We were about 100 meters from the base of the hill 124 when I heard the firecracker sound of gunfire near the front of the column. It was light at first, but then it seemed to erupt from everywhere. We hit the deck and took cover in a shallow gully that was located alongside our route of march. The NVA were dug in amidst the vegetation at the foot of hill 124 and along our right flank no more than 30-40 meters away. The grunts shook off the shock of the ambush and returned fire with their M-14's. Within seconds the noise reached a hellacious cacophony.

I knew Bockewitz would want some arty to suppress the ambush, so with Corporal Schieder in tow, I scrambled over the grunts in a half crouch toward his position at the front of the column.

We arrived to find a Navy Corpsman working frantically to save several seriously wounded Marines. The bodies of two dead Marines lay nearby.

Bockewitz and one of his senior enlisted Marines were in a crouch behind the gully pointing and yelling something about the M-60 machine guns which lay idle in the kill zone 15-20 meters away. Their respective crew members had been cut down in the opening moments of the firefight, and some brave young Marines had crawled out in the face of withering enemy fire to recover their bodies. Some of them had been shot in the process, though, which added to the growing number of casualties.

I never got the chance to speak with Bockewitz. Much to my shock and to the shock of the Marines around me, he stood up, ripped off his flak jacket and threw his helmet to the ground. Then, with his .45 in hand, he leapt up over the berm and sprinted in a crouch toward his wounded Marines and the M-60s. He was shot full of holes instantly, his body falling lifeless near the other dead and wounded Golf Company Marines. Capt. Bockewitz' premonition of death had come true.

Things were deteriorating rapidly for our beleaguered patrol. The skipper was dead, and we were pinned down by the massive volume of enemy gunfire. There were two other platoon commanders, but I had no idea where they were or what they were doing. It occurred to me that we should attempt some kind of envelopment around the NVA position, but any movement from the gully would have been suicide at that point. We were a force of 75 Marines up against what was most likely an enemy battalion firing from well prepared defensive positions. I had to get some arty in quick, or Golf Company would risk being overrun or annihilated by the numerically superior NVA unit.

Schieder and I scrambled in a half crouch back to a position near the middle of the column. I popped up and wedged my chin into the lip of the berm to eyeball some targets, and 2 or 3 enemy rounds cracked just above and beside my head. I ducked down and crawled 3-4 meters to the right, and then back to the left, each time popping up to get a quick look at where the enemy might be located, and each time I was greeted by purposely fully aimed gunfire.

We were near the base of hill 124 which was a prominent terrain feature on my map, but it was covered in the type of dense, Vietnam vegetation that made spotting and adjusting rounds difficult. I wanted to shift fire from the concentration I had plotted on top of hill 124 before we departed from the church earlier that day. After getting a ballpark reading with the mils scale on my single lens binocular, I grabbed the radio handset from Cpl. Schieder:

"MORTGAGE, MORTGAGE, THIS IS MONEY 62, FIRE MISSION, OVER...."

The Army battery at Camp Carroll responded immediately:

"MONEY 62, THIS IS ALPHA O'LEARY NINER, SEND YOUR MISSION OVER..."

"FROM CONCENTRATION TWO FOUR ZERO, RIGHT 100, DROP 200, ENEMY TROOPS FIR-

ING AUTOMATIC WEAPONS, ADJUST FIRE, REQUEST SPLASH OVER..."

**"WE DIDN'T FIND ANY DEAD NVA BLOOD
LEADING OFF INTO THE JUNGLE."**

In a few moments two rounds were on the way. The absolute worst thing that can happen to an Arty FO is for incoming rounds to fall short and cause death or injury to his fellow Marines. Regardless of who is at fault, the grunts will blame the FO.

Schieder and I passed the word to the Grunts and they in turn shouted up and down the column: "ARTY ON THE WAY!" A few moments later the call "SPLASH" came over the radio which meant 5 seconds until impact. The two rounds screamed overhead and landed about 50 meters directly in front of our position, exactly where I wanted them. This was a "danger close" fire mission, and dirt and debris from the impact rained down on our heads. The Army cannon cockers were true pros, so I immediately asked them to "FIRE FOR EFFECT."

The wind tearing roar of six shells came next, bearing down on us like an airborne freight train. Then six large explosions of black smoke and dirt erupted right where the first two rounds hit.

Success! With the enemy positions accurately bracketed, I was able to call in mission after mission, shifting to the left and right across what was about a 75-meter front, directly on top of the NVA positions. They were dug in deep, and I wanted to pulverize them so I requested delayed fuse rounds which would only explode 5 seconds after penetrating the soil, and variable timed (VT) rounds which would burst in the air about 5 meters above the target, inflicting maximum casualties on any exposed enemy soldiers.

The exact sequence of events which followed is somewhat of a blur, but Schieder and I brought in hundreds of rounds on the NVA positions over the course of the next few hours. Most of the arty strikes were so close (40-50 meters) that heaps of dirt and debris landed on us when the rounds impacted. It felt good to hit back at the enemy who had ambushed us, but these were battle hardened NVA regulars who did not quit easily.

Lieutenant Flaherty, the company FAC, who I would later become friends with aboard ship, made his way over toward Schieder and I. He tapped me on the shoulder and gave me a big thumbs up in ad-

miration of our work, then he pointed his finger to the sky and shouted "I GOT AIR ON STATION." I looked up and saw two F-4 Phantoms circling our position and working their way down from about 5000 feet. In what was called the "Save A Plane" concept at the time, we checked fire to let the pilots go to work without fear of being hit by a 105 round.

Just when it seemed they had disappeared from sight, one of the Phantoms came roaring by at tree top level from right to left tearing up the NVA positions with machine gun pods which sounded like the world's biggest jackhammer tearing into cement. Napalm would have been nice, but Flaherty said we were too close to the enemy. With each pass, the F-4s hit full afterburner and pulled straight up with an awe-inspiring roar. The sight of "MARINES" painted in large black letters on the fuselage of each jet was a pretty good morale jolt for all of us.

The combination of airstrikes and artillery missions began to take its toll on the enemy, and the amount of gunfire directed at us began to taper off by late afternoon. The NVA had probably started pulling back into the mountains north of hill 124, but at least a few stayed behind. When an H-34 rumbled in toward our position from the West, the NVA opened up on it, hitting the tail and underside with disturbingly loud pinging noises. Dead and wounded Marines were loaded on board as the crew chief kicked out crates of ammunition. When the old piston-engined chopper lifted off, the door gunner ripped into the NVA positions with his M-60.

Among the wounded loaded onto the chopper was 2nd Lt. Larry Gerlach, one of the two platoon commanders with Golf Co on the patrol. An enemy bullet had smashed through his right hip, and a corpsman had given him a generous shot of morphine. In his delirium, he was mumbling something about "the lieutenant is prepared to receive his critique Sir...", just the way we were taught to speak to our tactics instructors at The Basic School. It was a brief moment of humor on a battlefield far, far away from Quantico. Larry recovered and made a career out of the Marine Corps, but he was badly wounded during the Beirut barracks bombing in 1983.

By the time the battle was over, we had suffered 7 Marines killed and 18 wounded. 2nd Lt. Richard Mellon, the senior platoon commander, received orders for us to withdraw back to a position near route 9 where we set up a defensive perimeter for the night. While our casualties were bad by any measure (roughly 1/3 of the company), Lima 3/4 suffered worse.

While we were battling at the base of Hill 124, Lt. Col Ohanesian was ordered to lead a relief force to the Lima 3/4 position with all the remaining Marines from 2/3 at Camp Carroll. They held off several enemy attacks with the help of heavy artillery fire and close air support, then received orders to move west and provide reinforcements for our battle against the NVA. They never made it. Immediately after departing the Lima Co. position they were ambushed by a large enemy force that employed mortars and rocket propelled grenades. By the time the battle was over they had sustained 13 KIA's and over 100 casualties. Among those killed were Lt. Col Ohanesian and his battalion Sgt. Major Wayne Hayes.

LT. COL. EARL "PAPPY" DELONG AND A RETURN TO THE SCENE OF BATTLE

We spent an otherwise quiet night in our defensive position near route 9. Rumors spread that we were going back to Camp Carroll because fresh reinforcements were being flown in. At dawn, though, there was frantic word that a G Co. Marine and a Corpsman were unaccounted for. Lt. Col Earl "Pappy" DeLong, the 3rd Marine Regiment's XO, was flown in to take charge of 2/3 and all of the units that had been attached during the previous 24 hours. DeLong ordered Lt. Mellon and I to brief him on the previ-



LT COL EARL "PAPPY" DeLONG, WHO TOOK COMMAND OF 2/3 AFTER COL VICTOR OHANESIAN WAS KILLED. HE WOULD LATER EARN A SILVER STAR FOR ACTIONS UNDER FIRE IN THE HILL FIGHTS NEAR KHE SANH MAKING HIM THE ONLY MARINE IN HISTORY TO EARN A SILVER STAR IN WWII, KOREAN WAR AND THE VIETNAM WAR,

ous day's battle.

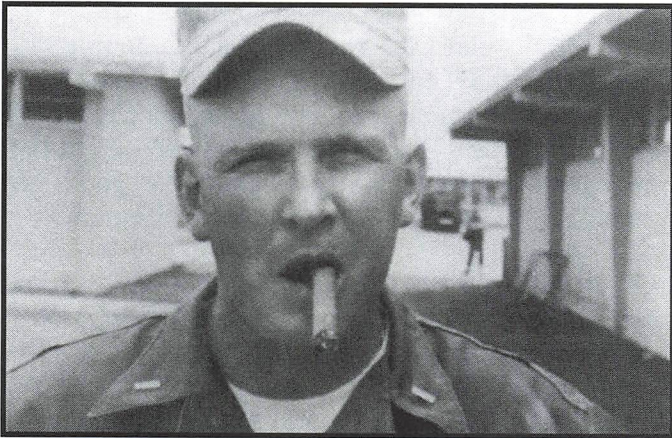
DeLong was as salty as they come, and easily could have passed for one of Chesty Puller's close relatives. He wore his .45 in a shoulder holster and smoked a cigar while holding court with Mellon and I. Marines never leave comrades behind on the battlefield, so Pappy quickly issued an order for us to return to the site of the ambush near hill 124. This time we had fresh reinforcements from 2/9, and they made fun of our raggedy appearance. Nearly all of the Golf Co. Marines (myself included) had torn knees on our utility trousers as a result of crawling around in the gully for hours fighting the NVA.

This time we approached hill 124 from the west, and DeLong ordered one platoon to establish a base of fire position, while another platoon enveloped the terrain held by the NVA 24 hours earlier. As Pappy had expected, though, the NVA had fled. We found the bodies of missing Marine, PFC Richard Dewane from Buffalo, NY, and the Corpsman, Petty Officer 3rd Class John Agee from Lindsey, Ohio. I didn't see PFC Dewane's body, but I distinctly remember seeing Corpsman Agee. He was lying on his back, eyes still open, and his hand, stiff with rigor mortis, reaching up toward the sky.

We didn't find any dead NVA bodies. Just trails of blood leading off into the jungle. There were impact craters from our fire missions everywhere. Amongst them were dozens of deeply dug enemy fighting holes, some filled with blood soaked rags and human remains, but very little else. Our fire missions had been right on target, but the NVA, ever phantom like, had withdrawn and taken all of their casualties with them.

The surviving members of 2/3 and I eventually made it out to Dong Ha where we rode in Mike boats from the Cua Viet river out to an amphibious transport ship that took us to Okinawa. Once aboard we enjoyed clean beds, hot showers and real chow.

Our time on Okinawa seemed like a dream compared to the hell we had just been through. But we returned to a war that had only worsened in its ferocity and intensity. In a few short weeks, I was at Khe Sanh with B/1/12 to once again provide artillery support for 2/3 as they battled to take Hills 881N and 881S under the leadership of Lt. Col Pappy DeLong. Some of the same Marines from the 28 February patrol participated in those hill fights, including my radio operator, George Schieder.



1st LT JIM AMBROSE, ON OKINAWA A FEW WEEKS AFTER THE BATTLE WITH NVA FORCES NORTH OF CAM LO.



HM3 JOHN AGEE, KIA FEB 28, 1967. THE MARINES OF GOLF 2/3 RETURNED TO THE NVA AMBUSH SITE TO RECOVER HIS BODY

THE FOLLOWING ARTICLES WERE WRITTEN BEFORE THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF KHE SANH BY COLONEL BRUCE CLARKE, USA DISTRICT ADVISORY TEAM 4

WAS AMERICA DUPED AT KHE SANH?

As we approach the fiftieth anniversary the siege of the Khe Sanh Combat Base (KSCB) we can anticipate a plethora of articles about the battle that decided the Vietnam War. The first of these was in the New York Times on January 1st ("Was America Duped at Khe Sanh?") The article by John Mason

Glen is spectacular in its attention grabbing title but weak on strategic analysis. Having lived through the battle and written about it in *Expendable Warriors: the battle of Khe Sanh and the Vietnam War*, I feel uniquely qualified to rebut Glen's argument.

The main theme of the article is that the attack on Khe Sanh was a diversion to draw American forces away from the populated areas in anticipation of the Tet Offensive which started 9 days after the beginning of the siege of the KSCB. This argument is inaccurate for many different reasons:

The attack on Khe Sanh had been anticipated for 3 months. Elements of 2 Army Divisions had been moved north in vicinity of Hue and Quang Tri. It was these forces that blunted part of the attacks on those two province headquarters.

Khe Sanh was reinforced by 4 battalions of Marines with most of the reinforcements arriving after the North Vietnamese Army launched its missile and artillery barrage on 21 January 1968. (More on the multiple implications of this attack in subsequent articles.) 4 battalions of Marines in the bigger scheme of things was not consequential to stopping the Tet attacks.

The diversion of air assets to support the defense of Khe Sanh was not as significant as Glen would have one believe. Much of the air support used was B-52 carpet bombing not pin point close air support. Such bombing approaches were inappropriate for populated areas.

Glen mentions the internal opinion divisions within the North Vietnamese leadership. One faction was focused on the Tet offensive and the other on Khe Sanh. He correctly points out that one faction focused on the general uprising goal while General Giap was seeking to break the American public support for the war by the attack on Khe Sanh. He wanted to repeat his success at Dien Bien Phu where the French public support for the Indochinese war was destroyed. To people like Glen it was one or the other. Why couldn't they have been reinforcing? Glen does not examine this point.

The agony of Khe Sanh played out for 77 days on the screens and in the newspapers of main street America. This is where the war was lost! Certainly Tet contributed to the loss but it was Khe Sanh that was the deciding factor.

It should be noted that in the Burns PBS documentary which has been critiqued on these pages the siege of the KSCB is barely mentioned—another of

its fatal flaws as has been recounted on these pages. In fact both Khe Sanh and Tet were significant failures militarily for the North Vietnamese. They lost both battles. The war was there to be won, but the political will to do so had been lost. Giap had been right. (There is a unique event highlighted in my book that makes this point explicitly.)

But the bottom line is that the battle of Khe Sanh was won and the war lost at the same time.

In my next response to the Glen's article I will respond to his critique of General Westmoreland. Stay tuned!

Returning to John Mason Glen's opinion piece in the New York Times ("Was America Duped at Khe Sanh?") We must also set the record straight about General Westmoreland and the strategy in the Vietnam War. Again Mr. Glen displays his lack of historical perspective by attributing the strategy of attrition in the Vietnam War to General Westmoreland's analysis of the battle of the Ia Drang Valley. (The basis of the book and movie *We Were Soldiers Once, Young and Brave.*)

Glen correctly paints General Westmoreland as the perfect image of a soldier—World War II leader, Airborne Infantry leader, former Superintendent of West Point—with a very stiff soldierly look. Westy, as he was called by cadets at West Point and soldiers in the field in Vietnam was all that Glen describes. One must also remember at this point in history the Airborne Mafia, as it was called ruled the Army. There was admiration for the Airborne coming out of World War II. President Kennedy was enamored with the Special Forces (Green Berets) all of whom were airborne qualified. Glen attributes Westmoreland's strategy to this background and does not attribute the country's experience and successes to the strategy in Vietnam.

When Westy was superintendent at West Point I was a cadet there studying military tactics and history. Much of our studies revealed that the US military strategy grew out of Grant's defeat of Lee. The battles of the Wilderness in late 1864 and 1865 were battles of attrition. The North had the wherewithal in terms of men and equipment to fight a war of attrition against the South. This strategy succeeded. The lesson learned was that attrition warfare was a way to win.

The world wars in Europe and Asia were also wars of attrition where superior resources were able to win the day, over time. When one couples the US

military experience of success through attrition warfare with Robert McNamara's "bean counting" revolution in the Pentagon one can understand how body count became the measure of success for the war in Vietnam. If more bad guys were killed in an engagement than good guys then the good guys "won". This became the approach in Vietnam.

Given this view that attrition / body count would cause the enemy to stop fighting one can clearly understand the desire of a set piece firepower intensive battle to crush the North Vietnamese Army (NVA). Khe Sanh offered this opportunity. The hope was that the NVA would go for the bait that was the Khe Sanh Combat Base and provide a large number of targets to be attacked by superior fire power and destroyed. For this strategy to succeed the bait could not be compromised by the NVA learning of the plan. The close-holding of the intelligence that the NVA was going to attack Khe Sanh lead to my advisory team in Khe Sanh village being "expendable". We were part of the bait and could not leak to our Vietnamese counterparts what was coming for fear that they in turn would leak it to the NVA. The solution was to just not tell us what was about to occur.

Many of the readers of *Expendable Warriors* have commented on how critical we deal with General Westmoreland. One former Chief of Staff of the Army refused to endorse the book because of this perspective. I must admit that the after taste of being "expendable" may have colored my perspective. However, I have learned the bigger lesson—strategic leaders must make strategic decisions based upon the bigger picture. In this regard the small advisory team and mixed force of Vietnamese, Bru Montagnards and Marines may have truly been expendable. Though we will probably never admit it.

The soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines did not lose the war in Vietnam the politicians and strategists did. In April/May of 1968 the strategy had succeeded. The NVA and Viet Cong had been defeated by all body count measures, but the political will to win was gone. The political will had not been considered by the strategists of the day. It was not until Colonel Harry Summers published his book *On Strategy; a Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* that Clausewitz's dictums on political will were brought again into consideration by strategic thinkers. Colonel Summers was part of the Vietnam negotiating team and his discussion with a North Vietnamese counterpart is often quoted. He told his counterpart: "we won every battle." To

which the North Vietnamese officer replied “But you lost the war.”

If one reads my writings on conflict termination he will see Colonel Summers’ views used as a basis for defining what it means to win. Body count is also dismissed as the failed measure of success that it is. A subject of another blog in our continuing discussion leading up to the 50th anniversary of the siege of the Khe Sanh Combat Base.

LIMITED WAR AND RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Some time ago one of my readers asked that I write about how the rules of engagement (ROE) severely restricted US forces freedom of action and thus played a significant role in the resultant “loss” in Vietnam. In this case ROE were linked to limited war. What is limited war you ask?

Limited war is where one side in a conflict decides to limit its application of military force for a whole series of reasons. The Vietnam War really had two phases:

The pre-1 April 1968 phase where the US was fighting to win though with significant limits on the application of force, and

The post 1 April 1968 date where the goal was to achieve a negotiated agreement. Initially this phase had even more restricted ROE, but after Nixon’s perception of North Vietnamese intransigence there was a significant loosening of the ROE—decreasing the limits on the use of military force. But the goal was still a negotiated agreement.

The above raises several questions:

What were the initial limits and why were they imposed?

What is so significant about 31 March 1968?

What were the limits in the ROE?

What were Nixon’s relaxation of limits?

When the US began its escalation of the use of force in Vietnam in 1964/5 there were significant limits placed upon the forces. Cambodia and Laos were off limits to conventional forces, as was North Vietnam. The bombing of North Vietnam was severely limited as to the targets that could be engaged. The whole theory of limited war was meeting a test. A test that it failed, but more about that later.

These limits were imposed on US forces because of

a fear that any expansion of the war would cause the Chinese to intervene. The memory of Korea was still keen in strategists’ minds. There was also fear of a confrontation with the Soviet Union. For these reasons there were severe limits placed upon US forces.

In late 1967 the North Vietnamese tested these limits with the extreme shelling and limited attacks across the DMZ in the vicinity of Cam Lo. Unbeknownst to the Americans this was a test—a test to see if it would abide by its limits and not invade North Vietnam. When the US did not invade the North Vietnamese were free to move several divisions west to come down the Ho Chi Minh trail and attack Khe Sanh. Which they did.

What is so significant about 31 March 1968? The evening of 31 March President Johnson announced his partial bombing halt as a means to entice the North Vietnamese into negotiations to end the war. It was at this point that the war was “lost.” As recounted elsewhere (*Expendable Warriors*) a proposed offensive military action into Laos was deemed to be politically unacceptable. The war had been won on the ground in Vietnam but lost politically. The US was unwilling to lift its limits and win the war on the ground and North was not fighting with any limits. Instead increased limits were imposed on US forces.

North Vietnamese intransigence and an attempt to disengage US forces while not increasing the degree of loss lead the Nixon Administration strategy of Vietnamization. This was coupled with several expansions of the war—relaxation of the limits imposed on US forces. First was the invasion of Cambodia as an attempt to destroy North Vietnamese Army (NVA) sanctuaries and to buy time for Vietnamization to take hold.

The second expansion was Lam Son 719A—the invasion of Laos in 1971 to cut the Ho Chi Minh trail. For several reasons this Vietnamese attack with US support was a miserable failure. The main reason probably being the loss of surprise—the NVA were waiting and the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) got mauled.

The final escalation was the use of B-52s over Hanoi and Haiphong. Previous bombing restraints/limits were relaxed and a massive bombing finally caused the North Vietnamese to agree to a settlement. In hiding the overall loss Nixon/Kissinger called it “Peace with Honor”. The POWs came home.

In Vietnam we relearned the lessons of Korea. When one side is fighting a limited war—limited in ways and means and the other side is fighting an unlimited war—applying all of the ways and means at its disposal to win the outcome is at best a draw. Does or should the MacArthur dictum: “there is no substitute for victory” apply? In the Gulf War we saw the limits replaced by the Powell Doctrine of “Over-whelming Force.” However there were limits in that conflict such that after several years the second Bush administration felt that it had to fight another war against Iraq—in short to do what the first Gulf War had prevented the overthrow of Saddam Hussein.

To return to the original issue of ROEs and limited war it should be clear that at no time except a nuclear threat will the United States not fight a “limited war.” But the extent of those limitations will clearly have a potential impact on the outcome of the conflict. Politicians and military strategists must decide before the conflict begins as to whether any limits being considered will prevent the achievement of the military objectives that have flowed from the political objectives of a conflict.

KHE SANH—THE INTELLIGENCE BUILD UP

Expendable Warriors was so named because General Westmoreland and Colonel Lownds at the Khe Sanh Combat Base (KSCB) knew that the North Vietnamese Army was going to attack Khe Sanh as much as 3 months before the attack began. However, the Advisory Team in Khe Sanh village in the District Headquarters were not told. We guess for fear that the intelligence would be leaked to our Vietnamese counterparts and then get back to the North Vietnamese. What was the intelligence?

The intelligence that the NVA were going to attack Khe Sanh got its first visibility in November 1967 when Colonel Lownds (Commander of the KSCB) told some Marines that: “you will soon be in the American history books.”

Recently unclassified intelligence showed that in October 1967 an NVA Division began moving towards Khe Sanh. There was also information from signal intercepts that a new headquarters had been formed to control a multi-division attack on Khe Sanh.

General Westmoreland’s intelligence brief of 12 January confirmed that the attack would begin on

21 January. During the entire month of January Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) began preparations for the battle of Khe Sanh. It began preparations for the upcoming battle by:

- Reinforcing the KSCB first on the 13 December with and additional Marine Infantry Battalion. The order sending the battalion to KSCB noted that reinforcements should not flow to KSCB too quickly so as to avoid the NVA knowing of General Westmoreland’s intentions.

- An air campaign to target the NVA using B-52s as they approached Khe Sanh was begun on 5 January —Operation Niagara

- Approval to use what was then a classified controlled fragmentation artillery munition (COFRAM—also known as fire cracker) was sought

- An Air Support Radar Team was deployed to KSCB on 16 January to control radar guided air attacks.

- On 17 January an additional Marine infantry battalion arrived at Khe Sanh bringing the force up to 3 battalions.

- On 18 January sensors were diverted from the Ho Chi Minh trail in Laos and deployed around the KSCB to monitor the movement of the NVA into the area.

During the period beginning in December 1967 the Marines at KSCB began improving their defensive positions by digging deeper and putting up more sand bag reinforced bunkers. Ammunition resupply by air began in earnest. This Marine effort was intelligence to those of us on the Advisory Team in the District Headquarters. We began to take similar actions by improving the defenses of our little compound.

Finally on 19 January an NVA officer was captured performing a reconnaissance of the wire surrounding the KSCB. This officer had the entire plan for the attack from the northern Division (NVA Division 325 C) that was to attack KSCB beginning on 21 January.

The information on the pending attack was known to the leadership at Khe Sanh and throughout the relevant portions of MACV, BUT not in the District Headquarters. The scene was set for the events of the next almost 80 days.

COMMAND AND CONTROL IN THE KHE SANH AREA OF OPERATIONS

(AO)

As we approach the 50th anniversary of the Siege of the Khe Sanh Combat Base (KSCB) it will be useful for the reader to understand the very confused and dysfunctional command and control relationships that existed in the Khe Sanh AO. There were at least 5 different higher headquarters.

The advisory team of 5 soldiers responded to the Province advisory team in Quang Tri. The District Chief Captain Tinh-A-Nhi responded to Province Commander who was a full Colonel in the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN).

The Special Forces (Special Forces Detachment A-101) at Lang Vei along the border with Laos reported to a C Team headquartered in Hue Phu Bai, which in return reported to the Special Forces Group in Danang.

In the village headquarters was the headquarters of a Combined Action Company (CAC-O) and one Combined Action Platoon (CAP O-1) of 10 Marines and about 25 Montagnards. The CAC reported to Colonel David Lownds the KSCB Commander but also had a battalion headquarters in Danang.

Located as an appendage on the western edge of the KSCB there was a special forces Forward Operating Base (FOB-3). The men of FOB-3 with their Montagnard soldiers conducted reconnaissance and raids in North Vietnam and Laos. They reported to a Battalion commander in Hue Phu Bai and Military Assistance Command Vietnam Studies and Observation Group (MACVSOG or SOG) in Saigon.

Finally there was a two man intelligence team located in the village headquarters that reported to a headquarters in Danang.

Colonel David Lownds as the senior American officer in the Khe Sanh AO exercised very loose operational control over the units in the area. All the units would go to the Marines at the combat base for support, but when that support was not forthcoming they would go to their parent units. This was especially true for the Special Forces and Advisory team.

The relations between the Army units—special forces and advisory team—and the Marines were so bad that they had developed their own code terms and frequencies to coordinate with each other so the Marines could not listen in.

Additionally each of the units mentioned had very different missions and therefore different objectives. So the lack of unity of command resulted in a loss of unity of effort, which is what the whole concept of unity of command is all about. Unity of effort is supposed to flow from unity of command. All of the units would be working towards a common goal. The Marines goal was to kill NVA. The Advisory Team and District Government's goal was to provide political leadership for the people of the area and to provide them security from small enemy forces. A-101's mission was border surveillance and to block the major avenue of approach into the area—route 9. The SOG team at FOB-3 only staged in Khe Sanh for out of area operations in Laos and North Vietnam. Thus no unity of effort.

This spaghetti bowl of relationships was the situation that existed when the battle of Khe Sanh began on 21 January 1968.

THE SIEGE OF THE KHE SANH COMBAT BASE— THE NOOSE TIGHTENS

Recently, when reading my VFW magazine I encountered an article entitled "Tanks in the Wire". It was a brief, but still not accurate, synopsis of the battle of Lang Vei Special Forces camp on 7 and 8 February 1968—50 years ago. (I would commend David Stockwell's two books on the battle. First came *Tanks in the Wire* and just recently *The Route 9 Problem*) I was underground in my bunker at the Khe Sanh Combat Base (KSCB) but listened to much of the battle on the radio and the next morning was part of the planning for the relief effort for the beleaguered forces at Lang Vei.

To put the battle in perspective it actually started at the end of January when the 33rd Royal Laotian Battalion was overrun by the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) in Laos using **tanks**. The Surveillance and Observation Group (SOG) Special Forces at Forward Operating Base 3, which was an appendage to the KSCB and where we had the local Vietnamese government in exile, had a close connection to the Laotians.

When the Laotians reported that they were overrun by tanks nobody believed them. The 33rd Battalion fled Laos and settled at Lang Vei in a camp near the Special Forces Camp. They were reinforced by Special Force elements from Hue Phu Bai lead by LTC Schungel. So now there were two Special Forces camps at Lang Vei—the old camp with Lao-

tians and Special Forces in it and the new camp with A 101 and its Vietnamese Civilian Irregular Defense Forces (CIDG). CPT Frank Willoughby, the commander of A 101 Special Forces detachment at Lang Vei requested anti-tank mines but his request was denied because the report of tanks being used was not believed by higher headquarters. The Special Forces did scrounge some Light Anti-Tank Weapons (LAWs).

The scene is now set with two camps near the Bru village of Lang Vei and track sound being heard on several evenings before the attacks. On the evening of 8 February the new camp was hit with artillery and mortar fire followed by an infantry attack led by PT 76 light amphibious tanks. The forces fought back and called artillery from the KSCB on the attacking NVA. Some of the LAWs failed to operate correctly and many of those that did were ineffective. Eventually, the defenders of the new camp either secluded themselves in the deep underground command bunker or fled to the old camp. The fight continued all night long. CPT Willoughby requested reinforcement by the Marines from KSCB, but was turned down twice!

Communications from the command bunker became difficult with the antennas knocked down but the single side band radio with its buried antennae continued to allow communications to the outside. At this point there was a PT 76 tank on top of the command bunker and the NVA were throwing tear gas down into the bunker. CPT Willoughby and his crew continued to communicate.

Forces from the old camp, supported by artillery and air strikes made up to five attempts to reach the bunker with no success. The 7 weak from wounds and dehydration survivors in the bunker made their plans to escape. CPT Willoughby told the aircraft overhead to make 3 hot strafing runs over the camp and then make runs without firing. During the "dry" runs the survivors would make a dash to the old camp. Actually it was to be more of a limp. The survivors met little opposition and with the help of a brave Vietnamese Lieutenant who drove a jeep to pick them up made it to the old camp.

The final saga of the battle was the evacuation. There are several versions of the fight for helicopters, but COL Ladd, the 5th Special Forces Commander in Danang was forced to go to General Westmoreland who was in a meeting with LTG Cushman (the Corps Commander) and could not be disturbed. COL Ladd turned to GEN Abrams who had established a MACV forward command in the

northern part of the country. GEN Abrams ordered the Marines to release the helicopters to rescue the survivors of the battle. The relief operation was planned by the Special Forces at Lang Vei and lead by Major George Quomo. After reluctance of the Marine CH 46 helicopter pilots to land at the old camp the Americans and the wounded along with the Laotian Battalion leadership were evacuated by air to KSCB and then once medically treated were taken to Danang. The individual soldiers and the Bru civilians were left to fend for themselves. They walked the distance to the combat base where they were disarmed and turned away. (This was to create a political incident between the Laotian government and MACV.) I radioed Quang Tri thru may radio relay that the 1500 or so mixed group was on its way. The advisory team in Quang Tri prepared to house and care for these stragglers. The Laotians were evacuated through Saigon back to Laos.

Route 9 was now not impeded—the Lang Vei and District Headquarters impediments had now been removed. The route to the KSCB was now open and the noose had been tightened.

THE KHE SANH VILLAGE FIGHT

At 0500 the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) attacked the Khe Sanh Combat Base (KSCB) rockets and artillery. The sound of the barrage woke up the District Advisory Team and the defenders of the District Headquarters (a mixture of Bru Montagnards, Vietnamese Regional Forces, Marines from Combined Action Company O (CAC-O) and the small 4 man advisory team.

At 0530 the ground attack against the District Headquarters began. NVA after action reports suggest that the attack was 30 minutes late in being launched. The attacking force from the 66th NVA Regiment had been slowed down by the B-52 strike of the previous day—all of the downed trees etc. that it caused.

The weather on the morning of 21 January 1968 was extremely foggy with visibility down to no more than 5-10 yards. Fortunately some of the improvements made due to the observed activity at the KSCB included the emplacement of trip flares along the entire outer perimeter.

Another improvement that CPT Nhi had made was to place a 3 man element on the roof of the warehouse. These brave montagnards were equipped with a case of grenades to drop on any one trying to conceal themselves behind the warehouse. Both of these improvements were to prove critical to the

defense of the District Headquarters.

The District Headquarters to include the Regional Force Compound to the south bordering the Landing Zone

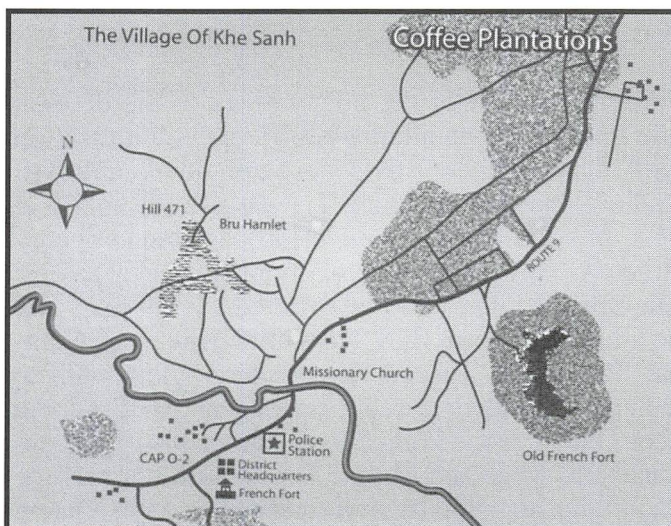
The attack with artillery and mortar rounds impacting throughout the area. One bunker was directly hit and collapsed on the occupants. SFC Perry dug the survivors out and treated them in a makeshift aid station. The enemy sought to penetrate the compound in the seam between the Regional Force Compound and the District Headquarters which was defended by Bru montagnards and Marines under the command of SGT Balanco.

The initial ground assault was announced by trip flares being set off. The Bru knew where to shoot when certain trip flares were set off. Thus they could engage the enemy that they could not see. The same was true for Regional Force (RFs) in their old French fort made of pierced steel planning with about 12-18 inches of Khe Sanh red clay filling the space in between. It stood up well to the enemy attack.

CPT Nhi and CPT Clarke were in the command bunker in the center of the compound. CPT Clarke was to request and adjust over 1100 rounds of artillery during the next 30 hours. The advisory team had 4 preplanned concentrations that were shaped like an L and located basically at each corner of the compound. By moving those concentrations East and West and North and South one could cover the whole compound with steel. The only rounds fired were fuse variable time (VT) a round that detonates in the air and throw shrapnel down to hit everyone who was not in a bunker with over-head cover.

The Marines in the compound became the fire brigade. SGT Balanco moved Marines around to meet the largest threats. The presence Of Marines bolstered the morale of the RFs who had born the brunt of the attack. The ground attacks came in several waves, each of which was stopped. The key spot was the two bunkers on each side of the seam between the two parts of the headquarters. The NVA seemed to be on something as an example when I shot an NVA sapper who was trying to take the north western bunker in the RF compound the two parts of his body, though separated continued to move towards the bunker with his pole charge. (A charge on the end of a pole to place the charge into an aperture of the bunker and detonate it so as to create a gap in the defense.) SFC Perry also thought that the NVA was on something.

In the late morning the fog burned off and the de-

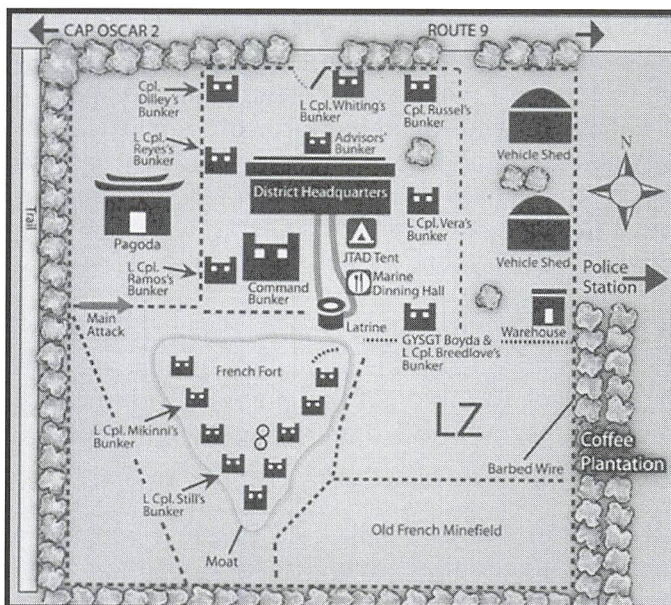


**KHE SANH VILLAGE WITH THE DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS
IN THE BOTTOM CENTER**

fenders were able to get some air support. This will be the discussion in our next article.

Air Support for Khe Sanh Village

In the last several articles we have discussed the bravery of the defenders on the ground in Khe Sanh



village. In this article we shall discuss the use of air support to provide a critical ingredient in the successful defense of the District Headquarters and the rendering combat ineffective a North Vietnamese Army (NVA) regiment.

The dense fog finally burned off in late morning. A Marine Forward Air Controller (FAC) put in a flight

of 2 F-4s to attack targets to the south of the District Headquarters. One of the F-4s was shot down. Following this the FAC advised that: "That's all I can do!"

Fortunately, part of the preparations of the defense was to establish an alternate form of communication with the Province Advisory Team in Quang Tri. Radio contact with Quang Tri was always spotty at best, in spite of numerous efforts at antennae construction and acquisition of more powerful radios. The Special Forces had established a radio relay site on a high hill north (hill 950) of the Khe Sanh Combat Base. The Special Forces were able to talk to Quang Tri and thus relay messages. CPT Clarke kept Quang Tri informed as to the status of the defense and when the Marine FAC could not provide additional air support he requested it from Quang Tri.

CPT Ward Britt (one of the advisory team's FACs) flew his light observation aircraft through the valleys to reach Khe Sanh and to coordinate for air support. He requested air support from air craft attacking targets along the Ho Chi Minh trail in Laos. The pilots flew below the clouds to the village. Every time he coordinated for bombs on a target and he blew away the trees to the south he found more targets.

CPT Nhi was listening to one of the NVA tactical radio nets and heard a request for additional stretchers to carry off wounded soldiers. This was passed to CPT Britt who found the force of about 100 enemy and after another air strike he could not see any movement. This became the norm as CPT Nhi provided target locations to CPT Clarke who then vectored CPT Britt to the target.

In the middle of this CPT Britt landed at KSCB and refueled under fire. He remained on station until the approach of dusk. At that point he had to return to Quang Tri. For his bravery he was awarded the Silver Star.

CPT Clarke and CPT Nhi tried to guess where the enemy would go to regroup. Based upon their analysis a B-52 strike was requested. They provided a rectangle 3 kilometers long and 1 kilometer wide that was centered on the hilly area about 6-7 kilometers south of the District Headquarters. The Province Advisory team coordinated with the Air Force and the mission was flown. Several days later a NVA soldier deserted and was picked up by the Special Forces at Lang Vei. He told them that his unit had been hit by the B-52 strike.

Before the B-52 strike a gun ship (Spooky—a C-47 plane that carried flares and several mini-guns) patrolled the area and engaged every target that it saw. It was a quiet night except for some snipers.

The combination of artillery, air support and the bravery of the Bru, Vietnamese, Marine and army soldiers inside the headquarters combined to render a regiment combat ineffective

THE BATTLE OF KHE SANH VILLAGE IS OVER

The morning of 22 January 1968 dawned bright and quiet. The North Vietnamese Army (NVA) forces were gone. There was a sense of exhilaration in the District Headquarters—the attack had been stopped! Patrols were launched to determine the damage and collect information on the enemy. There were numerous blood trails and bodies found. Over 150 weapons and 3 Rocket Propelled Launcher 7s (the first seen in South Vietnam) were recovered. Many of the weapons still had cosmoline on them as they must have just been issued.

As the Marines and District Forces were conducting their limited patrols LT Stamper (Combined Action Company Commander) was boarding and flying by helicopter to the Khe Sanh Combat Base (KSCB). He was not to be seen again. He radioed back to the Marines to pack their stuff as they were being evacuated.

Colonel Lownds sent a radio message to the Advisory team that he could no longer provide artillery support to the District forces. Both CPTS Nhi and Clarke reported this to their superiors in Quang Tri. Bob Brewer, the Province Senior Advisor said that there was a long meeting. No one wanted to evacuate the District Headquarters as it would be the first governmental headquarters ever surrendered. In the end the order was given to evacuate.

SFC Perry with all of the wounded and SFC Kaspar were evacuated by helicopter. SFC King and CPT Clarke worked with CPT Nhi to organize the withdrawal from the village. The small force of about 140 men followed a little known trail to reach KSCB. Throughout the trek CPT Clarke was coordinating with the Special Forces in FOB-3 for mortar coverage along the route and a reception when they got to KSCB. (The Marines had told the advisors that armed Vietnamese and montagnard soldiers could not enter their compound.) The small force reached FOB-3 and were assigned

defensive areas on the it's perimeter to prepare fighting positions. Little did they know that this was going to last over 77 days.

CPT Clarke reported all of the weapons that had been left behind. The Special Forces quickly organized a raid to get back into the District Headquarters to recover the NVA weapons and destroy anything else of worth that was there. CPT Clarke was the second in command of this raid and led the Special Forces into the compound after they were landed in the wrong spot.

The weapons were loaded and hauled off and then the helicopters returned for the raiding force. CPT Clarke remembers lying on the floor of the UH-1 helicopter and emptying his 30 round magazine at an NVA patrol that was approaching the village from the west as they were leaving.

Later the charges set in the food warehouse exploded as did the grenades that CPT Clarke had used to booby trap the food in the Advisor's store room.

The battle of Khe Sanh village had ended. Just over 50 years ago, but sometimes it seems like yesterday. Post Scripts: The Special Forces at Land Vei offered what was called a Mike Force to re-secure the village, but this request was never acted upon. When the 37th Army of Vietnam Ranger Battalion was sent to Khe Sanh the original intent was for it to be used to re-secure the village, but the Marines would not support such an attack.

BATTLE WON! WAR LOST

On the 1st of April 1968 the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) launched Operation Pegasus. Many newly interested authors focus on the battle for the old French fort. What they don't realize that just as the operation was beginning the war was being officially lost.

As the senior advisor in Khe Sanh before the beginning of the "agony of Khe Sanh" on 21 January 1968 I was seconded to the 1st Cavalry Division to assist in the planning for Operation Pegasus. (For a complete discussion of the siege of Khe Sanh see: www.Expendablewarriors.com or my recent postings here.)

It was strange to fly over what had once been the area along route 9 and see rice paddies where there had never been paddies before. In actuality what I was seeing was bomb craters that were filled with rain water. (I flew into Khe Sanh with Major Gen-

eral John Tolson (commander of the 1st Cavalry Division) several times. During the planning process units from the 1st Cav, the 101st Airborne Division and the 3rd Marines were conducting operations along the DMZ as a diversion to the relief operation. The engineers were busy building a short runway and underground bunkers for the command and control of Operation Pegasus near Calu. The new facility was to be named LZ Stud.

For Operation Pegasus the 1st Cav had an extensive set of capabilities

The 1st Cavalry Division with its 400+ helicopters

A Marine BDE with augmenting engineers and artillery

An Army of Vietnam (ARVN) airborne brigade 26th Marine Regiment +--the whole force defending the Combat Base (5000 strong)

Massive air support

This was the equivalent of a small Corps.

The attack began the morning of the April 1st with the Marine Brigade attacking along route 9. Its mission was to open Route 9 from LZ Stud to the combat base. This required the repair of numerous road by passes that had been destroyed by the NVA and neglect over more than a year. The air assault was delayed until 1 PM due to fog in the Khe Sanh area. The initial air assault was into areas where the vegetation had been flattened. or by use of a bomb called a Daisy Cutter (a 20,000 pound bomb that was dropped from a C130 aircraft and detonated when the long pipe that was its detonator struck the ground—thus creating standoff and blowing things down without creating a crater). The Infantry and engineers followed to secure the area and move the blow down so that howitzers, crews and ammunition could be lifted in. As a result a firebase was created.

With fire support for support of the infantry and to support the next hop forward closer to Khe Sanh the next unit could be inserted and the leap frog towards the combat base and the enemy could continue.

It was on this day 1 April 1968 when the war was lost. Major Paul Schwartz and I had to brief General Tolson on the proposed concept for the Division's next mission—clearing the NVA out of the A Shau Valley (about 40-50 kilometers south of Khe Sanh. There were 4 people present at the briefing—General Tolson, his Chief of Staff, Major Schwartz and myself. We proposed attacking through Khe Sanh to the Vietnam-Laos border. Going into Laos,

cleaning up the Ho Chi Minh Trail and then turning south to enter the A Shau Valley from the west—not the traditional route which was from the east. There were 90 days of supplies at Khe Sanh to draw upon and thus not have to back haul. Most importantly such an approach would have caught the NVA by surprise and had war winning effects.

After about 4 minutes of briefing General Tolson said” “Obviously you didn’t hear the President last night! What you are proposing is politically impossible.” Lyndon Johnson had just announced a partial bombing halt in an effort to enter negotiations with North Vietnam.

3 years later the US was to support ARVN in Lam Son 719A which was an attack into Laos where the ARVN got clobbered. The NVA had used the 3 years to recover. A year or so later President Nixon was to start the B-52 bombing missions over Hanoi and Haiphong. These would result in a peace agreement.

President Johnson’s bombing halt decision was when the US decided to not try and win the war on the battlefield—just as the NVA were on the throes of collapse. There war was winnable after the eventual Khe Sanh and Tet victories, but the political climate in the US had so turned against the war there was no political will to try and win on the battlefield.

1968 ADVISORY TEAM 4 NEWSLETTER WRITTEN IN APRIL 1968

There *was* a battle fought in Khe Sanh on 21 and 22 January 1968 that very few people know about. Everyone knows of the artillery barrages and the trenches, but one of the big battles took place when at 0500 hours 21 January 1968 the 66th Regiment, 304th NVA Division launched an attack against the Huong Hoa District Headquarters in Khe Sanh Village (about 4km south of the Khe Sanh Combat Base). The District Headquarters was defended by an understrength Regional Force (RF) Company, elements of 2 (Popular Force) PF platoons and Combined Action Company O (CAC-O) Headquarters and one Combined Action Platoon (CAP) with 10 or more Marines.

The attack was from three directions with the main effort coming from the southwest against the RF Company. The weather was extremely poor with very heavy fog. The initial enemy assault was beat-

en off by the *courageous* efforts of the RF Company and by almost constant barrages of Variable Time fused artillery fire. After the initial assault was broken, the enemy simply backed off and using the positions he had already prepared, attempted to destroy the key bunkers by recoilless rifle and B-40 fire. Simultaneously they moved into Khe Sanh village and setup mortars with which they attempted to shell the compound. At this time the police station was still communicating with the District Headquarters and made it possible to put effective fire on the enemy moving into the village. For the next four hours there were constant attacks or probes against the compound which were beaten off by the valiant efforts of Bru (Montagnard) PFs and the Vietnamese RFs working with the Marines who SGT John Balanco moved to critical areas of the fight, as needed. These various types of soldiers fought as a coordinated team. The four advisors were constantly moving through the compound, reassuring, reorganizing and helping the compounds' defenders.

At about 1130 the fog burned off. During the next five hours there were three attempts to resupply the beleaguered garrison, which was in dire straights for ammunition. The third attempt included a 46 man RF reaction force that was badly mauled. LTC Joe Seymoe, the Deputy Senior Province Advisor, lost his life in this effort. All during the afternoon CPT Ward Britt, an Air Force FAC, working out of Quang Tri put in numerous air strikes on the massed NVA who were trying to reorganize. On one of these airstrikes he put in two fighters on 100 NVA in the open and after it was over he could not see any movement, just bodies.

The night of 21 January the NVA were unable to make an attack and only sniped throughout the night.

The next morning the evacuation of District Headquarters was ordered after Colonel Lownds, CO, 26th Marine Regiment, ordered the evacuation of the Marines from the garrison. The marines and the wounded were evacuated by air. CPT Clarke and SFC King, two of the advisors, accompanied the District Forces who, using an unknown route, successfully escaped from the District Headquarters.

MEMORIES

During the first 5 days of July the 3rd Bn, 26th Marines was conducting search and destroy operations in the western end of what was known as "Happy Valley". On 3 July, Lima 3/26 lost three men while engaging an NVA unit in the tiny village of Tung Heo Bac, 14 kilometers north-northeast of the Ha Tin airfield. The three men were

- Cpl Franklin D. Ratliff, Chattanooga, TN;
- LCpl Arnold A. Ades, St Paul, MN; and
- Pvt Thomas A. Strande, Chicago, IL.

My main Man Phineas and I always debated anyone about the date of that event. Both of us were convinced it was July 4th not the third. Years later I got copies of letters Bill Correia sent his folks talking about that day. The letters were dated July 3rd. I remember the events so clearly, as if they occurred this morning. Bill was close to Strande and his loss is something, I am sure, Bill carries to this day. L/Cpl Ades is not someone I knew and until I read the Virtual Wall info I never knew he was KIA or even who he was for that fact. My Bad!

'RAT' was quite the other story. Struggling with the poncho used to carry him back into the perimeter his best friend Davis with tears running down his face said, "They shot him right through his heart". "He had the biggest heart of anyone." I was able to assist carrying 'Rat' to the chopper that carried him from the field of battle. It was 'Rat' who wasn't sure to stand and salute or sit and laugh when I strolled into the tent where they were playing Bid-Wiz while wearing a fatigue blouse that had a Captain's insignia sewn onto the collar. I demanded a proper salute but couldn't keep a straight face.

Perhaps it was the fact as Bill Correia said, "You looked like you were 12 years old."

Amid all that happened that day I received a bunch of 'Atta Boys' for getting confirmed kills. I know of one for sure but the letters Correia sent home said the guns got six confirmed.

I'm certain that we got six of them if not more. While I started the firing with the first NVA, I rolled left and Ronnie Marcella shouldered the 'gun' as I opened cans to feed him additional belts. Six confirmed was an easy count as once I opened up on the first one there was a flurry of NVA all charging the perimeter at one point. It was like turning the lights on in the kitchen and watching as the roaches scattered.

I always wonder how receiving positive reinforcement to such a negative action [taking a human life a 5th commandment thing] shaped my psychic outlook. Well, just some thoughts and memories of a time some 54 years ago.

Enjoy your Families and Loved ones this weekend.
Never Forget.
Semper Fidelis, Neil Joseph Kenny
Lima Co 3/26

3 years ago! Where did the time go! I remember this day like it was yesterday! The horror, the rage, and the sorrow of the day!! The tragic loss of life! The Magnificent Bravery shown that day by so many!! It sometime boggles my mind, with all of the different emotions that day brings up in my mind. These were Good men, magnificent Marines! They are truly missed! R.I.P. my Brave Bravo Brothers! **Posted on Feb-25**

MEMORIES FROM KSV WEBSITE

Remembering Jerry Ferren, Dave Divik, Gunny Dadamo, and all who lost their life onboard USMC VMGR 152 C-130 " 149813 Feb 10, 68.. Also, Pilot Budd Wildfang... who stayed at the controls hands-on fire... Thoughts of Danny Sullivan who got Jerry into his ambulance and to Charlie Med.

I'd spoken to Jerry Ferren three days before 813 went down. Jerry was regular crew on many 152 Khe Sanh flights, Dec, Jan Feb. He'd just received a letter from his wife informing him she'd just given birth to his daughter. He was thrilled. Jerry only had 17 days left in-country. We were friends. Jerry loved his Nikon camera. He told me to buy a pair of Nikon 8x35 binoculars for my 152 flare drop mapping job. He volunteered for 813, taking the crew spot for another navigator who was ill. The crew was an all-volunteer mission since the cargo was liquid oxygen for Charley Med, chopper fuel bladders, and flames ignition caps....

NVA guns on the approach. In the detailed after-action reports, Dave Divik came to the aid of Gunny Datamo, who fell to NVA 51 that raked the fuselage when he was trying to stop the escaping fuel flowing in toward the bladders that were igniting from taking the 51s, fire. Their bodies were found clinging together by KS Crash Crew. Dave was found laying on top of Gunny D. Jerry deliberately stood on the small platform at the forward hatch, blocking flames from the cabin with his body, protecting the

flight deck crew trying to land 813 off the flight line to keep it open to traffic.

Jerry Ferren passed in the Sam Antonio Burn Center on Mar 1. I didn't know until a buddy wrote Jerry a letter, that was returned stamped 'Deceased,' in red. As Danny Sullivan, everyone thought Jerry survived. We had a small memorial for VMGR 152 Khe Sanh losses in May. Jerry's nephew contacted my April, 010... to tell me Jerry's daughter he never saw, born during the siege, was a Missouri school teacher... I asked him about Jerry's Nikon... He told me his family had received it. Sad indeed...

RON MAIN

MORE 149813 MEMORIES

My platoon CP bunker was just off of the runway, about 50 meters from the crash site. I just happened to be standing outside my bunker when this event unfolded. The plane was slowly coming to a stop and it veered off of the runway to the right. The aircraft seemed to be tilted to the right because of the slope of the elevated runway. Initially, for a very short time, there seemed to be no smoke or evidence of fire. Someone opened the escape hatch above the cockpit and exited. I assumed they were the pilot/copilot. Then the aircraft started to show smoke and the subsequent fire. The crash crew was on site and attempted to extinguish the fire and enter the aircraft to rescue any passengers, but the flames quickly engulfed the aircraft. I happen to have a few pictures of the burning aircraft.

This accident drew quite a crowd. I began to tell Marines who were spectators to get back into their bunkers/trenchline. We had an active NVA 60mm mortar right outside the wire (the north perimeter facing hill 1015). "C" Company had already lost some Marines to the H&I fires. I was concerned that the NVA would drop in a few rounds, but thankfully that never happened. Also, I was concerned about what cargo the aircraft was carrying.

During the siege (can't recall if it was before or after the C-130 crash) an AF C-130 (painted cammie pattern) was hit on the landing approach, landing west to east. At the end of the runway the turnaround apron was outside of the wire near the steep drop-off of the terrain. The bird turned around, shut down and sat on the apron outside of the wire. I thought we would have been ordered to go out and provide some type of security. Alpha Co had a platoon manning the trench near the aircraft.

We still had that 60mm mortar active and the NVA

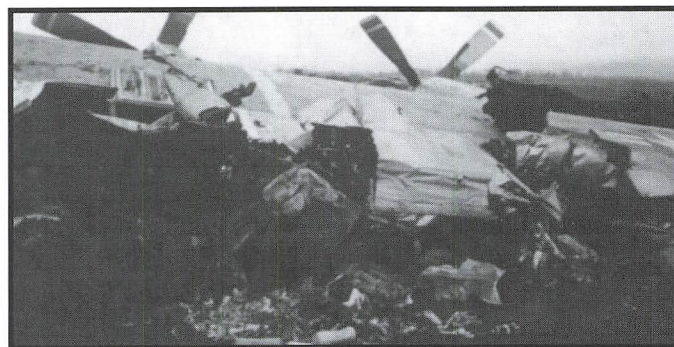
were digging assault trenches near the runway and it wasn't uncommon for NVA troops to shoot at aircraft landing and taking off. An RPG could have easily destroyed the C-130. We finally found out about the death of the trapped Marines in their aircraft and the cargo of fuel bladders. Well after the war I read that the AF C-130 was carrying pallets of artillery rounds and the pilot decided it was too dangerous to come into the base. After determining that the bird was safe, he taxied to the terminal. I think that plane stayed there for a few days while a crew of mechanics were sent up to fix the plane and it eventually took off.

Sadly, in almost the same location as the Marine C-130, a CH-53 Sea Stallion had its tail assembly hit by a mortar round (the 60 that I mentioned?) as it was lifting off and fell about 30' impacting to the right of the runway. The big floppy blades continued to turn and when the bird hit the ground, the blades kept going downward and sliced through the cockpit. The pilot and copilot were both decapitated.

Although my company (Charlie) was not in the thick of ground combat, we experienced the unfortunate fate of our Company CP taking two direct hits resulting in the death of several Marines. The first was at the beginning of the siege and the second was when our brand new CP was hit on March 22. We also lost several Marines to sniper and incoming. In writing this, I can recall all of this as if it happened just yesterday.

Nick Romanetz

C CO 1/26



OBIT**RONALD MARCELLA, USMC, KHE SANH
VETERAN, LIMA CO 3/26**

With a heavy heart I am reporting the passing of my Brother Ronald F. Marcella. I first meet Ron at KheSanh on January 2, 1968 my second day in country Ronnie was later to be my team leader and squad leader, both duties which he eventually passed on to me. As fate would have it I reconnected with Ronnie in August of 2010. We stayed in constant touch these past eleven years and had many a memory and story to share. Along his journey Ronnie was able to attend several of our KSVa reunions, most recently the 50th anniversary in Washington DC.

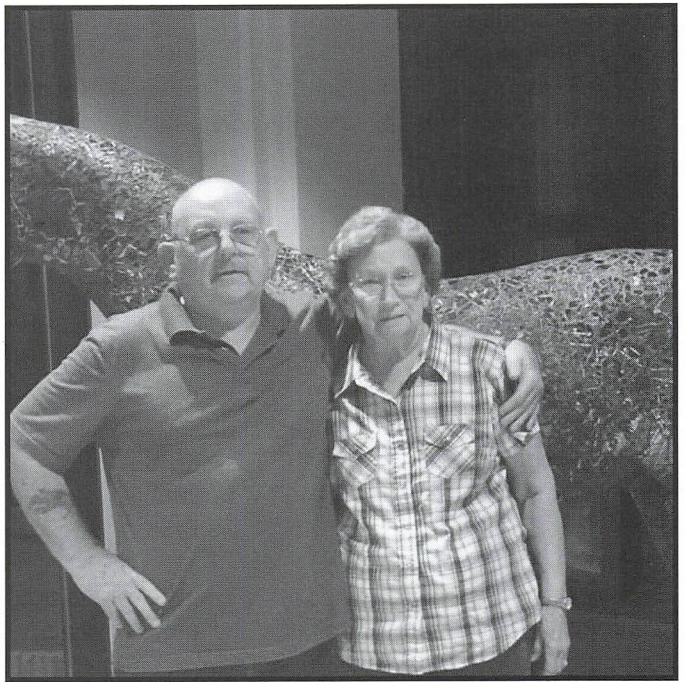
Ronnie shall be laid to rest after a private service at St Marys Catholic Church and interred with his late wife Sarah. He is survived by his children Genevieve, Jessica, Mariah, and Christian. He is also survived by his grandchildren Isabella and Joseph, as well as many nieces, nephews, Sister-in-laws and cousins. While a deep void shall exist with Ronnies passing it should be said that we are all better off for having had the pleasure of his company along this journey. Rest Peacefully alongside your mate Sarah. K now that we'll see you in that morning when we shall all be together again.
Go with God my Brother.
Semper Fidelis, Neil and Alice

OBIT**MICHAEL E. O'HARA, USMC, KHE
SANH VETERAN, BRAVO CO 1/26**

Michael E. O'Hara in prayerful hope went to be with his Lord and Savior on April 16, 2021.

Michael was born in Indianapolis on 31 May 1948, the second of six children born to Wayne and Gladys O'Hara.

Michael spent his youth in Brown County, Indiana. He obtained his work permit at the age of 14 and immediately entered into the workforce. During his summer months, Michael worked under the employ of Mr. Dick Wetzel. It was in the burning hot hay-fields of what was once Bakalar Air Base that Michael began to develop his strong personal ethic of hard work and determination.



Michael graduated from Brown County High School (BCHS) in 1966 with academic achievements. Soon, as Michael began to evolve as an adult citizen, he became convinced because of his compassionate spirit that the only thing he could do to contribute to a better world was to become a United States Marine. Michael served honorably, in 1968,



with Co “B” 1st Battalion 26th Marine Regiments during the infamous “Siege of Khe Sanh.” Michael would be awarded three Purple Heart Medals for his courage during intense combat operations. Upon returning to the continental U.S. as a very young Sergeant, he would spend the next two years training over 200,000 Marine Recruits in the arts of weaponry. Michael would one day say it was the most important job he ever held, and he was just 20 years old. Michael has always cared deeply for all of his “Marines.”

Upon returning to civilian life, Michael would eventually become a small business owner as proprietor of Michael E. O’Hara Custom Carpentry. His artistic skills can still be seen in many homes and businesses in the Brown County area.

However, in 1993, as Michael’s children were leaving the nest, he knew in his deepest thoughts he had much to do. Michael never forgot all the suffering brought about because of the Vietnam War. He set out to honor his high school friend, Larry C. Banks, the only native son to fall during those tragic days. Michael successfully led a drive to name the new high school gymnasium after his friend while also establishing a scholarship fund which has helped numerous young people from the county further their education.

KHE SANH VETERAN, IN THE NEWS

STORIES OF HONOR: A FORTUNATE MAN DUNCAN ADAMS

PAUL J. BEAUSOLEIL, USMC, KHE SANH VETERAN, MIKE CO 3/3

Grief threw a catch into Paul Joseph Beausoleil’s voice.

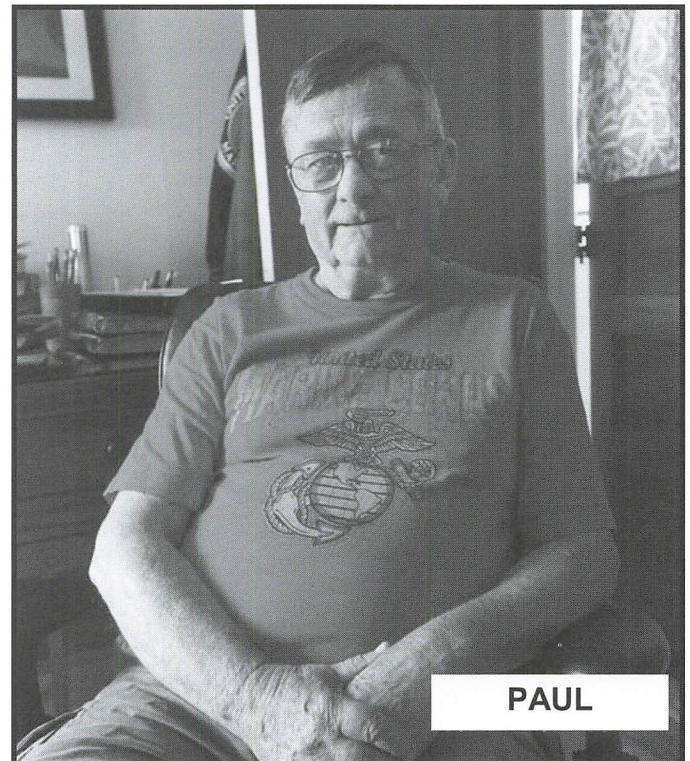
The Vietnam Veteran, now 74, had just opened a Veterans of Foreign Wars book titled “Brutal Battles of Vietnam.” He had turned to a page about the Hill Fights, which occurred during the spring of 1967 near Khe Sanh.

Beausoleil and fellow U.S. Marines had endured the bloody battles there, fighting at Hill 881 South against soldiers from the North Vietnamese Army. He survived without major injury. But many of his fellow Marines were killed or suffered grievous wounds.

Beausoleil still carries visions of the carnage and

sometimes wonders why he lived and so many others did not. Military historians have observed that the Hill Fights featured some of the Vietnam War’s most vicious and bloody fighting.

That was my life-changing experience,” he said during a recent interview at the home in Anaconda he shares with his wife, Michelle. I can still hear the screaming, the crying I guess you would say, of the wounded,” Beausoleil said, shaking his head.



Just two years before the notorious Hill Fights, Beausoleil had graduated from Anaconda Central High School. He decided to follow in the footsteps of his father, World War II veteran Paul V. Beausoleil, and become a U.S. Marine — a decision he said kind of shocked his father but also made him proud. He entered the Marine Corps in January 1966 and left for boot camp in San Diego. He said U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War was escalating and he didn’t want to miss the fight

For any young buck born after the World War II era, the mindset was you didn’t want to miss a war,” Beausoleil said. Boot camp was, he said, the most grueling 12 weeks of his life. He said his drill instructor, Sgt. C. Paine, was aptly named.

In March 1966, Beausoleil graduated from boot camp and joined forever the steadfast Semper Fi community.

"That's the proudest day of your life," he said.

All these decades later, hearing the "Marines' Hymn" elicits a predictable reaction. Even "today, I get the chills right up my spine," Beausoleil said.

In June 1966, he deployed to Vietnam. When he stepped unarmed off the military plane in Da Nang he was nearly overwhelmed by the heat and humidity.

"We didn't have any weapons at that point. I thought, 'Jesus, Mary and Joseph, there's something wrong with this picture,'" Beausoleil said. Ultimately, Beausoleil's service in Vietnam as a foot soldier, or "grunt," took him from Da Nang to the Demilitarized Zone, or DMZ. Ultimately, Beausoleil's service in Vietnam as a foot soldier, or "grunt," took him from Da Nang to the Demilitarized Zone, or DMZ.

He was first assigned to Headquarters Company, 3rd Marine Regiment, Security Section.

In January 1967, he was assigned to Mike Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines, and to patrol duty near the DMZ in a strategically important area known as the Rockpile.

In late April 1967, Beausoleil and other Marines were trucked and then flown to Khe Sanh Combat Base. His company received orders to join an assault of Hill 881 South.

"Our main mission was to take these hills and clear them of the enemy," he said. "We were working toward that objective."

A history of the assault reported that that North Vietnamese Army "had expertly camouflaged themselves on Hill 881 South" and the Marines who started up the hill did not know that a large number of enemy soldiers awaited their ascent.

Beausoleil said the fighting was the most intense he'd experienced. "Everything you can imagine happened there," he said.

The M16s issued to the Marines were notorious for jamming.

"I'm no hero, by any means, but I served with a lot of them," Beausoleil said.

"During that period of time, I used about five rifles.



PAUL BEAUSOLEIL'S ENLISTMENT PHOTO

You had to take them off dead bodies," he said.



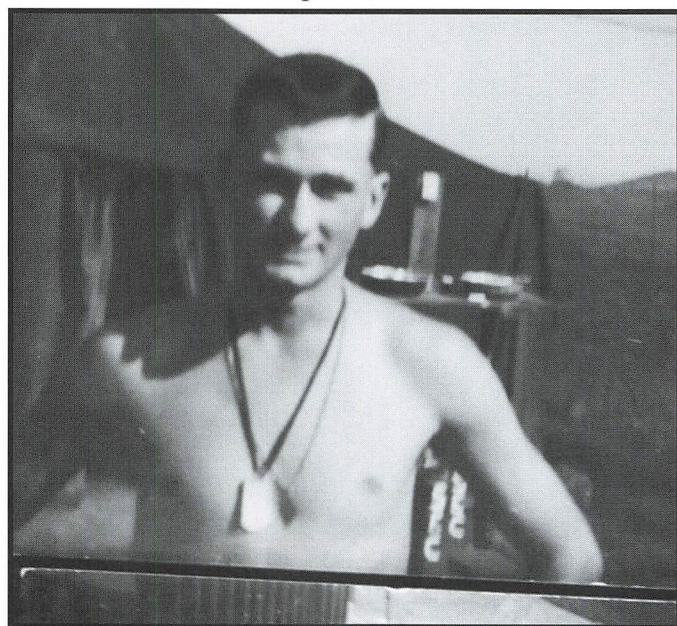
Paul Beausoleil is pictured at the bottom left with his squad that fought on Hill 881 South in the spring of 1967. All of the members of Beausoleil's squad survived the battle. Pictured from top left: Gene Davenport, Bill Paskins, Joe Rivera, Wayne Railey, and Jose Martinez and from bottom left is James Toy, Dennis Churchill, James Henry Taylor II and Paul Beausoleil.
Provided Photo

"We were up against regular NVA. They were good. We were damn good, but so were they."

U.S. artillery and aircraft did what they could to kill or drive back the NVA. There were times when the artillery shells or bombs exploded very close to the Marines.

U.S. artillery and aircraft did what they could to kill or drive back the NVA. There were times when the artillery shells or bombs exploded very close to the Marines.

"We had to call in napalm," Beausoleil said. "He



Paul Beausoleil remembers his friend who passed away during the Vietnam War. "I wasn't with him when he died. I always wondered where he was and I tried to look him up," says Beausoleil. He said he made a strong connection with Robert Hice because they had similar backgrounds growing up in blue collar towns. Beausoleil found Robert Hice's name on the Wall when he visited Washington DC. "He was just a really good man. He should have survived."

put that napalm right down on us. It was so close I can still feel the heat to this day."

Ultimately, an intense air bombardment by Marine F-4 Phantom Jets allowed Marines on the ground to capture Hill 881 South. The Marines discovered more than 250 bunkers the NVA had built. The intense bombing runs had destroyed most of them.

One account of the Hill Fights quotes a Captain Rogers describing how moved he'd been by the valor of youthful Marines involved in the battles for Hill 881 North and Hill 881 South.

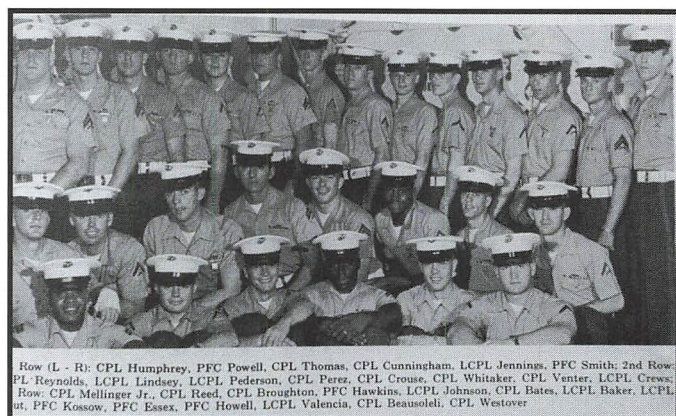
"I learned to respect the individual Marine — the 18



-year-old, 19-year-old, 20-year-old — more in this one particular battle than any other time that I've been in the Marine Corps. He was given a job; he went up in the face of danger, in the face of just being blown away, more or less, and he went up and did his job. To see the faces of the Marines dragging back their dead buddies, their wounded buddies, you could see how close the Marines really were with each other."

Beausoleil agreed with Capt. Rogers' assessment, but added, "By the time we came home, we were old men."

In July 1967, having served his 13 months in Vietnam, Beausoleil returned to the U.S. and to his family of origin in Anaconda. There had been no opportunity to decompress "There was no transition from the field to my mother's kitchen," he said. "That wasn't good." After a 30-day leave, Beausoleil's service with the Marines continued. Following Sea School training at San Diego he was assigned to the USS Bon Homme Richard, an aircraft carrier, thereby honoring the early roots of the Corps by be-



Row (L - R): CPL Humphrey, PFC Powell, CPL Thomas, CPL Cunningham, LCPL Jennings, PFC Smith; 2nd Row: PL Reynolds, LCPL Lindsey, LCPL Peterson, CPL Perez, CPL Crouse, CPL Whitaker, CPL Venter, LCPL Crews; 3rd Row: CPL Mellinger Jr., CPL Reed, CPL Broughton, PFC Hawkins, LCPL Johnson, CPL Bates, LCPL Baker, LCPL; 4th Row: PFC Kossow, PFC Essex, PFC Howell, LCPL Valencia, CPL Beausoleil, CPL Westover

coming a seagoing Marine.

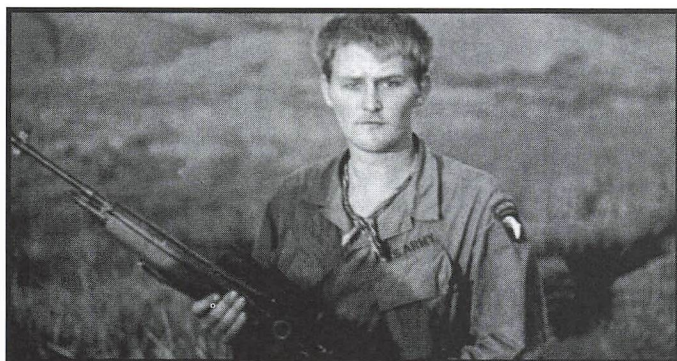
Beausoleil was honorably discharged in May 1972 as a sergeant. He returned to Anaconda, where he worked through the years as a smelterman, drove a truck for the county and held other jobs.

He met and married Michelle. They have five children.

Beausoleil readily acknowledges that memories of combat in Vietnam surface from time to time in ways that can ambush his emotions. He said he believes veterans should reach out for help if they are struggling.

He considers himself lucky to have survived the war, to have married and raised a family and to be a U.S. Marine.

**WHY THE ENEMY SHOULD HAVE
BROUGHT A BATTALION TO KILL THIS
SOLDIER**



"I'm a fortunate man," he said.

Specialist Michael Fitzmaurice was stationed in the area near Khe Sanh on March 23, 1971. The base had just been re-activated to support Operation Lam Son 719, the South Vietnamese invasion of Laos. That night in March, the American base was attacked by North Vietnamese regular army sappers, who expected to overrun the Americans.

They just didn't count on a 21-year-old from the Dakotas being there. They should have – and they should have brought more sappers.

Operation Lam Son 719 was an effort by the South Vietnamese to invade Laos to be able to cut off the Ho Chi Minh Trail, North Vietnam's "secret" supply line into the South. It did not go well for the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) forces or the Americans who were there to evacuate the

wounded and cover their retreat. By March 25, 1971, the ARVN were in full retreat. Two days before the end of Lam Son, however, the North Vietnamese tried to hit the Army's base at Khe Sanh with a force of sappers. Luckily the Army was able to repel the surprise attack and turn the NVA around.

Among those Army troops stationed at Khe Sanh that day was Michael J. Fitzmaurice, a soldier from the Dakotas who was about to take it to the Communists like a badass American from the Great North.

Fitzmaurice was manning a bunker that day with three other members of his unit, unaware that the base had been infiltrated by NVA sappers. What he did notice was three explosive charges tossed in the bunker from out of nowhere. He quickly tossed two of them out of the bunker and then threw his body, flak vest first, over the last explosive. The blast severely wounded Fitzmaurice and partially blinded him, but his fellow soldiers were still alive. But Fitzmaurice didn't stop there. He also didn't stay there.

He left the bunker and began taking down enemy troops with his rifle, one after another until *another grenade* hit him and disabled that rifle. Still undeterred, he stopped an enemy soldier with his bare hands, killed him, took his weapon, and began fighting on. With that weapon in hand, he went back to the bunker and started taking down the attackers one by one, refusing to be evacuated.

For saving his buddies and taking down the enemy in the most conspicuous manner possible, he Was rightfully awarded the Medal Of Honor



OBIT

**GLENN E. PRENTICE, USMC, KHE
SANH VETERAN, I CO 3/26,
C BTRY 1/13**

10-years ago I did a little documentary called Khe Sanh: A Walk in the Clouds. Tonight I got the news that one of my Marines and friend from the doc, Sgt Glenn E. Prentice, has passed.

There we are below in 2001 on top of Hill 881 south in Khe Sanh, Vietnam. I'm kneeling between 2 heroes, Sgt Glenn Prentice to my right and Cpl Bob Arrotta to my left. Both of these heroes fought and survived through the 77-day Siege at Khe Sanh.



Arrotta was the forward air controller with India Company 3/26 up on 881 during the whole siege. Captain Bill Dabney was his CO, who happened to be married to Chesty Puller's daughter. Imagine that guy being your father-in-law.

They dubbed Arrotta the Mightiest Corporal in the Marine Corps because of the amount of ordinance he brought down on the NVA during the siege. Undoubtedly he saved a lot of Marines lives and for his actions he was awarded the Silver Star.

Bob and Glenn remained the best of friends for years after the war until Bob passed unexpectedly in 2009. They shared a true Marine brotherhood and Glenn never seemed the same after Bob's passing. Now you're together again boys and that makes me smile no matter how sad the whole thing is.

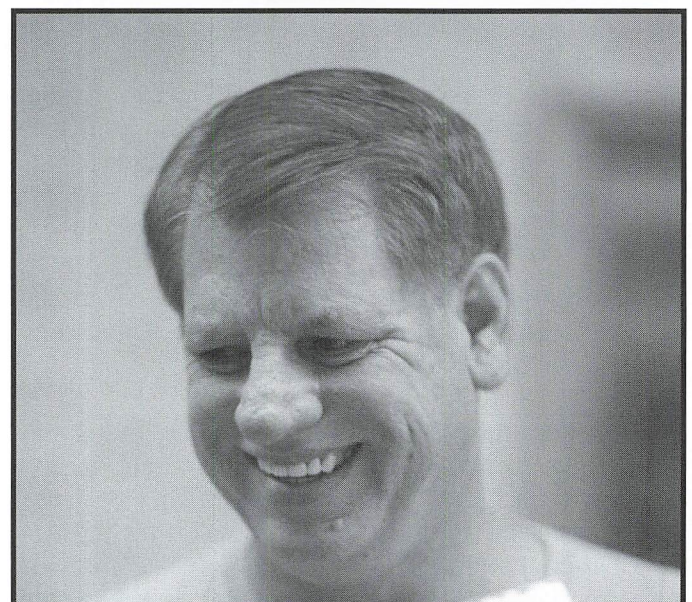
Glenn... I will always cherish the memories from our trips to Vietnam, humping those hills, the leeches, and the red clay stuck to our boots. You supported me and everything I did and I don't think I ever got the chance to truly thank you and tell you how

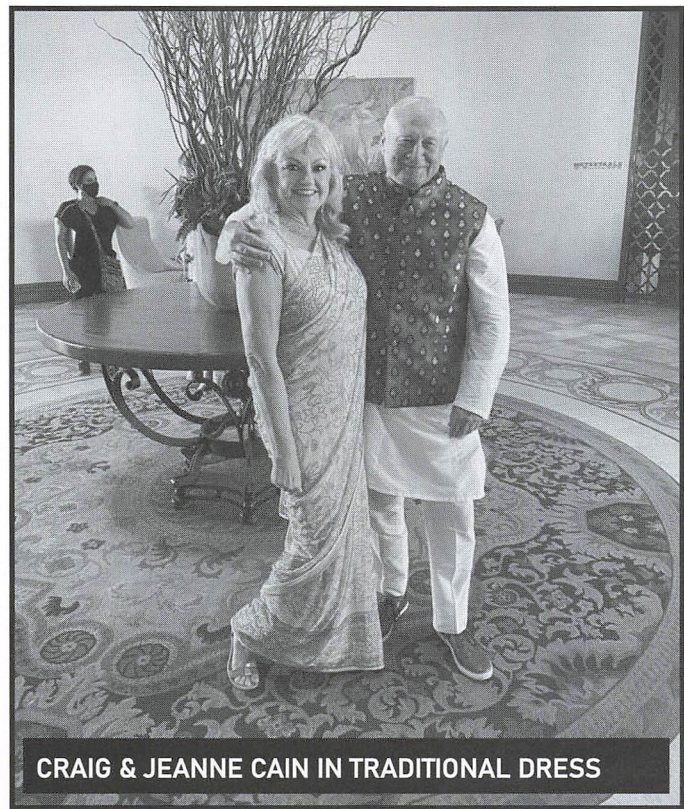
much it meant to me. You always took the time brother. You even flew to NY with me to be there when I met the Dunham's for the first time. I asked you why and you told me... "Because he's a Marine."

Today I drove to San Diego and it's weird how I thought about you as I passed through Oceanside... thinking to myself... I need to call you. 2 hours later I got the news. It saddens me to know that you're gone and that I didn't get a chance to talk to you one more time.

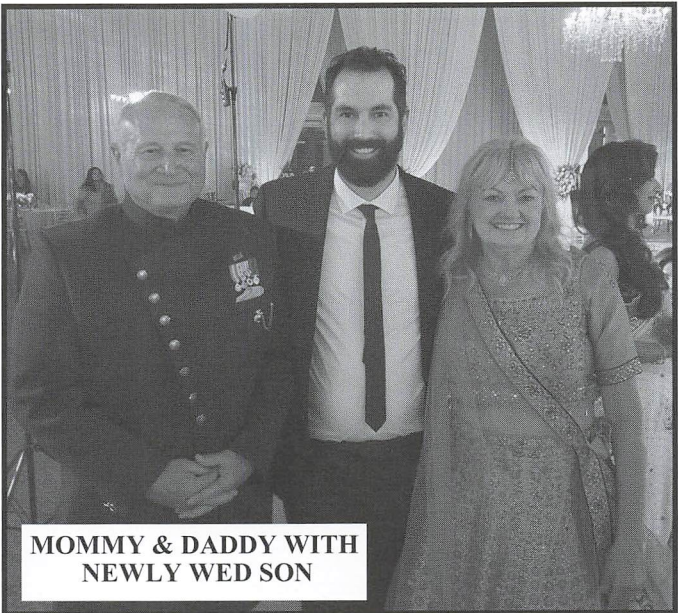
He was Buried at the Miramar National Cemetery. One of the most generous individuals I have ever known. I hope he rests with the rewards he so nobly earned in his time on earth.

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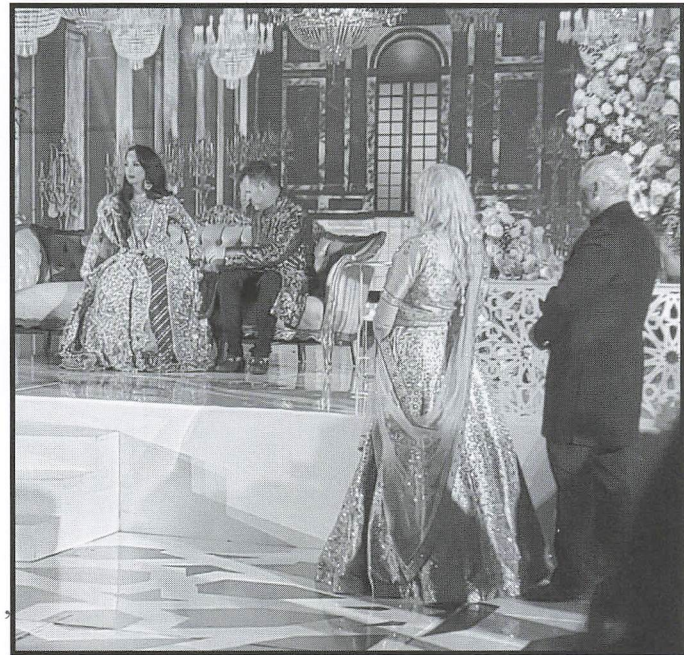




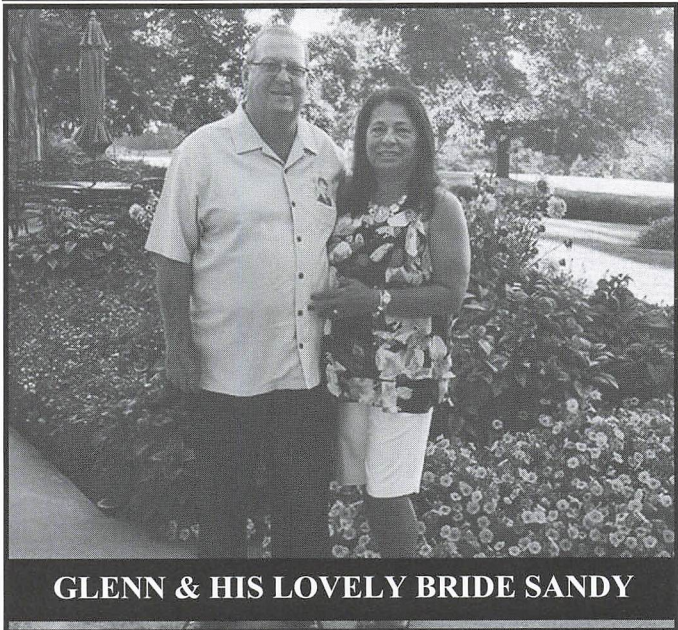
CRAIG & JEANNE CAIN IN TRADITIONAL DRESS



MOMMY & DADDY WITH
NEWLY WED SON



WEDDING PARTY



GLENN & HIS LOVELY BRIDE SANDY



TOM

TOM FORD CELEBRATING A
GREAT FISHING TRIP

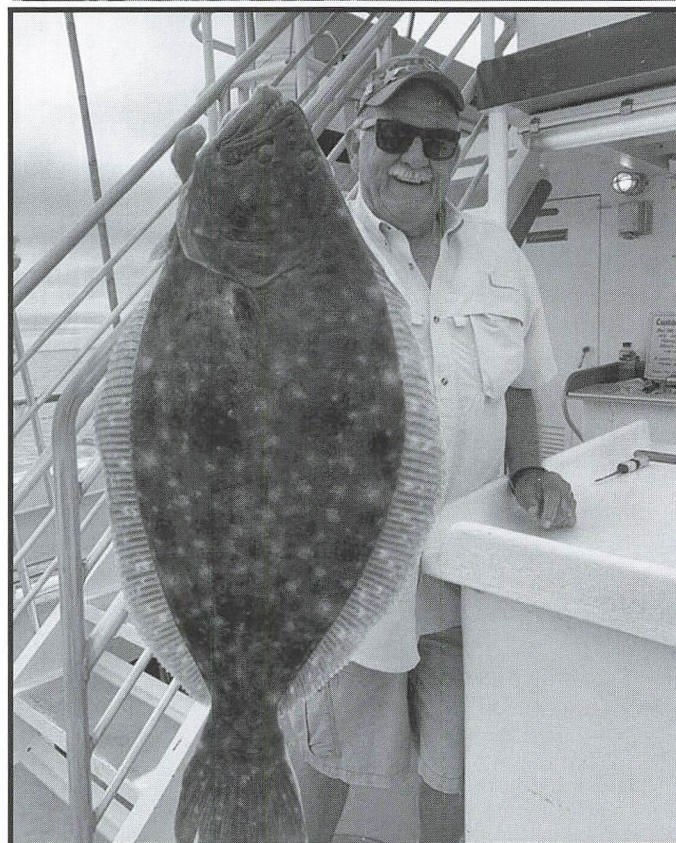
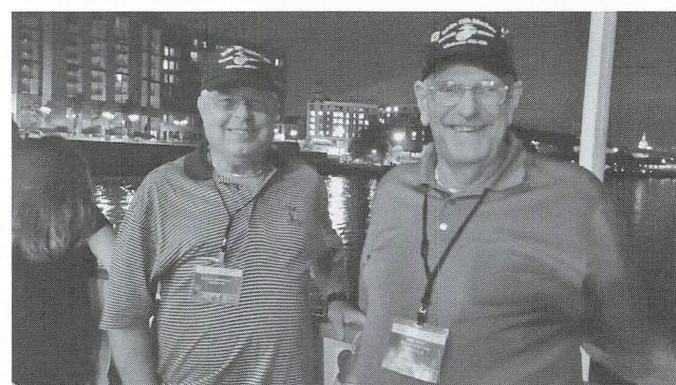
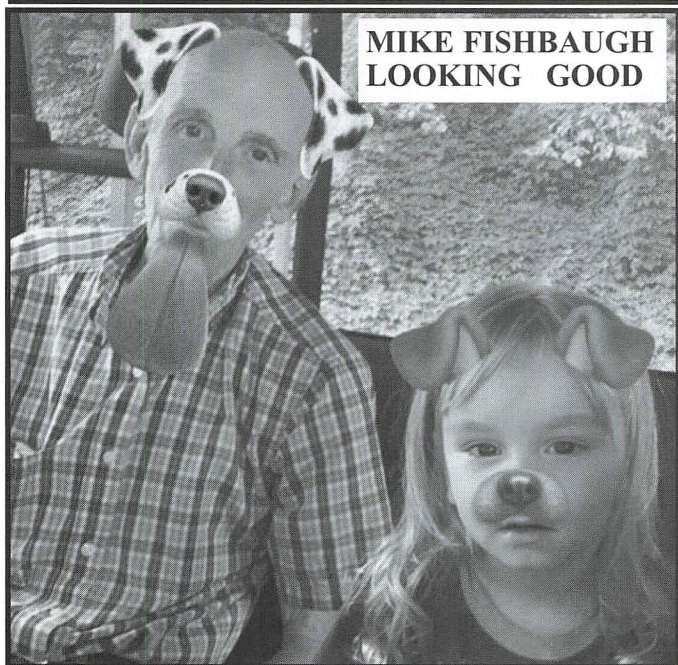




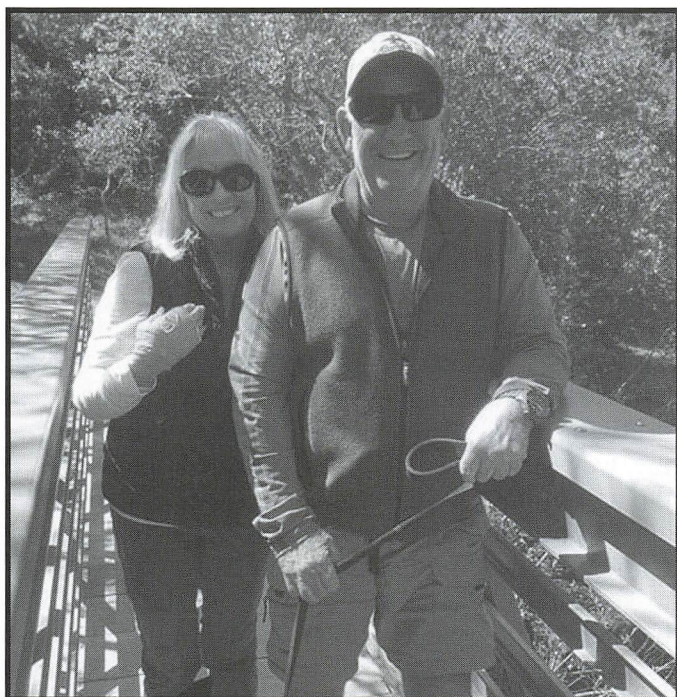
THE GRIFFIN FAMILY



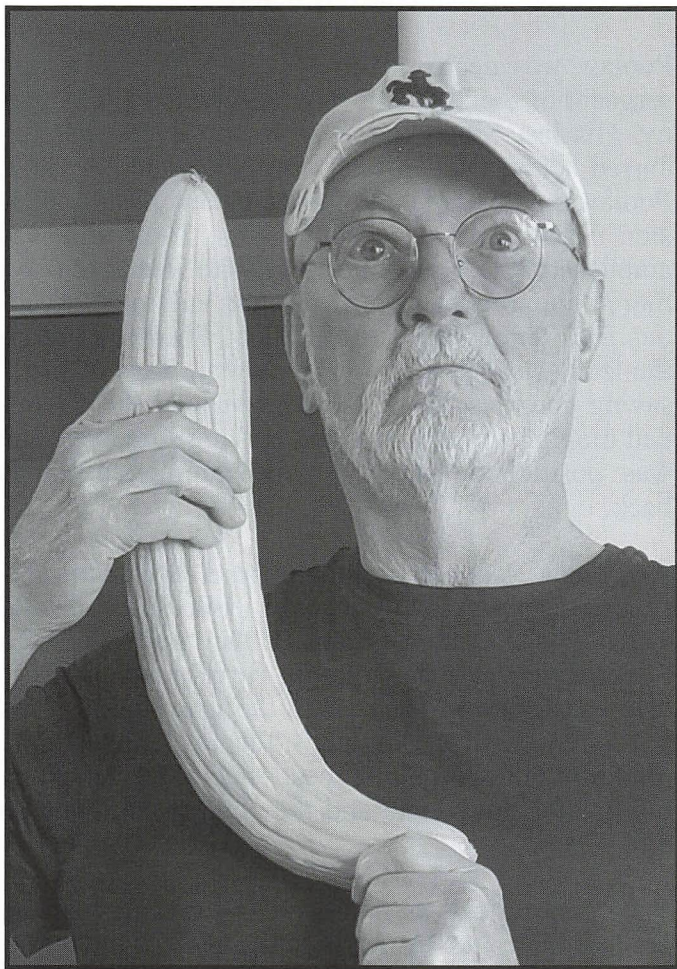
RUSS & KATHY WITH BILL & JOANNE EICHLER



I THINK TOM IS PHOTOSHOPPING HIS PICTURES LOL



TIM & JANET HALEY



KENNY RODGERS



TERRY FOURNIER FAMILY



THE TURNER FAMILY



**HEADS OF THE TURNER FAMILY:
RUSS & KATHY**

AMERICAN HERO

American Hero: The most decorated Native American soldier in U.S. history - 4 Silver Stars, 5 Bronze Stars, 3 Purple Hearts. He earned a total of 42 medals and citations. - Pascal Cleatus Poolaw Sr Died on the battlefield in the Republic of Vietnam on 7 November 1967, while serving with Company C, 26th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division. Posthumously awarded his 4th Silver Star on a "Search and Destroy mission" near Loc Ninh. Pascal Cleatus Poolaw Sr. is a full blooded Kiowa, was born on January 22, 1922 in Apache, Oklahoma. Poolaw served in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.

In 1942, Poolaw, his father, and his two brothers joined the armed forces. While serving with the 8th Infantry Regiment's M Company near Recogne, Belgium on September 8, 1944, he earned his first Purple Heart and Silver Star. On that day, Poolaw's unit was engaging fire with the Germans. He pushed his company forward while facing heavy machine gun fire for give minutes as he hurled hand grenades, causing numerous enemy casualties. According to his Silver Star citation, " Due to Sergeant Poolaw's actions, many of his comrades' lives were saved and the company was able to continue the attack and capture strongly defended enemy positions. Sergeant Poolaw's display of courage, aggressive spirit and complete disregard for personal safety are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service. "

Poolaw's military career did not end in Belgium or with the Germans. During the Korean War, lPoolaw saw combat and was wounded again and awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, a second Purple Heart and two more Silver Stars. His first Silver Star for that war was for his heroic actions on September 1950 when his company met still enemy resistance. Poolaw volunteered to lead his squad in an assault, charging up a slop to hit the perimeter of the North Korean's position. His squad engaged in fierce hand-to-hand combat and Poolaw's persistence encouraged his squad to keep going until they were able to seize their objective.

The second Silver Star during this war came on April 4, 1951 near Chongong-ni where Poolaw and his platoon was pinned down by a automatic weapons and mortar barrage. He exposed himself to the enemy and slowly advanced across the open terrain, firing his weapon as he went. By keeping the North Koreans' eyes on him, his platoon maneuvered to a

better position and were able to carry on the mission at hand.

He returned to the U.S. in 1952 and retired from the Army ten years later. This is not where is story – or military career – ends.

During the Vietnam War, all four of the Poolaws sons were in the military. In February 1967, his son, Pascal Jr., was injured by a landmine in Vietnam. This injury resulted in amputation of his right leg below the knee. Poolaw's youngest son, Lindy, was drafted. Afraid of what could happen to his sons as the war progressed, Poolaw rejoined the Army at the age of 45. Giving up his rank as a 2nd Lieutenant (a promotion he earned in Korea), with the intentions of serving in direct combat, Poolaw hoped to keep his youngest son away from the front lines by taking his place. Regulations prohibited two members of the same family from serving in combat at the same time without their consent. Unfortunately, by the time he arrived on the West Coast, Lindy had left for Vietnam the day before.

Poolaw was deployed on May 31, 1967 as a first sergeant of the 26th Infantry Regiment's C Company. His last Silver Star was for an event that occurred a few months later. On November 7, 1967, Poolaw's unit were part of a search and destroy mission near the village of Loc Ninh. Their unit was ambushed by a Viet Cong force with intensive claymore mine, rocket, small arms, and automatic weapons fire. Through a hail of bullets, Poolaw raced to the lead squad position to lay down a base of fire – saving countless lives. While wounded, he continued moving among his squad making sure everyone was positioned properly while pulling casualties back.

As Poolaw was carrying a wounded soldier to safety, he was struck by a rocket propelled grenade and killed. For his heroic actions Poolaw was awarded a Silver Star and a third Purple Heart posthumously. "He has followed the trail of the great chiefs," his wife Irene said at Poolaw's funeral. "His people hold him in honor and highest esteem. He has given his life for the people and the country he loved so much."

The citation reads as follows; "The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress July 9, 1918, takes pleasure in presenting the Silver Star to Staff Sergeant Pascal Cleatus Poolaw (ASN: 18131087), United States Army, for gallantry in action against the enemy while serving with Company M, 8th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infan-

try Division, near Recogne, Belgium, on 8 September 1944. While attacking in support of a rifle company, Sergeant Poolaw displaced his machine gun squad forward across an open field under heavy mortar and small arms fire in such a manner as to affect a minimum number of casualties among his squad. After reaching his new position, Sergeant Poolaw saw the enemy advance in a strong counter-attack. Standing unflinchingly in the face of withering machine gun fire for five minutes, he hurled hand grenades until the enemy force sustained numerous casualties and was dispersed. Due to Sergeant Poolaw's actions, many of his comrades' lives were saved and the company was able to continue the attack and capture strongly defended enemy positions. Sergeant Poolaw's display of courage, aggressive spirit and complete disregard for personal safety are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service."

His 2nd Silver Star was awarded to him for his bravery under fire and his disregard for his own safety while assisting his brothers in arms. The citation for his second Silver Star, earned in Korea, is as follows;

"The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 9, 1918, takes pleasure in presenting a Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster in lieu of a Second Award of the Silver Star to Sergeant First Class Pascal Cleatus Poolaw (ASN: 18131087), United States Army, for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action while serving with Company C, 27th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division. On 19 September 1950 when the company attack on an enemy position was halted by stiff enemy resistance, Sergeant First Class Poolaw volunteered to lead his squad in an assault. Courageously leading his men in a charge up the slope to penetrate the enemy perimeter and engage the numerically superior enemy in fierce hand-to-hand combat, Sergeant First Class Poolaw inspired his men to hold their position until the remainder of the company was able to seize the objective. Sergeant First Class Poolaw's outstanding leadership reflects great credit upon himself and is in keeping with the highest traditions of the American Soldier."

On April 4, 1951, once again, Sergeant Poolaw honored his people and the warriors creed by serving the calling of America. For his actions on that day, Master Sergeant Poolaw received his 3rd Silver Star. The third citation reads as follows:

"The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 9, 1918, takes

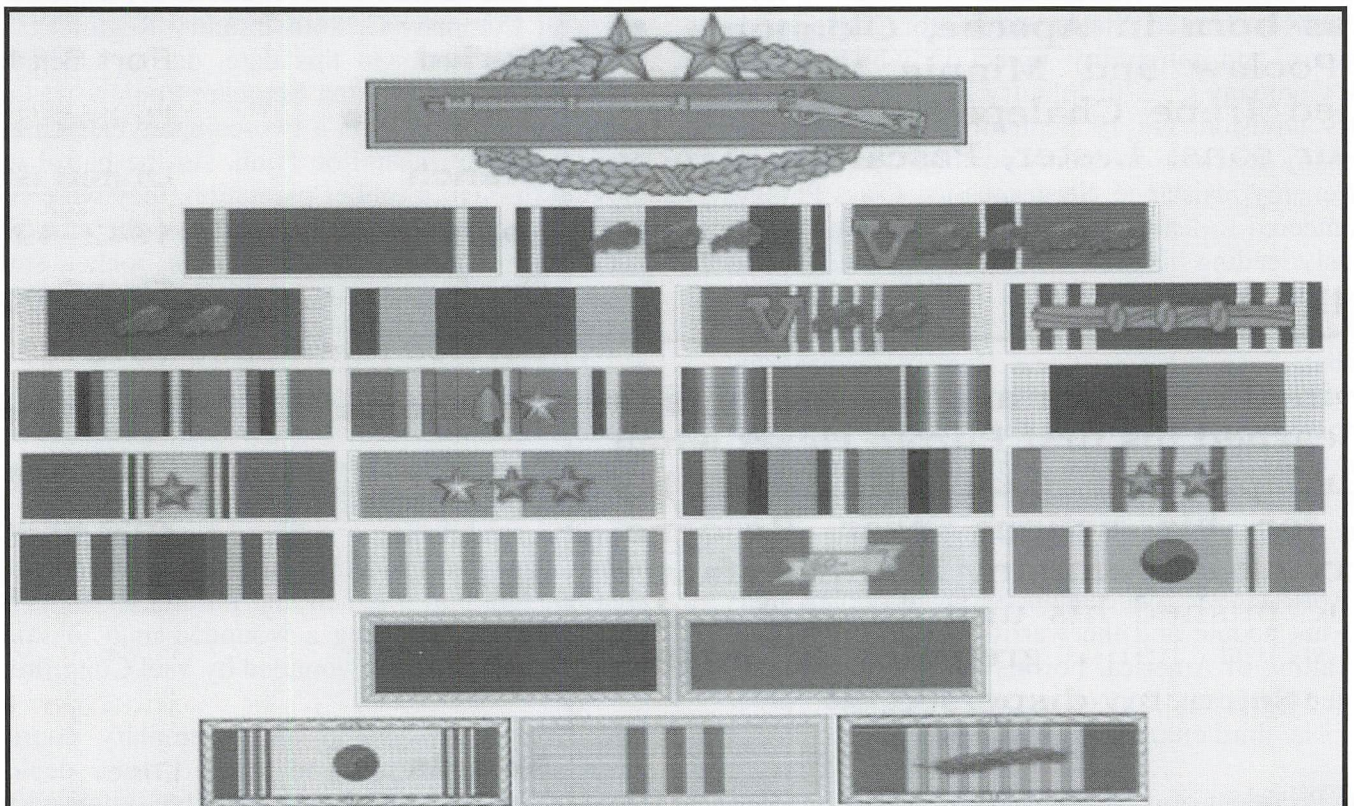
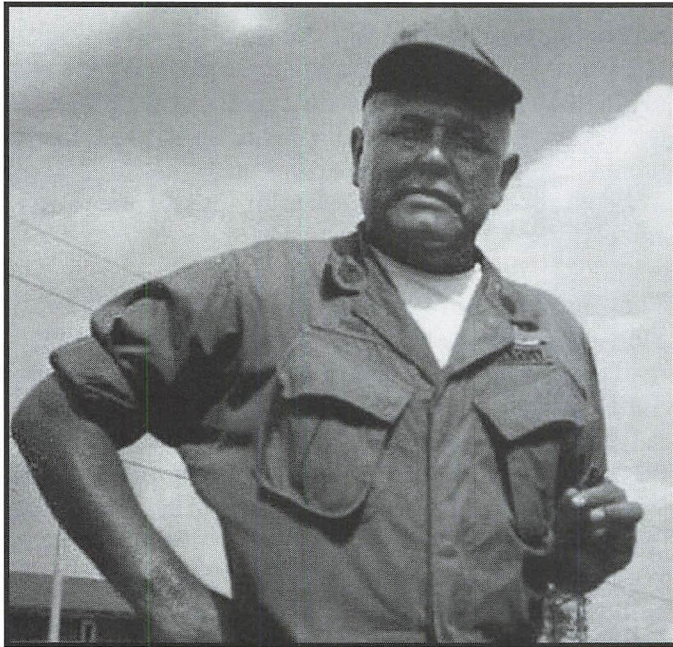
pleasure in presenting a Second Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster in lieu of a Third Award of the Silver Star to Master Sergeant Pascal Cleatus Poolaw (ASN: 18131087), United States Army, for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action while serving with Company C, 27th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division. On 4 April 1951 near Chongong-ni, Korea, while attacking strong hostile positions, one squad of Master Sergeant Poolaw's platoon was immobilized by a devastating automatic weapons and mortar barrage. Exposing himself to the deadly fire, he slowly advanced across open terrain, firing his rifle as he progressed. By deliberately diverting the attention of the foe to himself, he enabled his men to maneuver to more advantageous positions. Master Sergeant Poolaw's valorous actions were instrumental in the fulfillment of the unit mission and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the American Soldier."

The citation for First Sergeant Poolaw's 4th Silver Star, awarded posthumously for action in Vietnam, reads as follows; "The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 8, 1918 (amended by act of July 25, 1963), takes pride in presenting a Third Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster in lieu of a Fourth Award of the Silver Star (Posthumously) to First Sergeant Pascal Cleatus Poolaw (ASN: 18131087), United States Army, for gallantry in action against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam on 7 November 1967, while serving with Company C, 26th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division. On this date, during Operation SHENANDOAH II, First Sergeant Poolaw was accompanying his unit on a two-company search and destroy mission near Loc Ninh. As the patrol was moving through a rubber plantation, they were subjected to sniper fire. Within minutes, the area was raked with intensive claymore mine, rocket, small arms, and automatic weapons fire from a numerically superior Viet Cong force.

First Sergeant Poolaw unhesitatingly ran to the lead squad which was receiving the brunt of the enemy fire. With complete disregard for his personal safety, he exposed himself to assist in deploying the men and establishing an effective base of fire. Although wounded, he continued to move about the area encouraging his men and pulling casualties to cover. He was assisting a wounded man to safety when he was mortally wounded by Viet Cong fire.

His dynamic leadership and exemplary courage contributed significantly to the successful deployment of the lead squad and undoubtedly saved the lives of many of his fellow soldiers. First Sergeant

Poolaw's unquestionable valor in close combat against numerically superior hostile forces is in keeping with the finest traditions of the military service and reflects great credit upon himself, the 1st Infantry Division, and the United States Army. It should be noted that in the ferocious fighting at the Battle of Loc Ninh where he earned his 4th Silver Star and 3rd Purple Heart, it also resulted in the awards of Honor, 1 Distinguished Service Cross. . 14 other US Army soldiers also lost their lives in that engagement."



OBIT

**JAMES E. WRIGHT, USMC KHE SANH
VETERAN, H&S CO 1/26 81MM**

James Eric Wright, 73, of 2222 Fieldcrest Road, Wilson NC, passed away on Monday, May 3, 2021 at his home

James was preceded in death by: his parents, James Daniels and Sudie Mae Reid Wright and his sister Otealia Hobbs.

James leaves to cherish his memories: his loving wife of 35 years, Christine Wright of the home; daughters; Erica Wright of Durham, NC, Jamie Wright Harris (Garrison), Melanie Ward, Crystal Ward Precious Bynum (Dominic) all of Wilson,



NC; two brothers, Charles Wright (Anita) of Hephzibah, GA and Bobby Daniels (Tee) of Nashville, TN; sixteen grandchildren; Brandon, Brianna, Braxton, Abria, Christopher, McKailya, Garritt, Kiersten, Kaitlyn, Kennedy, Kahleb, Gavin, Kaisen, Grayson, Mayson, and Marlee; one uncle, Troy Reid of Wilson, NC; mother-in-law, Mary

McNair of Macclesfield, NC; two sisters-in-law; Mary Thornhill of Raleigh, NC and Janice McNair of Macclesfield, NC; a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and a Special brotherhood affectionally known as "The Wednesday Club": Leroy Barnes, Sammie Dew, Vernon "Tap" Hardy, Lenwood Spells, David Fate, Donald Ham, and Arthur Gaskins. Condolences may be posted to www.stevensfamilyfuneralhome.com or faxed to 252-991-5849.

"Committed to Serve, Committed to Care."

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. (Psalm 46:1)

OBIT

**JAMES UPDIKE "DOC", USN KHE SANH
VETERAN HN F CO 2/26 HILL 558**

James Everett Updike was born in Rapid City, South Dakota on May 8, 1947, and died unexpectedly on May 4, 2021. Jim lived in Laguna Woods, California with his wife Sharon.

Jim was a veteran of the Vietnam War, in which he served as a Hospital Corpsman in the U.S. Navy from 1966 to 1970, and was awarded a Purple Heart and Navy Commendation with Combat "V". He worked his entire career in the financial industry, retiring in 2015 as CEO of Honda Federal Credit Union. He was proud of his accomplishments as a leader during his career, and building great teams was what he loved best. He was a skilled speaker and enjoyed the motivational aspects that came with his role.



PHOTO FROM HILL 558, FROM TWS PROFILE

OBIT

STEPHEN R. STEGICH III, USMC
KHE SANH VETERAN, HMM-262

STEGICH--Stephen RICHARD Stegich, III was born on March 17, 1942 in Little Falls, New York. He passed away on August 19th at his home in East Hampton at age 79. He is survived by his daughter, Stephanie Stegich and son, Erich (Diana) Stegich, his grandchildren Joshua, Olivia, Lila, Sophie and Marin, his four siblings, Donna Kauffman, Sharon (Bob) Avery, Alan (Maria) Stegich and Jeffrey (Kay) Stegich and many loving nieces, nephews and cousins. He was predeceased by his niece, the Hon. Louise K Sira. **Steve was a proud veteran of the United States Marine Corps. He served as a combat helicopter pilot with squadron HMM 262 in the Vietnam War and received the Air Medal with 5 stars, a National Defense Medal, the Presidential Unit Citation for "extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy," and the Purple Heart. He survived two helicopter crashes, retiring as a Captain in 1969. after being seriously injured by gunfire while flying near Khe Sanh.**

Prior to his service, Steve attended the University of Notre Dame on a military scholarship and graduated in 1965 with a BS in Architecture. When he came home from Vietnam, Steve practiced architecture in Syracuse, New York for a year and then returned to South Bend, where he started a family and attended Notre Dame law school and was a member of the Law Review. After receiving his JD in 1972, he moved to New York and began a 49-year career as an aviation lawyer and partner at Condon & Forsyth. He was serving his clients in the aviation industry until the day that he died and was preparing for an October 2021 oral argument before the United States Supreme Court.

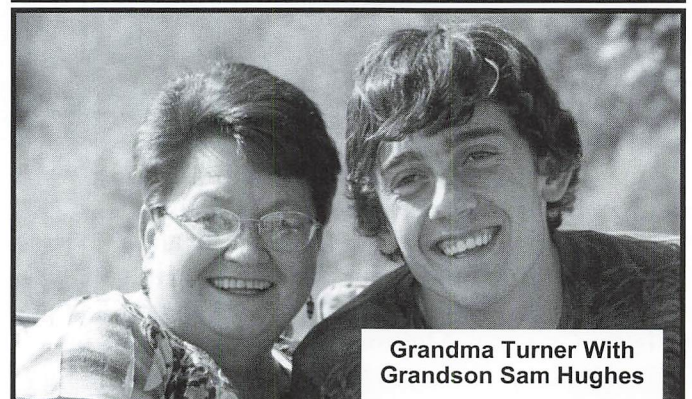
He was beloved by many clients, colleagues and friends and was known as a brilliant and passionate lawyer. He was a mentor to many young lawyers and inspired his son and four nieces and nephews to follow him into the profession. Steve had boundless curiosity. He consumed books, poetry, films, music and news with enthusiasm, and he took an interest in everyone who crossed his path. He loved history, art, opera and seeing the world. He found love again in the last decade of his life, and that brought him and his family great joy. Perhaps because he came from modest means, Steve genuinely appreciated all of the finer things in life and loved sharing them with others. He celebrated his seminal birthdays

with his children and closest friends in locations like London, Cortina Italy, and Barcelona. He was a master gift-giver and expert chef at Thanksgiving and Christmas. For the last 20 years, he enjoyed entertaining his family and friends in his yard in Wainscott, where his expertise in landscaping and green thumb were always on full display. His children and grandchildren were his greatest joy. They were a constant presence in his life. He attended his daughter Stephanie's countless marathons and was so proud of her accomplishments in her career and as a mother raising three girls. He was awed watching his son Erich grow his company from one employee into one of the preeminent general contractors in New York City.

He loved hearing about Erich's construction projects, encouraged his adventures and passed along to him a love of skiing, boats, planes, and cars from Stuttgart. He watched his grandson Josh play football from the age of six and was looking forward to watching him play this fall at Denison University. Steve frequently lectured his four granddaughters that women can do anything men can do, only more efficiently, and he encouraged them to break any glass ceilings. He told them that there was no luck in life, only hard work, and he was the first to cheer on their accomplishments. Steve was a fiercely loyal friend, advocate and most of all father, grandfather, son, brother and uncle who was happiest when surrounded by his family. He was larger than life and will forever be missed. Semper Fi



**KHE SANH
FRIENDS**

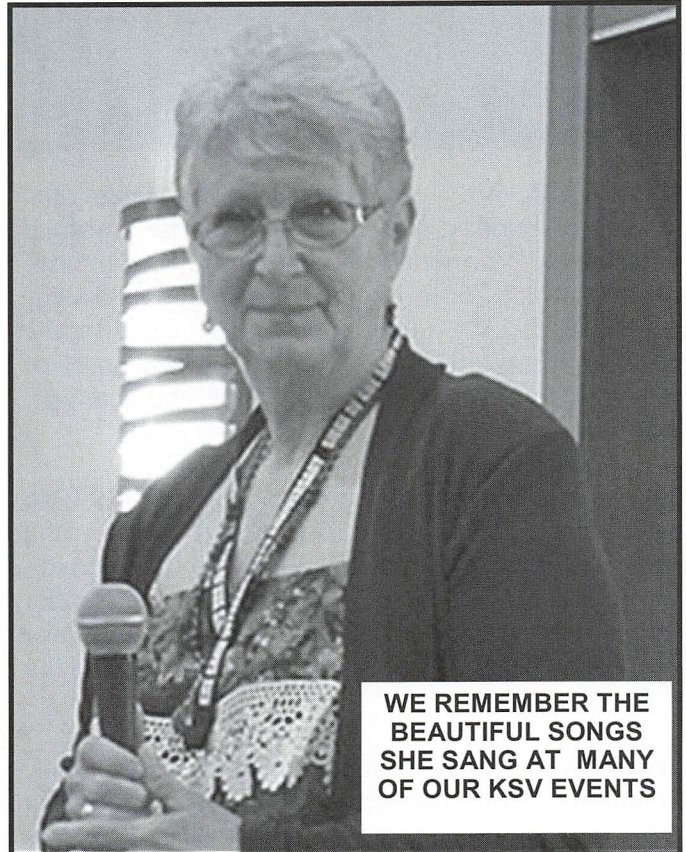


**Grandma Turner With
Grandson Sam Hughes**

OBIT

**LINDA M. EASTER, KHE SANH REUNION
COMMITTEE, WIFE OF HAROLD EASTER,
ALPHA CO 1/26**

Linda Marie Easter (Gram), died Tuesday morning, August 10, 2021, at the Reading Hospital. She was the wife of Rev. Harold L. Easter. They had celebrated their 54th wedding anniversary on December 30th. Born on September 28, 1947, in Harrisburg, she was the daughter of Brenda (Hold) Cox Dowhower of Middletown and the late Gerald E. Cox. Linda was a Christian counselor, and was very active in church, teaching Sunday School and leading hymns. She loved her children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren and had many hobbies including writing, reading, gardening, completing crossword puzzles, and cooking family dinners. In addition to her husband and mother, she is survived by her two daughters, son, and their respective families: daughter Tanya Brautigam and her two sons Seth and Ty Brautigam; daughter Trisha Dries and her three daughters and son: Adessa Trabosh, Kierra Taggart, Tiahna Trabosh, and Draken Dries; son Timothy, daughter-in-law Amy, and their two daughters Emma and Clara Easter; and eight great-grandchildren and four brothers: Wayne, Craig, and Bruce Cox, and Bradley Dowhower; Funeral services were held on Monday, August 16, 2021. A viewing occurred at 10:30 a.m., followed by a memorial service at 12:45 p.m. at Bunker Hill Church. Interment at the Indiantown Gap National Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, monetary donations may be made to Bunker Hill Church, at 2208 SR 72 North Lebanon, PA 17046. Kreamer & Lum Funeral Home & Crematory, Jonestown, is honored to serve the family.



OBIT

**GEORGE O. GATES, USN SEABEE, KHE
SANH VETERAN CBMU 301-DET B**

ANDOVER, Vt. – George Osborne Gates died peacefully Sunday, Aug. 8, 2021 at the Cardinal Wing of the Vermont Veterans Home in Bennington, Vt., at age 75, following a brief illness. George resided at the VA under their loving care for the past four years after developing a sudden onset of early dementia. George brought joy to the veterans' community.

George was born in Springfield, Vt., June 11, 1946 and was the son of Gordon Gates of Chester and Patricia Rowell of the Rowell's Inn in Andover. The Gates family owned and operated the lumber mill – until destroyed by fire – on Lowell Lake where they lived in Londonderry, Vt., later moving to Andover, Vt.

George was a man of many talents and interests. Graduating from Chester Union High School in 1965, he went on to serve his country as a U.S. Na-

vy Seabee in the Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 301 where he was assigned to the Detail Bravo Khe Sanh where he served as EO3 (Third Class Petty Officer) and promoted to EO2 during his service. He was rated with Navy Union Commendation Ribbon for his time at Khe Sanh, National Defense Metal, Vietnam Service Ribbon, and two Campaign Stars. George was present during the Battle and Siege of Khe Sanh and family has been able to piece together his accounts through numerous letters written to parents Gordon and Patty while in Vietnam.

He was released from active duty in September of 1969. After returning from Vietnam, he was an accomplished woodworker and homebuilder with a career as a carpenter working for his dad's family-run business, Gordon O. Gates & Sons Construction. His craftsmanship was excellent and a great source of pride. He was an avid hunter and angler who enjoyed deer and raccoon hunting along with trout fishing in local streams all the way home from work daily during summer months. George could fix absolutely anything but preferred working on American-made hot rods, Jeeps, and pickup trucks that he owned over the years. Coming from a musical family, he played the banjo, fiddle, spoons, and juice harp. He loved to dance and often spoke of the square dances held in local barns.

George is survived by a daughter Juliette (Tim) Gates Britton of Peru, Vt. and Jessy (Jamie) Gates Richardson of Denmark, Maine, and sisters Susan (Robert) Turco and Sylvia (Robert) MacDonald. He was predeceased by brother Charles Gates, also of Andover, Vt. George was a loving grandfather of six grandchildren and uncle to several nieces and nephews that he also loved.

A graveside service with military honors was held Aug. 13, 2021 at Village Cemetery in Peru. A gathering followed services at the J.J. Hapgood Store owned by daughter Juliette Britton. Both the service and the celebration following included live music by Ida Specker.



MILITARY RETIREES INFORMATIONBy Jim Absher

Military retirees and disabled veterans could see their monthly checks jump by hundreds of dollars each month in 2022, the largest increase since 1983. The annual inflation-based Cost of Living Adjustment, or COLA, soon will be determined by the government, and all the figures point to an increase of at least 6%, and maybe more, beginning in 2022.

That means that next year, military retirees will see their monthly retirement check increase, with the average monthly check going up by around \$160. Veterans receiving disability compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs also will see their monthly disability payments increase, with the average monthly amount increasing by nearly \$100. According to the Defense Department, there are around 1.87 million military retirees, with an annual average retirement payment of \$30,265. The VA says nearly 5.1 million veterans receive disability compensation, with an annual benefit of \$18,549.

The annual COLA increase is based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which is measured by the Department of Labor. That agency measures the costs of a select group of goods and services and compares those costs to the previous year. If there is an increase, retirees and many others receiving govern-

ment benefits see an increase in their monthly payments for the upcoming year. If those costs go down, the government payments will remain the same in the upcoming year.

In 2021, costs for most goods and services have gone up much faster than they have in the past. The most recent data from the Department of Labor is showing a 5.4% increase from last year, and there are two more months left in the current fiscal year, which ends on Sept. 30.

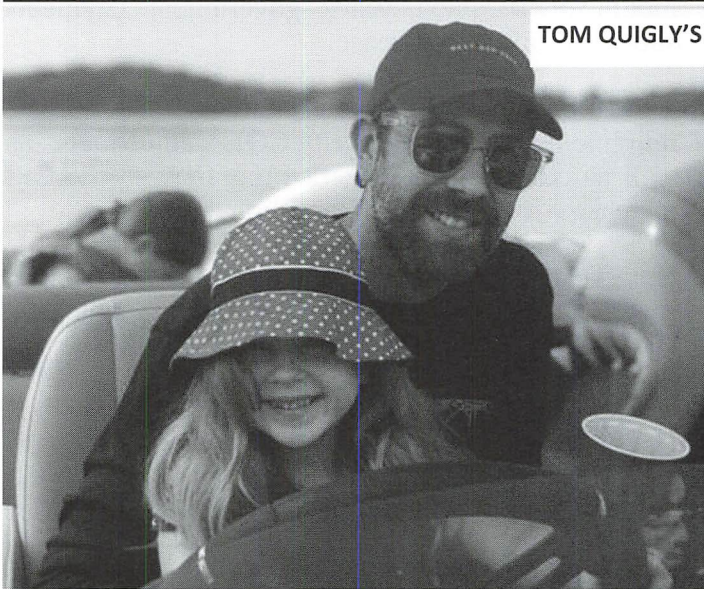
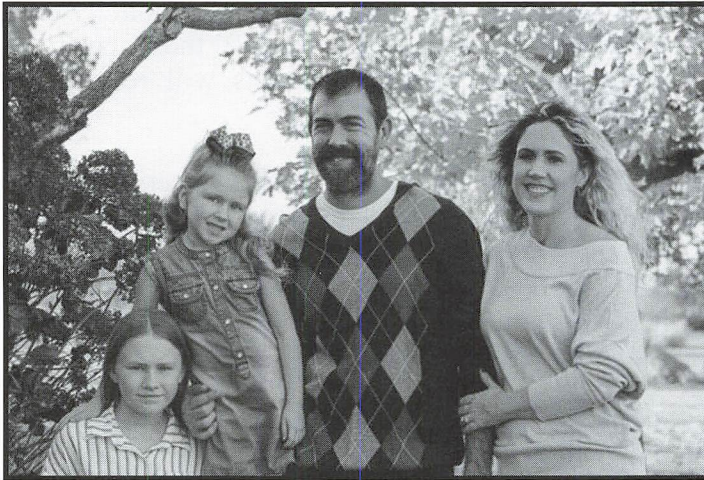
So, unless there is a major turnaround of the economy, with prices dropping dramatically in the next month or so, next year's government payments should see a hefty increase.

The CPI also is used to determine federal employee retirement and social security COLA adjustments as well as other federal benefit programs, so the CPI increase will affect over 50 million Americans.

Next year's COLA is scheduled to be announced in early October. When it is, Military.com will have the latest information, including disability pay rates available to you.

WILLIAM EICHLER WITH HIS WIFE JOANNE'S BEAUTIFUL FAMILY. BILL AND HIS WIFE REGULARLY ATTEND OUR KHE SANH VETERANS ANNUAL REUNIONS AND ARE GREAT SUPPORTERS.

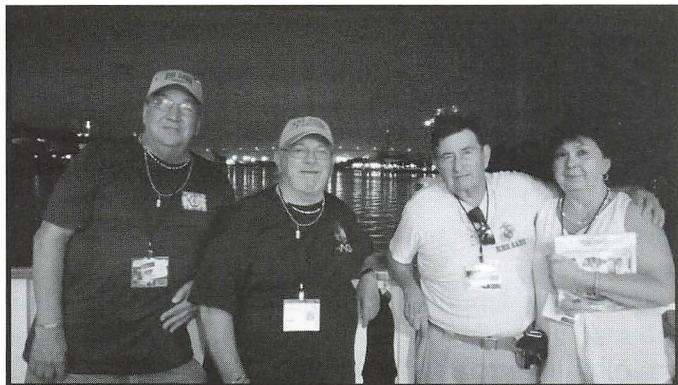




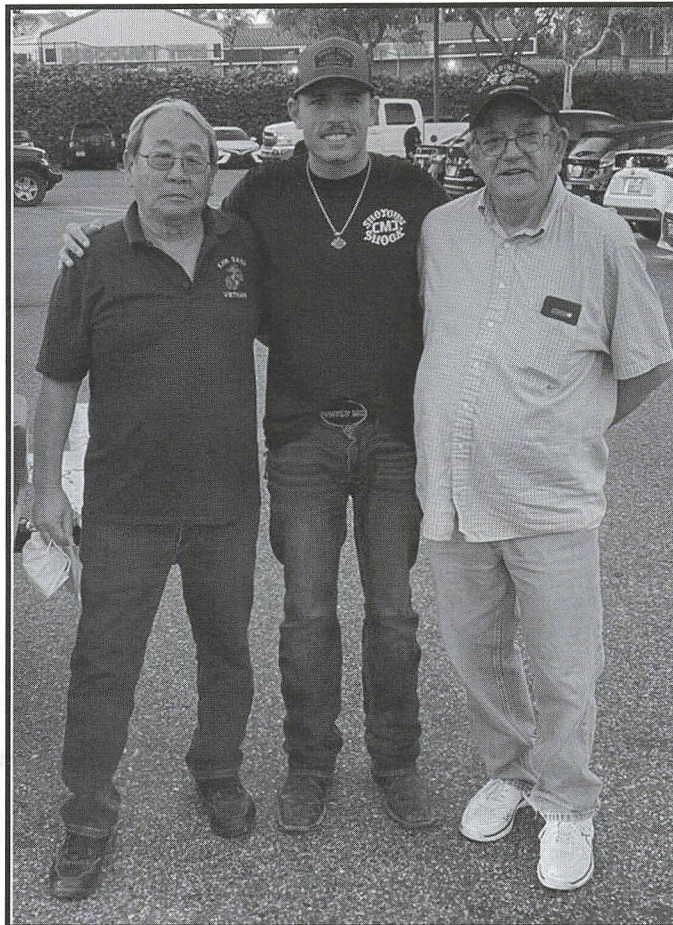
TOM QUIGLY'S SON IN LAW JACOB



GARRISON PROPERTIES 1968 A FEW WENT TAD TO KHE SANH DURING THE SIEGE



BARRY FIXLER CELEBRATING HIS GRANDSON'S BIRTHDAY AT BULLY BOY BAR.



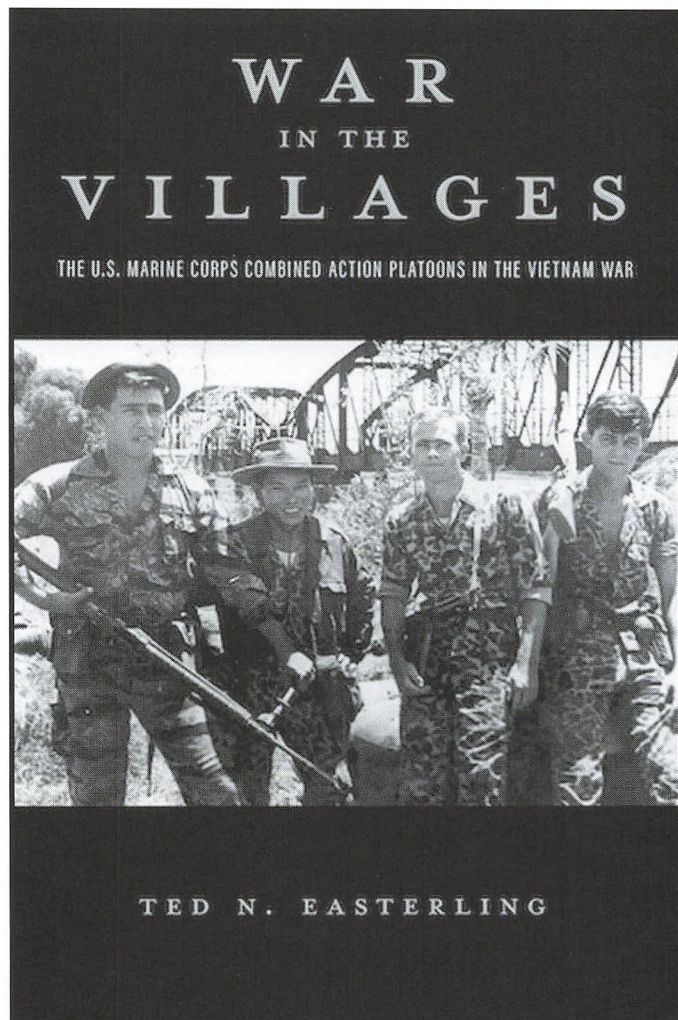
went to dinner with a couple absolute GIANTS Last night. Though they are both in their 70s now, don't let their grey hair and old bodies fool you.



BEAUTIFUL COUPLE

BOOK REVIEW

WAR IN THE VILLAGES BY TED N. EASTERLING



Men of the U.S. Marine Corps Combined Action Platoons in the Vietnam volunteered to live with and protect South Vietnamese villagers in I Corps. Ideally a CAP was made up of fifty men—14 Marines, one Navy corpsman, and 35 South Vietnamese Popular Forces troops, although in reality the teams often fell below those numbers. The program, designed to fight guerrillas during the night and help villagers during the day, was in place in Vietnam from 1965-71, and was the subject of controversies between upper echelon Marine and U.S. Army commanders. In essence, the Army favored the search-and-destroy strategy, and the Marines wanted to emphasize hearts-and-minds counterinsurgency programs.

In War in the Villages: The U.S. Marine Corps Combined Action Platoons in the Vietnam War (University of North Texas Press, 247 pp. \$29.95, hardcover; \$23.95, Kindle) Marine Vi-

etnam War veteran Ted Easterling tells the story of the effectiveness of CAPs against the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army. Easterling holds a doctorate from the University of Akron where he taught history. Relying primarily on secondary sources in his book, Easterling concludes that CAP never realized its potential.

The book's lengthy introduction details the principles of guerrilla warfare, communist ideology, and revolutionary warfare to show the formidable mili-



tary challenge posed by the communist forces in Vietnam. Easterling also explains a range of counterinsurgency tactics designed to meet the challenge, the core of which fostered disagreement between Marine Gen. Victor (Brute) Krulak and his boss, U.S. Army Gen. William Westmoreland.

Easterling conscientiously takes the reader through all the stages of CAP's existence, a struggle intensified by the program's limited size and insufficient support from the South Vietnamese government. Even when CAP became a separate command, a lack of supplies hampered progress.

Several recently released books about the CAP have reached conclusions similar to Easterling's. In *Spreading Ink Blots from Da Nang to the DMZ*, for example, the British military historian David Strachan-Morris rates CAP as successful—a minor success, perhaps, but nevertheless successful. For him, counterinsurgency is an effective way to achieve a specific objective, within a specific area, and (ideally) for a specific period of time. Beyond those parameters, he says, it is ineffective.

A more personalized view of CAP comes from *Tiger Papa Three* by Edward F. Palm, a former CAP Marine who lived with villagers between Cam Lo and Dong Ha, ten kilometers south of the DMZ in 1967. Palm reports that villagers acted indifferently to the Marines, did not buy into civic

action projects, “and never had any great call for our medical services.”

What’s more, he says that the South Vietnamese Popular Forces avoided taking risks, and the U.S. Army offered no help or encouragement. He labels CAP as the Marines’ “enlightened gesture of dissent” against a strategy that was “proving to be self-defeating.”

Regardless of the degree of CAP effectiveness, *War in the Villages* provides an in-depth study of a controversial program that once again shows the high degree of commitment by the U.S. Marine Corps.

LANCE CORPORAL BOB PARSONS

D/1/26

By Craig W. Tourte

It was time for a new Golf Club Driver, not because I’m any good, but my Cobra Driver was getting pretty beat up from all the miss-hits, pulls, and shanks. My wife told me she was surprised I’m not any better than I am; as much as I play, my response was, “So Am I.” I tried all the major brands, Cobra, Titleist, Ping, etc. I wanted one that would drive straight and long and one I could afford. I had heard about the brand PXG but only knew they were one of the most expensive clubs on the market, costing as much as \$255 to \$375 per club.

A little research revealed the name brand “PXG” stood for “Parsons Extreme Golf,” and the founder was Robert Ralph “Bob” Parsons.” It has been stated; Parsons told his engineers he wanted to spare no expense in developing the best golf clubs made, and there was no budget or timeline.

He is an American entrepreneur, billionaire, and philanthropist. In 1997 he founded the GoDaddy group, which included numerous very successful companies. In June 2014, he stepped down from his position of Executive Chairman. He also founded YAM Worldwide, Inc, with power sports, golf, real estate, and marking. As of September 2020, Parsons is ranked No. 378 on the Forbes 400 list of The Richest People in America.

Lance Corporal Bob Parsons United States Marine Corps

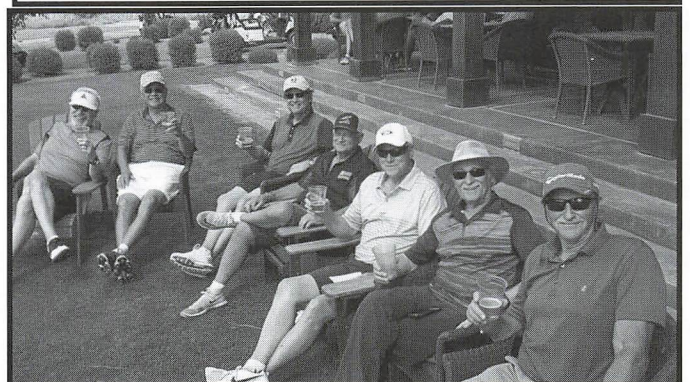
After nearly flunking out of high school, Parsons enlisted in the Marine Corps. In 1969 he served as a rifleman in Delta Company 1/26 and did a tour in

Vietnam Quang Nam Province. He was wounded in action and medically evacuated, spending two months in a naval hospital recovering, he earned the Combat Action Ribbon, the Vietnam Gallantry Cross, and Purple Heart. He attributes his success in his various businesses to the few years he served in the United States Marine Corps. In 2018 he founded the “Lance Corporal Parsons Welcome Home Fund for Vietnam Veterans,” “where care is provided to veterans of all US service branches wounded, injured, or suffering life-threatening illness based on their participation in combat operation in Vietnam.”

And yes, I ordered a PXG Driver for their sale price of \$299. I haven’t hit the driver yet, but my expectations are high.

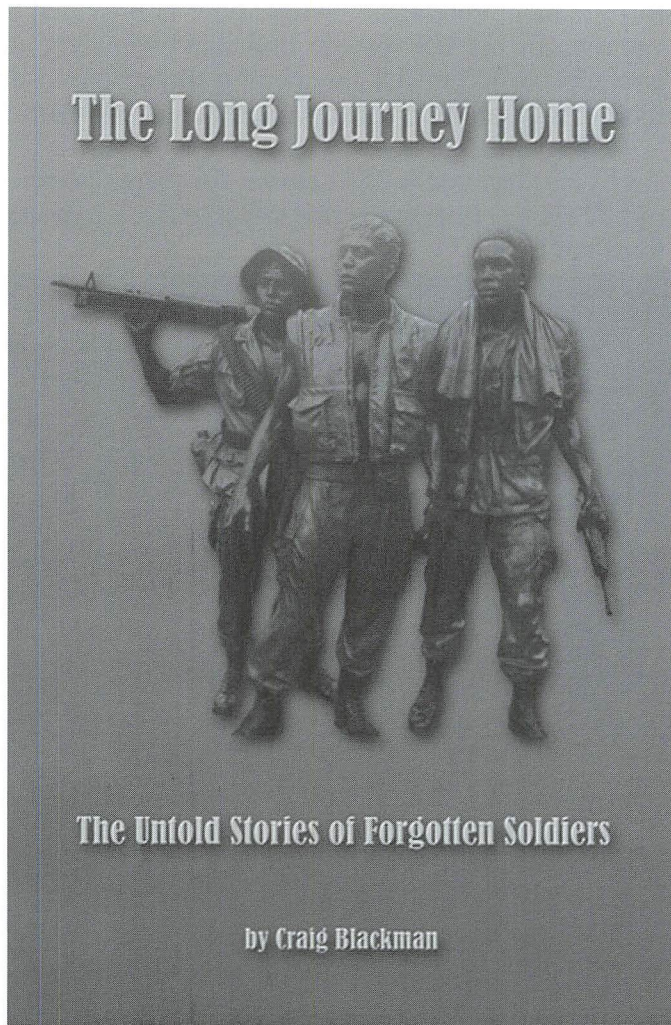


CRAIG INSTRUCTING TOM HORCHLER

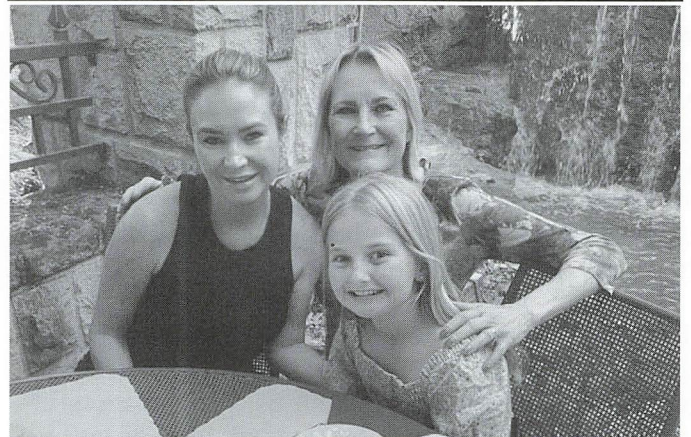
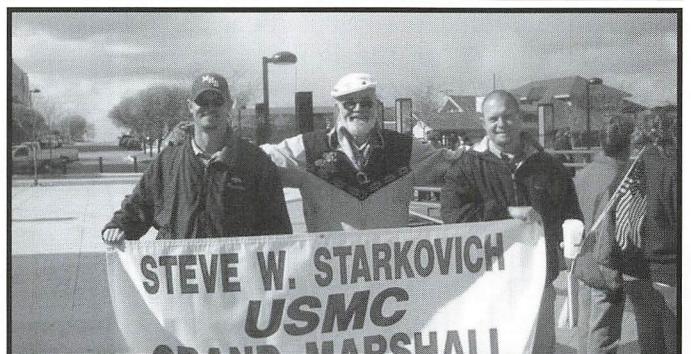


BOOK REVIEW

I GET PICTURES

**THE LONG JOURNEY HOME BY
CRAIG BLACKMAN**

With the support of Chris Mulholland (VFW Post 2894) and many others, I completed a book entitled *The Long Journey home: The Untold Story of Forgotten Soldiers*. The book, which took me 6.5 years to write, was based on a 2014 AP class project that changed the lives of my students. It is the story of how a diverse group of post-millennials rediscovered their local history and had a better understanding of the cost of war. They went beyond the learning objectives and developed relationships with Gold Star families that changed their lives. In a time when patriotism is diminishing, reading these stories of teenagers honoring Vietnam veterans is uplifting. Louis Franklin Staples and Kermit Anthony Ray, two men featured in the book, fought at Khe Sanh.

**LOVELY LYNNE NUCHERENO WITH GRANDDAUGHTER****LYNNE WITH NICOLE & AVA**

2021 Albuquerque Reunion By Craig Tourte

It was another wonderful reunion with the Khe Sanh Veterans Association, which was held this year in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Considering the restrictive circumstances of the ongoing pandemic, the reunion was well attended with members, family, friends, associates, guests, visitors, and volunteers. As usual, Tom Eichler, Russ and Kathy Turner, David Meyer, Tom Ford, Rolland Kutzback, Merle Moritz, spouses, and those I have unintentionally left out made it all possible.

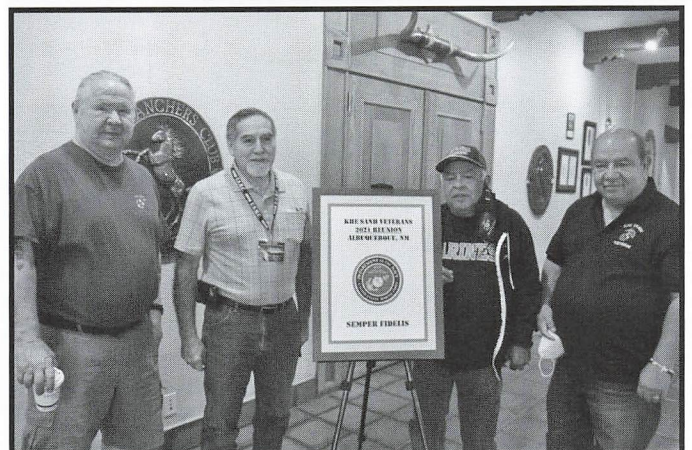
Even with the restrictive circumstances, all seemed to enjoy themselves. Many enjoyed their visit by taking the "Sandia Peak Tramway," ascending 10,378 feet in fifteen minutes for an 11,000 square mile panoramic view. The Tramway is considered the "most stunning urban peak" in America. Albuquerque's "Old Town" is another wonderful historic spot many attendees visited. Its narrow streets and century-old adobe houses, along with numerous places to eat and shop, and the 18th-century San Felipe de Neri Church made it a must-place to visit. The nearby Museum of Natural History and Science had dinosaur skeletons and western art. Bruce Geiger and I visited the "American International Rattlesnake Museum." Bruce was a walking encyclopedia when it came to rattlesnakes, having raised, and kept them as pets. I must admit he was making me a little nervous with all his rattlesnake talk, and I learned more about rattlesnakes than I needed to know, which was primarily avoidance when at all possible. While in Old Town, we stopped in at "Church's Café" for a light snack in an old adobe building off the beaten track and watched the many tourists walk by.

With Native Americans and Khe Sanh Veterans Robert "Chief" Longcrane and Wayne "Butch" DeVerney, we visited the "Indian Pueblo Culture Center." Admission for them was free with their Native American Tribal Card, and I paid the \$10.00 entrance fee. The IPCC is owned and operated by the 19 Indian Pueblos of New Mexico and is dedicated to the "preservation and perpetuation of Pueblo Indian Culture." It is a 10,000 sq ft museum filled with authentic history and artifacts of Pueblo people from "Pre-Columbian" to current times. I found the section dedicated to Pueblo women particularly interesting, with the many exhibits highlighting their role in Indian culture. I observed a beautiful wall hanging titled with the words, "Our Cycle of Existence" It read, "In our traditional stories, we recog-

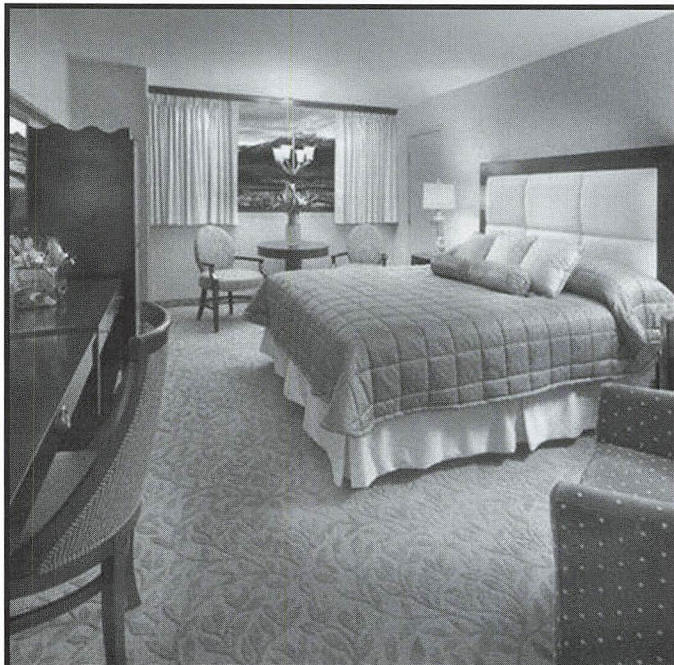
nize and celebrate life cycles. We pray for those who have gone on, those here now, and those yet to come. In this way, we are connected to our ancestors, to each other, and to future generations." It was attributed to "Grandfather Storyteller, Pablita Velarde, Santa Clara Pueblo."

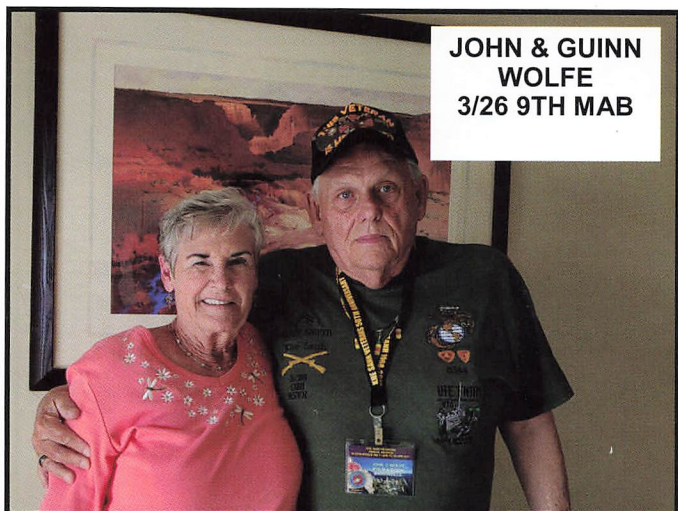
The Crowne Plaza Hotel chosen by the reunion committee was accommodating and affordable; the hotel certainly did its absolute best to make our reunion an enjoyable experience. Breakfast was included, and the Saturday evening meal and menu choices were appreciated and enjoyed by all.

In a discussion I had with Bruce Geiger, he said, and I'll paraphrase here, "the Association is not anything without the reunion." I thought that was correct and very poignant. Those of us who can and are able and who want to keep our Association alive and continue to prosper should make every effort to attend our reunions, or our Association will cease to survive. With that said, those who were unable to attend this reunion were sorely missed and we certainly look forward to seeing as many as possible next year.



THE 2022 KHE SANH VETERANS ANNUAL REUNION WILL BE HELD IN RENO, NEVADA FROM 23 OCT TO 30 OCT 2022, AT THE NUGGET CASINO & RESORT LOCATED AT 1100 NUGGET AVENUE, SPARKS NV 89431. ROOM RATES ARE \$99.00 (Plus Local Tax) RATE IS GOOD FOR THREE DAYS BEFORE AND THREE DAYS AFTER THE REUNION DATES. PARKING IS FREE. THERE ARE FREE SHUTTLES TO THE AIRPORT. IF YOU CALL THE HOTEL DIRECT, 775-356-3300 YOU MUST MENTION THE CODE GKHE22. IF YOU CALL THE TOLL FREE NUMBER 800-648-1177, YOU MUST ALSO MENTION THE SAME CODE, GKHE22.





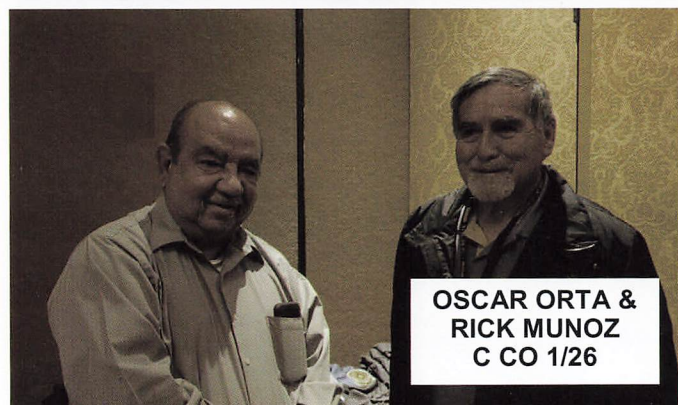
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WOLFE
3/26 9TH MAB**



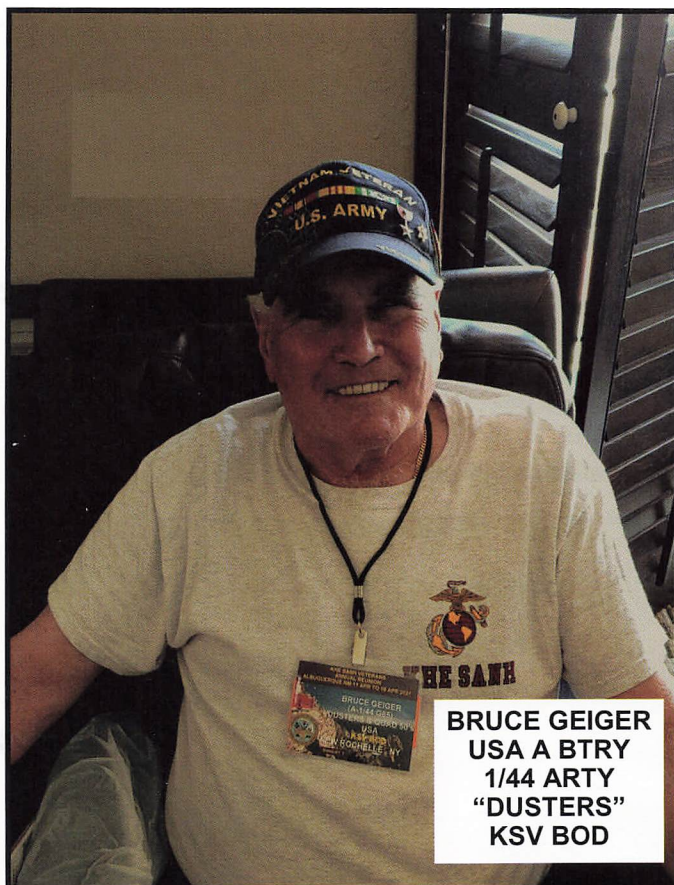
**ROLLAND
KUTZBACH &
SUE FLORES
USN SEABEES
KSV BOD**



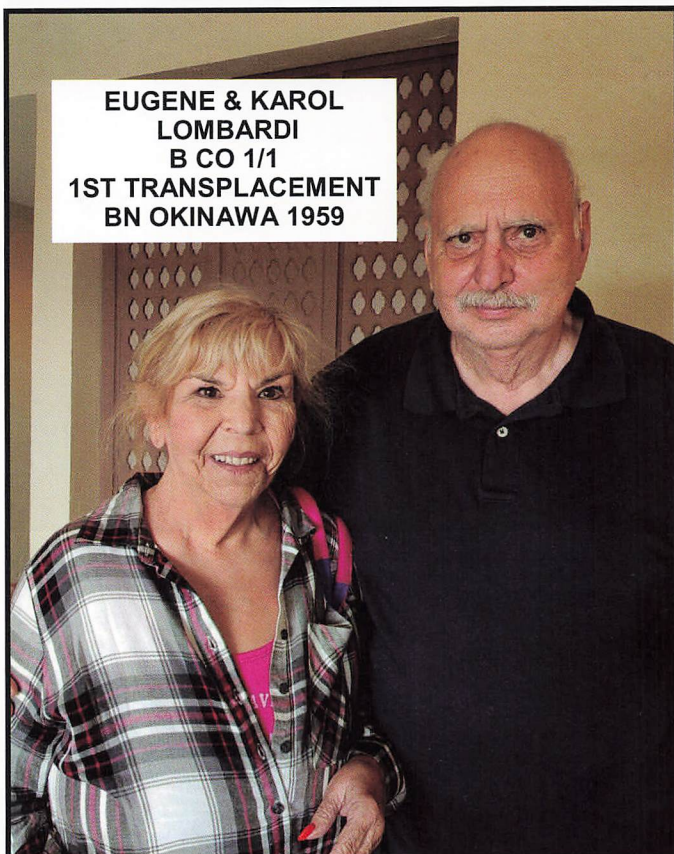
**ROBERT & LINDA
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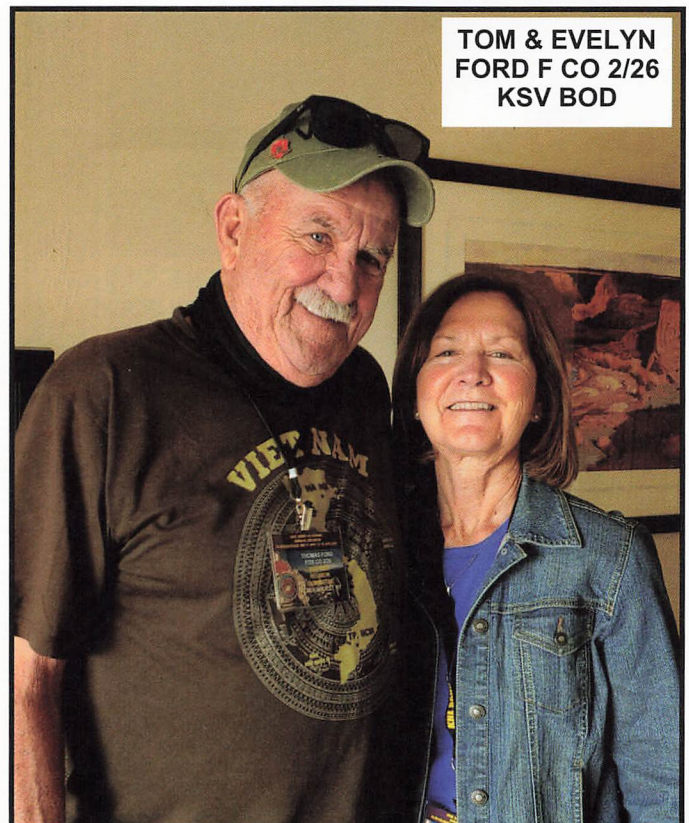
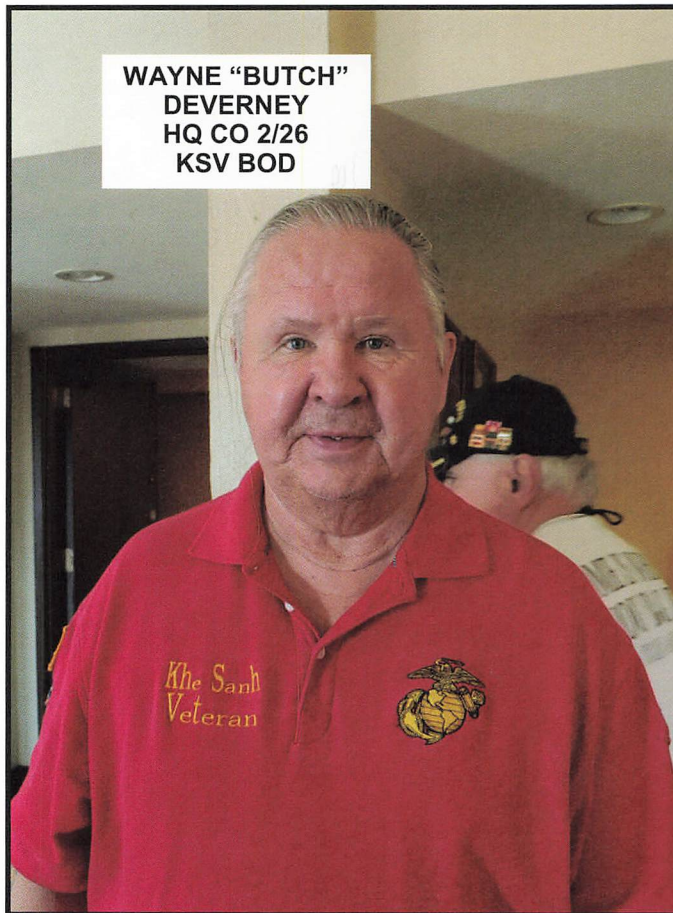
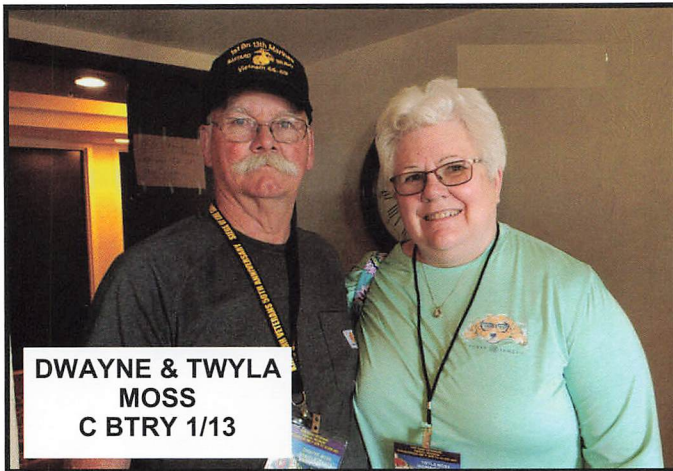
**OSCAR ORTA &
RICK MUNOZ
C CO 1/26**



**BRUCE GEIGER
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1/44 ARTY
"DUSTERS"
KSV BOD**

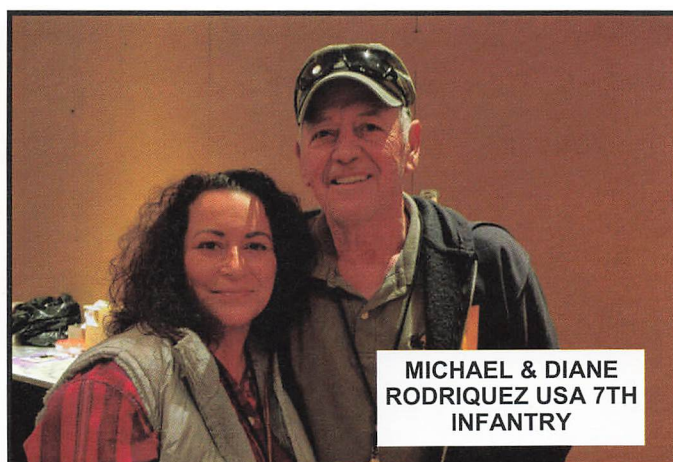


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1ST TRANSPLACEMENT
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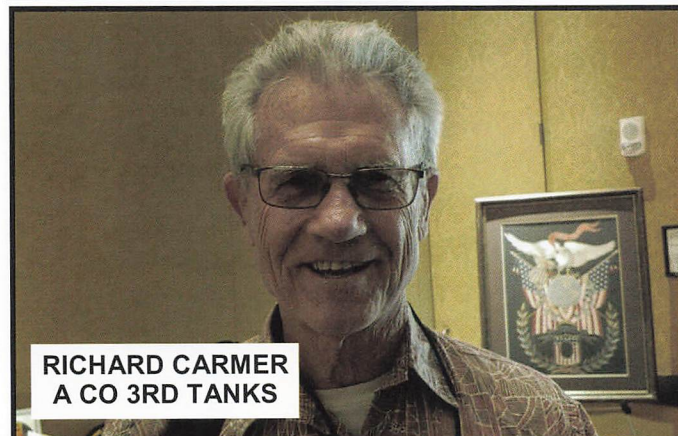




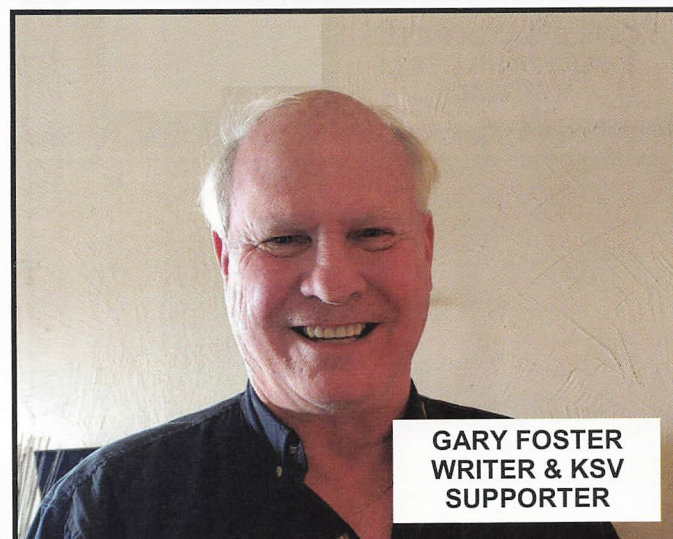
**HAROLD & LINDA
EASTER
A CO 1/26**



**MICHAEL & DIANE
RODRIGUEZ USA 7TH
INFANTRY**



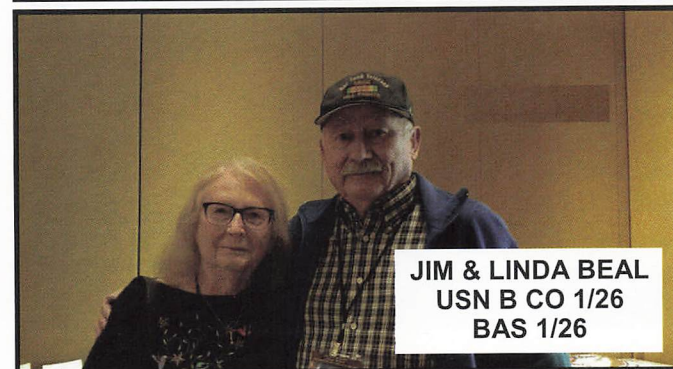
**RICHARD CARMER
A CO 3RD TANKS**



**GARY FOSTER
WRITER & KSV
SUPPORTER**



LINDA MARTIN



**JIM & LINDA BEAL
USN B CO 1/26
BAS 1/26**



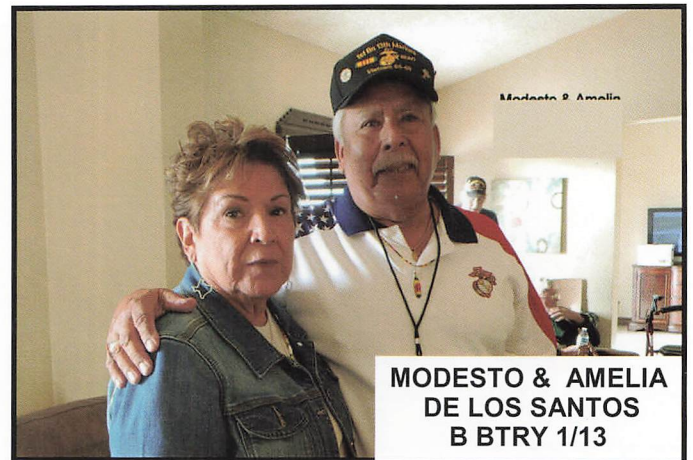
**STEPHEN WELDON
& KATHY BUTLER
B CO 1/9**



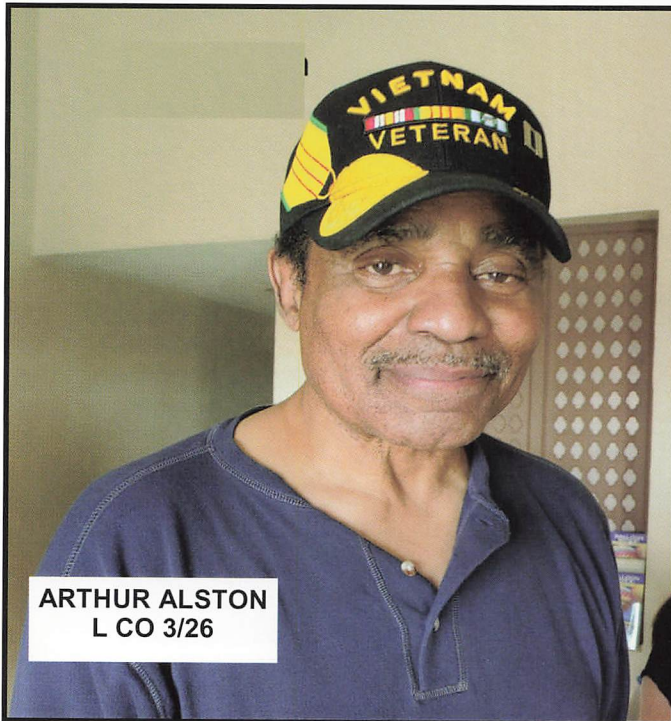
**JOHN & MARY
ROBINSON
D CO 1/1**



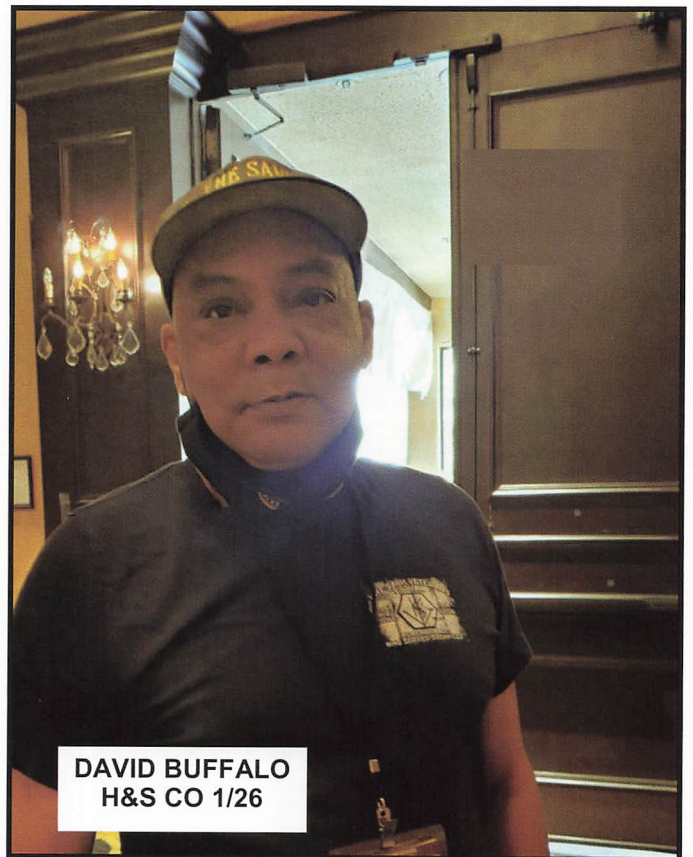
LOUIS & SANDI REYES
E CO 2/26 HILL 861A
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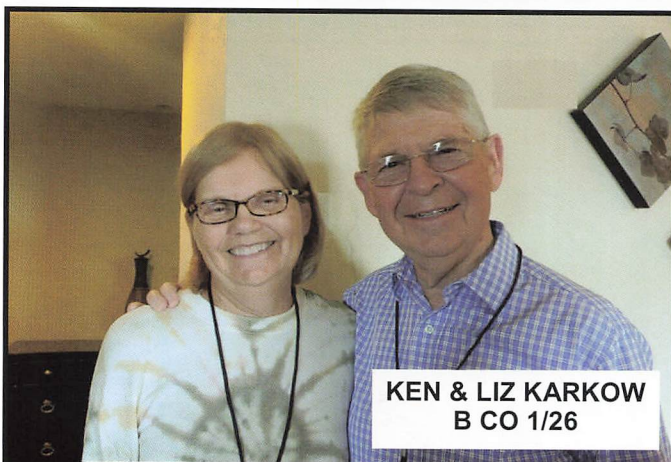
**MODESTO & AMELIA
DE LOS SANTOS**
B BTRY 1/13



ARTHUR ALSTON
L CO 3/26



DAVID BUFFALO
H&S CO 1/26



KEN & LIZ KARKOW
B CO 1/26



**RODOLFO HINOJO
& RUDY MACIAS**
H&S 3/26



**LARRY & NANCY
SEESE
B BTRY 1/13**



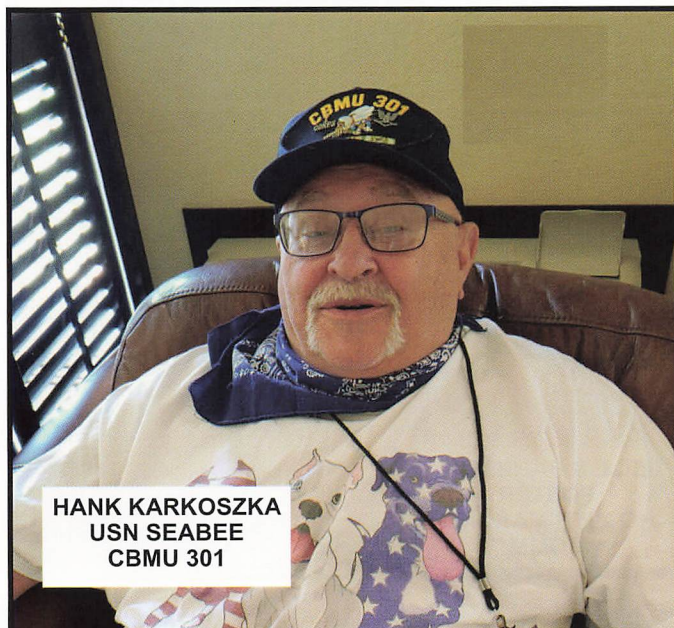
**BEN & JACKIE
LEITH
G CO 2/26**



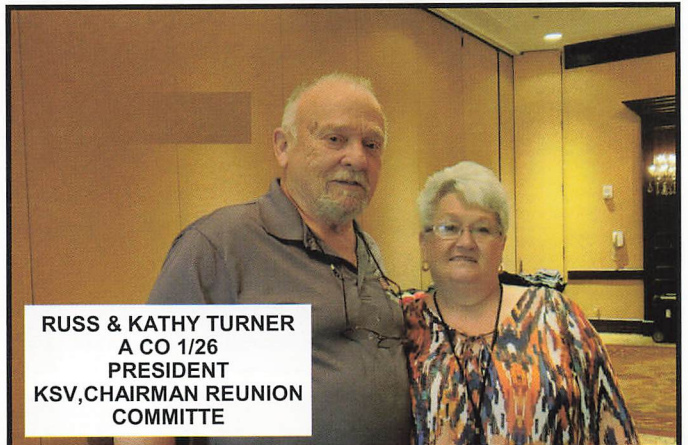
**CRAIG TOURTE
HQ BTRY 1/13
KSV SECRETARY**



**BILL & JOANNE
EICHLER
USN CARRIER GRP
1169**



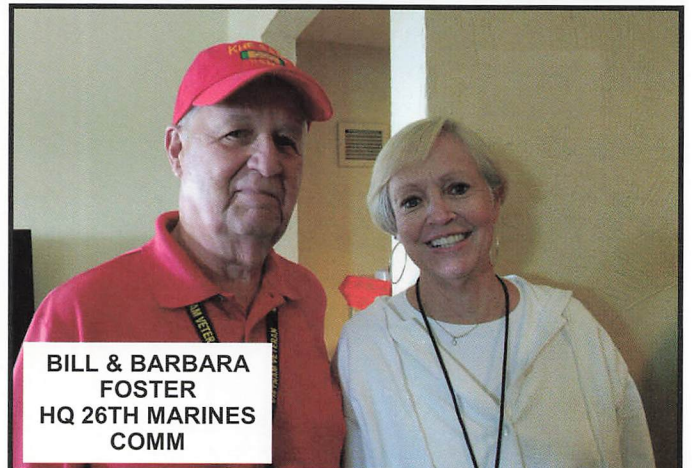
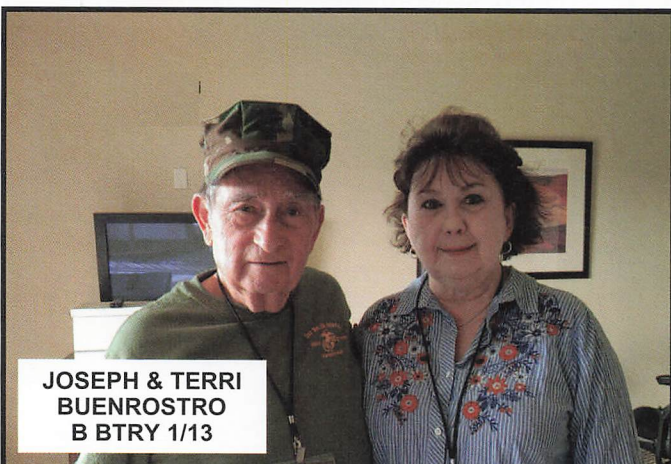
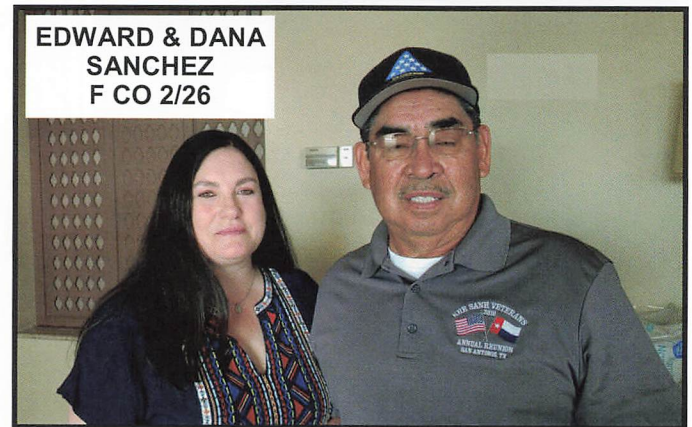
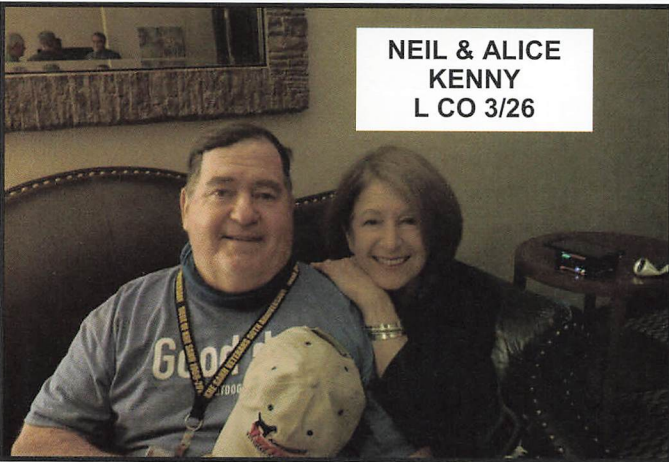
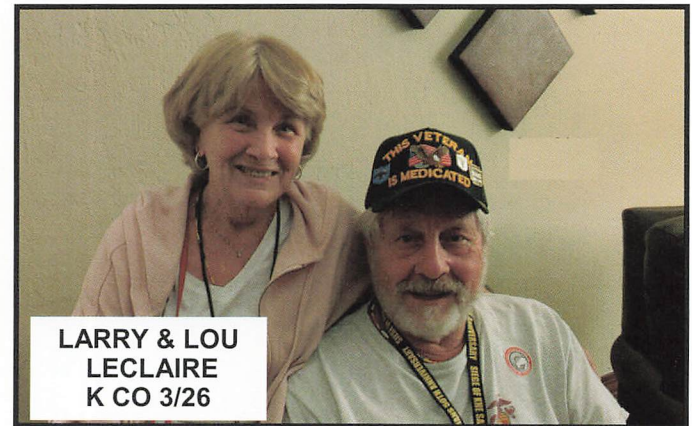
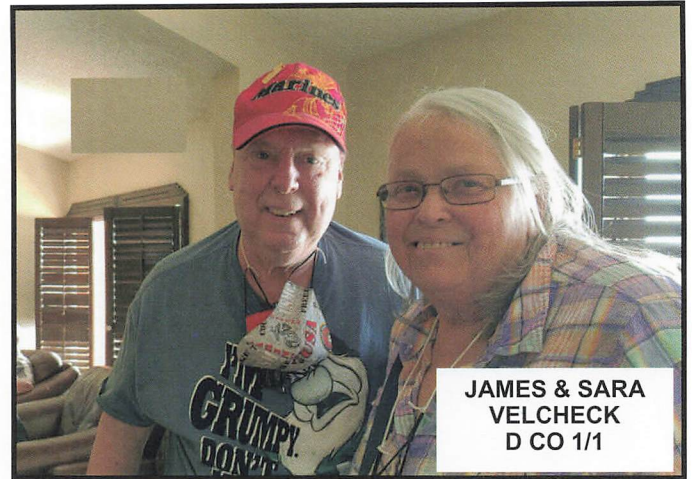
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USN SEABEE
CBMU 301**

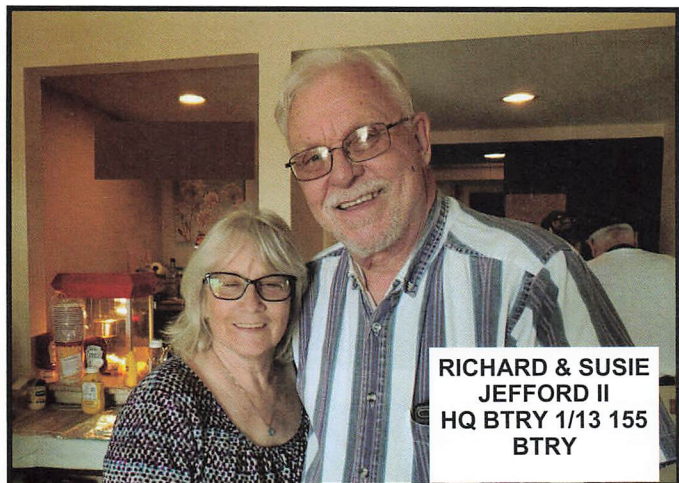


**RUSS & KATHY TURNER
A CO 1/26
PRESIDENT
KSV, CHAIRMAN REUNION
COMMITTEE**

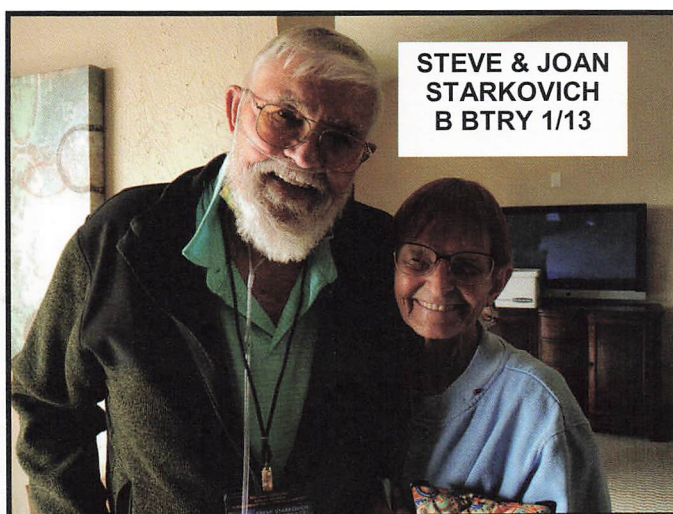


**DAVE & CAROL
MEYER C CO 1/26
KSV
BOD, REUNION
COMMITTEE**

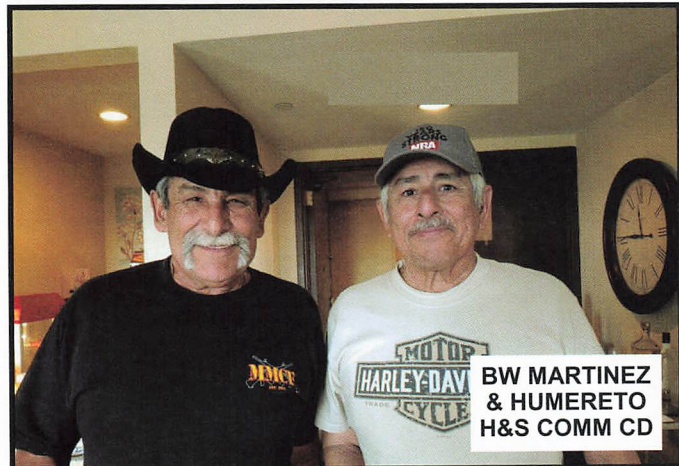




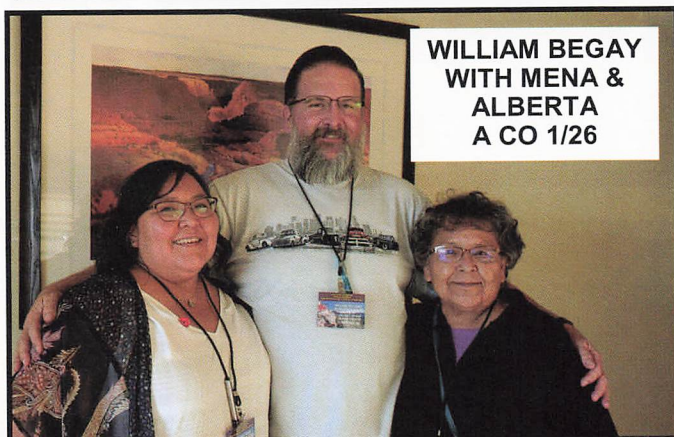
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BTRY**



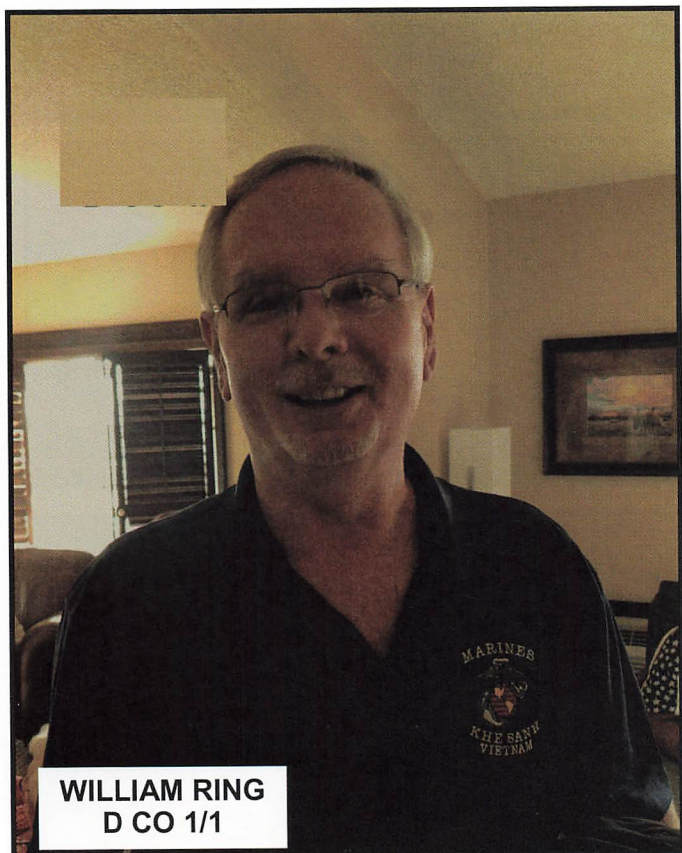
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STARKOVICH
B BTRY 1/13**



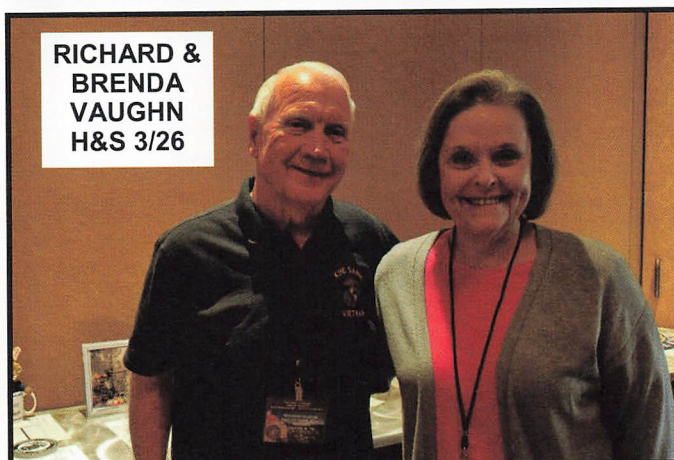
**BW MARTINEZ
& HUMERETO
H&S COMM CD**



**WILLIAM BEGAY
WITH MENA &
ALBERTA
A CO 1/26**



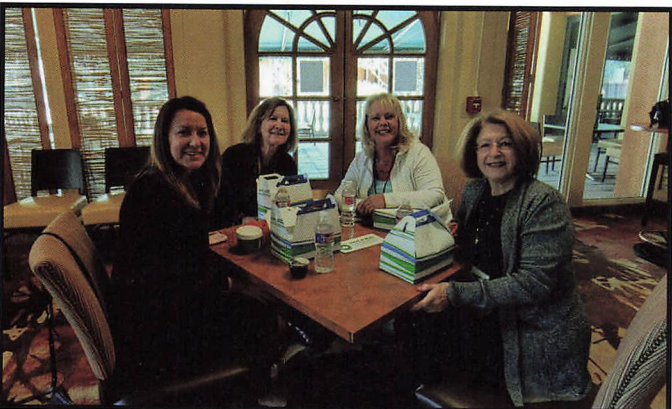
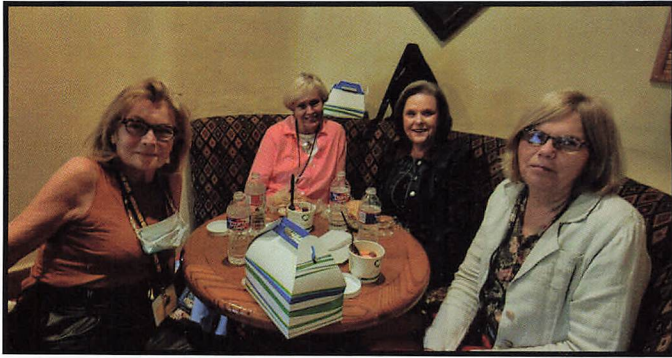
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D CO 1/1**



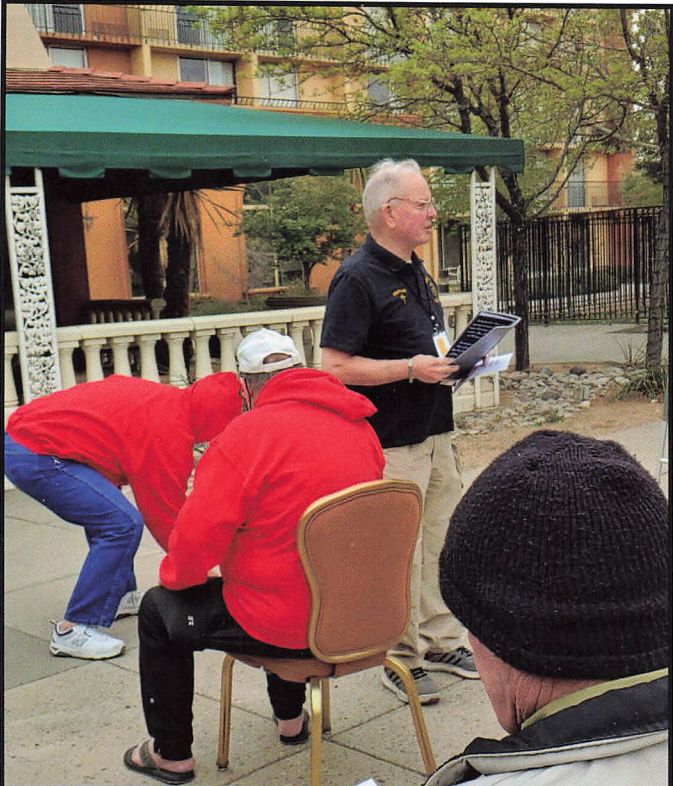
**RICHARD &
BRENDA
VAUGHN
H&S 3/26**



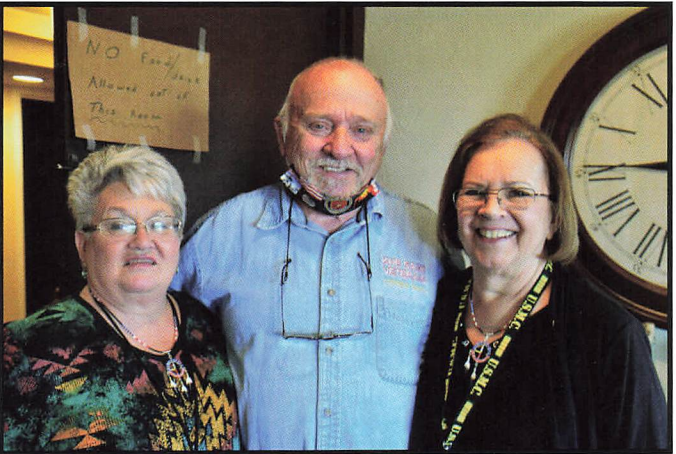
**MERLE &
RITA
MORITZ
E CO 2/26
HILL 861A,
REUNION
COMMITTEE**

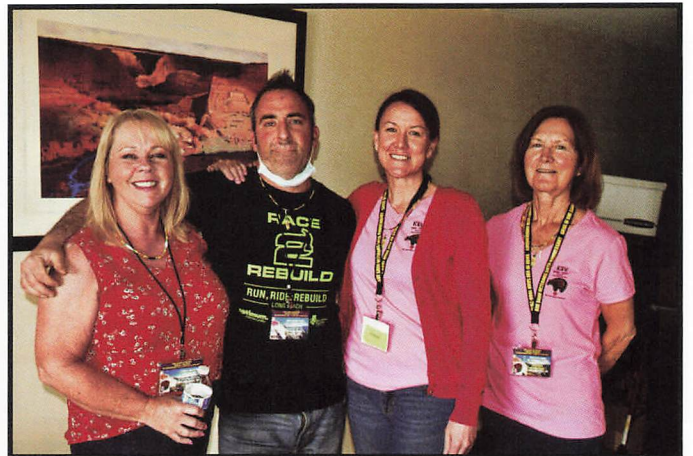


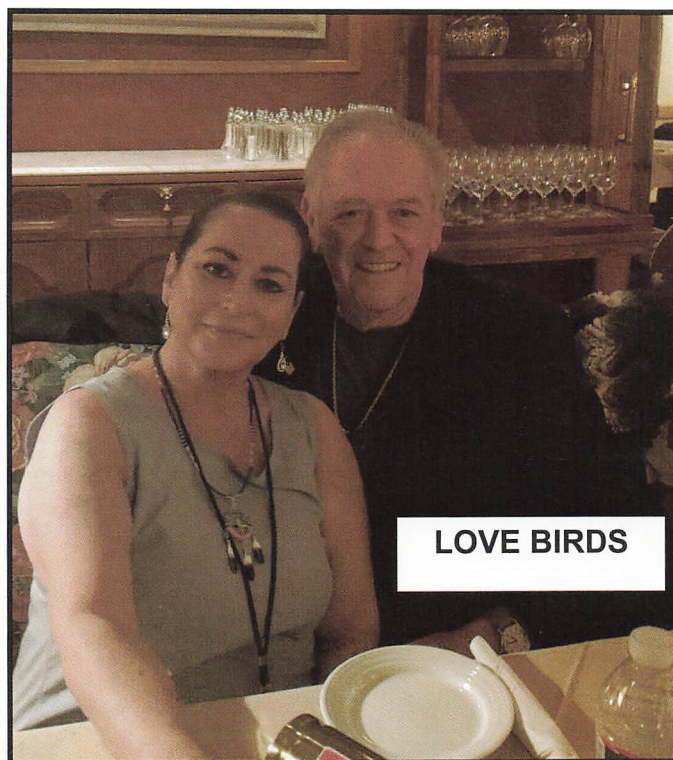
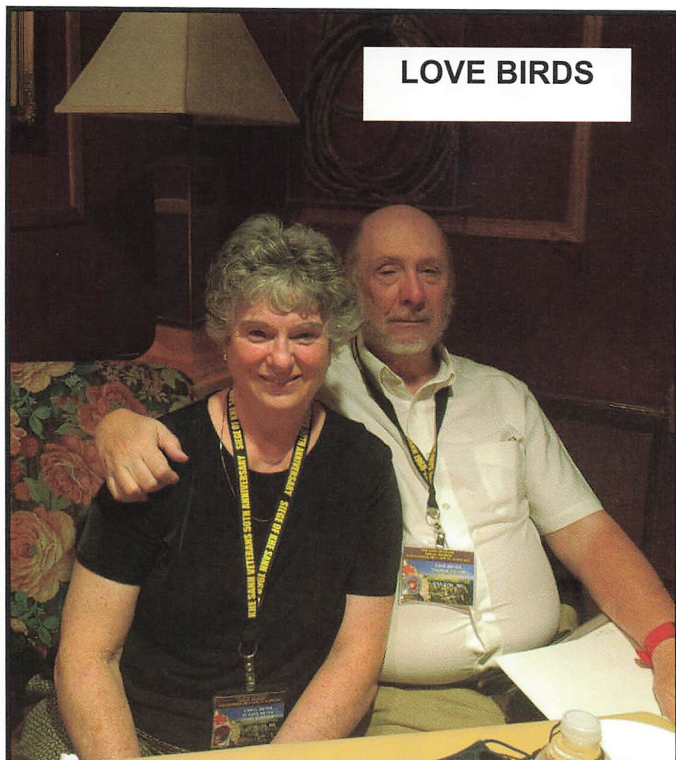
**BEAUTIFUL KHE SANH LADIES
ENJOYING LUNCH**



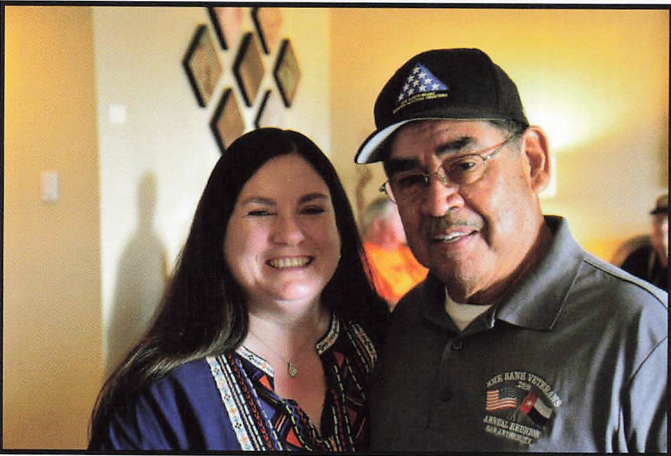
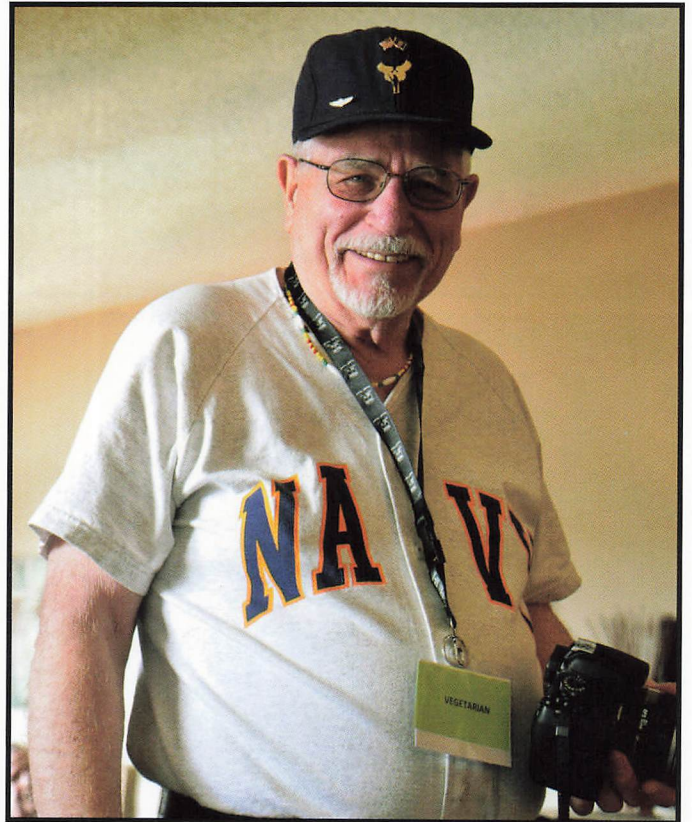
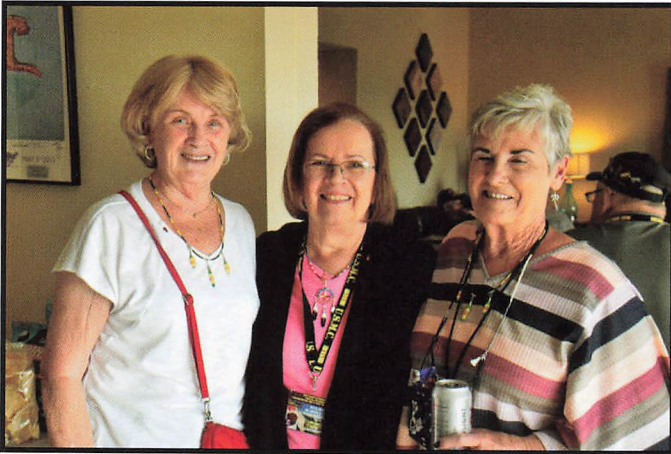
KSV CHAPLAIN RON RAYNER
HOLDING MEMORIAL SERVICE





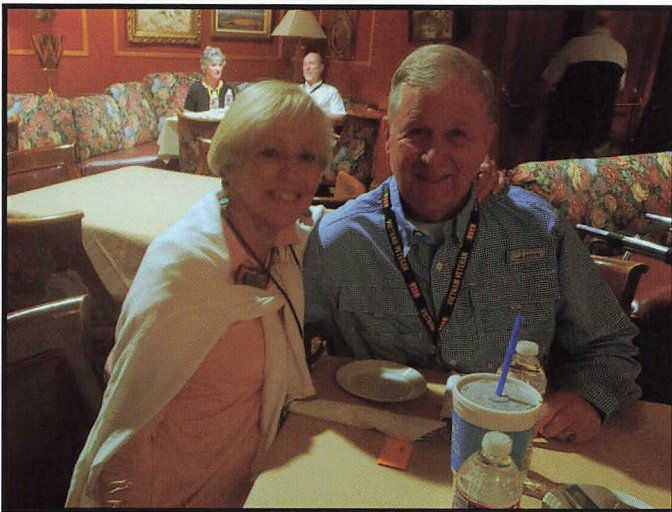
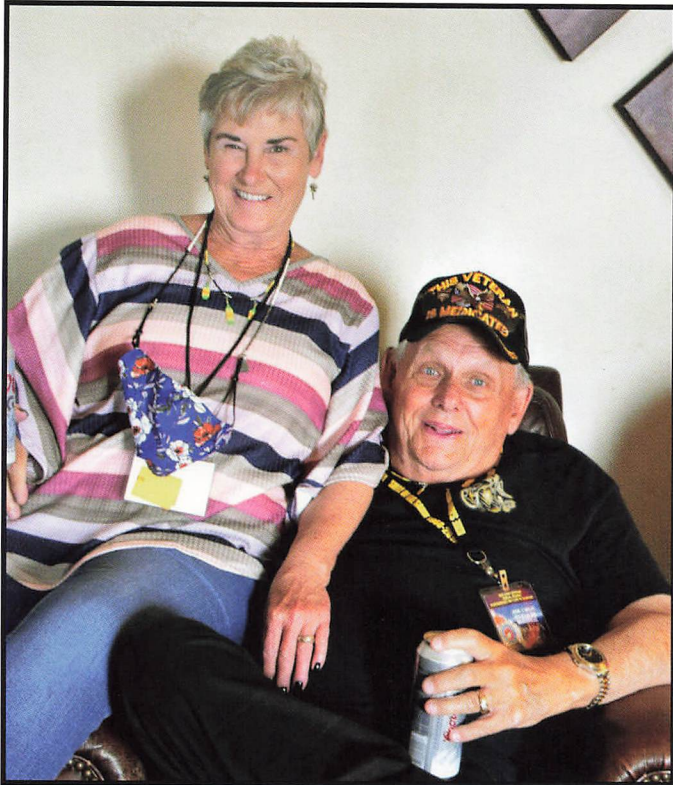


KHE SANH WIVES GONE WILD



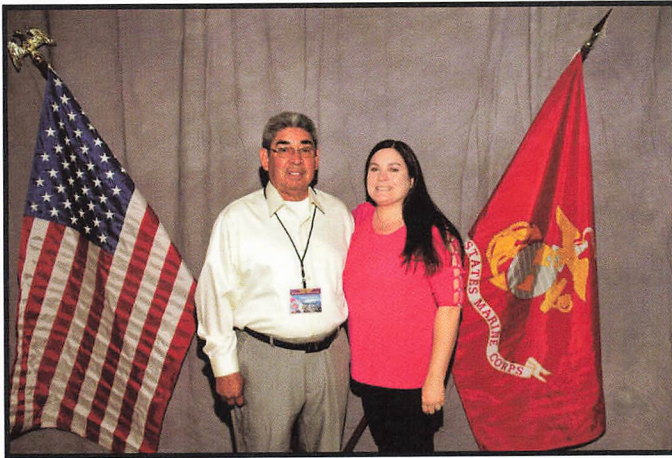
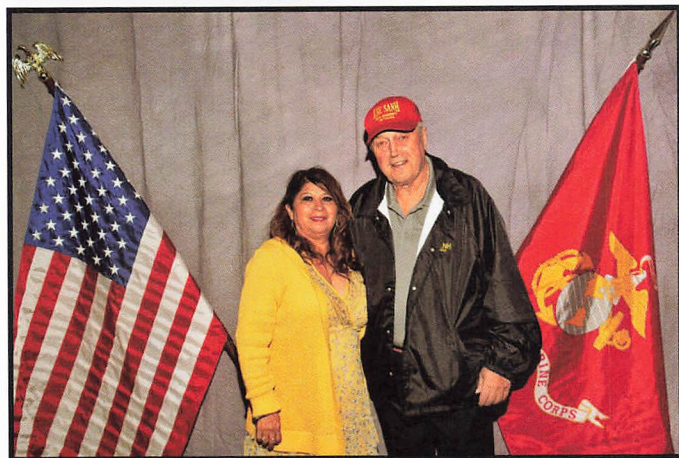
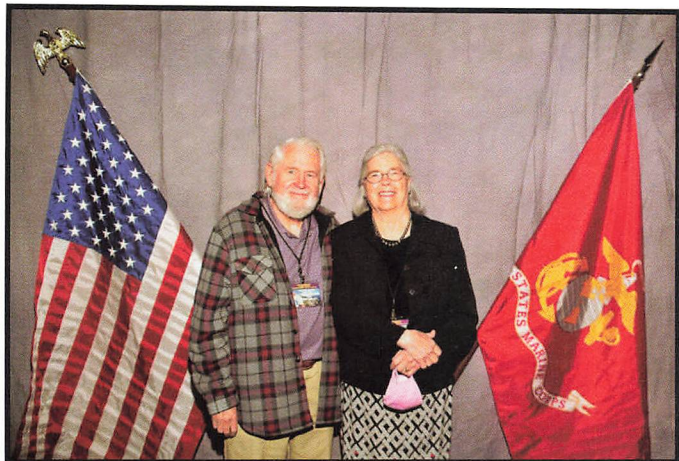
JUST CHILLIN

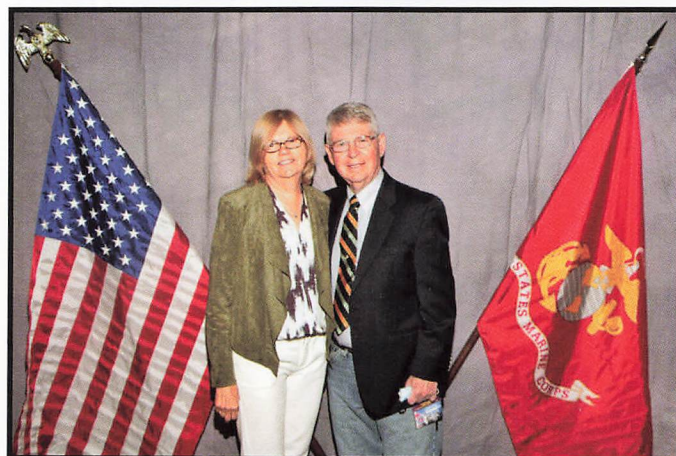




JUST CHILLIN







Accessibility**Wheelchair accessible - may have limitations**

- Wheelchair-accessible public washroom
- Wheelchair accessible parking
- Wheelchair-accessible concierge desk
- Braille or raised signage
- Wheelchair-accessible registration desk
- Wheelchair-accessible pool
- Wheelchair Accessible bathroom
In room acc

Breakfast Services

- Breakfast available - Extra Charge

•

Business, Conference & Meetings

- Business center on site
- Conference Facilities
- Conference center & rooms
- Conference space & rooms
- Meeting Room Facilities
- Conference space size : feet -
- Ballroom on site
- Banquet hall on site
- Reception hall on site
- Wedding & banquet services

•

CASINO FACILITIES

Number of Slot Machines
Number of game tables -

- Casino floor size square feet -
Casino floor size square meters

Entertainment & Activities

- Sportsbook
pool table or Billiards

Concerts & live performances

Games & Sports

- Bingo
- Arcade - Game room

Fitness Services**GYM - Fitness facilities****Lobby Level Services**

- Bellhop & Porter service
- Express check out
- Luggage storage facilities
- Concierge service
- Tours - ticket assistance

General Amenities

- Well-lit path to entrance
- Mountain biking nearby
- Hiking/biking trails nearby
- Elevator & lift on property
- Dry cleaning & laundry service
- ATM & banking on site
- Daily newspapers in lobby - Extra Charge
- Vending machine available
Casino

Outdoor

- TV in common areas

Pool Facilities**Indoor pool****Lobby Level Services**

- 24/7 front desk

Restaurants & Bars

- Number of bars & lounges -
- Number of coffee shops & cafes -
- Hotel Restaurant

Property Features

- Assigned smoking areas
- Number of VIP rooms -
- Roll in shower
- Multilingual staff

Shopping

- Gift shops or news stand
- Shopping on site
- Grocery - convenience store

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER FALL 2021 KSV CHAPLAIN RON RAYNER

Heaven and Winning Your Spiritual Battles to Get There

My younger sister passed away in June of 2020. Just prior to her passing I had ordered a large number of pamphlets -line from the Christian book store. The first book I reonad was Heaven by Randy Alcorn and the next was Winning Your Spiritual Battles by Tony Evans. These two books helped me to console my family and have clarified my beliefs on what the future holds for us in relation to Heaven. They gave us all the hope that we will be together again with my sister, parents and others we love in Heaven.

When I took my chaplain training in 2002, I was told my main role at a funeral service I was performing was to **provide comfort in the family's time of loss and hope for the resurrection.** My intention with this article is to give all who read it, comfort and hope for the resurrection as all Khe Sanh veterans are over age seventy and should be considering what comes next. The number of obits in each Red Clay tells a story.

First of all, I have always based my Christian belief in Heaven on the following Scripture:

"One of the criminals hanging beside him scoffed, 'So you're the Messiah, are you? Prove it by saving yourself -and us, too, while you're at it!' But the other criminal protested, 'Don't you fear God even when you are dying? We deserve to die for our evil deeds, but this man hasn't done anything wrong.' Then he said, 'Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.'

And Jesus replied, 'I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise.'"

Luke 23:40-43 (NLT)

Bottom line, if you believe in Jesus Christ as your savior, through grace (undeserved favor), you will be in Heaven with him. My friend, Khe Sanh veteran Larkin Spivey, puts it quite eloquently:

"By definition, a Christian is a fallen human being whose only value comes from the **grace of God and trust in Jesus Christ.** There is no room for a "holier than thou" attitude toward any other human being."

Larkin Spivey
Battlefields & Blessings
Stories of Faith and Courage from World War II-page289

The apostle Paul explains the order of grace and works by saying **you cannot earn your way into Heaven, it is given through grace.**

"God saved you by his special favor when you believed. And you can't take credit for this: it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so that **we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.**"

Ephesians 2:8-10 (NLT)

That is the simple version to get you interested in seeking Jesus Christ as your savior. You do have to seek and search for the Lord.

**"The Lord is a shelter for the oppressed,
a refuge in times of trouble. Those who know
your name trust in you, for you,**

**O Lord, have never abandoned anyone who
searches for you."**

Psalm 9:9-10 (NLT)

Hopefully, you are considering seeking Jesus as your savior. **Winning Your Spiritual Battles** takes some Bible study and prayer. I told a minister in about 1976 that "I wanted to believe in Jesus, but it was not working." He asked me to "Try praying at every meal." Praying at every meal became a habit and I became a believer. My life has changed and I now realize how a guardian Angel has been watching over me and blessing me my whole life.

"A final word: Be strong with the Lord's mighty power. Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies and tricks of the devil. For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against the evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against those mighty powers of darkness who rule this world, and against wicked spirits in the heavenly realms.

Use every piece of God's armor to resist the enemy in time of evil, so that after the battle you will still be standing firm. Stand your ground, putting on the sturdy belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness. For shoes put on the peace that comes from the Good News, so that you will be ful-

ly prepared. In every battle you will need faith as your shield to stop the fiery arrows aimed at you by Satan. **Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray at all times and on every occasion in the power of the Holy Spirit.** Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all Christians everywhere.”

Ephesians 6:10-18 (NLT)

The answers are out there. You have to look for them. Find a good Bible based church. Ask your Christian friends. Read a daily devotional such as “The Upper Room” or “Daily Bread.” Checkout the Christian Book Store online. “Seek and you shall find.”

Loving God, we thank you for your Son, Jesus Christ, whose love washed away our sins. We come before you, secure in the knowledge that we are accepted by grace. In Christ Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

OBIT

FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS

A REALLY SALTY 102 OLD VIETNAM VETERAN WHO SERVED IN WWII, KOREA & VIETNAM

It is with great sadness; we learn the passing of Colonel Carl Cooper, a veteran of WWII, Korea and Vietnam. He was 101-year-old.

Colonel Carl Cooper was born in Clanton on March 18, 1920, and was the seventh of ten children, Colonel Cooper was the only one of his siblings to go to college. He was studying biology and on his way to medical school when his life and the world changed.

He registered for the draft Sept. 3, 1941, according to military record. He enlisted in the Marines on April 1, 1942 and was a member of the 6th Marine Division.

He left Guadalcanal for Okinawa on April 1, 1945. Okinawa was the site of the greatest casualties in the Pacific during World War II.

When they landed, some of the amphibious, tractor-like vehicles hit underwater bombs. Cooper said he was close enough to shore to swim there, and most of his troops made it.



“On the northern part of the island, we were securing it, and I was the only outfit that went up to secure the remaining holdout,” he said. “So, we got in some of the caves, and we eliminated a few Japanese along the line.”

On the Fourth of July, Cooper left Okinawa aboard a ship headed for Guam.

“At Guam, we were getting ready to invade Japan. And of course, the big bomb was dropped, and that changed everybody’s plans,” he said.

After the war, he returned home to his wife and met his 1-year-old son. He and his wife later had a daughter, and Cooper said he was able to be present for her birth.

Cooper spent some time as a teacher and coach in Marion before serving in the Korean War. When he returned from that war, he became Mountain Brook Junior High School’s first principal.

“Mountain Brook called me in, and I was the first principal they hired when they created the new school system,” he said. “I enjoyed it. I’ll tell you what, you have a good faculty and it makes the job

a whole lot easier.”

Cooper’s fellow staff members told him he was pretty strict in his role.

“And I was strict on the discipline,” he said. “But still, we had a good school. And still today, sometimes I’ll run across one of them, and they’ll make some comment about, ‘You were hard on us. You were strict.’”

He served as principal there for eight years until he was called to serve in the Vietnam War.

On April 1, 1980 – the same day of the year on which he had been sworn into the Marine Corps 38 years before – Cooper retired at 60 years old.

“You feel lonesome,” he said about retiring. “You miss it. But I knew it was going to come. This happens to us all.”

Continuing Service

Even though Cooper was finished serving his country in the Marine Corps, he found a new way to serve by working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency. He traveled all over the country in his new role.

“I enjoyed it,” he said. “It wasn’t a military operation, so to speak, but it employed all of the principles of setting up an operation like you were getting ready to attack the enemy. And we were getting ready to attack the enemy – by helping out to restore what the hurricanes and the weather had done to our country.”

He made an impression in South Carolina after Hurricane Hugo hit in 1989. They needed Cooper to help find a place to set up 300 offices as close to the disaster as possible. Within three or four days, Cooper had converted every room at a former Holiday Inn and outfitted it as an office, right down to the paperclips.

“Well, when they give you a credit card and say there’s no limit, you go for it,” Cooper said, laughing.

He spent 30 years working for FEMA, refusing to quit until he hit 90 years old. He said he enjoyed serving his country in that capacity.

During the Gulf War, he even tried to get on Operation Desert Storm.

“I called and said, ‘I’d like to come back on active duty if it’s possible,’” he remembered. “They started laughing. They said, ‘Colonel, you’ve had your fun. Let some of these other younger folks have theirs.’ “I was in my mid-’70s or ’80s. Of course I didn’t think they would do it, but I said, ‘I’m going to give it a chance,’” he said.

Cooper has outlived his wife and two children. He has four grandchildren, 16 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.



LYNNE NUCHERENO WITH YOUNG LADIES



STEVE DIGOR, SOME OF MY SQUAD



GRANDPA RUSS TURNER BABY SITTING

A STORY OF BRAVERY AND A PARTNERSHIP FORGED IN COMBAT

By Father Matthew Weber



Honor guard members stand watch over the urn and folded ensign of Father Francis Brett April 24, 2019, on Chaplains Hill at Arlington National Cemetery. The cremated remains of Father Brett, a priest of the Diocese of Knoxville and longtime Army chaplain, were buried in the same gravesite of his brother, Father Robert Brett, a Navy chaplain who was killed while serving in Vietnam in 1968. (CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn)

May 27 2021

In 2014, while stationed at Saint Bridget University Parish in Glassboro, I had come to know about Navy Chaplain Robert R. Brett who was killed in Khe Sanh, Vietnam, during the height of the Tet offensive in 1968.

At the time, a parishioner and I were changing the linings of the collection baskets when, behold, underneath one of the linings, was a yellowed, torn obituary, hidden for almost 50 years: "Navy Chaplain Killed in Vietnam: Collingdale Priest Was Saying Mass."

In addition to an obituary about a priest-chaplain killed in action, what struck me most was the town "Collingdale." Collingdale, a borough on the outskirts of Philadelphia in Delaware County, is the site of my home parish of Saint Joseph. It was where I was baptized and eventually ordained a priest.

Unfortunately, I had never heard of this local priest or of his Gold Star mother who lived across the street from the parish — that is, until 2014. Even though the article piqued my interest, I set it aside. Finally, almost under inspiration, I read the obituary

again on Feb. 19, 2018, three days shy of Father Brett's 50th death anniversary. I decided then to research Father Brett's life. What unfolded was devotion and bravery, but also a story of a partnership forged in the heat of combat, united in death, and reunited after death.

Father Brett was the son of Margaret H. Brett of 1001 Bartram Ave., Collingdale, whose home, at the time of her son's death, was directly across the street from Saint Joseph's Parish grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes. Father Brett, however, grew up in the Grays Ferry section of South Philadelphia and attended Saint Edmond and Saint Gabriel schools. He became a priest in the Society of Mary (Marists) in February 1962 and, in June 1967, he entered the Navy Chaplain Corps. The obituary states that Father Brett "told his family he wanted to go to Vietnam to give spiritual guidance to the men." A family member later recalled, in a 1987 newspaper article, that Father Brett "was neither a hawk or a dove, but he wanted to be where the men needed him most, so he requested combat duty in Vietnam."

Lieutenant Brett was assigned to the 26th Marine Regiment, 2nd Battalion, at Khe Sanh and was assisted by Private First Class Alexander Scheleph Chin.

Pfc. Chin, 23, of Baltimore, was a seasoned combat veteran with three Purple Hearts when assigned as chaplain assistant to Father Brett. Together for three months they had forged a close partnership as they served frightened, wounded and dying Marines in combat.

A May 27, 1999, article from the Washington Post states: "Chin, family members say, was deeply religious and, after several months of combat, told his commanders in Vietnam that he could no longer kill the enemy. Instead of a court-martial, relatives said, Chin was given a job protecting and assisting Brett." Years later, Navy Rear Admiral Barry C. Black, deputy chief of chaplains, quoted Chin saying, "I won't take a life, but I'll put my life on the line for another."

The last time anyone saw the chaplain and his aide alive was on an airstrip in Khe Sanh where a rocket attack took their lives. It was Feb. 22, 1968. The Washington Post wrote, "Marines who witnessed the attack said the two were about to board a helicopter when they came under assault. Brett, they said, told the chopper to take off without them, allowing another man to go instead."

The mangled bodies of Brett and Chin were pulled from the shrapnel and shipped home for burial in Pennsylvania and in Maryland.

Father Brett was buried, at his mother's request, in the cemetery of the Penndel, Pennsylvania, seminary where he received his religious training. PFC Chin was buried in his family plot in the town of Princess Anne on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

Years later, at the request of family, Father Brett's remains were reinterred at Arlington National Cemetery in 1998. The family also felt strongly that Chin should be there, too. Eventually Father Brett's nephew, Edward Rouse, had tracked down Chin's relatives in the Baltimore area. At the behest of Brett's family and with the permission of Chin's relatives, the remains of Pfc. Chin were removed from his family plot and reinterred on Chaplains' Hill on May 26, 1999, next to the chaplain whom he served.

Larry Ballard, a former Marine who served in the 26th Marine Regiment at Khe Sanh, stated, "They were always on the battlefield giving last rites and dragging the wounded to safer positions. They were heroes. They placed themselves in mortal danger. Both of them."

Father Matthew R. Weber is pastor of Holy Cross Parish, Bridgeton.

OBIT

ALICIA RAYNER POTE, SISTER OF KSV CHAPLAIN RONALD RAYNER A CO 1/26



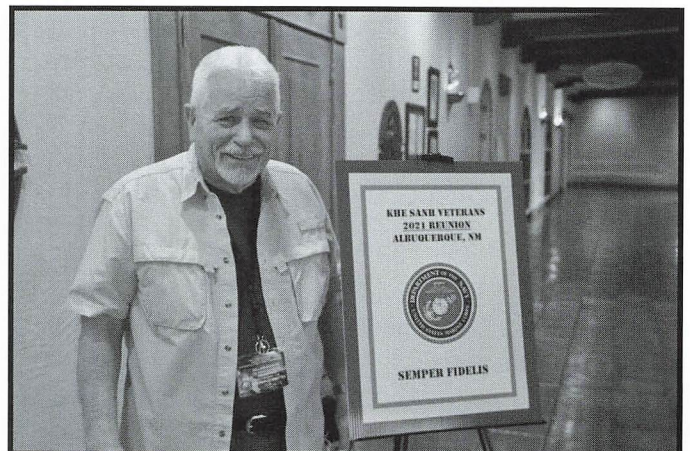
Alicia is remembered for her indomitable positivity. Throughout life and in her later illness, she brightened others' days with kind words, and embodied the phrase, "never knew a stranger." She was an accomplished baker, and the wedding cakes she baked for friends and family are happily remembered. A lover of animals since childhood, she rescued many cats and dogs throughout her life. Above all, she cherished her friends and family, and was a loving daughter, mother, sister, aunt, and most recently, grandmother.

She is survived by her children Kaitlyn Pote (Steven Silverstein) and James Pote, granddaughter Margaux, siblings Al Rayner (Mary), Ron Rayner (Cathy), Glenden Rayner, Marcia Green (Bill), Tom Rayner (Becky), and John Rayner (Beth), brother-in-law Jim Watt, and many loving nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends. She was preceded in death by her parents, Albert H. and Emma Gene Rayner (nee Archer), and her sisters Elizabeth (1961) and Jeanne Watt.

A memorial service was held at Grace and Peace Church at 451 W. Kennett in Pontiac on October 23rd at noon. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Grace and Peace Church in her memory.



GRANDPA DEVAUGHN WITH GRAND KIDS



THE GIANT KILLER

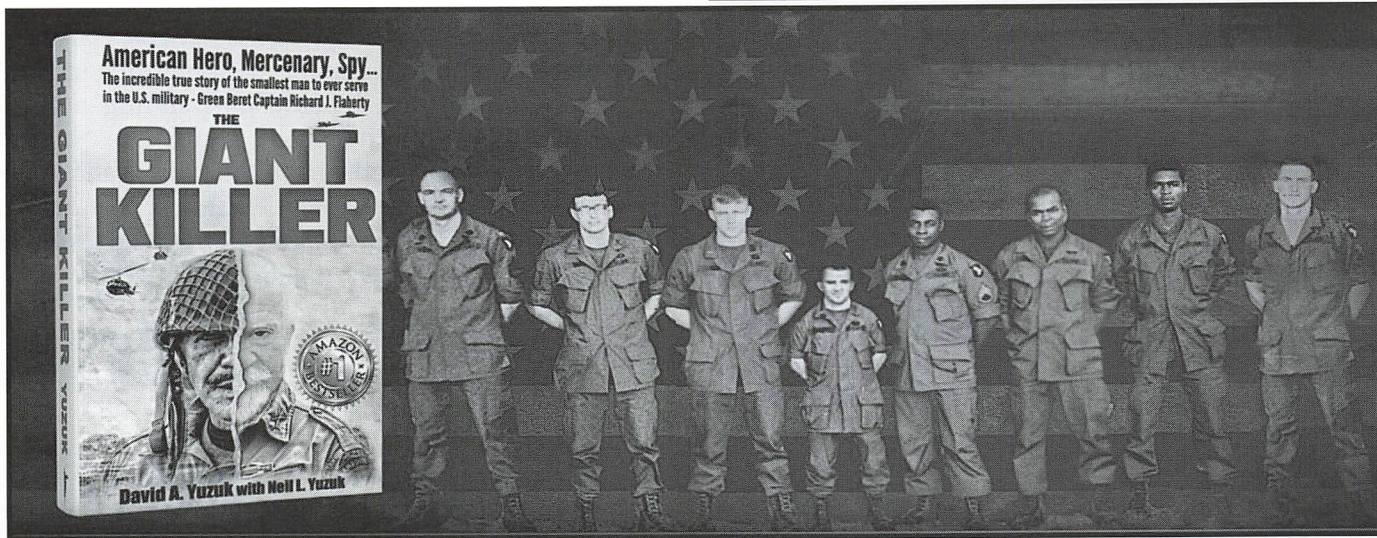
Recon's Echo Platoon lead by the smallest soldier 4' 9" 97lb Lt. Richard Flaherty. Beginning in 1968, the infantry began experimenting with a new concept that would combine experienced combat personnel, stealth, firepower, and operating independence. The result came to be called, "Echo Recon," or battalion reconnaissance platoons.

The Echo Recon platoons were made up of veteran personnel that had at least six months in the field with a regular line infantry unit. They were not required to be Airborne, Ranger, Recondo, or Special Forces qualified, although many personnel were.

They operated much of the time as "Hunter-Killer" units, engaging the enemy whenever possible and then calling in the rest of the battalion instead of being assigned strictly reconnaissance missions.



Despite being the smallest soldier in the US military, Flaherty would go on to become a Green Beret Captain and earn the Silver Star, 2 Bronze Stars, & 2 Purple Hearts. His unbelievable & inspiring life story was captured in the book, *The Giant Killer* available on Amazon, Walmart, & Barnes & Nobles.





OBIT

MICHAEL T. SEGURA, USMC KHE SANH VETERAN, D CO 1/26, 1ST PLT 1ST SQD

Michael Terry Segura, 76, of Fort Davis, went home to Heaven on Friday, May 21, 2021.

Terry was born on June 15, 1944, in Corpus Christi to Ovey & Margaret Segura. He was the eldest of 8 children and was raised in Port Arthur, Texas. In February of 1962, he married Sue Stokes and eventually became the proud father of 3 daughters, Karen, Betsy and Ellen.

Terry was a decorated military veteran of the Vietnam War. In 1968, he voluntarily signed up to join the Marines and was a Corporal in the Company D, 1st Battalion, 26th Marines (Khe Sanh) from March 2nd, 1968, to March 28th, 1969. He was awarded the Achievement Medal for Radio Operator in Combat Operations.

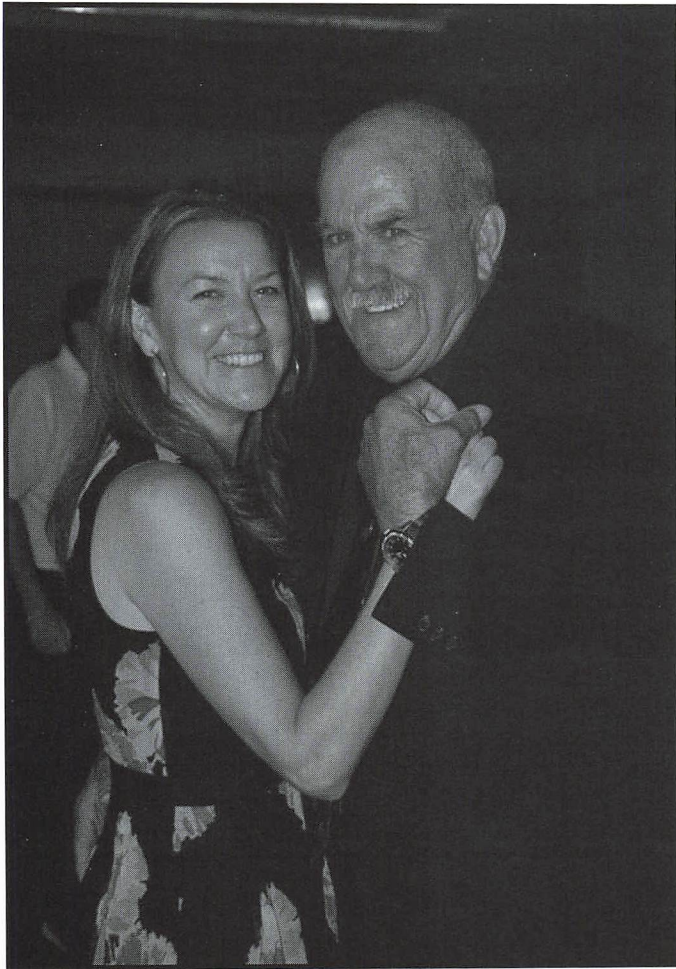
Upon returning from war, Terry worked as a professional butcher in Beaumont and Houston for over 35 years.

He enjoyed studying Karate for some time at House of the White Moon in Houston, cutting a rug to James Brown any chance he could get, watching movies, educating himself on the world, and spending time with his best friend, Willis. Terry also enjoyed visiting with his family and witnessing his grandchildren and great-grandchildren grow.

Funeral services were held at 2:00 PM on Wednesday, May 26, 2021 at the Alpine Memorial Funeral Home in Alpine, Texas.

Terry's parents preceded him in death. He is survived by his daughters, Karen Busa and husband, Steve Busa of Cypress, Betsy Bates and husband, Steve Bates of Montgomery, Ellen Huskey and husband, Alan Huskey of Magnolia; Grandchildren, Brandon Djie and wife, Jackie Djie, Brittany Djie-Mills and husband, Nick Mills, Spencer Busa, Summer Walker and husband, Henry Walker, Ellie Noland and husband, Blake Noland, AJ Huskey and wife, Josselin Huskey, and Kodi Bell and husband, Travis Bell; Great-grandchildren, Lexi and Brysin Noland, Evelyn, Devon, Lincoln and Roslyn Djie, Arlo Mills, Arya Huskey, and Bowie Bell.

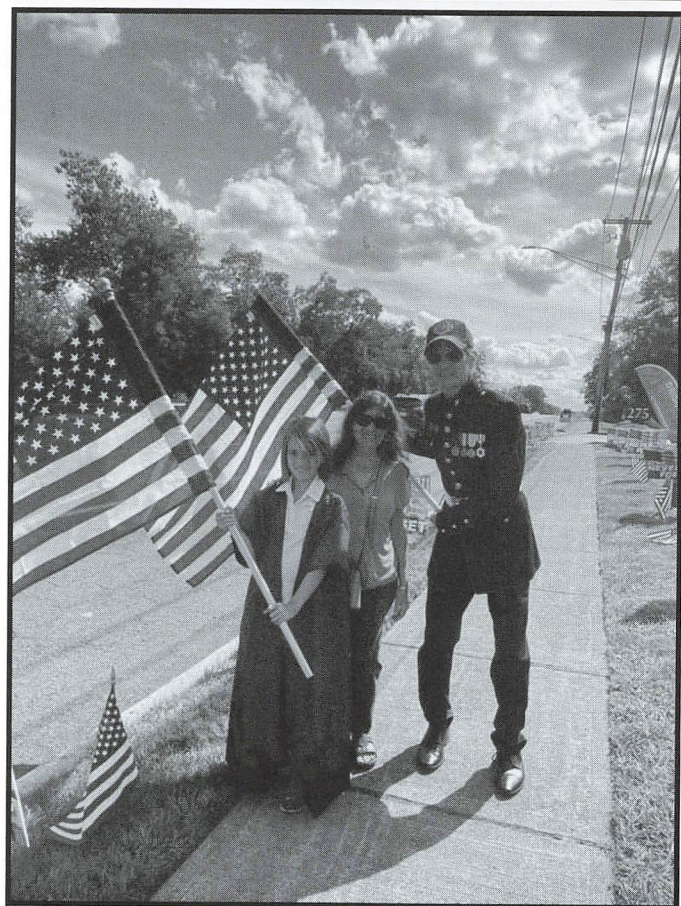
MEMORIES



**TOM FORD DANCING WITH LOVELY DAUGHTER
TARA FORD AT 2015 KSV REUNION & THE
OTHER FORD GIRLS**



**BARRY FIXLER, E CO 2/26 HILL 861A,
OWNER OF BARRY'S ESTATE JEWELRY,
BARDONIA, NY, REMEMBERING 911**

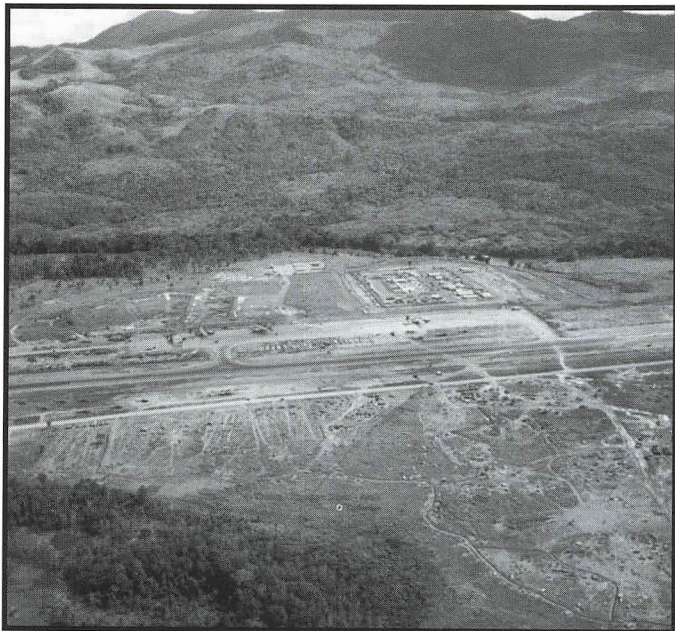


MEMBERS DONATIONS DECEMBER 2020 TO OCTOBER 2021

ARCHER, Michael	20.00	Check# 2846
BATES, Robert G.	20.00	Check# 5752
BELLANTONE,	100.00	Check# 2666
BIGLER, Donald	100.00	Check# 2874
BISPO, Jose A.	100.00	Check# 2565
BRONSTON, Martin	100.00	Check# 2537
BRONSTON, Martin D.	100.00	Check# 2611
COLLINS, James	1,000.00	Check# 1592
CRAWFORD, Daniel C.	40.00	Check# 216
DELOTTO, Richard	50.00	Check# 222
ESTES, Leo	10.00	Check# 3714
FARRELL, Brian	25.00	Check# 1440
FETTER, Charles	20.00	Check# 896
FOLEY, Richard M. Jr.	50.00	Check# 1775
FORD, Tara	250.00	Check# 1039
FRIEL, Thomas	500.00	Check# 0996
CHICOINE, M.A.	1,000.00	Check# 3905
GAROUTTE, Michael	60.00	Check#10199
GEIGER, Bruce	100.00	Check# 310
GEIGER, Bruce	500.00	Check# 1001
GERRIOR, Charles	1,000.00	Check# 106
HARTNET, Carol	100.00	Check# 4514
HOLSCHER, Robert	100.00	Check# 18166
HOFFMAN, Victor	500.00	Check# 4075
HOTZ, William	300.00	Check# 8001
JAYNE, Bill	100.00	Check# 430
JONES, Bruce	100.00	Check# 11230
KING, James	250.00	Check# 2664
KING, Daniel	10.00	Check# 4174
KORN, William	100.00	Check# 7797
NAZZARIO, Anthony	100.00	Check# 1041
MARTIN, Linda	100.00	Check# 3963
MCGUIRK, Steven	100.00	Check# 3786
MEYER, Dave & Carol	1,250.00	Check# M/O
MILLER, William	200.00	Check# 6756
MORRISON, Sammy	50.00	Check# 3597
NAZZARIO, Anthony	50.00	Check# 3433
NUCHERENO, Phil	200.00	Check# 130
ORTA, Oscar	50.00	Check# 165
RAYNER, Ronald	500.00	Check# 433
ROSSON, Harold	250.00	Check# 9319
SABOL, John	100.00	Check# 1166
SADOWSKI, Alexander	100.00	Check# 6676
SALLADE, Gary A.	10.00	Check# 09557
SANCHEZ, Jesse	250.00	Check# M/O
SEPULVEDA, Charles	100.00	Check# 401
SHERER, Larry	100.00	Check# 8780
SHUFF, Ronald	1,000.00	Check# M/O
SHUFF, Ronald	1,000.00	Check# M/O
TURNER, Russell	500.00	Check# 6197
WADAS, Kenneth	100.00	Check# 6815
WIEDRICH, Albert	100.00	Check# 2638

**299TH ENGINEER BN: SIEGE OF DAK TO:
MAY THRU JULY, 1969**

Dak To is about 55 miles northwest of Camp Enari where I was stationed w/the 4th Infantry Division & right on the Cambodian border. I ETSed in August 1967 after my tour..



The buzz of the incoming rockets caught the men of the 299th Engineer Battalion (Combat) in their noon chow lines. One second they were standing around joking with one another, the next they were frantically scrambling for cover as panicked voices yelled "INCOMING! INCOMING!" For nearly thirty minutes the engineers huddled in bunkers as twelve 122mm rockets and eighteen 81mm mortar rounds ripped into their camp at Dak To. Then, as suddenly as it began, the barrage ended. Amazingly, no one was hurt by the blasts. The engineers pulled themselves from cover, dusted off their fatigues and looked around. What the hell was that all about? They wondered. They had no idea that their little corner of the war was about to heat up.

Dak To sits in the middle of one of the most hotly contested regions of South Vietnam. Deep in the rugged, jungle-clad mountains of the Central Highlands, the hamlet is a mere twenty kilometers from the border where Laos, Cambodia, and South Vietnam come together. A spur of the Ho Chi Minh Trail crossed the border here and paralleled Route 512 east through Ben Het, Dak To, and Tan Cahn. From there it was a straight shot south down Route 14 to Kontum, Pleiku, and then east to the coast. It was axiomatic to the Americans that if North Vietnamese forces controlled the Central Highlands,

South Vietnam would fall.

To prevent that from happening, the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, beginning in 1964, had established a chain of Special Forces camps along the border, including one at Dak To. From Duc Co in the south to Kham Duc in the north, the Green Berets and their indigenous troops patrolled the unforgiving terrain in search of the enemy. And they frequently found the North Vietnamese Army forces. Bloody clashes were common. Sometimes it was more than the unconventional forces could handle and regular infantry units were called in. In the fall of 1965 the 1st Cavalry Division's 7th Cavalry was mauled at LZ X-Ray in the Ia Drang Valley. In the summer of 1966 the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division had its turn. After one of its companies was nearly overrun the paratroopers were pulled out. In the fall of that year two brigades of the newly arrived 4th Infantry Division were handed responsibility for the two major provinces of the Highlands: Kontum and Pleiku.

Fierce combat raged throughout those provinces over the next year. The action reached a climax with the Fall 1967 Border Battles that engulfed two brigades of the 4th Infantry Division and the 173rd Airborne Brigade. The fighting was so brutal a battalion of the 173rd was trapped on Hill 875 for two days before a relief force could get to them. In thirty days of fighting, the American units suffered nearly 1,800 casualties, of which 376 were killed in action. A relative calm descended on Dak To after the North Vietnamese suffered heavily in their January-March 1968 Tet Offensive. To secure the region, MACV placed the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division at Dak To. Fifteen kilometers west a Special Forces team with a force of native soldiers held Ben Het. The Army of the Republic of Vietnam's 42d Infantry held Tan Canh.

Into this arena stepped the 299th Engineer Battalion (Combat). The 299th arrived in South Vietnam in October 1965. In the summer of 1966 it relocated from Tuy Hua to Pleiku. The battalion remained there, attached to the 4th Infantry Division, but assigned to the 18th Engineer Brigade, for two years before it moved to Dak To. The 299th's mission was to provide the infantry units with engineering support and to keep the roads to Ben Het and Tan Canh open. Mine sweep patrols headed out in each direction daily. As weather permitted, the engineers were paving Route 512 between Dak To and Ben Het. Not only would this ease the passage of the frequent truck convoys, but it would also hamper the NVA's mine-laying activities.

When Lieut. Col. Newman Howard took command of the battalion in January 1969 his companies were scattered throughout the hills surrounding Dak To. "The Fourth's infantrymen held the fire support base and air strip at Dak To," Howard recalled. "My men were spread all around the area." Shortly after Howard arrived, the United States implemented its new policy of "Vietnamization" which transferred increasingly greater combat responsibilities to the ARVN. Giving the ARVN responsibility for the much fought-over Dak To area would clearly demonstrate the confidence MACV's new commander, Gen. Creighton Abrams, had in them to fulfill their mission.

Unfortunately, about that same time, the NVA reassembled its forces in the region. In late January 1969, intelligence sources reported two NVA infantry and one artillery regiments operating south of Route 512. A prime target was Ben Het. In early February 1969 the NVA's 40th Artillery Regiment began blasting the camp. Specialist 4 Jay Gearhart, of the 299th's 15th Engineer Company (Light Equipment), had just arrived in Ben Het a few days earlier. "About twenty of us were detailed to go to Ben Het," Gearhart recalls. "The monsoons were coming and Route 512 was the only overland supply route to Ben Het. We were going to upgrade the road before the rains came."

All went well for the first week. Then the enemy shells came down. "There was only sporadic incoming for the first few days and we worked right through it," Gearhart said. "After about a week, though, they started pouring over a hundred rounds a day into that little camp. "We ended up being pinned down in a trench right near their little airstrip. We spent nearly two months like that. I counted over twenty-seven hundred rounds inside the wire in twenty-three days. And Ben Het was small!" The daily artillery barrages at Ben Het were but a preview of what Gearhart would experience at Dak To.

Meanwhile, Colonel Howard prepared his battalion for Vietnamization. After the 4th Infantry Division's troops were pulled out, two of Howard's companies, B and C, were relocated. Howard then brought his remaining three companies in from their outlying sites. "Our final mission was to prepare Dak To for the 42d ARVN," Howard said.

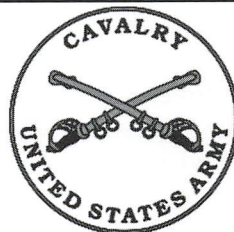
Specialist 4 David G. Swanson, a motor pool dispatcher in Headquarters Company, remembers the move. "We'd been on one of the hills overlooking the airstrip since I'd joined the battalion in Octo-

ber," Swanson said. "When the infantry left we were brought down and told to clean up the area. We were supposed to remove all the debris, empty ration cans, used artillery canisters, garbage--you name it. There was so much crap we had to use front-end loaders to dump it outside the wire.

When we'd finished with that we were supposed to load up all of our equipment and join our other two companies near Qui Nhon." That was what Colonel Howard understood, too. Once the base was squared away it would be turned over to the ARVN. The rest of the 299th would then be on its way. But things changed.



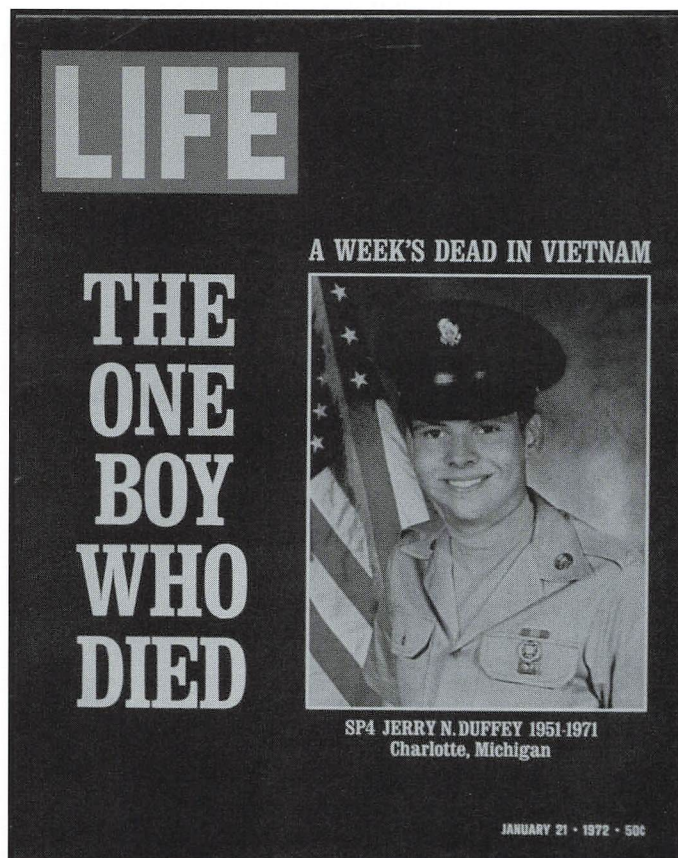
A platoon of U.S. Cavalrymen struggle on foot through the high elephant grass on their way towards the Khe Sanh Marine combat base on April 5, 1968 during the Vietnam War. They are taking part in Operation Pegasus, a joint marine and cavalry drive to relieve the base, which has been under North Vietnamese artillery fire for the last three months



INTERESTING STORY THOUGHT I WOULD HELP HER REMEMBER

FORT PIERCE MOTHER REMEMBERS SON WHO FOUGHT, DIED IN VIETNAM. JERRY DUFFEY

A month after Sgt. Jerry Norman Duffey was killed in Binh Dinh, South Vietnam; Life magazine dedicated its cover and a feature story to the Army trooper.



On the grand scale, the 20-year-old from Michigan wasn't more or less special than those with whom he served. His death wasn't on account of any over-the-top heroic action.

He was killed when Hill 131 — the hill was named for its height in meters — was mortared and attacked by Vietcong sappers with explosives. Duffey's position was undermanned and no longer lit well enough to see the enemy, according to the magazine.

His mother, Fort Pierce resident Joyce Cope, hangs tight to her memories of her eldest son, whose life, more than his death, was recounted in the pages of Life on Jan. 21, 1972.

It's something that happened in my life, but the hurt never goes away," said the Gold Star Mother who has lived on the Treasure Coast for 30 years. Gold Star Mothers is an organization of mothers who have lost a son or daughter in service of the United States.

Now 73, she wanted to share the story.

Duff, as his friends called him, died for his country 19 days before the hill was to be turned over to the South Vietnamese. At the time, he was one of 45,000 Americans killed in Vietnam. President Nixon commented on Duffey's death during a televised interview as an example of the on-going de-escalation of troops.

Duffey was highlighted because he was the only death announced in a weekly reporting period. At the time it was the lowest number of recorded deaths for a reporting period since a week in February 1965, when no one was killed.

"It was kind of a political thing. He wasn't really special, but he was special to me," said Cope. "They asked if they could write the story. We didn't get any money, but it was an honor to have it written. And I thought they did a really nice job on the story."

To Joyce Cope, he was more than just the oldest of her five children, who have given her seven grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren. "He was a really nice boy and really well liked in the community." Jerry grew up on a farmhouse in a town called Sunfield, Mich., about 30 miles from Lansing. At 10 he began raising chickens and selling them. He sold enough that at age 11 he bought himself a horse he called Comanche. He later turned his interests to auto mechanics. But the war was always in the background. Buddies were being drafted or enlisted, so at 19 he decided to volunteer.

His first overseas assignment was Germany, to the ease of his father Stub Duffey, who questioned the war in the magazine. Three months after Jerry was born, Stub had been drafted and sent to Korea, returning when Jerry was 21 months.

However, it wasn't too long before Jerry Duffey was off to Vietnam. He even agreed to extend his tour by six months so he could get home leave for Christmas in 1971. But he never made it.

On Dec. 12, 1971, he was working the "graveyard watch" when Vietcong slipped through jagged wire

and blew up several buildings, leaving 17 GIs injured and Duffey dead.

It would be more than a week before his mother learned of his death.

It was a very tough Christmas, it was really hard on the other children," Cope said. "But we had many friends and we thanked the Lord for that."

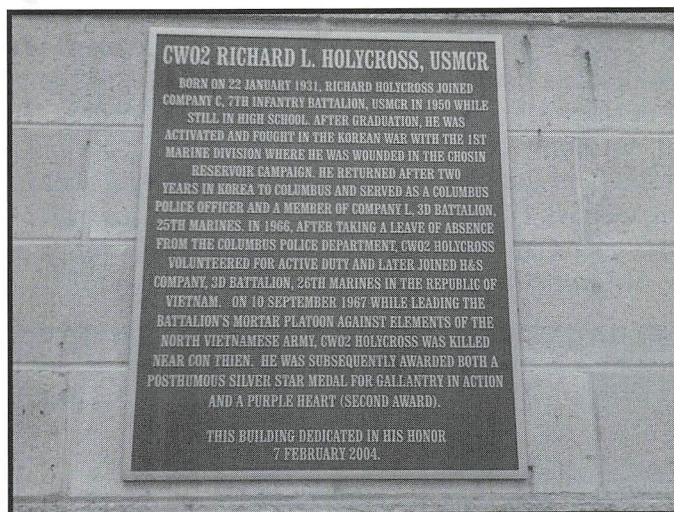
**MY FOND MEMORIES OF MY TIME IN
VIET NAM WITH CWO RICHARD L.
HOLYCROSS USMC H&S CO 1ST BN 3RD
MARINES CLNC, KIA 10 SEPTEMBER 1967
EDDIE TEAS USMC**

Today I will honor, remember and tell you about a Marine who was my first Platoon Commander that I met as a young 17-year-old Marine PFC 53 years ago when I reported to the 106mm Recoilless Rifle Platoon of H&S Company, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines CLNC in 1966. CWO-2 Richard L Holycross was a Marine Chief Warrant Officer with a Bursting Bomb on his collar. He was known as Gunner Holycross. He was KIA 52 years ago today in Viet Nam.



This Marine not only showed me what a Leader should be, but also taught me how to follow. That is something that too many forget as they move up the ranks.

The Battalion was sent to Guantanamo Bay Cuba sometime around September 1966 to provide security at the base for the next four to five months. This is where it all started for me. As a young PFC, I tried to do most things by the Guidebook according to what we all had learned. One day on the FE-BA (Forward Edge of the Battle Area), we were on one side of the barb wire/minfield and the Cubans were on the other side where we were looking at each other. Gunner Holycross was walking up to our position and I could clearly see it was him. I did what the Guidebook said and what I was trained to do. I Yelled out, "Halt Who Goes There?" He said, "Gunner Holycross". I responded, "Advance to be recognized". He responded, "Neas YOU ASS-HOLE, you know it's me". I didn't laugh then, but I do now.



Another time on a Battalion Reaction Exercise to see how fast we could get out to the wire, he was in the Command Operations Center (COC) and I got on the Battalion Net (not a good thing to do as a PFC) after seeing flashes around the COC and asked him, "Sir what are those lights on the Hill?" Not a good move on my part and I could only imagine what they must have said to him at the COC. When we got back to our Platoon area, he held a formation and gave the platoon an After-Action Report on how we did. He then pulled me out of formation and told the platoon that PFC Neas was so worried about the COC, he was promoting me, to Colonel. Yes, everyone laughed, and I heard about this for months, but every time I ran into Gunner Holycross and he saw me first, he saluted first and said, "Good morning/afternoon Colonel."



He taught me that you can be Squared Away, Tough as Nails and still have a sense of Humor as a Leader. I never forgot that. He left for Viet Nam in early 1967 and a few months later I followed. I wrote him two letters while in Viet Nam and received one from him. The second letter I sent him, was marked RETURN TO SENDER and I got it in October of 1967 just as I was getting ready to board a Helicopter at Quang Tri for the start of Operation Medina. I did not know what it meant, so I ripped it up and buried it in the sand. A few weeks later I got word that Gunner Holycross was killed on 10 September 1967 near Con Thien as a member of H&S Company, 3rd Battalion, 26th Marines, 52 years ago today.



I was devastated to say the least, but I went on. I not only honor him today, but I do every day and think where I would be without his Leadership and mentoring that he gave this young PFC 53 years ago. He was the Epitome of a Marine Officer and Leader.

I have attached a few pictures and the four-page let-



ter he sent to me while in Viet Nam. Please feel free to read it. It's the only letter I have from my time in Viet Nam. He addressed the letter, Colonel and crossed it out and put L/Cpl. He talked about those two incidents and made mention of many members of our Platoon.

So today when someone calls me an ASSHOLE, I think back to that day when Gunner Holycross first said it and it brings a Smile to my face and yes, a tear in my eye.

Semper Fi and Thank You, Gunner Holycross "You Led the Way."



The last contingent of Khe Sanh-based United States Marines on board an M42 Duster self-propelled anti-aircraft gun during the evacuation of Khe Sanh Combat Base (KSCB) in Khe Sanh, Vietnam, 4th July 1968. The Battle of Khe Sanh was conducted in the Khe Sanh area of northwestern Quang Tri Province, with US forces defending Khe Sanh Combat Base.

**KHE SANH FAMILIES LOUIS & SANDI
REYES & GLENN & GUINN WOLFE
HAVING A FRIENDLY VISIT.**



**CRAIG TOURTE IN TRADITIONAL
DRESS AS THE FATHER OF THE GROOM
FOR THE TRADITIONAL
INDIA WEDDING OF HIS SON**

1968 HUE, US MARINE AT THE BATTLE OF HUE.

Picture by Don McCullin.
God Bless our Vets!

The Marine was swallowed by the night. When he was found he was mute, though in his eyes lay a stare best unmet while dreaming: a gaze that was part trance, part fear, but mostly horror. The men who'd located him recall that he neither blinked nor uttered a single word.



His true name is lost and his fate has become a mystery. But you may know his face already, for a photograph of him remains his only known legacy. Taken by British war photographer Don McCullin during the battle for Hue in Vietnam 50 years ago, it is the portrait of the -frozen man who became known to the world by a clumsy caption: "Shell-shocked US Marine". Other than his photograph and those words, all that remains of the Marine at the centre of one of the most totemic war images of the 20th century are shards of memory, half a century old, smoke-edged and bullet-griddled, from the few men

who encountered him in the ruins of Hue and managed to survive. It was to them I turned when I began to look for him. It took me nearly two years to track them down.

It was monsoon season, February 1968, when the Marine went missing. The night air was cold and heavy with mist, which mingled with the smoke from burning buildings set ablaze by shellfire, reducing visibility to a few yards. To the US Marines crouched there, the city of Hue was reduced to snapshots of rubble and fog, which shrouded their memories of the fight there even before time eroded them further. Long after the battle was over, the smell of smoke and fire and the bodies of the dead, the cold of the rain and the imprint of fear and grief came more readily to the minds of many of those left alive than any sense of orientation or time during the fighting.

Standing in the gloom of a ruined dwelling on the city's front line, exhausted from lack of sleep and already twice wounded, Staff Sergeant Robert "Cajun Bob" Thoms waited for a pair of his Marines to report back. He did not know their names. Thoms had been given command of a platoon from Delta Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, a few days earlier, and many of his new command had been killed or wounded after his unit reached Hue and became embroiled in the battle inside the city's walled citadel. The turnover of casualties and replacements was so fast there was little time to get to know individuals.

That night, while consolidating a newly won block of houses near a street nicknamed "rocket alley" by the Marines, Thoms had sent the two men out into the darkened ruins to check that a house to their rear was clear of NVA (North Vietnamese Army). But only one Marine came back. "Where's the other guy?" Thoms asked. The Marine could not explain his absence. "F..k," said Thoms. He collected a couple more men to search for the missing man, suspecting he had somehow been overpowered and killed by the NVA.

Minutes later, as they moved through the darkness of the house in which the man had disappeared, Thoms saw something white in the corner of a room. "It was a face," he tells me. "I went over and this was the Marine. Just kinda sitting against the wall with his eyes open."

The missing Marine — described as a tall, well built man — was so still that at first Thoms assumed he was injured, and checked him for wounds. "I

thought someone had cut his throat, the way he looked,” he recalls. “Because I’ve seen people with their throats cut and their eyes just wide open.”

But there was not a mark on the man, who -neither moved nor spoke. Unnerved by this -petrified figure, the other Marines consolidated their positions around the house while Thoms laid him down on the floor. At dawn he had his men fetch a medic to examine him. The medic duly checked out the frozen figure, then turned to -Sergeant Thoms. “Sarge,” he murmured, “his mind is not there. We need to get him out of here.”

British photojournalist Don McCullin in Hue, February 11 started the search for the Marines in - McCullin’s photographs in 2016 with just one name that the photographer recalled: Captain Myron Harrington. In February 1968 Harrington was a 29-year-old Marine officer, a commander of Delta Company; he’d already lost more than half of the 120 men under his command in the battle for Hue when he was told that one of his Marines — the one who had been found in the ruined house — was “not willing to participate in the action”.

It was early morning on February 21 when -Harrington was called to see the shell-shocked Marine, who was being escorted away from the front by two of Thoms’ men. “He was in a state of shock,” -Harrington recalls. “He had the classic thousand-yard stare, and was kind of frozen. I ordered that he be evacuated. That’s my last -sighting of him.”

I hand him McCullin’s picture to double-check we are talking about the same man. We are. -Harrington stares at the details I am so familiar with: the filthy flak vest and combat jacket; the stubble; the bitten fingernails; the pen in the top left breast pocket; the suggestion of tattoos on the man’s left knuckles. This was no newly arrived grunt; no “FNG” – “f..king new guy”. This was a -seasoned -veteran, broken by a moment of war we could only guess at. “The human mind can only take so much,” concludes Harrington. “If we had taken him behind a building and slapped him around a little bit, would he have come out of it? I don’t know. But it was imperative to get him out of the battle area as quickly as possible.”

The shell-shocked Marine was escorted to the Delta Company command post. He was left there awaiting evacuation as Delta’s most senior NCO, Gunnery Sergeant Odell Stobaugh, tried and failed to communicate with him. -McCullin appeared. The pho-

tographer, then 32 years old, had arrived in Hue a week earlier on assignment for The -Sunday Times. On seeing the frozen Marine he dropped to one knee to photograph him. “I noticed he was moving not one iota. Not one eyelash was moving,” McCullin says. “He looked as though he had been carved out of bronze. I took five frames and I defy you to find any change or movement in those frames.”

Then the photographer left the yard. Minutes later, at 7.45am, an NVA rocket hit the edge of the wall above the command post, showering shrapnel onto the Marines below. Seven were wounded, including Stobaugh.

Private Eric Henshall, a Marine sniper attached to Delta Company, was there when it happened; the explosion threw a lump of debris right between his eyes, which hurled him to the ground, semiconscious. For Henshall, then 24, it was the end of what had been an eventful battle. One week earlier he’d won the Bronze Star after sniping the NVA crew of a 126mm rocket launcher, then calling in tank fire that had wiped out the survivors. As part of a two-man sniper team he had crawled as close to the enemy position as he could, and spotted through his -binoculars as his partner shot one man before Henshall grabbed the Remington 700 rifle for himself. “I got seven of them.” Twenty-four hours later he was wounded in the legs but returned to combat after two days, when McCullin took his image in one of the most haunting portraits of the battle: “The Sniper”.

Though McCullin recalls speaking to Eric -Henshall for some time while taking his photograph, Henshall remembers nothing of the -photographer or the moment his picture was taken. And this highly decorated career Marine, whose own courage was so publicly acknowledged, draws no distinction between his own fixed stare in McCullin’s photograph and that of the shell-shocked Marine. “I look like that,” he adds, staring at the picture of the frozen man when we meet at his home in Arizona. “Something had to have happened to have me looking this way,” he murmurs. “I don’t know what it was, but it wasn’t good.”

Today, thanks to the internet, it would be -relatively easy to search for the identity of a -contemporary US Marine in a photograph from, say, Iraq or Afghanistan. Yet no internet existed for returning Vietnam veterans. Moreover, they completed their tours as individuals and returned home alone rather than as a unit.

None of the Marines I found from either Delta or Charlie Company had maintained contact after returning home. It was only the advent of mainstream internet use, and with it veterans' sites and Facebook pages, that allowed some of them to reconnect 30 years after they'd fought in Hue.

Having first contacted Captain Harrington, within a few months I had managed to trace three other Marines from Delta. These in turn introduced me to other men among the network of -surviving Hue veterans. I also secured a copy of the microfilm archives of Delta and Charlie companies' unit diary for the year 1968, as well as the 1st Battalion's after-action report. The unit diary was essential, because it contained the daily details of casualty reports, and night after night, month after month, I pored through thousands of documents for February 1968, looking for clues about the identities of the shell-shocked Marine and the other men photographed by McCullin.

A major breakthrough occurred last year, when McCullin mentioned that he had left the Marine in the company of Delta's gunnery sergeant, and recalled that the "gunny" had been wounded minutes later by a rocket attack on the command post. Knowing each Marine company only had one gunnery sergeant, I called Harrington, confirmed that his gunny was Odell Stobaugh, then cross-referenced that name with the microfilm entries to see when he was wounded, thereby confirming the date and time McCullin took the photograph. I was convinced that this was the eureka moment, and that by tracking down each man evacuated that morning I would identify the shell-shocked Marine. Yet I ran immediately into two problems. First, Odell Stobaugh, who might have remembered the name of the Marine, had died in 1999. Second, my faith in the documentation was misplaced. No record of a non-injury evacuation existed during the key week. I managed to track down the Delta Company clerk in California, and he pointed out that in the bureaucratic bedlam surrounding the battle, the details of a non-physical injury may never have been recorded. Still, I continued to hunt the shell-shocked Marine from the strangest places. During the nine-month battle for Mosul in Iraq, I sometimes returned from the front to scour microfilm details from Hue in my hotel at night, hoping that the weird link-up between the ruin of two cities would afford karmic aid. It didn't.

hen at one point last year, staying in a dirty guest-house on the Iraqi side of the Syrian -border, waiting to cross over, I spoke with a go-between in the

US who twice weekly met a severely -traumatized Delta Company veteran in a cafe. A fragmented entry of a document suggested this might be the man I was after. The go-between duly handed this veteran a carefully worded and extremely gentle letter I had written asking for his help in identifying Marines in photographs from Hue. The picture of the shell-shocked Marine was attached. Yet the moment the man saw the photograph, the effect was terrible. He became distraught and walked out of the cafe. The go-between told me the attempt could never be repeated.

Yet I searched on, aware as I did so that with each voice of another veteran I encountered, so the ghostly, shell-shocked Marine became more a guide than a quarry. He had begun in my mind as the distillation of every man's worst fear — frozen and reduced. Yet he changed. In his footsteps I met others, and learnt of time and war and grief and brotherhood, and how Marines grow old, but trauma never fades away.

There was never a pretender or claimant to be the shell-shocked Marine. No one was out there who years later said, "That's me." But many people wanted to be Richard Schlagel, the Marine with the octopus tucked into the band around his -helmet, or thought that they might be the bandaged Marine he cradled in his arms aboard a tank. I remember first noticing McCullin's photograph of these two Marines when I was a teenager. The -rubber octopus on Schlagel's helmet, irreverent and cartoon-like, had always stuck in my mind, riffing off the desperation of the moment. What had become of him and the Marine he held? Now Schlagel sits before me and I am about to find out.

He remembers every moment aboard the tank in Hue, though nothing of the minutes before. But as he held the dying, bare-chested Marine in the foreground of McCullin's image, memories of Fred Tate on Hill 110, in the Que Son Valley of South Vietnam in spring 1967, came back. Tate had been injured in a mortar attack and Schlagel had given him mouth-to-mouth in a vain bid to keep him alive. "There were no signs of life," he says of the wounded Marine on the tank. "I didn't see any breathing or movement or anything. It was like I felt guilty because I lost Tate on Hill 110, and I really didn't want to lose someone else that I was trying to help." There is no doubting Schlagel's identity. He still has at home the octopus that appears in the photo, minus a couple of tentacles lost in the jungle; it had been given to him by his brother in a Christmas package in December 1967. But the main point of

contention, exemplifying both the fog of war and the passage of time, concerns the dying young man in Schlager's arms.

The dispute over this man's identity was most recently resurrected last year on the publication of Mark Bowden's outstanding study of the battle, Hue 1968, in which Bowden and photographer John Olson both identified the casualty as a man named Alvin Grantham, who survived his wounds and lives today. Grantham is a respected Marine veteran who was indeed shot through the chest — the wound exiting out of his shoulder blade.

Yet the testimony of the Marines present on the scene that day with whom I speak, combined with unique access to McCullin's -contact sheet of images taken at the scene in the minutes before his famous tank photograph, suggest beyond any reasonable doubt that there was no happy ending for the Marine -cradled in Schlager's arms. His name was James Blaine, and he had received a terrible gunshot wound that entered his right upper torso, breaking his spine, before exiting his lower left back just below the belt line. Blaine died the same day. It was -February 15, 1968. The shell-shocked Marine may have always been one step ahead of me. But in his -footsteps other mysteries ended.

Myron Harrington says the shell-shocked Marine never came back to Delta. Thoms tells me that he later heard the Marine had been sent to a psychiatric ward in a catatonic state. The personal medical records are not accessible. The trail went cold. I had walked through the valley of the shadow of Marines' memories in search of him all the way from DC to Tennessee, from the Arizona sun to the snows of Michigan — and I lost him.

Yet there was one more Marine who I found while looking for the frozen man, and every detail of this man's story glowed with the wealth of a hard-fought internal peace. He was not alone in that. I found Marines who had made their own peace with -Vietnam. But his words held particular resonance, and if I wished for an -epitaph for the shell-shocked Marine, it would be written in "Frenchie's" final words to me.

His full name is Melvin "Frenchie" Bourgeois. He is from south Louisiana, and is the Marine in the centre of McCullin's own favoured photograph from Hue, captioned "Crucifixion", in which he is held, his arms over the shoulders of two comrades, his head leaning back in pain from a bullet wound. McCullin photographed Frenchie, 18 at the time, on

February 17. He'd been shot in the groin by an NVA soldier, the bullet entering his upper thigh and exiting from his buttock. Dragged behind the cover of a wall, he was treated by two Marines and a medic. As they lifted Frenchie up, McCullin took his photo. But the connection did not end there. Every Marine was needed for the fight, so -McCullin offered to carry Frenchie away from the wall. Amid the crackle of gunfire he held the Marine over his back so that Frenchie's arms were over his shoulders, his body and legs draped down. At some point he stumbled and fell, a moment each recalls, as they negotiated the steps down from the wall.

It was the last time Frenchie ever saw McCullin. He recovered from his wounds and later returned to duty in Vietnam with Delta -Company. A few months later, out on patrol, the man in front of him triggered a booby trap. -Frenchie received a sucking chest wound. "Well, if Don called me the subject of a crucifixion in that first photograph," he tells me, laughing, "he should have seen me the second time I was hit: I looked like Christ being stabbed with a spear — I had blood and water -spurting out of my chest."

He recovered from that, too, and continued to serve in the Marine Corps until 1972. It was not until 2016 that he saw McCullin's photograph. "I have not shed the memories," he says as we sit discussing the war and day begins its fade. "But I have shed some of the weight, the burden that you pick up in war. The losing of friends — I haven't -forgotten them. I've just put it in a place where I can manage that, and live peacefully. I can still have those memories, but in such a way that I am at peace with that. I am OK with my past.

I GET PICTURES

Story



by Anthony Loyd Weekend Australain

BOOK REVIEW



“THERE IT IS... IT DON'T MEAN NOTHIN”

Charles Hensler's *There It Is...It Don't Mean Nothin': A Vietnam War Memoir* (289 pp. \$9.95, paper; \$3.99, Kindle) is a gripping account of Hensler's tour of duty in Vietnam from April 1968 to May 1969. This unique memoir is written as a long letter to Hensler's family. This creates an intimacy between the author and readers. In addition to his wartime experiences, Hensler provides a timeline of the war's key events and the changing political landscape at home.

Hensler's dual approach is compelling. With sober

clarity he illustrates the growing number of American casualties and the dwindling support for the war. At the beginning of his tour nearly 14,000 American troops had died in Vietnam. One year later that number more than doubled.

After recounting his childhood in rural Pennsylvania, Hensler describes his decision to enlist in the U.S. Army in 1967, his training at Fort Polk, and arriving in Vietnam in the spring of 1968. He notes that during the Tet Offensive the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army had proved their resolve to win at any cost. Despite huge losses, they staged uprisings all over South Vietnam, shocking the American public.

Hensler served with the 199th Light Infantry Brigade northeast of Saigon. His descriptions of his first days, then months, in country are vivid. As a new mortarman, he carried heavy loads of equipment and ammunition on long patrols.

In addition to the risks of tripping mines and booby traps and being ambushed, there was the hostility of the environment itself. The triple canopy jungle was rife with leeches and red ants, forcing men to continually check for the first, and often strip naked to free themselves from the second. Staying dry was impossible in the heat, humidity, and constant rain. Because wet underwear caused chafing, men rarely wore any. Even writing letters home was challenging. Trying not to drip sweat on the pages, Hensler says that he wrote in pencil because ink would quickly wash away.

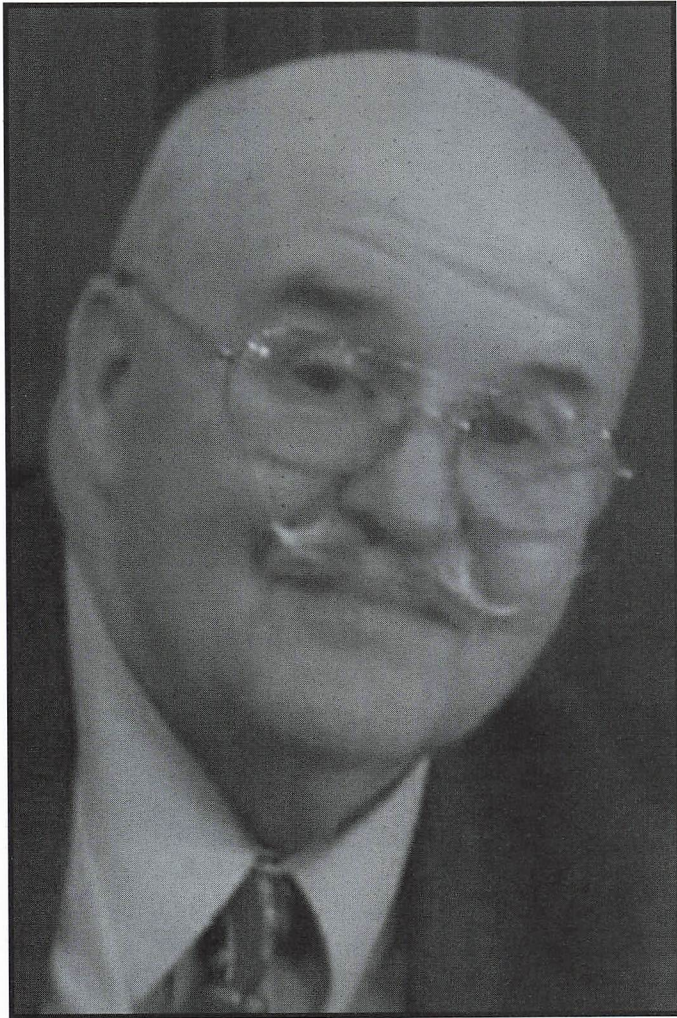
In addition to the constant tension and fatigue from the long patrols and nights on guard duty, he and his buddies felt that they were there in Vietnam for nothing—a point perfectly summarized by the oft-said G.I. phrases in the book's title.

“Most GI's in Vietnam,” Hensler writes, “felt they were getting screwed over by being there, at least in the post-Tet Offensive years when the country turned the corner on the war. It became apparent, even to the lowest private, that with the way things were run we were never going to win.”

With his engaging, unsettling, often haunting style, Hensler imbues in readers a sharp sense of the conditions American infantrymen endured: Their exhaustion. Their loneliness. Their doubts, even despair. Their cautious anticipation of the end of their tours. Their dream of the Freedom Bird, the plane that would take them home.

OBIT**MORLEY R. SWEET, USMC, KHE SANH VETERAN, H&S CO 26TH MARINES, COMM MESSAGE CENTER**

LOWELLVILLE — Morley R. Sweet IV, 71, passed away Tuesday, Sept. 21, 2021, at St. Elizabeth Boardman Hospital, following a brief illness.



Morley was born in New Castle, Pa., on Oct. 10, 1949. He was the son of the late Morley R. Sweet III and Elizabeth Jane McConahy Sweet, the oldest of four children. Mr. Sweet attended New Castle High School, Class of 1967.

Morley married the love of his life, Rebecca Jean Gray, on Sept. 6, 1969, and recently celebrated 52 years of holy matrimony. Together, they had six children, Rachel (Rich) Sieman, Sarah (James) Johnson, Esther (Ken) Snodgrass, Lydia (Steve) Minford, Morley (Barbara) R. Sweet V and Elizabeth (Jeffrey) Kiley. Morley was grandfather to 26, Robert, Alexander, Katherine, Gwendolyn, Lauren, Emily, Matthew, Andrew, Samuel, Abigail, Will,

Elise, Nathaniel, Evan, Laura, Logan, Landon, Harrison, Morley R. Sweet VI, Collin, Nolan, Rowan, Gavin, Vincent, Genevieve and Oliver. In addition, Morley had eight great-grandchildren, Reagan, Natalie, Cooper, Tucker, Duke, Daniel, Brianna and Rose.

Morley leaves behind a legacy of love and of family. He maintained deep and individual relationships with each of his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren ... leaving each to believe that they were his favorite. Morley invested in the lives of those around him on a daily basis. He taught kids to drive and to spell and to excel and to push limits and boundaries. Morley built soapbox derby cars, entered kids into the spelling bee, taught games of strategy like chess, and created champions.

Morley was an active member of Venture Church in Boardman, and a staunch supporter of the Reformers Unanimous Program. He was generous with his worldly possessions and with his time. He will be remembered as a remarkable storyteller and a formidable Scrabble enthusiast. He despised blueberries and macaroni salad and had a terrible golf game that he thoroughly enjoyed. Morley was a world-class whistler and enjoyed Sousa marches and classical music.

Morley enlisted in the Marine Corps, on Oct. 14, 1966, four days after his 17th birthday. He completed basic training in Parris Island, S.C., where he was recognized on the Marine Corps birthday on Nov. 10 for being the youngest recruit. He completed secondary training at Camp Lejeune, N.C. Morley and his family continued to observe the Marine Corps birthday, including a birthday cake, every Nov. 10.

Sgt. Sweet served as a teletype operator in the 3rd Marine Division of the 26th Marines Regimental Status, Headquarters Company. Morley served during the battle of Khe Sanh, a 77-day siege during the Vietnam War, that went on to be the longest in documented U.S. history. On Feb. 23, 1969, Sweet received a bullet wound to his chest and left shoulder by incoming enemy fire, and a wound to his left hand from shrapnel, rendering his left hand paralyzed. He received a Purple Heart for his wounds sustained in battle. He was featured in the book "A Patch of Ground, Khe Sanh Remembered," by Michael Archer. Morley was a lifelong member of the Disabled American Veterans.

After being given retirement status from the Marine Corps in November 1969, Sgt. Sweet went on to

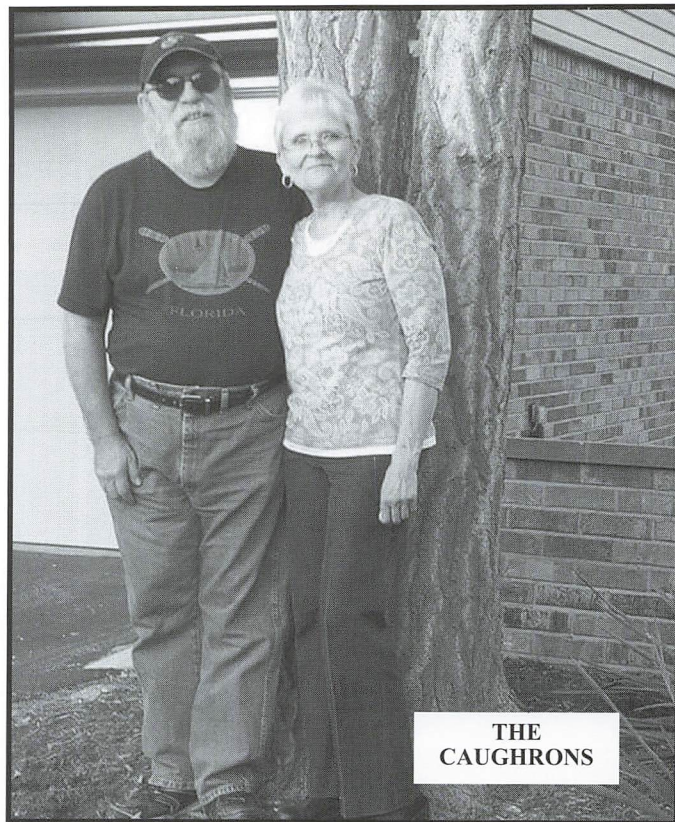
earn his Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from Youngstown State University, where he was the president of the Delta Nu Alpha business fraternity 1974 / 1975. Sweet worked on the B&O Railroad as an operator and teletypist in a tower for 11 years, typing 40 words per minute with one hand. He also served as the division grievor chairman and treasurer for the Baltimore and Ohio Credit Union. When the railroad towers were shut down, Mr. Sweet owned and operated Chris Glass Block window company in Youngstown, and New Castle, Pa., employing dozens of area youths before his retirement.

In addition to his wife, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, Morley leaves behind his brothers, Jon and Jay Sweet; and his sister, Susan Sweet; as well as aunts, cousins, nieces, nephews; and many fellow Marines and lifelong friends.

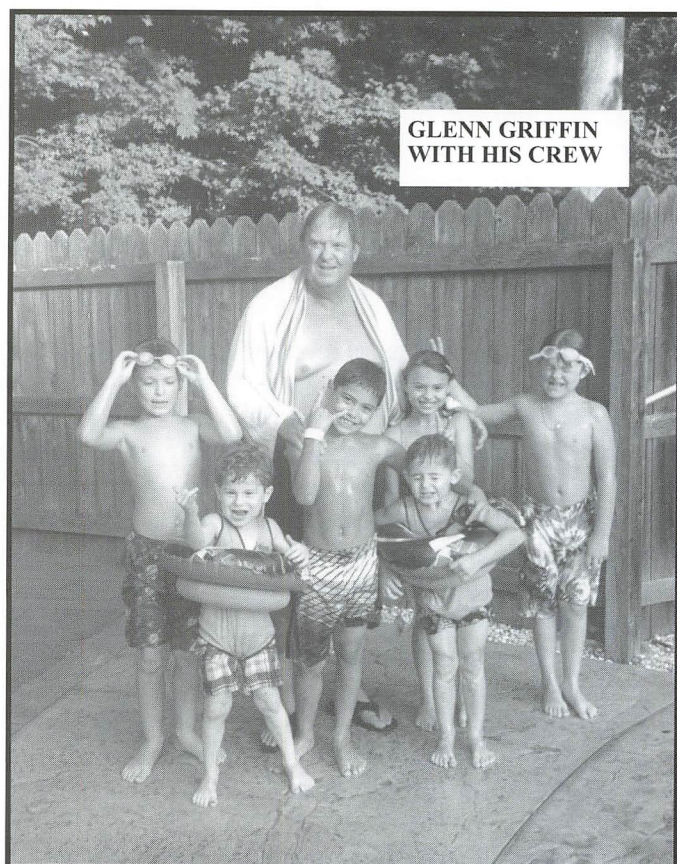
He was preceded in death by his son-in-law, James Johnson.

Celebration of life services were held at the Davis-Becker Funeral Home, 8536 Market St., Boardman, OH 44512. The Rev. Roland Gray, brother-in-law of Morley, officiated. Interment immediately followed in Graceland Cemetery, New Castle, Pa. Pallbearers will be Morley's grandsons.

I GET PICTURES



**THE
CAUGHNONS**



**GLENN GRIFFIN
WITH HIS CREW**



**MIKE FISHBAUGH WITH HIS GRAND DAUGHTER
HANNAH AND HER TWO BROTHERS**

MEMORIALS

THOSE REMEMBERED

Capt Walter Egger USMC C CO 1/26 KIA 3 22 68
 GSGT John J Grohman USMC C CO 1/26 KIA 3 22 68
 1Lt Paul W. Bush USMC C CO 1/26 KIA 3 22 68
 LCpl Stephen C Shannon USMC C CO 1/26 KIA 3 22 68
 PFC Bennie J. Sisson USMC C CO 1/26 KIA 3 22 68
 Sgt Manuel Floyd Martinez USA A-1/44 KIA 9 06 68
 Cpl Fergus J. Carroll USMC K CO 3/4 KIA 18 Jun 68
 L/Cpl Wilbur Stovall USMC A HQ Btry 1/13 KIA 09 MAR 68
 Sgt Tommy Antrim USMC A 1/13 KIA 08 Feb 68
 Remembering All "Bastard Bravo" Marines and their families
 Captain Bill Person USAF 553 3RD Recon Wing
 James Wright
 PFC Donald Saunders USMC HQ BTRY 1/13 KIA 04 Mar 68
 Sgt Donald Ray Chamblin USMC HQ BTRY KIA 08 Mar 68
 GYSGT Charles Perkins USMC DOW 17 May 1968
 SSgt Karl E. Taylor USMC India CO 3/26 KIA 12/98/68
 PFC Roland T. Marshall USMC M CO 3/4 KIA 5/17/68
 Capt Daniel Coonan USMC VMF-AW-115 KIA 10/08/68
 1Lt Thomas Reich USMC VMF-AW-115 KIA 11/17 68
 Sgt Major James Gaynor USMC KIA 25 Feb 68
 Doug Ipson USMC H CO 2/26 KIA 9/15/68 LZ Margo
 Steve Rienhart USMC H CO 2/26 KIA 09/16/68 LZ Margo
 Nate White USMC H CO 2/26 KIA 05/06/68 Cam Lo
 All Members of Det A-101 Lang Vei & All who served at FOB-3
 All the men of HQ Btry 1/13 Who Gave Their Lives So We can Enjoy
 The freedom we have today
 Cpl William E. Wyrosdie USMC H CO 2/26 KIA 10/08/68
 Always remembering all those KIA HILL 689 27 June 1967
 L/Cpl Adrian Brittle USMC India CO 3/26 KIA 9/21/68
 2LT Donald Jacques USMC B CO 1/26 KIA 25 Feb 68
 CPL John Greene USMC C CO 1/26 KIA 04 July 1968
 LCPL Frederick B. Link USMC C CO 1/9 KIA 3/1/68
 All Marines & Corpsman who served on Hill 861A in Jan/Feb & Mar
 of 1968
 All Marines KIA of Delta CO 1/26
 All Marines 1/1 & 2/1 Hotel CO
 DR John Magilligan, d. 29 Jan 2013, DR Ed Feldman d. 03 Oct 2017 &
 DR James Finnegan, 13 Sep 2013 From Charlie Med
 All who served at Khe Sanh
 HN William A. Beyer "Willie" USN H&S Co 3/26 KIA 2/1/67
 1LT John Ellis USMC Crash-Rescue Crew OIC KIA
 Gy/Sgt Joe H. Kahee Crash Crew Passed Away October 2019
 PFC David A. Cramer, USMC KIA 22 Feb 68
 PFC Leslie G. Aputen USMC KIA 15 May 68
 PFC Francis W. Lamon USMC G CO 2/1 KIA 04/17/68
 PFC William W. Lawrence USMC G CO 2/1 KIA 04/17 68
 PFC Charles T. Johnson USMC G CO 2/1 KIA 05/04/68
 L/Cpl Darrel W. Cottrell USMC G CO 2/1 KIA 05/04/68
 Thomas Jack Pennington KIA 27 Jan 68 at "Mikes" Hill Mike CO 3/4
 PFC Ricky Marson USMC F CO 2/26 KIA 4/7/68
 Mike Bradbury, Mike "Pops" Salinas, James "Doc" Thomas
 Gilbert Wall B CO 1/26 & Lt COL Ken Pipes CO B CO 1/26
 Frank Addice USN KIA 04/11/68
 Sgt Tommy Antrim USMC A Btry 1/13 KIA 08 Feb 68
 L/Cpl Wilbur Stovall USMC HQ Btry 1/13 KIA 09 Mar 68
 Cpl Donald E. Whitaker USMC B CO 1/26 KIA 25 Feb 68
 William Roland Prewitt MIA Phu Loc Hamlet Not Recovered
 Gold Star Parents Of L/Cpl USMC Jeremy Santiago L CO 3/26
 3rd Plt 12/14/73 -9/7/93 Operation Restore Hope
 Louis Lowe USMC, Kilo CO 3/4, 3RD PLT KIA Hill 689 14 May 68

REMEMBERED BY

Bruce Geiger USA 1/44th Arty Dusters
 Bruce Geiger USA 1/44th Arty Dusters
 Bruce Geiger USA 1/44th Arty Dusters
 Bruce Geiger USA 1/44th Arty Dusters
 Bruce Geiger USA 1/44th Arty Dusters
 Bruce Geiger USA 1/44th Arty Dusters
 William Hotz Mike CO 3/4
 Bob Holscher HQ Btry 1/13 S-4
 Bob Holscher HQ Btry 1/13 S-4
 William E. Carpenter Bravo Btry 1/13
 Alex & Barbara Sadowski H&S CO 1/26
 Alex & Barbars Sadowski H7S CO 1/26
 James Baker HQ BTRY 13TH Marines
 James Baker HQ BTRY 13TH Marines
 Barbara Eddowes Fiance
 Will Griggs India Co 3/26
 Hugh Liverman Mike CO 3/4
 Charles H. Fetter H&MS-11, MAG -11 1ST M AW
 Charles H. Fetter H&MS-11, MAG -11 1ST M AW
 Charles H. Fetter H&MS-11, MAG -11 1ST M AW
 Joe Derian Hotel CO 2/26
 Joe Derian Hotel CO 2/26
 Joe Derian Hotel CO 2/26
 Lawrence Cooper CO C 5TH Special Forces
 James Baker HQ Btry 1/13 26Th Marines

 John Laibinis SR. H CO 2/26 2ND PLT
 Clarence T. Anthony India CO 3/26
 Chester W. Nelson JR. India CO 3/26
 Pietro Osimanti Bravo CO 1/26
 Johnny Moon Charlie CO 1/26 3RD SQD
 Eric Bergland C CO 1/9
 Lt Don Shanley 1st Plt E Co 2/26 Hill 861A

 John Finn Delta Co 1/26
 Peter Hoban Hotel CO 2/1
 Rear Admiral Robert F. Birtcil USN
 Rear Admiral Robert F. Birtcil USN
 Ron Shuff LSU MTM Co. Maintenance Bn.
 Pat B. Buckley Charlie CO 1/26
 Richard Takacs MABS-36-MAG-36 Crash-Rescue Unit
 Richard Takacs MABS-36-MAG-36 Crash-Rescue Unit
 Fred Gholson G BTRY 3/12
 Fred Gholson G BTRY 3/12
 Thomas C. Manson Golf Co 2/1 REST IN PEACE
 Thomas C. Manson Golf Co 2/1
 Thomas C. Manson Golf Co 2/1
 Thomas C. Manson Golf Co 2/1
 Thomas C. Manson Golf Co 2/1
 Hugh Liverman Mike CO 3/4
 Donald Kujawa F CO 2/26 F CO 2/5
 Randall Mapel Kilo CO 26TH Marines
 Peter Mudrinich B CO 1/26
 Larry Sherer USN HMM-262 HM-2
 Bob Holscher HQ Btry 1/13 S-4
 Bob Holscher HQ Btry 1/13 S-4
 Bill Jayne B CO 1/26
 Lorne Lemieux M CO 3/26
 Daniel J. Depagnier Helicopter Sqd 363

 Daniel King K CO 3/4

KHE SANH VETERANS, INC. SCHOLARSHIP FUND - 2020-2021 AWARD RECIPIENTS

APPLICANT	SCHOOL YEAR	SCHOOL	SPONSOR
1. CPL ADAM J. CHIARELLA	1	UNIV OF MICHIGAN @DULUTH	DAN FISHER D CO 1/26
2. KAITLYN G. KING	1	ST/MARYS NOTRE DAME NURSING	JAMES KING M CO 3/26
3. ANDREW M. KESSLER	1	UNIV OF TOLEDO-IT	MERLE MORITZ E CO 2/26
4. CORRINE E. HILL	1	DAEMEN COLLEGE, AMHERST MED	DONALD PAYNE 3/26
5. CONNOR C. CIRROTTI	1	UNIV OF NOTRE DAME FINANCE	DON CAMPBELL HQ 26TH MAR
6. JESSICA D. VELCHECK	1	GOUCHER COLLEGE LITERATURE	JAMES VELCHECK D CO 1/1
7. VICTOR D. HOFFMAN	2	SHIPPENBURG UNIV UNDECLARED	VICTOR HOFFMAN H&S CO 1/26



In 2009 the KSV Scholarship Foundation started with 6 applicants and has risen to an average of 25 applicants each of the last three years. Many of the student scholars have finished 4 years of post secondary education to successfully achieve their selected bachelors degrees due in part to the support from Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc ..

In this, the 2020-21 school year, we have received 7 applicants for a grand tally of 179 young scholars in 11 years who have benefitted from the KSV Scholarship Fund. Over \$110,000 in generous donations from the Khe Sanh Veterans Brotherhood and proceeds from the reunion silent auctions have kept the Foundation healthy. However, the individual awards have trended lower due to the increased volume of applicants vs. reduced donation levels.

The Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc. Scholarship Foundation is now in its twelfth successful year of providing financial support for children and grandchildren of paid up members of Khe Sanh Veter-

KHE SANH VETERANS, INC. SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION**GOVERNING RULES FOR OPERATION OF THE KHE SANH VETERANS, INC. SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION**

The purpose of the Khe Sanh Veterans Scholarship Foundation (KSVSF) is to provide financial aid to high school graduates who plan to attend an accredited educational institutional as a full time student OR who are currently enrolled full time in an accredited post secondary curriculum.

Scholarship funds will be awarded to applicant students who have at least one parent , legal guardian or grandparent who is a paid-up member in good standing of KHE SANH VETERANS, INC., a 501 C (19) charitable organization.

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT APPLICANT TO SEE THAT THE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS ARE FULLY COMPLETED AND SENT DIRECTLY TO THE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR BEFORE 5/1/2020 AT THE ADDRESS BELOW:

Mr. Dan Fisher
KSVSF Committee Chairman
6050 52nd St. North
Oakdale, MN 55128

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Applicants must be the legal child or grandchild of a paid up member (sponsor) of Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc. (see member definition in the KSV by-laws). This includes deceased, life members of KSV and those Khe Sanh Veterans listed as KIA/MIA in Vietnam if the family member are paid up, associate members of KSV, Inc. Children and grandchildren of associate members are not eligible for this scholarship.

Information provided by each applicant on the attached forums will focus on the following qualities; proof of enrollment at an accredited educational institution, good grades, scholastic character, citizenship, school activities and a personal essay on educational and career goals.

A scholarship review committee will serve at the pleasure of the President of Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc. to review the application forms for completion and correctness. The KSVSF Chairman will provide scholarship financial report, a list of applicants and their KSV member sponsors and a summary to be presented to the membership at the annual reunion and for publication in RED CLAY newsletter.

NEW!! SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS (school year 2021 onward). NEW!!

APPLICANTS FOR SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS WILL RECEIVE A ONE-TIME-ONLY AWARD, REGARDLESS OF THEIR PRESENT YEAR IN SCHOOL. SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS AMOUNTS ARE DIRECTLY AFFECTED BY DONATIONS TO THE SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION FROM KSV MEMBERS AND THE REUNION SILENT AUCTION. WE CAN NO LONGER SUPPORT MULTIPLE YEAR AWARDS. THIS IS THE DECISION OF A VOTE BY THE KSV BOARD OF DIRECTORS AT THE 2019 REUNION.

ALL AWARDS WILL BE EQUAL FOR EACH CERTIFIED APPLICANT AND WILL BE AWARDED UPON PROOF OF REGISTRATION FOR THE UPCOMING SCHOOL TERM AND SENT TO THE CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS ABOVE

SCHOLARSHIP GUIDELINES AND PURPOSE

The financial award should be used to defray cost of tuition, fees, books at the educational institution of the applicants choice.

The KSVSF Chairman and KSV Treasurer will send a check for the award amount to the selected applicants upon final approval of the KSV President.

Scholarship recipients will be notified of their award no later than the end of August of the upcoming school year applied for.

!!Scholarship applications sent to the KSVSF Chair MUST be post marked not later than MAY 1 of the school year applied for!!

KSV Scholarship recipients must maintain a standard of personal performance while at school that reflects positively upon the Khe Sanh Veterans' Association membership.

Scholastic Criteria for Award Consideration: 1). Attached "Official" Grade Point Transcript form the last school attended, 2). Completed Application Form, 3). Summaries of Scholastic Participation, Volunteer and Work Experiences, 4). A small photo of the applicant and, 5). Completed final page with applicant's signature and the KHE SANH VETERAN sponsor's signature.

KHE SANH VETERANS, INC. APPLICATION FORM

Date of Application_____

APPLICANT'S INFORMATION:(PRINT CAREFULLY AND LEGIBLY!!)

Name: Last_____ First_____ MI_____

Address: Street_____ City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Home Phone: _____ Cell_____

Date of Birth _____ E-mail address_____

KSV SPONSOR INFORMATION: (Name of Khe Sanh Veteran, Inc. Regular or Life Member)

Name: Last_____ First:_____

Relationship to Applicant:_____ Branch of Service_____

Unit Served at Khe Sanh_____ Dates Served There_____

Regular paid KSV member _____ Life KSV Member _____ Deceased KSV Life Member _____

KIA or MIA KSV Family Associate Member _____

SCHOOL INFORMATION: (School to be Attending)

School Name:_____

School Address: Street_____ City_____

State_____ Zip_____ Phone Number _____

Intended Field of Study

School Year to Be Funded: Freshman _____ Sophomore _____ Junior _____ Senior _____

APPLICANT PERSONAL HISTORYA). Applicant Volunteer Activities (Example: community, church, governmental, environmental, health, etc

B). School Extracurricular Activities: (examples) Athletics, Music, School Government, School Publications, Academic Honors & Achievements, Scouting, Counselor, etc..

C). Employment Experience: (examples) part/full time jobs during school year, military service, etc.

D). Final Mailing Packet Check List: (ENCLOSE THESE COMPLETED FORMS)!!

***COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM (ABOVE)**

***COPY OF YOUR LAST OFFICIAL GPA TRANSCRIPT (FROM THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR)**

***SMALL PHOTO OF YOURSELF**

***PERSONAL ESSAY (250 -400 WORDS) TELLING YOUR ACADEMIC GOALS AND CAREER PLANS.**

***SIGNATURE PAGE FOR APPLICANT AND SPONSOR (BELOW)**

SIGNATURE PAGE: (TO BE INCLUDED IN PACKET)

I SWEAR THAT THE ABOVE STATEMENTS ARE CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE:

APPLICANT SIGNATURE:_____

ACTUAL SIGNATURE OF KHE SANH VETERAN PARENT OR GRANDPARENT SPONSOR:

**IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE DATA PRIVACY ACT, PRIVATE INFORMATION GATHERED HEREIN
WILL BE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL TO THE KHE SANH VETERANS SCHOLARSHIP COM-
MITTEE**

APPROVED: _____DAN FISHER COMMITTEE CHAIR

APPROVED: _____RUSSELL TURNER KSV PRESIDENT

SPENT A FEW DAYS AT THE VIETNAM REUNION IN KOKOMO INDIANA
WITH A FEW MEMBERS OF THE KHE SANH VETERANS WITH MY JEEP





Remember their Names.

U.S. Marine, Sgt Johanny Rosario (25)
U.S. Marine, Cpl Hunter Lopez (22)
U.S. Marine, LCpl Kareem Nikoui (22)
U.S. Marine, LCpl Rylee McCollum (20)
U.S. Marine, LCpl Jared Schmitz (20)
U.S. Marine, LCpl David Lee Espinoza (20)
U.S. Navy, Maxton Soviak (20)
U.S. Marine, SSgt Taylor Hoover (31)
U.S. Marine, Cpl Daegan Page (23)
U.S. Army, Ryan Knauss (23)
U.S. Marine, Cpl Humberto Sanchez (22)
U.S. Marine, Sgt Nicole Gee (23)
U.S. Marine, Ricky Thompson (21)