

FALL
&
WINTER

RED CLAY

ISSUE
79



KHE SANH VETERANS

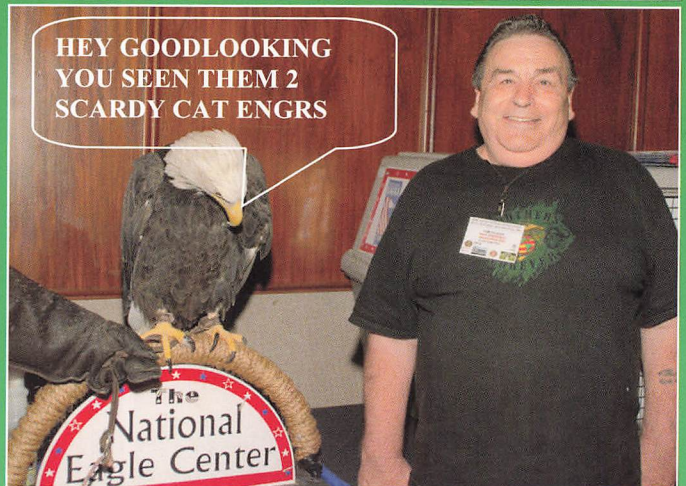


HAPPY HOLIDAYS

THE KAYLOR GRAND HOTEL WITH THE ROCHESTER CONVENTION BUREAU HOSTED A WELCOME PARTY FOR THE KHE SANH VETERANS. ALSO INVITED WERE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL EAGLE CENTER, WHO RESCUE AMERICAN BALD EAGLES. SEVERAL OF OUR MEMBERS POSED FOR PICTURES WITH ONE OF THE RESCUED BALD EAGLES, WHO ALSO ATTENDED.



TWO OF OUR BRAVE" 3RD ENGRS"



The KSV reunion was quite a success. Although our numbers were somewhat less than other reunions, mainly due to its location and lack of direct airport flights, everyone had a good time.

The City of Rochester and the Grand Kahler Hotel bent over backwards to ensure we enjoyed our stay. The Convention Bureau hosted a welcome party with free food and cocktails, with a appearance by the mayor of Rochester who personally welcomed us.

The Luncheon cruise on the Mississippi River aboard a authentic Paddleboat, was enjoyed by all. The Captain let everyone who chose, to actually take a turn operating the boat.

Rochester has one of the most beautiful Soldiers Memorials, and we decided to have our regularly scheduled Memorial Services, there outdoors at sunset. Wayne Stillman, one of the curators of the memorial, who is also on the committee of the BELL OF HONOR, sat down and helped in the planning. He also arranged for the Bell to be a part of our ceremony.

The ceremony was emceed by our Chaplain Ron Rayner who did a wonderful job. Each of the four services marched in their colors as Ron read aloud the number of personnel that were lost at Khe Sanh from that branch. The ceremony was very touching. Members on Wayne Stillman's staff provided the Audio and music, and seating arrangements as well. After Taps was played and the ceremony ended, the

president of the Khe Sanh Veterans, David "Bulldog" Smith, gifted Wayne Stillman, with a new automatic bugle to be used by the Local VFW and Memorial Staff for future ceremonies.

There was an election held for members of the KSV BOD. Tom Eichler was elected President, Russell Turner a Member At Large. All other incumbents retained their seats. Normally I would thank those who did not retain their seat for their services, but Mike Fishbaugh is still aboard in another position so he can continue to contribute his expertise to the KSV. And as always, another shout out to our outgoing president, Bulldog Smith, for his continuing dedication to the KSV.

Every member should have received a package from me, which contained a complete color brochure of all the different items that are available in our PX, and a registration form for the upcoming reunion in Washington DC. However, I neglected to put down Russell Turner's Postal Zone. **The correct zone is 63010. Please get them in early since we are again expecting a very large crowd.**

REUNION COMMITTEE

Last but not least, we have to thank the lovely Kathy Turner who is the real force behind a successful reunion. She would like to stay behind the scenes and not be recognized, but she does too much for the KSV, not to be. Let us not forget Carol & Dave Meyer and all the other volunteers who do so much to help the reunion committee.

EDITORIAL STAFF

All submissions go to:

Tom Eichler

Email: Teic1448@aol.com

Managing Editor 3221 N Opal

Chicago IL 60634

Ph: 773-625-2101 Cell 773-606-8145

Fax 773-626-8021

Tom Eichler Chairman Publication & Membership

John Pessoni & Sid Patricio.....Web Page Editors

www.khesanh.org

Diana F. Fecarotta.....Editing Director

Michael Fishbaugh.....Article Research

Tom Eichler.....	President-Treasurer
John Pessoni.....	Vice President
Jack Haigwood.....	Secretary
Ron Rayner.....	Chaplain
Dave Meyer.....	Sgt At Arms
David "Bulldog"Smith...	Immediate Past President
RussellTurner.....	Member At Large
Neil Kenny.....	Member At Large
Bruce Geiger.....	Member At Large
Tom Ford.....	Member At Large
Leland Uphaw.....	Member At Large
Larry McCartney.....	Member At Large
Ken Martin.....	Member At Large
Craig Tourte.....	Member At Large
Dan Fisher	Scholarship Chairman

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Chaplain's Corner Fall 2011

By Chaplain Ron Rayner

The Rochester reunion was fun and educational. The last three reunions I have attended have shown me that Tommy Eichler, Russ Turner and their families are great examples of people who truly give much of their time for the benefit of all. They certainly have my gratitude for a job well done.

"Bravo! Common Men, Uncommon Valor"

Thank you Ken and Betty Rodgers for a job well done! This is a very moving and inspirational program. I hope there is plenty of notice on the message board before it is on television.

The Rochester Veterans Memorial was very inspiring. This beautiful series of engraved stone walls is a very fitting way to honor United States Military personnel, past and present.

Our Memorial Service went well in the heat and humidity. I believe some of the compliments on the service resulted from some advice from George Burns; "The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and a good ending; and to have the two as close together as possible."

I quoted parts of Ecclesiastes chapter 3 (KJV) in the service; "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven: 2 A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted; 3 A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down and a time to build up; 4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance; 5 A time to cast away stones, and a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; 6 A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; 7 A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silent and a time to speak; 8 A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war and a time of peace."

For those of us who are affected by Post-Traumatic-Stress-Disorder it is very important to remember what this says. Most of who were involved in a time of war killed, mourned a friend, lost part of himself or herself, and hated. We also wept, embraced and laughed. War is certainly an intense time

that teaches us to take every opportunity to love the people we care about.

So many people quote the Ten Commandments saying "Thou shalt not kill." I personally like the New International Version which says "You shall not murder." Many of us were killers, but not murders. Joshua, Gideon, Samson, Saul, and David were all warriors sent forth to kill in the name of the Lord. We killed for our country and in defense of ourselves and our friends. I fully believe now should be a time of peace in our personal lives. We should be supporting those who are now fighting for our country. The Bible does say there is "A time to kill."

Two books that I recommend for the healing warrior are *Stories of Faith and Courage from the Vietnam War* by Khe Sanh Veteran Larkin Spivey and *Wild at Heart* by John Eldredge.

Larkin Spivey uses the daily devotional format to relate 365 short stories from the Vietnam War to Scripture. This book shows how any experience, good or bad, may be turned into positive life changing event. I believe the following quote from Romans 5:3-5 sums up Larkin's book quite well; "We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials for we know they are good for us—they help us learn to be patient. And patience develops strength **of character** in us and helps us trust God more each time we use it until finally our hope and faith are strong and steady."

John Eldredge in *Wild at Heart* explains from a biblical point of view why men are the way they are. Eldredge says "in the heart of every man is a desperate desire for a battle to fight, an adventure to live, and a beauty to rescue." He quotes Exodus 15:3; "the Lord is a warrior; the Lord is his name."

I believe this is so true. It is just too bad political correctness and the people that want to weaken the United States of America push their agenda of just being vanilla to everybody and not offending anyone. A perfect example is France after resisting the Germans for four years in World War I. There was a campaign by liberals after WWI to berate military, heroics and guns as if they started the war. It worked. It took less than four weeks for Germany to defeat France in WWII. I believe the left in America keeps trying to do this same type of thing with anti-

gun campaigns and all the crap that was put on us Vietnam veterans after our return home.

Joshua 1:6-9 (New Living Translation) is quite clear "Be strong and courageous, for you will lead my people to possess all the land I swore to give to their ancestors.

7 Be strong and very courageous. Obey all the laws Moses gave you. Do not turn away from them, and you will be successful in everything you do.

8 Study this Book of the Law continually. Meditate on it day and night so you may be sure to obey all that is written in it. Only then will you succeed.

9 I command you—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

For those of you out there that have mental conflicts going on, these books may help. I pray we can all take "time to keep" the positive aspects of our experience and "cast away" our bad memories.

RAYS CORNER

VETERANS DAY TALK

By Rev. Ray William Stubbe

11 November 2011 - Veterans Monument, Miller
-Coors Brewing Co., Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Upon entering the remarkable National World War I Museum in Kansas City, Missouri, a visitor first sees a large map of France set in the floor below his feet. The map is covered with thousands of red poppies. There are so many, it is as futile to attempt to count them as it would be to count the colored leaves of Fall through which we recently walked. A guide quietly whispers that each poppy represents a thousand killed. It is overwhelming. The scene becomes a window through which we peer at another reality. Like standing in the midst of the black granite Vietnam Memorial Wall, we are silenced, overcome by the enormity of the loss.

When America entered World War I in April, 1917, the war had been going on for three years. When it started, most assumed it would be over within

months, but like the fly caught in a spider's web, once started, the agony seemed to have no end. New horrors snuffed soul and spirit as machine-guns, warplanes, bombing, and poison gas, made the conflict a foretaste of hell. Ten months earlier, on 01 July 1916, 60,000 British soldiers marched in parade formation at the Somme River against German strong points, only to be mowed-down by a new weapon of war, the machine gun. The Battle of the Somme raged for four months, only mercifully stopped by rains. It was as if they were tears from God! There were over a million (1,293, 907) casualties in four months, just one battle of World War I. [There were 419,654 British casualties, 204,253 French casualties, and 650,000 German casualties.] During World War I, more than 8 million soldiers died, at least 19 million were wounded, and civilian casualties, obviously in the millions, can only be guessed.

That's why so many poppies cover that map of France in the World War I Memorial Museum at Kansas City, Missouri--over 8,000, one for each 1,000 soldiers killed. One is reminded of Lieutenant Colonel John McRae's famous poem written in World War I after four years' service in that war as he mourned the loss of a friend killed in that war and just before he himself was killed on 28 Jan 1918:

**"In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place: and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.**

Today, we observe Veterans Day, formerly known as Armistice Day. [First observed in 1920, it became a legal holiday by act of Congress on 13 May 1938.] But, because World War I, the "War to End All Wars," only laid the seeds of future wars--World War II and Korea, Congress voted [on 01 June 1954] to change Armistice Day to Veterans Day, a day to honor all veterans, living and dead, of all American wars.

For a brief time, Veterans Day was moved to create a three-day weekend, but the significance of the sacrifice and service of veterans and not a long weekend's personal pursuit of pleasure, soon returned Veterans Day observance to November 11th. [The

Uniform Holiday Act, signed 28 June 1968, made Veterans Day part of a 3-day weekend, along with Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, and Columbus Day. The first Veterans Day under the new law was observed with much confusion on 25 Oct 1971. On 20 Sep 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed legislation restoring the annual observance of 11 November, beginning in 1978.] This year's celebrations are not only the "the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month," but also the year 2011!

*

During a visit with my folks while on active duty, we were sitting quietly at a restaurant. Two ladies were conversing at an adjacent table. One said: "Would you believe, my neighbor served in the military for twenty years, retired, and is now drawing a pension?"

Her comment stunned me, paralyzing a sudden surge of anger. She would never know the six or eight month separations from family while serving overseas on a Navy ship, the regular grind of long watches at night followed by a full day's work, weeks without showers on a ship at sea, separation from growing up with friends over the years, missed job opportunities, not to mention war's horrors, terrors, and ugly scenes seared forever on the soul. You want my pension? Fine! You can also take my nightmares, my wounds, my inability to live a normal life! my lost innocence, my social isolation. You can have these also! Today, in the midst of high unemployment, veterans have an even higher rate. An alarming percentage of the homeless are veterans. Their suicide rate exceeds that of their civilian peers.

As I sat there at that restaurant table, listening to their conversation, my mind raced to a small bunker on a remote hilltop outpost in Vietnam. The Company commander there had taken the stiff cardboard sleeve of a carton of C-rations and written on it:

**"God and the soldier we adore,
In time of war and not before;
The battle ended and all things righted,
God's forgotten, the soldier slighted."**

The Company Commander was Capt John Raymond, USMC, commanding A/1/26 on Hill 881-South, Khe Sanh, Vietnam, noted in Stubbe: *Khe*

Sanh Chaplain (unpublished manuscript), 01 April 1970, diary entry for 18 August 1967. Although Capt Raymond attributed the poem to "Lord Marlborough," it was actually written by Frances Quarles (1592-14), and its original form is: "Out God and soldiers we alike adore / E/en at the brink of danger, not before / Our God's forgotten, and our soldiers slighted." [Oxford Dictionary of Quotations, 3d rev. ed., London: Oxford University Press, 1953, p. 404, No. 9].

*

One of the stories to emerge from World War II tells of a soldier coming home after years of being away in the war. He telephones his parents. "I'm coming home," he tells them. They are ecstatic. He says, "I'm bringing home a friend who was badly wounded." Still overcome with joy, they tell him, "Bring him with you. It will be great to have both of you home!" His voice becomes serious, "But you must know that he has some ugly scars." They say, "That's OK. We know that war does bad things." Softly, he says, "But he also has lost a leg and an arm, and he has difficulty with large groups of people." They say, "Well, son, maybe it might be best if he goes to a hospital for those things where he will be more comfortable. But we are so excited that you're coming home." There's a click. He hung up the phone. He was the "friend," the wounded, damaged man.

At his inauguration, President Kennedy uttered those words: "Let every nation know .. that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and success of liberty " [Kennedy, John F., Inaugural Address, 20 January 1961] Today, we pause to consider that price, that burden:

WAR	KIA	WIA	MISSING	TOTAL
World War I	116,516	204,002	3,350	320,518
World War II	405,399	670,846	30,313	1,036,245
Korea	33,741	103,284	5,127	137,025
Vietnam	58,209	153,303	2,489	211,512
Gulf War 1990-91	382	849	0	364
Iraq 2001-present	4,404	21,839	2	26,243
Afghanistan	1,135	6,141	2	7,276

[Data as of September, 2011.]

Also: COLD WARS-1947, 1956:

92 KIA, 55 WIA, 147 total casualties, 0 missing.

GRENADA, 1983: 19 KIA, 119 WIA, 138 total casualties, 0 missing.

PANAMA, 1989: 40 KIA, 324 WIA, 364 total casualties, 0 missing.

REVOLUTIONARY WAR: 4,000 KIA.

WAR OF 1812: 2,000 KIA.

MEXICAN WAR 1846-1848: 13,000 KIA.

INDIAN WARS 1817-1898: 1,000 KIA.

CIVIL WAR: at least 618,000 KIA out of an entire US population of 31 million.

SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR 1898-1902: 11,000 KIA.]

Many of us will be more focused on a family member--a father or mother, brother or sister, a son, a nephew or niece--or perhaps a boy or girl from the neighborhood or church. For, as the German poet, Goethe, once noted: "I am rent to the core by this simple one's suffering; you pass carefree over the fate of thousands." [Goethe, *Faust II*, 439f.]

*Veterans Day focuses not only on the enormity of those lost in war, but on the living veterans who today live lost lives. A recent newspaper article noted there are roughly 107,000 homeless veterans in America and goes on to state: Many of them are chronically condemned to wander our streets because the trauma they suffered serving our country has left them profoundly brain-damaged or disabled with terrible psychiatric conditions like post traumatic stress disorder.. These wounds of war are physically invisible, but they are no less life-threatening." [Lawrence Tribe and Bobby Shriver, "Why Wounded Warriors Sleep in Dumpsters," *The Wall Street Journal* Thursday, 9 June 2011, p. A21.]*

Following the death of his brother in World War I, the American poet, Archibald MacLeish wrote his poem, "The Young Dead Soldiers:"

The young dead soldiers ... who has not heard them?

They have a silence that speaks for them at night and when the clock counts.

They say: We were young. We have died.

Remember us.

They say: Our deaths are not ours; they are yours; they will mean what you make them.

They say: Whether our lives and our deaths were for peace and new hope or for nothing we cannot say; it is you who must say this.

They say: We leave you our deaths. Give them their meaning

Remember us.

Today, we remember. The word, "remember," as used in the Bible, refers not to mere thoughts in our mind, but bringing something from the past in order to affect present action. In other words, we pause and ponder in order that we might do something now.

Today, we rededicate ourselves to serving others and serving our country

Today, we rededicate ourselves to promote peace and justice.

Today, we rededicate ourselves to care for those who have borne the burden of the battle and their families.

May God bless us all with the vision and the strength to do this. God bless you all!

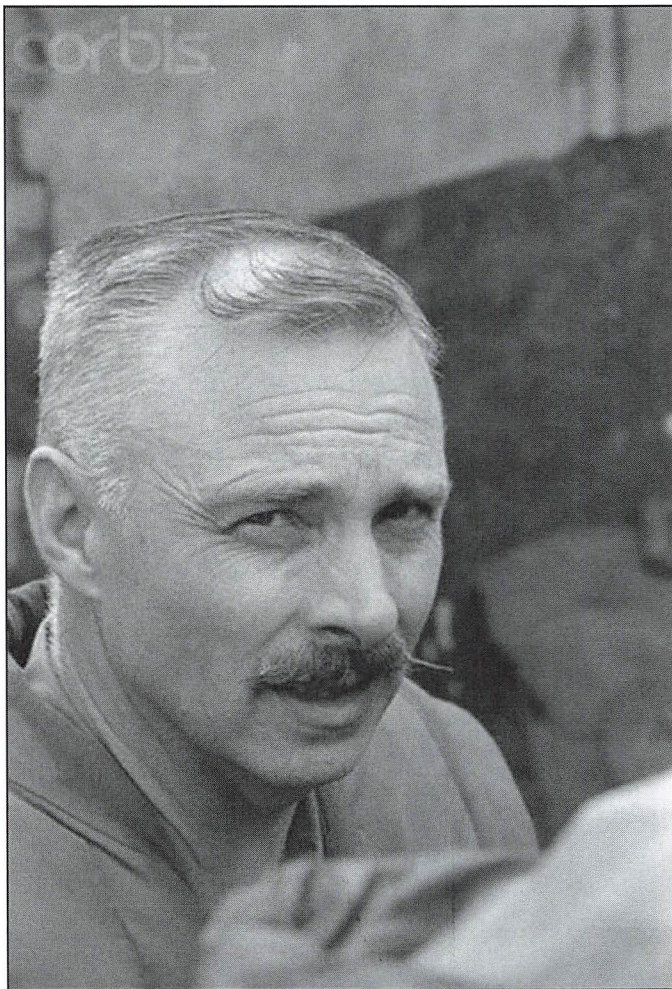


THE LION OF KHE SANH

OBITS



COLONEL DAVID E. LOWNDS COMMANDING OFFICER 26TH MARINE REGIMENT KHE SANH VIETNAM



David E. Lownds of Naples, FL, born October 4, 1920, passed away peacefully on August 31, 2011. As all good Marines do, the "Lion of Khe Sanh", Colonel David E. Lownds, USMC (Ret) reported for duty on "heaven's scene." A veteran of three wars, Dave Lownds was wounded on Saipan and again on Iwo Jima; braved the enemy and elements in Korea; operated behind enemy lines in the Do-

minican Republic Expedition; and commanded the Twenty-Sixth Marine Regiment at the Battle of Khe Sanh during the infamous Tet Offensive of 1968 in Vietnam. For his actions at Khe Sanh, he was awarded the Navy Cross, our nation's second highest award for valor. Married to his wife, Jean, for 69 years, he is survived by her, seven children, 19 grandchildren, and 23 great-grandchildren. He will be sorely missed. In lieu of flowers, the family has requested memorial contributions be made to Avow Hospice, 1095 Whippoorwill Lane, Naples, FL 34105 or online at www.avowhospice.org. Services will be held at a later date.

TRIBUTES: KHE SANH VETERANS

From Dick Peloquin JR.

I will advise my father Dick Sr. He has great respect for Colonel Lownds. May you go with God Sir. I will not soon forget our brief meeting, I feel privileged that I have had the honor of meeting a legend. The Peloquin family offers our prayers and condolences to Colonel Lownds loved ones.

From Craig Tourte

In 2004 I wrote a little article regarding Colonel Lownds which was published in Red Clay, issue 59 Fall 2004. At Ernie Spencer's suggestion I sent a copy of that article to the Colonel. Although ill, Colonel Lownds was kind enough too responded with a personal letter thanking me for remembering him and the kind words. After 4 years and 3 moves I was finally able to put a copy of the article, the magazine and the letter I received from Colonel Lownds into a frame and place it on my wall. Now, one of my most prized possession.

THE STORY

By: Craig W. Tourte

I was just another Private First Class (PFC) during the ten plus months I served at the Marine Corps Combat Base of Khe Sanh in Vietnam. I have a vivid memory of a special moment I would like to share with my Khe Sanh brothers.

I was manning the defensive perimeter trench line located on the southwest side of the base across from the Headquarters Battery, First Battalion, Thirteenth Marine Regiment, a hundred yards or so northeast of the main gate. It was one of those dark dreary nights when I stood looking straight ahead at nothing. Exhausted from lack of sleep, a diet of cold C rations, rain, cold fog, digging and just plain being there. I turned towards a voice behind me, which asked

"How is it going Marines?" I looked up and saw a squared away Marine holding an M-16 rifle. He had a big broad dark mustache and was accompanied by another Marine with a radio strapped to his back. This Marine was obviously an officer of a type which I had never seen before at Khe Sanh. He introduced himself as Colonel Lownds. He said he was just seeing how things were going and asked how we were getting along. I swallowed hard and responded, "Fine." In my surprise at seeing the Colonel I might have mumbled something else, but I don't recall what it was. Colonel Lownds smiled, turned away and continued walking along the trench line.

Of course, I knew the name of the commanding officer on the combat base, but not in my wildest dreams did I ever expect to see him out along the trench line at night, without some type of security detachment and virtually alone except for the radio man and I never expected a colonel to express concern for a lowly private.

That simple act lifted my spirits and for some reason I felt a lot more secure knowing that the commanding officer was in this with us and was exposing himself to the same dangers the rest of us faced. I never saw Colonel David Lownds after that, but I would like to thank him and let him know that moment touched my life. It was a moment I'll forever appreciate and remember

THE RETURN LETTER

Dear Craig,

I recently returned from a few' months in

Tampa where they took care of some cancer all my head. I regret delay in responding to your letter and I must say Ernie Spencer was correct as I thoroughly enjoyed your letter.

I would have liked to put these thoughts in my own hand writing however my hand writing has deteriorated to such a degree that in most cases I can't read my own handwriting.

They changed the name of our street a couple of years back so the new statistics are in the letter head.

I thank you for remembering me after all these years and the kind words you had for me.

Semper Ti,

Colonel David Lownds

Another Lownds Story Lownd's Mustache

I only saw Colonel Lownds on the Khe Sanh Combat Base a few times. I was impressed with his prominent large black mustache, ending in a twisted point. Even then he looked very distinguished with the authority of command, and often a big cigar protruding from his lips. I would say more like a movie character than a Marine Corps Infantry Battalion Commander.

Dennis Mannion sent me a link to an interview Colonel Lownds did some thirty years ago. The interview was thirty-five odd pages and quite interesting. Regarding the mustache, and I'll paraphrase here, and not quote his exact wordings, you'll understand what he is saying about this issue. Colonel Lownds said that a leader is recognized because he knows what he is doing and because people recog-

nize who he is. In order that others know who you are and that you're around you have to have something distinct. My standard trademark in the Marine Corps was to always carry a stick. It wouldn't be anything fancy, it'd be a broom handle, or something I'd pick up and I'd say this is my stick. I didn't use it as a walking aid but the young Marines would recognize me when I carried it around. If I happened to visit another battalion or another company I would sometimes inadvertently leave it there, they would always send someone to my unit after I left and say that the Colonel left his stick behind. This was one of the ways people would know that the Colonel was in the area. I didn't have a stick at Khe Sanh, I couldn't find one, that's a good excuse, so I grew a mustache, and I guess it became quite famous.

So that's the story, the colonel grew his mustache because he couldn't find a stick to carry around. I think the mustache was a good choice. I'd forget someone carrying around a stick back in 1967/1968 on a muddy combat base; I could not forget a very photogenic Colonel with a large black mustache.

CRAIG

By Mac - Milton McNeely

I met Colonel Lownds several times. Having a pair of hair clippers, I once had the honor of trimming his hair. It was sometime in the middle of the siege and as luck would have it we had incoming. My hands were shaking and the haircut was somewhat botched. Not sure if it was the incoming or just the stress of cutting the Colonel's hair. We have lost an outstanding Marine Officer and leader. Prayers of comfort and blessings for the friends and family that mourn his loss.

By Gene Weresow

Rest in peace Colonel. I Salute you sir!

By Chaplain Ron Rayner

I considered it to be an honor and privilege to serve my country in the United States Marine Corps under such a fine officer as Colonel David E. Lownds. A sympathy card has been sent. If anyone has further details on the arrangements, please let me know. Semper Fi,

By Doctor Ed Feldman

Colonel Lownds, I remember you studying the maps in the regimental command post. Your composure set the example for Marine Leadership. Business as usual...Godspeed.

S/F Ed Feldman., one of the C Med Surgeons.

From Dave Doehrman

I spent a few minutes with Col Lownds at the '97 St Louis reunion. We were at the mass grave site at



Jefferson Barracks for the victims of the C-123 crash and the Col was kind enough to pose for a few photos. I was glad he was able to attend at least one of our reunions. He had some rough decisions to make at Khe Sanh but his leadership and composure inspired a lot of people during those days in our history.

By Ken

THE LION OF KHE SANH

When the last wave touches down
and we move to high ground
above a shore no mortal has seen.

Till the last trumpet sounds
and the guns quiet down,
hold fast our Colonel of Marines.
We all will move fast,
arriving at last
to link up with that
Lion of a Man.



We will salute once more
and in unison roar
SEMPER FIDELIS MARINE

Col. Jim Leslie 26 Mar

I served with Col. Lownds 1968 Khe Sanh. He was
A great Marine. God be with him and his family. I
plan to stop at Quantico 9/15/11. Col. Jim Leslie
USMC Ret.

MORE REMEMBERANCES OF THE LION OF KHE SANH

Capt H.J.M. ("Mac") Radcliffe (CO, A/1/9)

remembers that after the Alpha Outpost (Hill 64) had been attacked and A/1/9 lost over 30% of its company on 8 February, he had told his troops, "Nobody gets into the Company perimeter I don't know about it." "They called down and said, 'We got somebody coming into your area.' I said, 'Stop him! We had a lot of press people and others coming in. I said, 'Who is it?' They said, 'I don't know who he is, Sir. He has a moustache and cigar and has his radio operator with him.' Well, I knew right away that was Colonel Lownds. He looked at me and said, 'How you doing, Captain?' I said, 'Fine, Colonel.' He said, 'No.' He pulled me aside, away from the radio operator, and said, 'Mac, how you doing?' And I said, 'I'm hanging in there.' And he said, 'I know you will.' And he gave me a cigar. Just that touch. I knew what I'd known before, but reinforced the fact that we had a caring, concerned, intelligent, super Regimental Commander, who knew what the hell it was to 'take it,' 'take it,' 'take it' and bounce back to be a Marine!"

On one of his walks through the KSCB during the Siege, Colonel Lownds came into the Ponderosa area containing D/1/26 and noticed the men's clothing was getting raggedy. He told George E.

Myrick, "Corporal, you get clothes anyway you can get l'em!" "I said, 'Yes, Sir! We stole them off the comm. lines. So I got his shirt. A day or so later, Lownds was again visiting the area, walking around. He saw his shirt, but said nothing at the time. Returning, he simply said, 'Nice shirt, Corporal! You got my sox, too?' and he walked away."

John Hargesheimer (A/3rd AT Bn)

remembers that during the Siege, "I was sent to deliver a message to Col. Lownds. I had to go to the concrete bunker that was his headquarters and was led through the maze to where he was. He was sitting in a chair and he looked exhausted. He didn't look up when I delivered the envelope, but he did thank me. I immediately turned around and left, but it left a lasting impression on me of the enormous responsibility that this one man had to carry and I was humbled. After that experience I prayed every night during the siege for Col Lownds. If anyone needed God's help and strength it was Col. Lownds during the siege.

LtCol Frederick McEwan, the S-4 of Regiment during the Siege

Remembers "Around December [1967], the North Vietnamese Army blew a French bridge across Highway 9. Well, Uncle Dave, who was Colonel Lownds, and the Engineer Officer and myself went to a steel bridge over the river at Route 9, and we swam across that river to check out that area, see if the bridge could be rebuilt. It couldn't. So we got out of there hastily. It was a precarious situation.

LtCol Louis Rann, the Executive Officer of Regiment

Remembers the radioman leaning over and saying: "Colonel, the President wants to talk with you! The President's on the other end of the phone!" Rann notes, "I won't tell you what Colonel Lownds said—you're a minister!" "Shit?" "Well, a few other choice words!" "The next thing I know, Colonel Lownds picked up that phone [and was saying], 'Yes, Sir!.. No, Sir!' He's standing at attention!" Rann thought, "My God, it is the President!" Afterwards, Rann asked, "What did he say?" Lownds:

"He said, 'I made the Joint Chiefs of Staff sign a paper that we're not going to make you guys surrender!'"

Chaplain Ray Stubbe remembers in a few paragraphs from a letter he recently sent to General Ron Christmas regarding the passing of Colonel Lownds

Dear General Christmas:

As I mentioned on the telephone, Colonel David E. Lownds had a profound effect on my life. Although I was assigned to 1/26 and not the regiment, for a long time, 1/26 was the only battalion at Khe Sanh and I came to know Colonel Lownds through informal conversation and the evening regiment briefings. Soon after his arrival at Khe Sanh on 12 August 1967, I noticed his presence at memorial services for a Marine from recon that had been killed while his team attempted an insertion and for a Marine who drowned in the nearby Rao Quan River. His concern and interest in the welfare of the Marines at Khe Sanh was plainly evident. He cared.

I recall an incident during the monsoon rainfall in which a recon team had completed about eight days of patrolling, had run out of water and food, and due to the weather, the helicopters couldn't extract them. 1/26 had alerted an infantry company to move to them and bring them back. (They were south of us, south of Route 9, as I recall). Knowing all the men in the recon team, I had obtained permission and decided to accompany the patrol. Just as we were about to depart the combat base, the skies cleared and the helicopters were able to extract the team. Colonel Lownds suddenly appeared with our infantry patrol and informed us that the team had been successfully extracted and thanked us for preparing to rescue them. He didn't have to do that, of course. His presence there spoke volumes of his concern for his men.

I recall talking to a recon Marine (Kevin Macaulay) who overheard a conversation in the regimental bunker. It was a conversation between Colonel Lownds and the recon commander who was about to commit another team to replace one that had just been shot out. Obviously, we knew where the enemy was! Colonel Lownds told the recon commander, "Don't you care about your men? Why are you sending them to the place where we already

know the enemy is located?"

Colonel Lownds had his humorous moments. At one regimental briefing, he had just returned from a visit to 3d Marine Division at Phu Bai, and he jokingly reported to the staff and officers gathered about his trip "to the wonderful world of 'Bai'." I can still hear him talking about how they "actually had sidewalks of wooden pallets so you don't get your boots muddy!" (laughs). "And then there was hot and cold running water--and flushing toilets!" (more laughs). "They actually had air-conditioning--but I don't think they'll ever get it as cool as we have it here at Khe Sanh!" (by now he was on a roll, and everyone was roaring!)

As I mentioned to you, General, I am firmly convinced that I am here today because of some very difficult, agonizing decisions that Colonel Lownds made during that Khe Sanh siege battle. In fact, had I given a short eulogy for him, I might have been tempted to use the text from John 10.10 ("I am come that they might have life, life in its abundance") and noted that while this may be strange to use for a Marine officer, it certainly reflected what Colonel Lownds accomplished. He made numerous decisions that all turned out right. Probably from his earlier duty as a regimental S-2 (in which he had, by the way, two very junior lieutenants who later served him as Captains during the siege--Jerry Judson, one of his S-2 scouts who was, during the siege, his S-2, and Capt Earle Breeding, another scout who was the commander of E/2/26. Earle tells me that when 2/26 arrived at Khe Sanh just a few days before the battle erupted, the officers and staff of 2/26 were in the regimental bunker and Colonel Lownds said, "We will hold." And then spotting Earle, continued, "Won't we, Captain Breeding?" to the astonishment of all the officers of 2/26!))

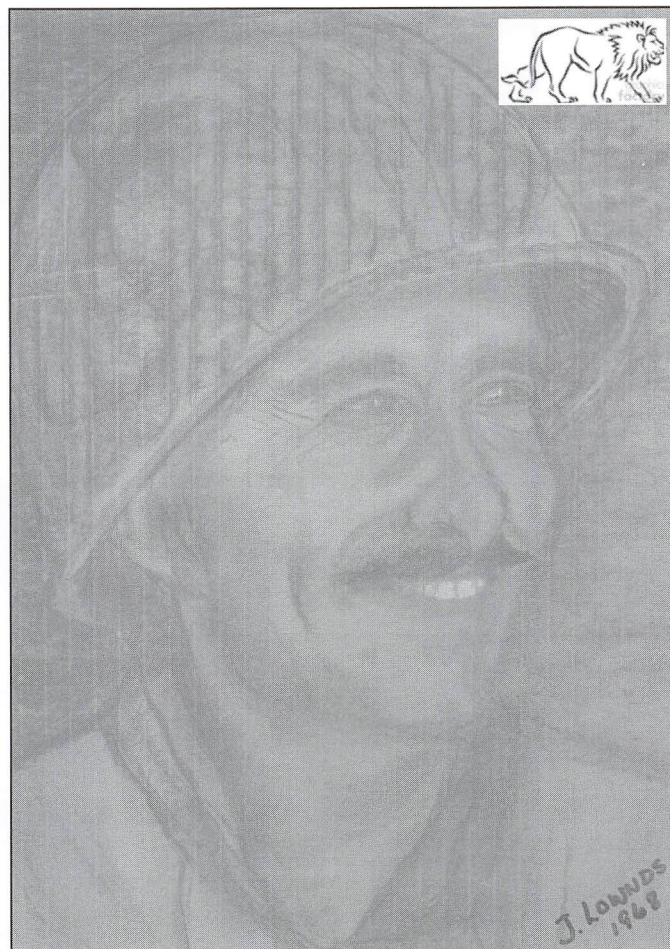
Kevin Macaulay Remembers his compassion

Kevin Macaulay, a radioman in BRAVO Company, 3rd Recon, recalls an incident: "This brand new Lieutenant—he'd been in country maybe two days—had just exited the [regimental] COC bunker. His utilities were perfectly clean. His flak jacket was green where the rest of ours were red because of the clay. His helmet liner and helmet cover were perfectly green. His jungle boots were the bright green and the dark black that characterizes the jun-

gle boots. And he walked out of the COC bunker and right into the middle of this barrage. He was wounded extremely severely by this 122mm rocket that came in, and we saw him lying on the ground. One of his feet was at a totally impossible angle; his foot was almost severed, and there was a big pool of blood around him.

We were already carrying our company clerk, a fellow by the name of [LCPL Ronald D.] Coleman out of the company office who had taken shrapnel from the same round. Coleman lost, I believe, the major portion of all his fingers on both hands, plus he had a gaping wound over his right kidney. It looked, as we loaded him on the stretcher, that he was in bad shape, but I believe he survived. His kidney, I think, was destroyed though; luckily we have two of them. We ran Coleman up to Charlie Med and then we came back and there was a group around this poor Lieutenant. As we were loading him onto the stretcher, Colonel Lownds came up out of the COC bunker and he spotted us there. Immediate recognition came upon his face as he saw this poor Lieutenant lying, and Colonel Lownds watched us as we picked him up and took him to the aid station.

We came back with the empty stretcher which was now totally covered with blood. Colonel Lownds looked over to us and yelled, 'Hey Marine, how's he doing?' And I looked back over to Colonel Lownds and I shook my head. And you could see the look that came across Colonel Lownds' face; you could see how visibly upset he was by this man's death. It was one of the few times that I had seen Colonel Lownds and had direct conversation with him. I had seen him numerous times in the COC bunker, but it was the first time I had ever really spoken to him, and it just gave me the impression that the man really cared. Not only did he care about the entire base—the worry that he had on his mind that we had anywhere between ten to forty thousand NVA around us, but he was concerned about the individual. And he was visibly shaken by this man's death."



Picture By Colonel Lownds Wife



WE ALL REMEMBER THIS





THE LION ROARS NO MORE





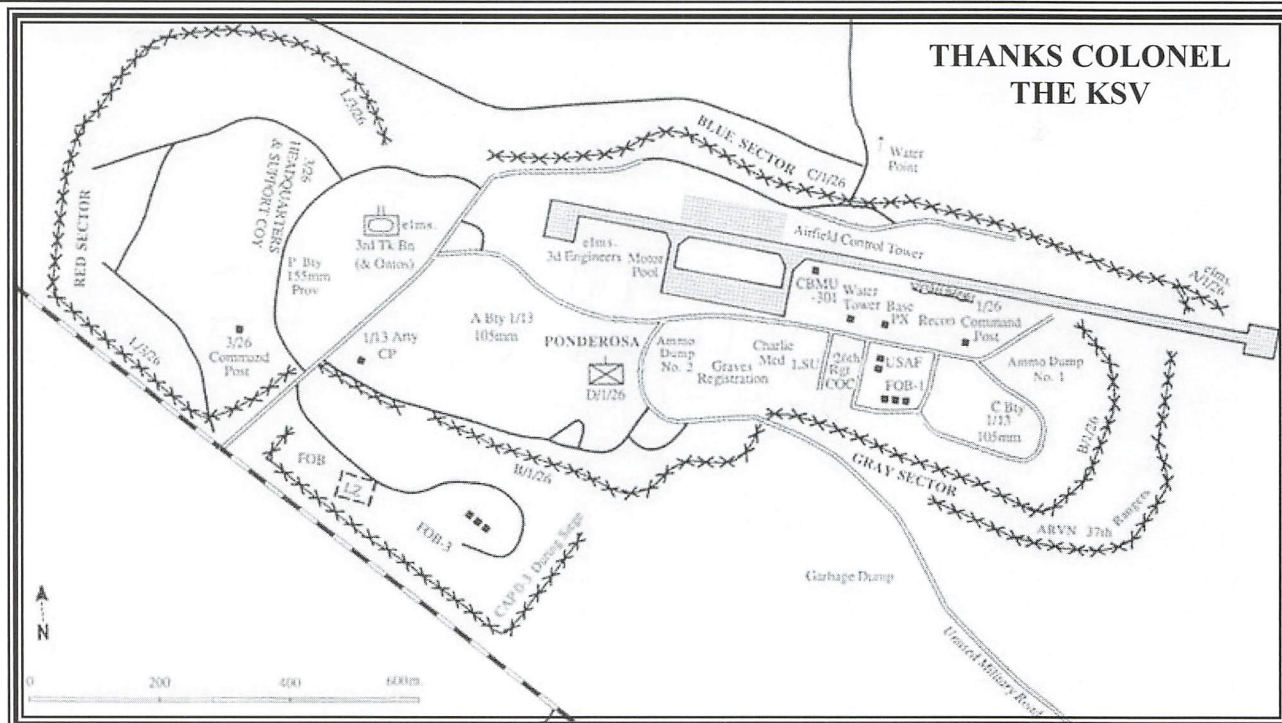
L-R Ray Stubbe, Col David E. Lownds, Earle Breeding, John Kaheny (Then President of the Khe Sanh Veterans) at the St. Louis, Mo reunion. Photo taken at Glenn Rappold's Khe Sanh Memorial Monument in the backyard of his home.



L-R Ernie Husted, Ken Pipes, Ray Stubbe, Col David E. Lownds, Earle Breeding, John Kaheny, Glenn Rappold, William Griffith



**THANKS COLONEL
THE KSV**



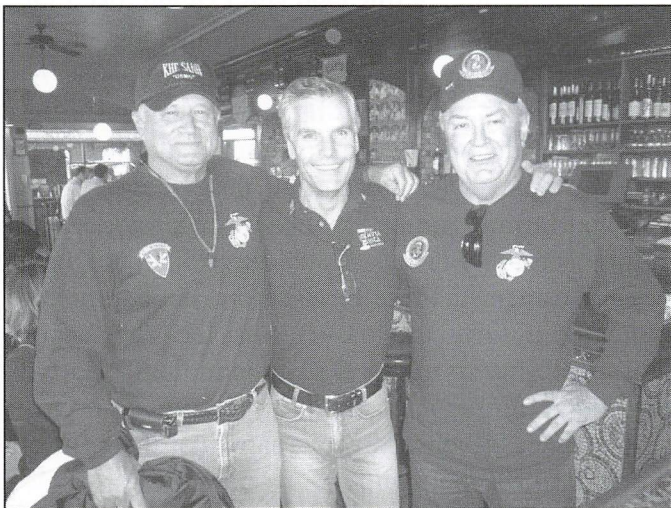
FLEET WEEK, SAN FRANCISCO

October 8, 2011

By Craig W. Tourte

I found myself this weekend with my good friend David Lind (H&S 2/4, battle of Dai Do, April 30 -

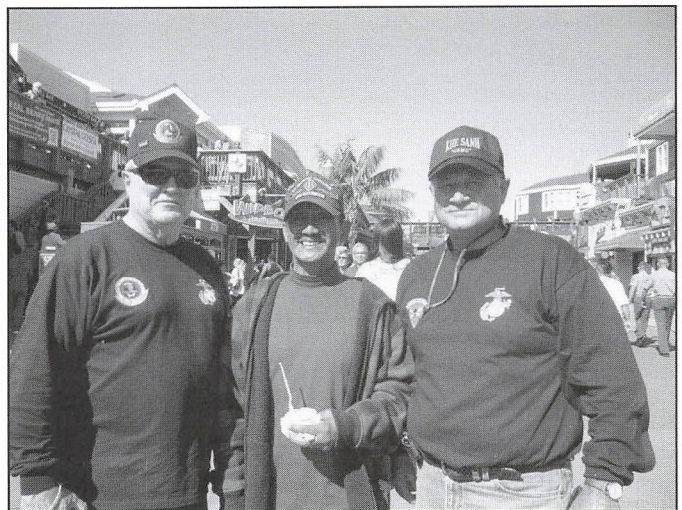
May 3, 1968) in San Francisco attending Fleet Week. Eight or so ships led by the aircraft carrier Carl Vinson from the United States Navy, a few from the Canadian Navy and the United States Coast Guard came through the fog of the Golden Gate Bridge and anchored in the bay and along the docks. You'll remember the Carl Vinson as the ship which conducted the burial at sea of Osama Bin



Laden's body on April 2, 2011. The Blue Angles F/A 18 Hornet aerobatic demonstration awed the many thousands. The United State Marine Corps 1st Expeditionary Force from Camp Pendleton was with the fleet. The Marine Band and Marine Corps exhibits along Pier 39 were big hits with the crowd, many having their photograph taken next to the Hummer painted in Marine Corps scarlet.



David and I were properly attired, I wearing my Khe Sanh USMC ball cap and David with his "Magnificent Bastards" 2 Battalion, 4th Marine ball cap. Both of us wore black shirts with the Marine Corps Eagle, Globe and Anchor.



Our first stop was the "Buena Vista" restaurant and bar located at 2765 Hyde Street near the Hyde Street Pier. There were few in the establishment that time of the morning as we sat alone at the bar. We became engaged in a conversation with Doug the manager who "Thanked us for our service." When we decided to get breakfast, Doug said the breakfast was on the house. I took off a "Home is where you dig it" pin from my hat and pinned in on Doug's shirt. His eyes lit up and he thanked us again. After we finished we decided to have an Irish coffee before we hit the road and Doug told us that was also on the house. We left grateful for his acknowledgment of all veterans.

We next found ourselves at the Marine Memorial Club & Hotel at 609 Sutter Street. Edda Rodriguez the Club manager was filling in for the usual staff that time of the morning. After an engaging dialogue with our new friend Edda she told us that our libations were on the Club and she "Thanked us for our service."

We returned to the Hyde Street Pier to the area of the Historic Ships where the C.A. Thayer, Eureka, Hercules, Alma Balcluta and the Eppleton Hall are docked for exhibit. We entered the Visitors Center/Ticket Booth to pay for our entry, there was a Park Ranger at the counter taking the entry fee, she noted our hats and shirts and said, "Thank you for your service" before handing us a couple of free passes and telling us have a good time.



We next wandered over to Pier 39 where the Navy and Marine Corps had set up various tents and exhibits. About a dozen or so members from the Marine Corps Band were playing some up beat tones and the crowd was really enjoying the sounds when a man who was standing in front of me turned around and noticed my Khe Sanh ball cap. He said that he was also a Khe Sanh Veterans. He didn't have a Khe Sanh ball cap but a division cap. He said that he had been an 0311 with 3/26 on 881. He was not aware of the association. I gave him a card with my name and email and wrote the name of the two web sites (Khe Sanh Veterans Home Page & Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc) and told him to email me his name and address and that I would send him a magazine and membership form. He was pretty darn excited and we spent about twenty minutes talking about our experiences.

We walked over to the Marine Corps exhibit drawn by the loud (rap type) music where hundreds stood around talking to the Marines and trying chin-ups on the bar they had set up to draw in the young people. We stood back about ten yards on a little rise in front of the exhibit. I was suddenly aware of someone standing next to me and turned to see a Marine Gunnery Sergeant. I noted his name tag to read "Garcia." Gunny Garcia "Thanked us for our service" and handed both of us a printed picture - in gold - of the flag rising at Mount Suribachi.

The rest of the day went on like that with many "Thank you for your service." I was stunned having never experienced anything like that before and especially considering I was in San Francisco. All in all it was a wonderful experience I'll not soon forget. When I arrived home at the train station and just before walking to my car I was approached by a young man carrying a backpack. He said that he had noticed me on the train and just wanted to say "Thank you for your service." What a day...

IF WE HAD JUST ONE MORE DAY

By Craig W. Tourte

-THEN-

Every time I come to this web site I spend just a few seconds viewing the photograph of our founder Ray Stubbe, ministering to Marines at Khe Sanh. Although I didn't personally have any contact with a minister during my ten or so months at Khe Sanh, there are many who did and all that I have spoken with had infinite praise for those who provided that comfort and guidance. Many have spoken about these fine men, their selfless heroics and sometime tragic and unfortunate loss. It must have been quite a responsibility trying to explain pain, loss, deprivation and suffering - and faith to young men in those circumstances, then again; perhaps just the comfort of devotion was enough.

To Whom Do I Pray

In boot camp (First Battalion, Platoon 1145, M.C.R.D. San Diego 1966) we had a kid by the name of Talbert R. Sakamoto. We all were required to attend Sunday religious services. As we stood in formation, Platoon Commander Staff Sergeant Golubski ordered, "All the Catholics over here, all

the Protestants over there and the Mormons stand there,” leaving Recruit Sakamoto standing by himself. “What religion are you?” Staff Sergeant Golubski asks Sakamoto, “Buddhist” was his response. Staff Sergeant Golubski doesn’t miss a beat and immediately instructs Sakamoto to attend religious services with the Protestants. You see, the Drill Instructors recognized that it didn’t matter whose God the Marine(s) served, whom he prayed too, how he prayed or what name he called his God or religion. What was important was that he had the opportunity to pray - or not - to whomever he wanted and it didn’t really matter who was around or where he was. Let me try to make this just a little simpler. One’s religion doesn’t make one special or better or worse than anyone else, it’s the opportunity to serve whom you please, that is what’s special, one of our inalienable rights and just one of the many principles Marines have fought and died for these many years.

-NOW-

I first posted the above in April 2010 and happened to come across it again. This is a most difficult time for us who are getting along in years. So many have been ill and left us too soon. Once strong and always brave men who served so gallantly. I said a little prayer at Khe Sanh and it went something like, **“Please let me live just one more day...”** I’m going to a funeral on Monday, the wife of a close friend of mine who I have known for over forty years passed on last week. She was ill for just a few months when her condition became such that she left us. We never know when it is our time and I was thinking if we all had “just one more day.” One more day to say the things we had wanted to say, one more day of life, I wish she had just one more day so that I could have hugged her and said goodbye but I waited too long and gave her a little wave at the door, thinking that she was going to be alright. Perhaps just one more day to say, I’m sorry or I love you. Just one more day is all we need, just one more day to make things right. Perhaps just one more day to ask for forgiveness and to tell others we forgive them. But most of us leave without having just one more day to do or say those things that should to be said. If we all only had, just one more day to make things right.

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS 3000 MARINE CORPS PENTAGON WASHINGTON, DC 20350-3000

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

SEP 12 2011

Secretary Panetta, as we explore ways across the Department to adjust to a new period of considerable fiscal austerity, there emerges a clear imperative that our Nation retain a credible means of mitigating risk while we draw down the capabilities and capacities of our forces.

Our Nation faces an uncertain future; we cannot predict where and when events may occur that might call us to respond to protect our citizens and our interests. There have always been times when events have compelled the United States to become involved, even when such involvement wasn't desired; there is little doubt that we will have to do this again in the future. Complicating matters is the fact that since the 1990s, our nation has significantly reduced the number and size of our bases and stations around the world.

We are a maritime nation. Like so much of the world, we rely on the maritime commons for the exchange of commerce and ideas. Many depend on us to maintain freedom of movement on those commons; we continue to take that responsibility seriously. Your naval forces are the solution set to fulfilling our global maritime responsibilities.

Naval forces are not reliant on host nation support or permission; in the conduct of operations, they step lightly on our allies and host countries. With the increasing concentration of the world's population close to a coastline, the ability to operate simultaneously on the sea, ashore, and in the air, and to move seamlessly between these three domains represents the unique value of amphibious forces. Operating as a team, amphibious forces provide **operational reach and agility**, they “buy time” and decision space for our national leaders in time of crisis. They bolster diplomatic initiatives by means of their credible forward presence. Amphibious

forces also provide the Nation with assured access for the joint force in a major contingency operation. Modern amphibious operations, like the TF-58 assault that seized Kandahar airport 450 miles inland in 2001 shortly after the 9/11 attacks, seek to avoid enemy strengths by exploiting gaps and weaknesses.

When the Nation pays the 'sticker price' for its Marines, it buys the ability to remain forward deployed and forward engaged to assure our partners, reinforce alliances, and build partner capacity. For 7.8% of the total 000 budget, our Nation gains the ability to respond to unexpected crises, from humanitarian disaster relief efforts, to non-combatant evacuation operations, to conduct counter-piracy operations, raids or strikes. That same force can quickly be reinforced to assure access anywhere in the world in the event of a major contingency; it can be dialed up or down like a rheostat to be relevant across the range of military operations. No other force possesses the flexibility to provide these capabilities and yet sustain itself Logistically for significant periods 0.1 time, at a time and place of its choosing.

"Expeditionary" is not a bumper sticker to us, or a concept, it is a "state of conditioning" that Marines work hard to maintain. Given its mission to be the expeditionary force in readiness, a tiered readiness concept is not compatible with the Marine Corps' missions because its non-deployed units are often called upon to respond to unanticipated and varied crises on a moment's notice.

The Marine Corps fills a unique lane in the capability range of America's armed forces. A *Middleweight* Force, we are lighter than the Army, and heavier than SOF. The Corps is not a second land army. The Army is purpose-built for land campaigns and carries a heavier punch when it arrives, whereas the Marine Corps is an expeditionary force focused on coming from the sea with integrated aviation and logistics capabilities. The Marine Corps maintains the ability to contribute to land campaigns by leveraging or rapidly aggregating its capabilities and capacities. Similarly, Marine Corps and SOF roles are complementary, rather than redundant. Special Operation Forces contribute to the counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism efforts of the Combatant Commanders in numerous and specialized ways, but they are not a substitute for conventional forces with a broader range of capability and sustainabil-

ity.

The Marine Corps was specifically directed by the 82nd Congress as the force intended to be "the most ready when the Nation is least ready." This expectation exists because of the costly lessons our nation learned during the Korean War when a lack of preparedness in the beginning stages of the conflict very nearly resulted in defeat. Because our Nation Cannot afford to hold the entire joint force at such a high state of readiness, it has chosen to keep the Marines ready, and has often used them to plug the gaps during international crises, to respond when no other options were available.

Anecdotally, the American people believe that when a crisis emerges - Marines will be present and will "invariably turn in a performance that is dramatically and decisively successful - not most of the time, but always." They possess a heart-felt belief that the Marine Corps is good for the young men and women of our country. In their view, the Marines are extraordinarily adept at converting "un-oriented youths into proud, self-reliant stable citizens - citizens into whose hands the nation's affairs may be safely entrusted." An investment in the Marine Corps continues to be an investment in the character of the young people of our country.

Finally, in an increasingly dangerous and uncertain world, we must continue to provide the protection our Nation needs and to preserve our ability to do what we must as the world's only credible remaining super power. As we face inevitable difficult resource decisions, I believe that we must also consider how we can best mitigate the inherent risk of a reduced defense capacity ... like an affordable insurance policy, Marine Corps and the Navy's amphibious forces, represent a very efficient and effective hedge against the Nation's most likely risks

**JAMES F. AMOS
COMMANDANT USMC**



IN THIS RED EARTH, BLOODLUST FOR SURVIVAL

A GREEN BERET MEDIC

AT KHE SANH

"DRUGS AND DEATH"

*By Denis Chericone U.S. Army Special Forces
Medic 1967-1968*

**REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM BAY
STATE VIETNAM VETERAN**

It took at least three weeks of raging siege to explode Dada into the relative solace of drugs. He offers no excuses about his drug usage. In fact, he says without the presence of some hard-core drugs at Khe Sanh, he would have probably lost his mind and messed up more than a few wounded guys because the situations were always so nerve-wracking that if he hadn't been under the influence of something, he would have screwed up the sensitive emergency procedures that were necessary to grab back his comrades from the arms of death.

He never even knew he was getting hooked on drugs when he was taking them because the siege had ways of diverting attention from certain evolutions within oneself. I can imagine: A man is laying in the middle of an open and exposed area wounded with shells bursting all around him. He cannot, cannot move because of his wounds and he lays there, naked to the searing metal heating the air and Dada was one of the few men who had to, just had to go out and drag the man to safety. Yeah, safety, a hole in the ground. Dada told it so clearly, as if it was something that had happened to him just moments before and even I knew then that this was a something he was never going to forget.

"We spent the first five days under the shells filling sandbags and learning basics, like knowing when to dive for cover. Yeah, basics, sandbags, we must've filled a million of 'em. We were all so tired, so very, very tired, but we had to get the base ready for the attack we knew was going to come after they stopped shelling us. We had to fill sandbags, dig deep slit trenches, re-enforce the flimsy structures we'd already put up and then, get this, because it was after some guys got hurt while they were taking

a dump, we had to bury our shithouse underground. An underground shithouse, hell, even then, so early on, I learned to get in, drop my pants, eliminate and get out in all of about twelve seconds.

Talk about some of the hemorrhoids I saw during the siege. Everyone became an expert quick shitter. I was the one who had to go in take out and pull the wounded guys out. The sight was enough for all us. No one lingered after that, no more daydreaming while eliminating ... Believe me, no one " Dada laughed cynically, "Talk about feeling vulnerable yeah, I love it when people tell me they're feeling vulnerable now days. Just love it...It took us five days around the clock, working to get things in minimal shape for the attack. It seemed the shelling grew more severe every hour, but we worked, until we were ready to drop and I stayed awake for those five days, wide awake, son, wide eyed, wide awake.

We were given the best speed the army had in its drug arsenal then to get the job done. Of course no one said anything about taking the speed because everyone knew we simply had to because we were going to die if we didn't get our area ready for the North Vietnamese and after five days and nights of working, digging, sweating, cringing, cowering, carrying, throwing and lifting, I fell asleep on the nude ground, fell asleep in the middle of one of the worst rocket barrages of the siege and you know, I was so tired, I just didn't care if I died or not. They launched about two hundred of their big one-two-two rockets at us that night and I just didn't give a shit.

I found a very comfortable casualty bag, crawled inside, put my helmet under my head and fell asleep for fourteen hours, from 8 p.m. to 10 a.m. and none of my friends bothered me. When the rockets began coming in they yelled at me to come into the trench with them, but I didn't care, just didn't. I waved at them and said, 'Tomorrow, guys.' I remember them screaming at me that I was going to die, but I just curled up within the sheep-skin of that bag and drifted into my first good night's sleep in quite awhile. They finally got pissed off at me and let me alone and the next morning I could hear them whispering to one another, 'You think he's still alive? Think he got hit?' and when I popped up out of the bag and yelled, 'F_ THE GOOKS CAUSE THEY MISSED !!!!!' All my buddies laughed and

cheered. I laughed, too, and it was one of the last times I laughed at Khe Sanh.

I liked the speed immediately. I'd never taken it before and this particular kind, was wonderful because they'd added an agent to it that prevented you from becoming depressed once it wore off. Christ Almighty, it was powerful, potent stuff. There were times . . . there were times when I was so high on the stuff that I would try to get myself killed. I would scream into the face of certain death. One time one of our choppers was shot down inserting a team into Laos and they'd called us for an immediate rescue. I'd just dropped about three of those pills and was feeling real good, real good, so I volunteered to go over the line with the rescue team to pull them out and when we hit the crash

I sat in the door of the chopper screaming down at the little People who were all shooting at us, 'YOU CAN'T KILL ME! YOU CAN'T Kill ME!' Dada paused a moment, musing, a slow smile growing on his face. "I dunno . . . dunno why I wasn't dropped in my tracks right then. I should've been. I was the perfect target, perfect and I presented myself like that more than once to the Little People.

When I wasn't on some kind of dope, I didn't feel like that, that's for sure. Yeah, the army had a dope for every occasion and I found out about all of 'em."

Dada found out about them all right. He found out about them the hard way, stone-cold hard, the hard of necessity, desperation, the dead-end of perspective, the wasteland of no other choices. The amphetamines just didn't do it for him, though, at least not with death. They could handle the boredom, the dangers, the gnawing unknowns even, you know, the moments when the combatant has time to lay back and wonder what dark, black shrouded desolation the sun is going to drag into his smoking and bitter world in what Dada told me should have been spelled "mourning" instead of the one that means a new day.

"Yeah, new day ... I used to look at the prospect of another day of bombs in the same way as if my neighborhood back home had been infested by the plague and it was only a matter of some time, a few moments, yeah, ha-ha, a few moments before it got to my house and started painting the exploding boils

on my family ... family and those guys were certainly my family ... and I felt closer to them than I ever did to my own family and for awhile, I'd feel guilty about that, but after a few thousand more pregnant bombs aborting their explosions, I didn't give a shit anymore, it just didn't matter."

Dada's ideas, views, beliefs on the war, his war, from the war, his war, were not always similar to the beliefs of people who think they know something about war. When he talked about the other guys at Khe Sanh being his family, he didn't mean anything else but family, blood family. Their blood ran outside of their bodies and I guess it makes a stronger bond that way. They were his brothers, uncles and in a few cases, his father. He never told me it directly, but I understood, even without his saying anything about it, that he loved those men he lived with during the siege. Life becomes, among other things, compressed in war. There's not much time to edge around friendships just to make sure the potential friend is not going to screw you over. You either make friends or you don't and Dada said there weren't too many guys who didn't make friends.

"I needed friends. Had to have friends, had to. There was one of this 'not make friends' shit because they might get killed. At least friends gave you the illusion that you could maybe survive a little longer or come out of a raw spot with ' your balls still hanging on ... It was so intense having friends, intense . . . it was compressed like everything else, the love of it, I mean . . . ' yeah, love . . . I know it sounds strange, but that was it . . . that was all of it . . . I mean . . . what is it that makes a man run out into the middle of exploding metal, white-hot bits of killer steel, hunting for fresh, flesh, yeah, hunting ... it was alive ... what makes someone do that, run out into stalking death to pull a friend to safety? WHAT? WHAT? ... Tell me, it's anything else but love, anything and I'll tell you don't know what you're talking about, at all ... We would do anything for each other, anything."

Dada grew hot, passionate whenever he would tell me of the sacrifices the men would make for each other. His face glowed in a way I can only compare to the faces of old women praying alone in a cool, quiet and softly shadowed church on an autumn afternoon. If this was a belief or an expression of faith, Dada believed it deeply and possessed as

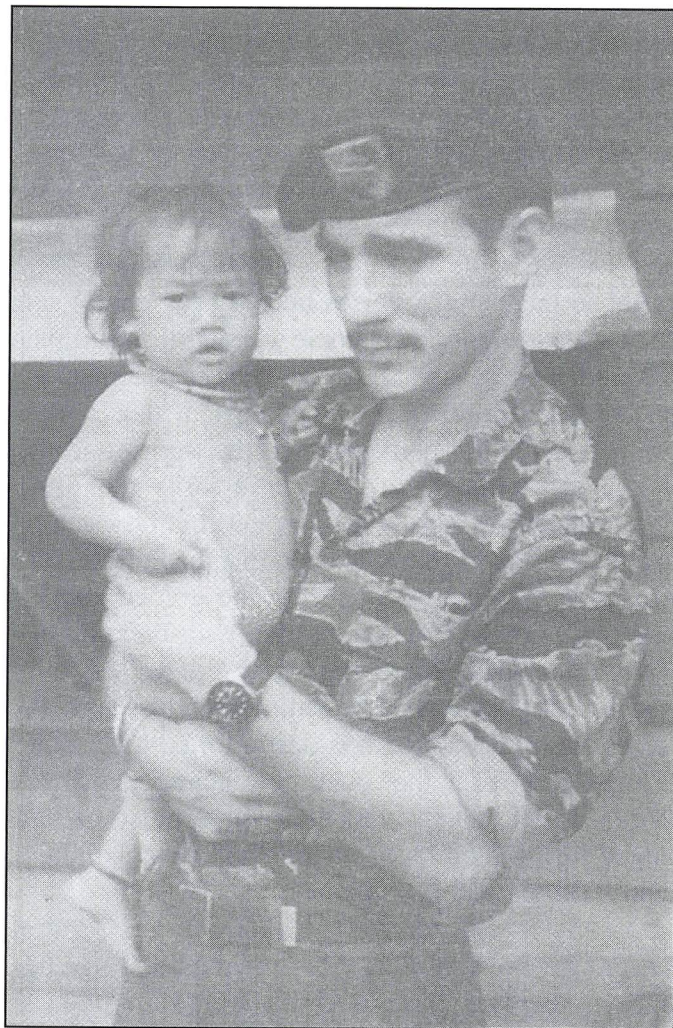
much faith as those women and the people who taught them the fundamentals of faith.

"But friends couldn't do all of it, all that it took to put up with the intrusions, sacrifices, unending sacrifices and insanities that come with combat, war or whatever else you call it when large groups of people are at each others' throats ... Yeah, my buddies could wrap an arm around me or hold me when the tears were sweeping my legs out from underneath me. They could bring me back when I caught the speed of light and traveled a little too far, a little too fast and suddenly found myself out in a place that nobody knew existed and if they did, they sure as shit didn't want to go there ... " Dada's voice grew softer, "Sometimes when I looked at a scene of such extreme horror that it hit me in the chest like a heart attack and then all of a sudden I was looking at pieces of precision, reality, there was a crack in the air, many cracks and it was what was left of my world, the world I knew, had known and there was something behind the fragments of the horror that were splayed before my eyes and death became fractured, fractured like the bodies themselves . . . what lay before my sight was so entirely harsh and merciless not even nature itself was able to portray it in its own reality ... I dunno, I dunno, son, I'm not sure I can describe this as it happened or appeared . I do know that when shit like this occurred I usually wound up desperately, and I mean desperately, seeking out some strong, Jackass narcotics, anything really that would take that scene away or maybe, hopefully, lessen its impact on my heart, soul and mind The first time I needed some medication . . . the first time I the first time ... " Dada went quiet for a moment. His eyes fell or drifted into the stream of years between then and now and finally came to rest on the moment he first needed the drug.

"I drank half a pint of paregoric straight down and I was breathing so hard that I gagged on my own breath, not the drug, but my own breath people think being a junkie is fun or easy or something anything but what it really is .. rough, demanding and very, very unpredictable work ... and most of them think you're just being irresponsible because you're maintaining a habit or wanting to get high; but I never did it to get high, never. I just did it to get to that place where I couldn't see or feel those scenes anymore. Yeah, it'd be nice, so nice if they could walk up to you and go, 'Here's your war pills.

Take three a day and one before bedtime and you'll never ever even believe you were in a war after a few weeks. You'll laugh when you hear the word, 'WAR!' Ha-ha. Ah, f_ what they think ... "

Sometimes Dada would really get going and sometimes he was glorious ... prolific, poetic, proud but not arrogant and most importantly, at least for me, patient. There was so much about the military, especially the war part, that was most impermeable to my understanding. It was another world to me, a world my father had lived in for three years, but one



Special Forces Medic, Denis Chericone worked, and is still working on making this baby well. She had a very bad case of dysentery mimicking cholera. She is getting better, as you can see through tender care and a good diet, it's taking effect.

that was confusing because the things Dada would tell me about the military and yes, especially war, contrasted so dramatically to what my world fed me

about warfare. .

It wasn't quite how popular culture portrayed it, not even close. Bullets and bombs don't play favorites and they don't give a shit how good looking you are or how big your muscles may bulge. Oh, how Dada would laugh when those celluloid soldiers took out the bad guys. Laugh, laugh, laugh. "Yeah, look, John Wayne parting the machine gun slugs like Moses walking through the Red Sea. Ha-ha, ha, ha, ha ... " I often wondered what I myself would have done in Dada's place.

Who would have told him the truth about war and it made me realize that he never stood much of a chance in avoiding it because he never had many choices. He just didn't know there were any choices because there was never anybody in his life to give him any. Everybody was still beguiled by the whipping we gave the Germans and Nipponese. They were bad guys and America helped beat 'em. When Dada was a young kid, people were still proud that they did those nasty Nazis and Nips in and good, too. War accomplished good things in those days, not, at best, moral confusions in the troops and the confusions, while they didn't necessarily make the men hesitate to pull the trigger, get the job done or do whatever it took to survive, did manage to surface once they made it back to the golden shores. And that's what Dada had to live with once he began to understand that things weren't exactly like he dreamed they'd be when he returned home. Horne, it had been a hope, a dream, a desire for so long while he was in the war that once he reached it, he was confused and lost. It wasn't the same place he had longed for. Something, someone had changed, drastically, deeply and it was him.

He thought he would be able to leave the drugs behind in the war once he'd made it; but he was wrong, so very, very wrong. After the rush of happiness began to wear off and he discovered that home was just as confusing and almost as deadly as the combat zone, he reached for the one thing which had provided for him in times of extreme distress while under the gun: drugs.

A CRYING SOLDIER'S PRAYER

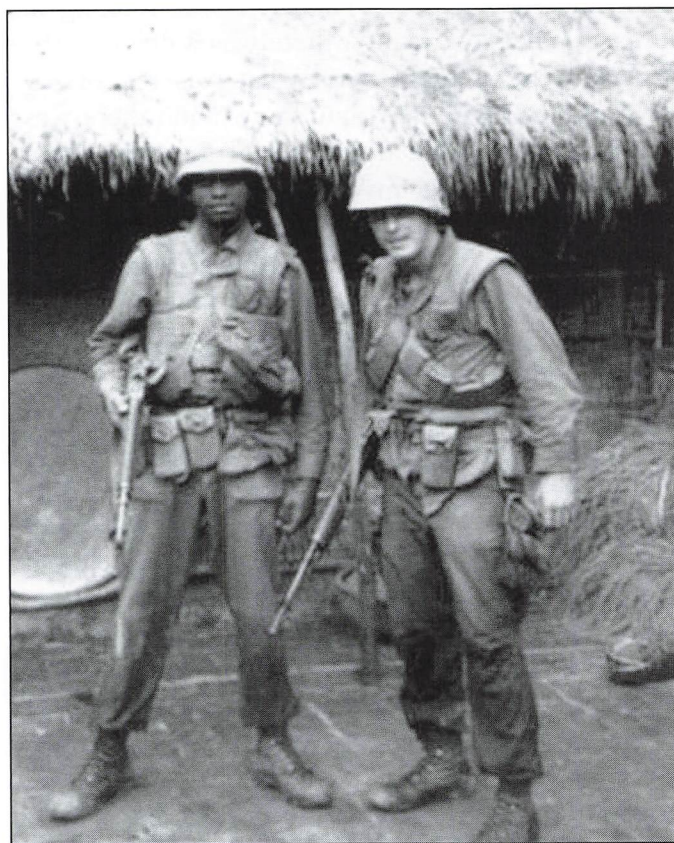
1966 VIETNAM

CPL Ronald Gulbranson

A/CO 1/26

By Bette Trantum-Mallow
Tribune Correspondent

"The monsoons had stopped. It was so hot, so very hot, and the war was raging all around us. "June 27, 1967, I had been there for eight months. I was 22 years old when I arrived and celebrated my 23rd birthday on Hill 881 in Vietnam, arriving in Khe Sanh, as a replacement troop with the 26th Marines Regiment A Company 2nd Platoon, 1st Squad, the previous October 1966.



"Eight months of agonizing fighting and watching my buddies and friends blown up with mortar attacks. A horrifying time of life or death in a horrifying place called Vietnam." These words were from the Marine who spent eight long months fighting for his country while knowing each day or minute could be his last - **Marine Cpl. Ronald Gulbranson of Knobley Road, Keyser.** "I depended on God, my buddies and letters from my girl friend,

who later became my wife, Peggy, to get me through," he said.

The day had started much like most of the other days - fighting in and around a foxhole and listening to the sounds of war all around and hearing the cry of the wounded everywhere. "I jumped into a large foxhole as a mortar round started coming to my right in a barrage of three. Some of my buddies became casualties. My lieutenant came towards me, he said, 'Get your men together, we're moving out as soon as this barrage is over.' As squad leader, it was my job to get them moving. "As we were talking, another round landed directly in front of us, about 100 meters away. Knowing that the North Vietnamese Army was shooting in rounds of three, I told my lieutenant to 'jump in! jump in!,' The third round landed in my foxhole, my lieutenant was dead and I was severely wounded. My legs felt numb, but I got to my feet, dazed.

One of the guys was screaming that his hand was gone. Another buddy, Rodriguez, was screaming with head injuries and reaching for me. Both of my knees had been hit and I couldn't hold him, so we fell back into the foxhole. He was dead. "The NVA fired another round directly into our foxhole. I was hit in the stomach, left side of the chest, and the upper part of my arm and shoulder, and both knees. I later found out my lung had been perforated, and the sac around my heart was torn. All around me was the cry, 'Oh my God, Help Me.' It seemed to be coming from everywhere," Gulbranson said. "My friend and good buddy Neil Shaffer was asking 'Gil are you alright?' "I can't move,' I answered. 'Move Rodriguez off of me.' We knew he was dead, I had felt the life leave his body.. There were other dead bodies on top of Rodriguez and he had to move them also. I mustered all the strength I could and slid out from under them.

"Seven men had died around me and I was covered in their blood and there was a pool of blood forming in the foxhole. Someone was yelling for him to come on. I managed to crawl out. I pulled myself up on my captain's knee, I could feel my blood pressure dropping and I felt that I was going to die. I told him to tell my mother that I had been attending services and praying while I was there. He promised, 'I will,' and I knew that if he survived he would.

"I managed to crawl away and I pulled my New Testament out of my pocket. Pain was setting in and it was agonizing. I was preparing to die. I was screaming, 'God Help me!' and I will never forget that feeling.

"All of a sudden, I had the sensation of floating about chest high, the pain and bleeding actually stopped, and then nothing. Someone found me and placed me on a mule (like a four wheeler with a bed on the back). As we were headed for a first aid station, we were fired on, the driver hit what seemed to be a log and I went flying through the air, and was dragged along by one foot. I yelled and he stopped and put me back on and I lost consciousness again. "I regained consciousness among a pile of dead Marines, they had placed me there for pickup, thinking I was dead. I raised up on an elbow and saw a light coming towards me. A Marine saw me and said, 'We have to get him to an aid station. I lost consciousness again and woke up when we went through the door of the aid station.

"Are there any doctors here?' I asked. I don't think there were, I think it was just a lot of brave men bandaging the most severely wounded and tagging them. I saw my chaplain, David Menske, and yelled for him. After praying with me he said, 'There's only one chopper coming for the wounded, and we have to get you tagged and out on the airstrip.'



"I think it was only by the Grace of God that I was lucid enough to recognize the chaplain. The doctors told me later if he had not tagged me and got me on that chopper, I would surely have died. I blacked out again, only to wake up and see the bottom of a

large chopper descending. What brave men they were, the medics! While they were loading up, I heard one medic say 'There is only room for one more, the Marine beside me was not moving, so I raised my hand. They stepped over him and picked me up. The last thing I remember was being loaded into an ambulance truck.

"I came to sometime between the chopper ride from Khe Sanh and the Phu Bai Hospital. I had an IV connected to my arm. Lying there in the emergency room on a cot, a priest came over to me, he had his Bible open and was giving me last rites in Latin. The doctor was working on another Marine when my knee started pumping out blood. It was squirting across the floor with every beat of my heart. I hollered and they came over and put pressure on it. The doctor also rolled me up on my side because I was short of breath. He wanted to insert a tube in my left lung. He couldn't get the tube between the ribs because he cut back too far, so he cut again.

"I remember him saying, 'Major surgery with no light. Get him to Danang for abdominal surgery.' 'Every thing went dark again. When I came to again, I was still clinging to my little Testament. I was removed from the plane to another chopper. 'Amazing enough, God had kept me alive. I don't remember the ride to the Danang Hospital, but when I regained consciousness, I was lying on a marble slab by myself. Every once in a while a Navy corpsman would look around the corner. I guess to see if I was still alive. I was still covered with Rodriguez's blood. I said to myself, the next time I see one of them I'll holler and I did. I said, 'I'm in a lot of pain, I need help.' A short time went by and then two corpsmen came and rolled me over onto a cot with wheels and took me into Xray. I will never forget the pain as they rolled me from one side to the other. I could feel the steel shrapnel cutting the inside of my body.

"I lost consciousness again only to wake up looking at a man's face. I will always remember his face and the comfort his presence gave me. In a comforting voice, he said 'Everything will be all right buddy' I was in the operating room and don't remember anything until I woke up in the Intensive Care Unit. After 10 to 12 days in the ICU, during which time General Cushing presented me with the Purple Heart, I was sent to Bethesda Naval Hospital. I was

back on U.S. soil. I spent almost 9 months at Bethesda. I had to have one more surgery for skin grafts and to recover from my wounds. Then I was discharged to go home. I received a medical retirement from the Marine Corps with General Cushing signing my retirement certificate.

"It has been over four decades since the attack at Khe Sanh, and there is never a day that goes by that I don't think about it. And I think about what God and the medics did for me that day. "About two years ago I started dreaming about what happened and how God was there for me. Almost every night I would wake about 2:30 with the thoughts of what I was dreaming, I feel God was telling me it was time to tell my story. I have done a lot of praying, crying and shaking, it has been really hard to recount those terrible days, but after telling and talking about it and giving my testimony for God, the dreams have stopped and I am at peace. My story is told.

"Thirty-eight years later in 2005 I got to meet my chaplain again. I had read an ad for a reunion of Khe Sanh, I called and talked to the present chaplain and he gave me Meschke's phone number at his home in Altoona, Pa., for a meeting and we decided to meet for lunch. He spoke at my church, Mt Zion, later that year. I had the privilege of introducing him to my family, friends and church family. I said he was my hero, and he responded 'I'm no hero, all I did was console you and pray for you'. "That was what I needed and God did the rest. "My friend, Dalton Rogers, wrote my story as I gave it to him into a song titled 'A Crying Soldier's Prayer,' and the song is sung by Ed Elza, a local musician, with music put to the words by Dick Atkinson, who has a recording studio in Eckhart, Md. "I will always remember the screaming, 'Oh, my God, help me!' and how God smiled on me, allowing me to live. The CD is finished, my story has been told.

"One last thought, my little Testament that was such a comfort; I kept with me always, until it and my suitcase were stole from me in a hotel where I was with my son Charles, who is now a lawyer in Texas. I hope the thief gets the same comfort from it as I did in Vietnam.

"The proceeds from the CD will be donated to a church. I dedicate this story and CD to all my broth-

ers and sisters who served in Vietnam. A special thanks to my mother, Mary, my second mother, Marg, and to my brother, Dr. Tom and to my sisters Nan and Denise, to my wife, Peggy, who had been steadfast throughout the whole ordeal and to my children, Rhonda, Charles and Brian, for all their support and prayers.

"I love you all. To My God...Thank you forever!"

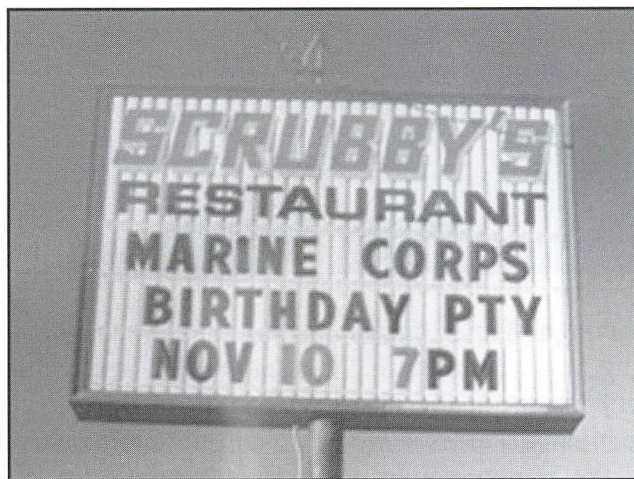
A BIRTHDAY TRADITION

By Mike Bradbury
K CO 3/26

I had left for the cemetery to participate in the lying of the wreaths for Veterans Day. That night we gathered for a time-honored tradition that goes back a lot further than that.

On the 236th anniversary of the U.S. Marine Corps, Marines everywhere gathered someplace to celebrate the birthday. If there are only 2 or 3 living in the smallest of towns, they'll get together at the local coffee shop on the 10th.

There was a time here in Mountain Home when there were only 6 of us who we knew of, and we'd meet at the old Scrubby's Restaurant



This particular gathering was in 1996. The "bearded guy" on the end is me.....then Dave La-bar, Denny Densley, Brian Krazcnavggi, Chuck Abrahamson and our then Marine Corps League Commandant, Brett Allies.



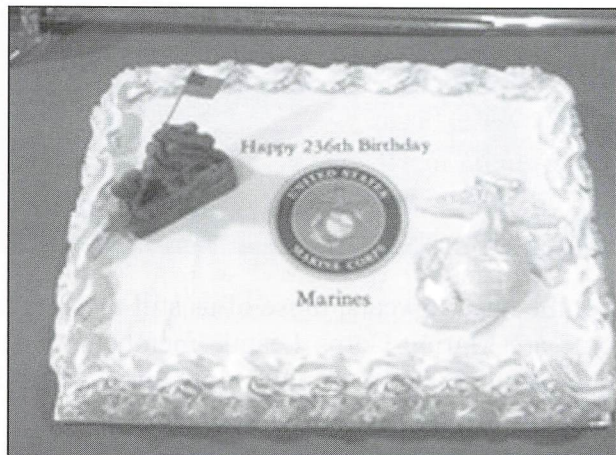
Over the next 15 years, those of us still in Mountain Home are Marine Corps League members, and include the wives and kids now at our annual birthday celebrations. We had it at A.J.'s that night.

After dinner and the announcements, we all stood and sang the Marine Corps Anthem. My old buddy Irv Levine was our Guest of Honor, and he & I provided the music



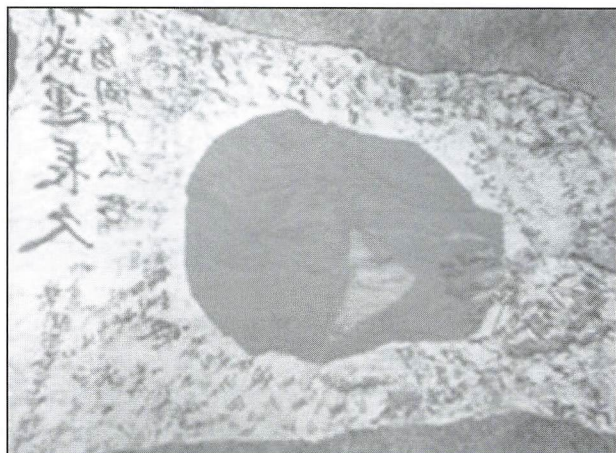
Irv, an old F-105 fighter pilot who had flown missions at Khe Sanh, sang Marine songs that he wrote. I sang the "Ballad of Ira Hayes and finished up with a patriotic instrumental medley. It was my

first time in public since the hand surgery---it felt good!. A good time was had by all, and then it was time to cut the cake.....and of course, it can't just be any old cake!.



By Corps tradition, the oldest Marine present, always gets the first piece of cake and hands it to the youngest Marine present. If you have a Guest of Honor, he gets the first piece, so fighter pilot Irv found himself right in the middle of things.

One of the guys, brought a flag his uncle took off a dead Japanese soldier on Iwo Jima, That was a real



piece of history

There is no such thing as an "ex"....."Once a Marine, always a Marine".....and Marines will celebrate the birthday every November 10th until the earth no longer exist! his is not a put-down, just a fact.....but I'd bet that most servicemen from the other branches don't know the year their branch was founded, let alone the actual date.....without having to look it up. I doubt that anyone else but Marines get together every year to celebrate the birthday!

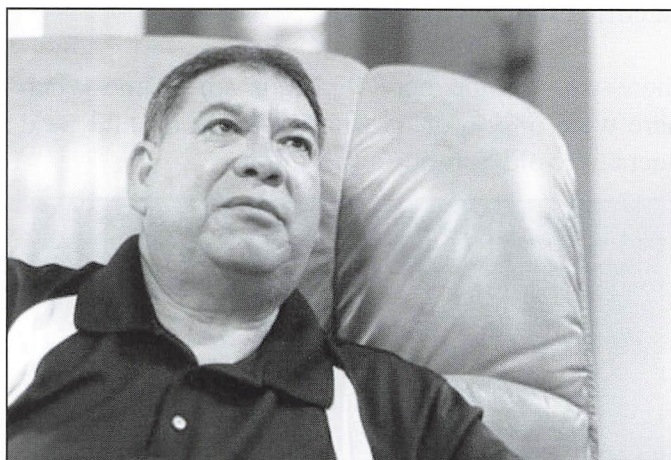
It's more than just a branch of the service.....it's a brotherhood, and one I've always been proud to be a part of.

Semper Fi

KHE SANH VETERANS IN THE NEWS

RAY E. TORRES USN
E CO 2/26 HILL 861A

STERLING – Tears flood Ray E. Torres' cheeks as he recalls a nightmare. A wounded survivor of the



Vietnam War's longest battle, the 64-year-old Sterling man appeared in "Vietnam in HD" a documentary airing on the History Channel in three 2-hour segments. Torres served in 1968, the bloodiest year of the Vietnam War, when 16,592 Americans died, according to the documentary produced by Lou Reda Productions. His story will surprise many in the community, Torres said. He almost never discusses the war, to avoid "uncontrollable outbursts of emotion."

"They probably never realized what I went

through,” he said. “I know when I see people out in the street now, after they see the movie, that they’re going to be coming up to me, and I am going to have a hard time.” The documentary will focus on Torres’ experience at Khe Sanh. He read that more bombs were dropped there than anywhere else in the history of aerial warfare.

The North Vietnamese Army violated a truce on Jan. 31, 1968, by attacking Khe Sanh and all of South Vietnam on Tet, the Vietnamese New Year, in an action known as the Tet Offensive. At Khe Sanh, the siege lasted 77 days. The 6,000 Marines fought against 20,000 to 40,000 enemy soldiers. “It was probably the biggest battle of all of Vietnam,” Torres said. Torres, a 1965 graduate of Sterling High School, was a Navy corpsman with the Marines. Stationed in the dangerous trenches of Hill 861A, he knew the only way down, before the battle ended, would be with a wound or in a body bag.

One day, the North Vietnamese Army hit a platoon hard, and Torres, trained as a medic, rushed to the scene. He found four Marines wounded by grenades. As he checked the men, all wounded or dead, another grenade landed in a foxhole and exploded 2 or 3 feet from him. “In that couple seconds, your whole life flashes before you,” he said. The blast lifted Torres off the ground and threw him. He suffered a concussion, multiple injuries to both legs and an arm, and two ruptured eardrums. When he shielded his face, a nail went through his hand. Shrapnel, dirt and rocks also blew into his eyes, impairing his vision. The corpsman, who always tried to rescue others, screamed for someone to save him. Through mortar, rifle and machine gun fire, and exploding grenades, another corpsman heard his cry. The Marine tried to drag Torres to the company aid station, but a large boulder stood in their way. The corpsman told Torres, who did not think he could walk, to hop out of the trench as soon as he yelled and started firing. “To this day, I don’t know how I got over that rock,” Torres said. “And I don’t know if he got out alive or not. ... He saved my life.” Marines cut off Torres’ clothes to assess his injuries. As the fighting continued, tear gas blew into his wounds.

The Americans eventually overpowered the enemy there in hand-to-hand combat. The next morning, Torres was to be loaded onto a Medevac helicopter.

It was crowded, so he was told to wait for the next one. Torres believes someone was watching out for him – the enemy fired at the chopper he almost boarded, and it crashed. “I always feel guilty about making it out; and the other ones ...” he trailed off.

Torres still has ringing in his ears caused by nerve damage, as well as some hearing loss. An irremovable piece of metal is lodged in his knee. And he struggles to sleep soundly. His wife, Caroline, 61, and his family are proud of him. “We feel very fortunate,” she said. “Ray’s been a very strong person, and a very good leader, and just a very good example through all these tough times for himself, physically and mentally.” Torres, who was awarded the Purple Heart, recognizes that many others also were affected by the war. Even unwounded soldiers should be considered casualties, he said.

Overcome with emotion, Torres did not talk about Vietnam for 28 years. His family never knew the details until his son, Ray Jr., asked him to speak to his history class at Sauk Valley Community College in 1996. Honored, Torres agreed. His presentation included war stories before Khe Sanh. With permission, Tom Tegge, the professor, filmed Torres’ presentation. Years later, he included footage in a documentary for the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Lou Reda Productions, a company that makes documentaries for the History Channel, saw the presentation and left Torres a message last November.

“I had to play it over and over to make sure it was not a joke,” Torres said, according to his biography provided by the History Channel. The company asked him to appear in the documentary. Worried about his emotions, Torres hesitated, but eventually agreed in hopes of leaving a legacy for his children. His family includes Tanya (John) Craft, 37, and Thomas (Michelle) Torres, 31, both of Sterling, and Ray Jr. (engaged to Magen Steele), 35, of Montgomery; and five grandchildren. In March, Lou Reda Productions flew Torres and his wife to Pennsylvania for filming. They enjoyed a fancy hotel and limo, all paid for by the company. “I never in my wildest dreams had ever imagined that something like this could ever happen to me,” Torres said, according to his biography. “It is truly humbling, and an honor, and something I will cherish for the rest of my life.”

"Scott L. Reda, an executive producer for Lou Reda Productions, praised the Sterling veteran. Talking to Torres, Reda said, helped him realize all the stress and work involved with producing the documentary was worth while. Reda hopes viewers will respond. "We want everyone in this country to hug a Vietnam vet," he said. The History Channel will fly Torres and his wife to D.C., on Veterans Day to attend the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Award Ceremony at the Capital Hilton Presidential Ballroom. The all-expenses-paid trips and recognition, however, will not relieve the heavy burden Torres carries. He will never forget the fallen Marines he served alongside. "We didn't need to lose all those lives there," he said, choking on his words. "...They were all so young. ... To this day, I can't get over that." About "Vietnam in HD" "Vietnam in HD" a 6-hour documentary covering the war from 1961 to 1975, aired on the History Channel. Torres was featured on a segment in regards to the battle on Hill 861A on 05 Feb 1968, when the Hill was overrun by the NVA.

GOD BLESS ALL NURSES

By Lloyd R. GOWER
W/BTRY 1/13



Write Today To Honor The Nurses Who Served Us In Vietnam

In 2010 I attended an Historical camp in the State of Ohio, we referred to it as "The Eastern Primitive Rendezvous." Sitting on a wooden stool by a group camp fire, American and Canadian campers were discussing the current conflicts in Iraq & Afghanistan, and the plight of the many "Wounded Warri-

ors."

When it was my time to speak I informed the group that I served in the U.S. Marine Corps during the Vietnam War and was severely burned at the Khe Sanh Combat Base in North Vietnam. The protective concertina wire we had erected around our perimeter had become overgrown with elephant grass.

Utilizing JP4 & gasoline, during the afternoon heat we had just spread both fuel on the overgrowth, when someone prematurely touched of the fuel before we could all get clear. I became enveloped in a fireball and was burned over my whole body including my Hair, face. Ears, and upper body. Fortunately a corpsman was right there treating my burns and administering Morphine.

When I awoke, I was on a stretcher in a helicopter being medivaced. I was then transferred to a C-130 and flown to the Air Force Hospital in Cam Rahn Bay. Infection was already setting in, and my skin began to split apart, getting worse by the minute, I fell in and out of consciousness.

A nurse pulled a mattress across the ward floor and placed it between me and another wounded Marine. She continually treated her patients, draining wounds, keeping liquids on my burns, changing bandages, and anything else she could do to make us as comfortable as possible.

At lunch time she brought in food and fed it spoonful by spoonful to myself and another Marine, occasionally taking a spoonful herself, making it a picnic like atmosphere. She worked and cared for her patients 24 hours a day. She constantly reassured her patients that they would recover and never let them give up hope.

After three weeks at the Air Force Hospital I was flown to the 6th Army convalescent Center to complete my recovery. When my wounds finally healed I returned to Whiskey Battery 1/13 at Khe Sanh. I never did get the name of that wonderful nurse, or even get to thank her. But from that day on I held all nurses in the highest regard.

At Khe Sanh things became worse, with the constant enemy barrages. Construction began on a Medical Bunker, and helicopters with medical

markings flew in and out of the base when they could. During one of their runs a Medical Helicopter was shot down near the bunker and numerous Medical Personnel and Marines were wounded. I never did learn how many were actually KIA.

Ned Thompson who was also at the Rendezvous, informed the group that his wife was a nurse in Vietnam on a Medical Helicopter and recalled that incident. She had terrible memories of her Vietnam experiences, and even though he tried to help her, one day she just walked away and disappeared. Just another casualty of the Vietnam War.

I offer this poetry from an unknown nurse, also a victim of the War in South East Asia.

Lloyd R. Gower
Corporal USMC
W/Btry 1/13 -3/26
Khe Sanh

POETRY

A Nurses Tribute:

TAKE MY HAND

I gaze, alone, at my reflection in the black granite wall, The memories of hell, Vietnam, are so very easy to recall. The smells, the wet, the whirring of a Huey's noisy blades, Sweep over me and remind me of a debt that's still unpaid. For it was in that damp, dark land my soul did find its heart,
And my childhood dreams of happy innocence forever did depart. For was there, dying soldiers taught what it really means to give, And through their death I learned what it really means to live.

My journey and my mission in that dark and death-filled land, Was to remain with dying soldiers and to offer them my hand. I never heard their laughter, and I never knew their joy,

I only shared the part of them that war was trying to destroy. But though their bodies were broken, so many beyond all hope The valor of each soldier was courageous above all scope. Their pained and anguished faces, I will forever preserve. With such valor and greatness I, a very young girl served.

And when I heard their prayer, "Please God, let me

remain", I promised each and everyone they would not die in vain.

It seemed so simple that first time, after all, just a single name. The promise easy, until the list was proportional to its' shame. My sight now from tears has blurred, my memory has faded. God forgive me, I can't recall one name of a soldier that I aided. So I've come to this special place to make my peace at last.

To say hello, to cry goodbye, to say I'm sorry for the past.

In the quiet early morning from the Wall, a voice did speak. He said "I'm that first soldier whose name you've come to seek. You'll find me on this panel built to honor all who died,

Just place your hand upon the wall and I will be your guide". The soldier had the answers that I had sought so long He told me I had forgiveness, he told me all blame was gone. For it was that first dying soldier who taught me how to live And through his death I learned what it really means to give.

DEAR SOLDIER:

Gentlehawk Talks to Them

My heart remembers you so clearly, like it was yesterday. Your final hours confused me so, I almost lost my way.

I've tried to remember your names but your faces have grown dim. If only I could just recall if you were Vince or Bill or Jim.

I remember your frightened journey from that death filled land

I walked that road beside you and you took my outstretched hand. I now see your face reflected here, reaching out in love to me

You know I would have traded places but it wasn't meant to be.

[I'm saddened by all the memories, yet I will never let them go, Because soldier, I too, left a piece of me in that war so long ~go. You asked if I'd remem-

ber you, and I promised that I would

I told the world you would have stayed if only that you could.

I ask for your forgiveness, and for you to know how hard I tried. You are in my dreams, my sleepless nights and always when I cry. The memory of your screams come to me even in quiet thought, Screams still, so loud within my soul, I wonder what they bought.

How can I who cared so much forget a name and face so clear,

Of one who shared their soul with me in a long past sad, sad year? So, from the prison of my mind I have come to unlock the door. To talk to you my soldier so I can strive to grieve no more.

Your greatness is forever reflected in the love within my heart Your courage my guide and map from which I will not depart. And when my earthly war is over and life's battle is won at last

I, in death, will call to you and we will travel on the path of past.

I speak as one who went to Vietnam, we share a common pain, We left so many brothers and sisters there and never felt a gain. We have fought the angry demons and tried not to feel their shame We try so to forget those years but we will never be the same.

Our struggle with our dreams and memories never fade with time, We still hear those voices saying our service was a crime

But soon our journey will be over and we will leave this land

Our load will be lightened by taking your outstretched hand.

In that quiet early morning on a cold, cold February day, the Wall wet with the tears of many, echoed the soldiers answer to me .

MY BELOVED GENTLEHAWK HEAR ME.....

I couldn't see your face that day, the blood had filled my eyes, But, your beauty though hidden from me, could not be disguised. Dressing my wounds, taking my pain, and I saying I did not sin,

I remember your kindness and I remember your name was Lynne. And though in my heart I knew the answer, I begged you not to lie Please nurse, Is the hell of Vietnam the place that I must die?

You softly said, "Life goes on in death, it simply turns a page", I knew your words were truth, still I struggled with my rage.

How gently you spoke, "Dear Soldier, step to heavens bright light, It is a place of peaceful sleep, where pain gives up without a fight. For God is coming to take you, far from this dark and fearful land, This journey will be less frightening, take my outstretched hand."

You said while I crossed over, you would never leave my side, Your strength gave me courage and helped to stem the raging tide. The years have come and gone yet, you nurse, still mourn for me.

I know you would have traded places, but it wasn't meant to be.

I reach out now and touch your hand reflected in this great wall

I see your tears and hear your prayer and still ever loving call.

I asked you to remember my name, you promised that you would, I know that you have tried and tried with everything you could. Remember, I was much too frightened to make that trip alone,

Thank you nurse, for helping me take that walk to heaven's light. In my peace I'm grateful for your company on that fateful night.

All of the brothers and sisters this wall holds precious and dear, Send you who lived, forgiveness and want to take away your fear. For now we walk beside you, it our time to lead you on your way. We'll give you the strength and courage you will

need for every day. When, my brothers and sisters, it's time to leave your earthly land, We'll walk along your journey, and take your outstretched hand.

In Loving Memory to honor the bravery and courage of Four Eagles who were called home on April 1?, 1969 so that I might live •••• to help all know their valor. Now in the autumn of my years, one day soon,

I will reach and take their hands.

Author Unknown

IS WAR HELL

By Denny Bowers
B CO 1/26

OCEAN PINES -- Is war hell?

Was William Tecumseh Sherman, a Union general during the Civil War, correct when he made that historical statement?

"That's putting it mildly. It is just total insanity," Vietnam veteran Denny Bowers said.

The 63-year-old Ocean Pines resident was a young Marine when he was injured twice, during incidents about six months apart. He received two Purple Heart medals.

A citation signed by the Secretary of the Navy honored him for "heroic achievement while serving as radio operator with Company B, 1st Battalion, 26th Marines, 3rd Marine Division against the enemy in the Republic of Vietnam."

On June 7, 1967, "during a search-and-clear mission near Khe Sanh, elements of Company B came under an intense mortar attack, which was closely followed by an assault from a platoon-size force of North Vietnamese Army Regulars. During the ensuing fire fight, Private 1st Class Bowers observed a fellow Marine engaged by the enemy.

"Realizing the seriousness of the situation and disregarding his own safety, he unhesitatingly exposed himself to the heavy volume of enemy fire to assist his comrade. Although painfully wounded in the leg, he quickly obtained a rifle from a casualty and ran across 30 meters of fire-swept terrain to give it

to the beleaguered Marine.

"After returning to his own position, he steadfastly ignored his painful injury and calmly and skillfully resumed his duties as a radio operator until he was subsequently medically evacuated.

"His heroic and timely actions at great personal risk were an inspiration to all who observed him and were instrumental in the accomplishment of his unit's mission," the citation states.

He was honored for upholding "the finest traditions of the Marine Corps and of the United States Naval Service."

He was injured again Jan. 21, 1968, when the Khe Sanh Combat Base came under enemy mortar and rocket attack. Bowers was praised for leaving his covered position and exposing himself to intense fire. He "fearlessly ran 25 meters across the hazardous area to the platoon's ammunition bunker. Although wounded by fragments from exploding ordnance and sustaining several burns from burning gasses, he steadfastly continued his determined efforts and reached the bunker," the citation states.

Bowers picked up several rounds of mortar ammunition and carried them to the gun crew, which had been unable to fire due to lack of ammunition because they had to evacuate their original position and seek cover in a trench line. His legs and upper chest were wounded.

But Bowers, a native of Baltimore, doesn't consider himself a hero.

"No, the heroes are those dead Marines we picked up and put on a plane and those guys laying, wounded, calling for their mothers," he said as he discussed his experiences from the kitchen table of the home he shares with his wife, Peggy.

He was 18 when he enlisted in the Marines, and on his 19th birthday, after training, landed in Vietnam. He recalled being surprised by the activity around him, quickly moving people, planes, helicopters.

"I knew I wasn't in Baltimore anymore. Anybody who tells you they aren't scared is a liar. You lose your childhood instantly when the first bullet goes

over your head. Nothing touches, nor does anything make you ready for combat. You can do all the training in the world. It takes your innocence away instantly," he said.

In August 1966, his boot camp training began at Parris Island, S.C. He also had infantry training at Camp Geiger, within Camp Lejeune, N.C. After a 30-day leave, he was sent to California to Camp Pendleton for additional training before going to Vietnam. His job in the Marines, he said, was a basic grunt, an infantryman.

He was first stationed south of Da Nang, Vietnam. The enemies were farmers, women and children with guns and booby traps.

"I knew of children who were killed because they were the enemy. It's horrible to shoot anybody. It's the most horrible thing in the world," he said. From Da Nang, he was flown to Khe Sanh Village and ordered, right off the plane, to "grab the dead Marines and put them on the same plane we just got off of. I had never even seen a car wreck. That takes me back to a time I'd rather not talk about," he said. Bowers recalled 18 men, fellow Marines, being killed in one day.

"They would give their life for me. They're my brothers," he said.

He remembered exactly how long he was in Vietnam -- 13 months, four days and two-and-one-half hours.

"That's a long time to be frightened to death," he said.

His final months of duty were in the United States, stationed at Camp Lejeune and working as a marksmanship instructor and brig guard. After discharge, he was flown to an airport in California. There, radical Vietnam War protesters threw water balloons filled with urine at returning Marines.

Three days later, he was in downtown Baltimore watching a protest against the war.

"Then, it occurred to me what I had done allowed them to do what they were doing. They had the freedom to do it. It helped me be a hell of a lot less an-

gry," he said.

Bowers earned a Bachelor of Science degree in personnel labor relations from the University of Baltimore and worked for the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program for 31 years, retiring in 2007.

He has helped build a monument to veterans at Arthur W. Perdue Stadium in Salisbury and a memorial to deceased Wicomico County veterans positioned in front of the Wicomico Youth & Civic Center, also in Salisbury.

About five years ago, he helped plan the Worcester County Veterans Memorial in Ocean Pines.

"I carry the same demons as everybody who saw what I saw. As difficult as my military career was, it is the foundation of who I am because, no matter what happens in my life, it is not as bad as being shot at," he said, smiling. "It truly was the foundation of my life, of who I am."

DOCUMENTARY FILMING TAKES LOCAL WAR VET BACK TO VIETNAM

By MIKE FISHBAUGH



RAY CALHOUN
M 3/3 April 30, 1967 Hill 881S

SAN DIEGO -- A Scripps Ranch resident who was awarded the Silver Star for his heroic actions during the Vietnam War will soon be returning to South-

east Asia as part of a documentary. Two years ago, Lester Ray Calhoun was belatedly awarded the Silver Star for heroism in Vietnam. Wounded and knocked unconscious twice, he fought back against Viet Cong soldiers while providing medical aid to other fallen Marines near him.

In 2012, he's going back for the first time since he fought there.

In the mid 1960s, he and two friends, Tim Haley and Mike Hogan, enlisted in the Marines as part of the Corps' "buddy plan." Each was sent to Vietnam, separately. They were in different battalions and their tours of duty were during overlapping timeframes. Now, the three friends are reuniting almost 50 years later for a documentary in production titled "Through Their Eyes." Calhoun, a former Marine lance corporal, hopes it will help rid him of some ghosts that haunt him. "Maybe allow me to say more complete, final goodbyes to some guys that didn't make it," said Calhoun. The trio's return to the killing fields won't be easy emotionally for any of them. Haley said, "The thought of going back to Vietnam is scary; to walk on the ground again is going to be tough." Hogan spoke of the pain he's experienced, and said, "Until you've been where we've been, done what we've done, and seen what we've done, don't bug me." The filmmakers want to delve into the impact of the war on the three idealistic young men.

Director Jason Frizado told 10 News, "To really understand what they went through, you need to go back and be there." Producer Tony Mohareb said the goal is "understanding the war they fought; not necessarily the war we know about." Like so many war vets, Calhoun has battled post-traumatic stress disorder. He hopes this will help close the circle. "I'm hopeful it will help me put this all in a box and put it somewhere," said Calhoun. "Through Their Eyes" is targeted for national release on Veterans Day 2012. For more information about the film, visit www.indiegogo.com/through-their-eyes.

MIKE,

Interesting that you should post this today. I just got back from visiting the traveling wall here in Bridgewater, NJ. I went to pay my respects to all the brothers who fought with me and Denny on that faithful

day. June 7, '67. I found each name touched it said some prayers and was moved almost to tears by their sacrifice. May they rest in peace.

LCPL James Lujon Blaz	21E65 (19)
PFC Lawrence Arthur Brooks	21E66 (19)
LCPL John Joseph Chase	21E65 (20)
CPL Crooks, , Ronald Lee	21E66 (21)
LCPL Robert Francis Enderby	21E66 (21)
CPL Edward Francis Fulon Jr	21E67 (19)
PFC Gale Edward Gotti	21E67 (21)
PFC Thomas Micheal Healy	21E68 (19)
PFC Kenneth Micheal Johnson	21E68 (19)
LCPL Kenneth Ray Keefer	21E68 (20)
PFC, Larry LeMorris	21E69 (20)
PFC, Pitts, Wayne Monroe	21E70 (19)
PFC Frank Joseph Shovlin	21E70 (18)
PFC, Phillip Andren Van Deusen	21E6 (18)
LCPL Edward Arnold Vercouteren	21E71 (24)
CPL Walter Leonard Ward	21E71 (18)
PFC Larry Eugene Worthen	21E72 (21)

OTHERS I VISITED AND PRAYED FOR:

B-1/26 BROTHERS

SGT Jose Castillo	23E97 (20)
PFC William Alfred Pollard	23E103 (19)
PFC Reginald Eugene Wilson	23E106 (22)

M-3/26 BROTHERS

LCPL William Roland Prewitt Aug 31, 1967	24E62 (20)
SGT Eugene Richard Kritz, April, 11, 1967	18E15 (30)
CPT Richard John Sasek, July 6, 1967	23E23 (30)
LCPL David Joseph Frischmann, Feb 1, 1967	14E103 (22)

Rest in peace brothers you are not forgotten, I still wonder how/why I didn't join you.

GENE WERESOW

B CO 1/26

M CO 3/26

I GET MAIL

Dear Mr. Eichler & Red Clay,

I would greatly appreciate if you could consider telling the story of LCpl Keith Perrelli and the passing of his Mother Emma. After LCpl Perrelli was KIA, his parents became very passionate about supporting the war in Vietnam. His Father Frank, was more than just passionate when it came to War Protesters. He was known to "crack" a few heads, if he observed anyone who even thought carrying an NVA flag was a good idea.

Rich De Lotto

ED NOTE: Rich it would be my pleasure, to include Keith's story in Red Clay. Most of the material you provided was scanned from a newspaper and unreadable. From what I could decipher, after Keith's death, his parents attempted to have his brother, who was serving in the US Army, home from Korea, under the sole surviving son's act. I do not know the income of that request.

LCPL KEITH FRANCIS PERRELLI USMC

KIA 25 September 1967

Con Thien Vietnam

Keith grew up in the Atherua section, where his friends nicknamed him "Buddy".

His grand parents, Mr. & Mrs. Iwanoski operated "Olly's Tavern" on Van Houten Avenue for many years. In 1962, the family moved from Clifton to Oakridge. Keith still remained friends with many from Clifton such as Eddie Freed.

Keith enrolled in Franklin High School which has since changed its name to Wallkill Valley High School. He lettered in 3 sports and graduated. Keith's brother Duane had already decided to enter the Air Force when Keith decided to enlist in the Marines. Keith received basic and advanced infantry training during 1966 and was ordered to Viet Nam soon after. He arrived in January 1967, and was assigned to the 3rd Marine Division. Participating in Operation Junction City, Keith Perrelli found

himself and his fellow Marines cut off from his company. Acting as a forward observer, Keith called in artillery fire to protect his unit from being overrun. During this engagement, Keith was wounded and later received the Purple Heart for his actions.

During this time of the war, North Vietnamese forces were making a concerted effort to invade the northern provinces of Viet Nam and route American forces there, primarily U.S. Marines. During September 1967, in attempting to throw back enemy forces by utilizing B-52's, Navy 7th Fleet fire power, long range artillery and jet fighter bombers, General William Westmoreland was quoted as saying " ... this is the heaviest conventional bombardment in the history of warfare". At the fire base called Con Thien, U.S. Marines would suffer over 1,100 killed or wounded during this month. On September 26, 1967, Marine Headquarters announced that in the previous 24 hours, 2 Marines had been killed in the Con Thien area.

On September 25, 1967 Lance Corporal Keith Francis Perrelli serving with the 3rd Marine Division, was killed in action by an artillery and mortar bombardment of his sandbagged position at Con Thien. He left behind his parents, a brother and a sister.

KEITH'S MOTHER RECENTLY PASSED AWAY

Emma Perrelli Gold Star Mother, of Hudson, Fla., passed away Oct. 21, 2011

A Mass was held at Blessed Katri Church, 427 Stanhope Rd. Sparta, N.J., at 12:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 19. Repast followed in the community room after the Mass.

A Gold Star Mother belonging to many veterans' organizations, Emma was most proud of VVA Chapter 1003, named after her son, Keith F. Perrelli.

She is survived by her husband of 68 years, Frank; son, Duane; daughter, Deidre Sponheimer; four grandchildren; five great-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

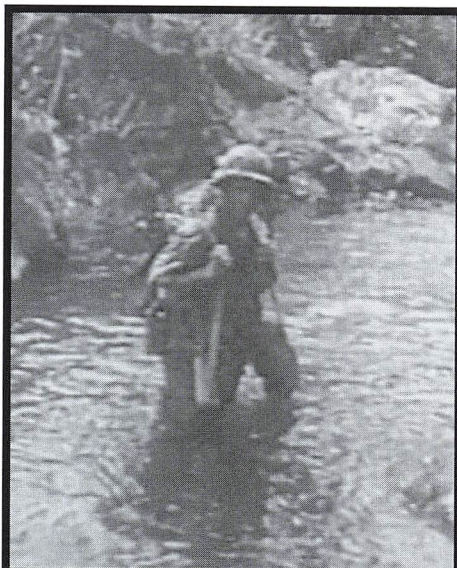
VIETNAM MARINES HONOR THEIR CORPSMAN

Written By

**LtCol Charles S. Gaede,
USMCR Retired- H Co, 2/3
Vietnam, For Leatherneck
Magazine Dec 2011. Reprinted
With Permission**

Vietnam veteran Marines of the 3d Platoon, Company H, 2d Battalion, Third Marine Regiment, Third Marine Division honored their corpsman, Hospital Corpsman Third Class Roy "Doc" Moon, with a surprise presentation of an M 1 carbine at their biannual reunion in Memphis, Tenn., on May 15. Moon's wife, Nancy, accompanied him to the reunion as did his son, Chris, who lives in Memphis.

Five 3d Plt Marines who had been wounded and treated by Doc Moon



HM3 Roy "Doc" Moon (above in Vietnam on Operation Pegasus in April 1968 with 3d Plt, Co H, 2/3 and (below) fifth from the right on the front row, with wife Nancy, by his left side, after reuniting with members of "his" platoon in Memphis, Tn., in May 2011.

in Vietnam were at the reunion and spoke with praise about his treatment of their wounds on the battlefield. Former Sergeant Ben "Tex" Williams said: "All of our corpsmen were good; they were great. But as good as all of those corpsmen were, there wasn't any of them that came close to filling the shoes of Doc Roy Moon. We love you, Doc. Semper Fi."

The most seriously wounded man, former Private First Class John "Weasel" Griffin, reunited with Doc Moon for the first time since Doc had treated and prepared him for medical evacuation from the Khe Sanh area on April 30, 1968. "Right after the mortar exploded, I was still numb," Griffin said, "when Doc came over and tended to me, and calmed me and assured



me that I was in pretty good shape, even though I was concerned about my fathering ability. Doc, thank you for being right there when we needed you most."

Former Corporal Joe Richardson, wounded in the same mortar attack, said, "This is the bravest man I've ever met. Without any reservation at all about his own life, his own safety, he was professional, and when you yelled for Doc, he was there."

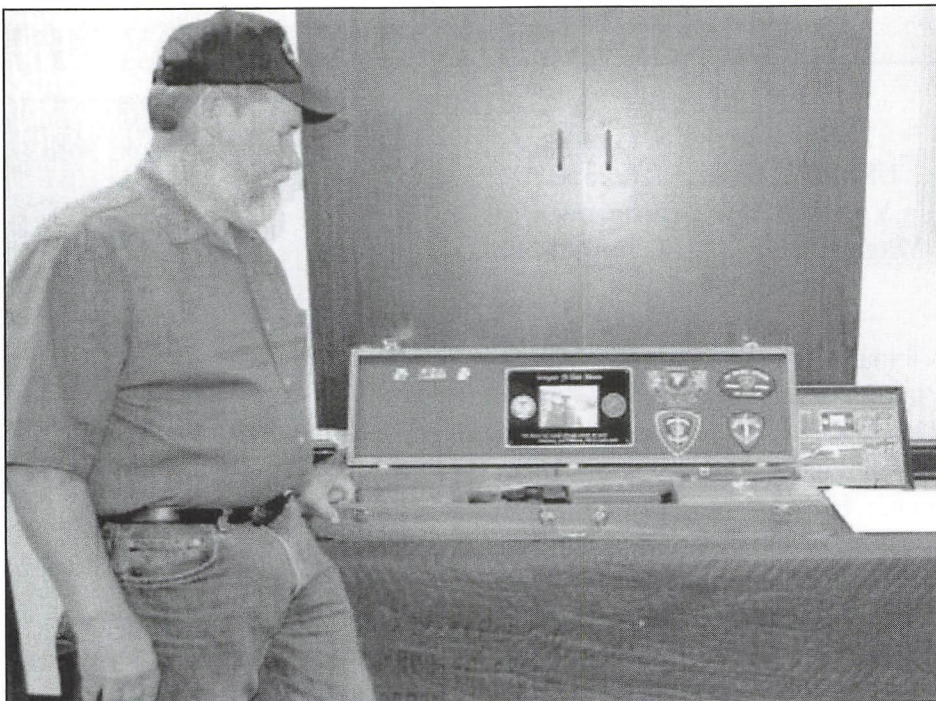
All I can say about Doc is Semper Fi, brother, and thank you from the bottom of my heart."

Former Cpl Patrick "Boot Camp" Hodgkins and the author, then-First Lieutenant Chuck Gaede, also spoke highly of Doc Moon's treatment of their wounds.

Moon arrived in Vietnam on Oct. 5, 1967, and was assigned to the 3d Plt. He stayed with the 3d Plt until May 14, 1968. His tour in Vietnam included the 1968 Tet offensive and operations at Con Thien, An Hoa, north and south of Danang, and Khe Sanh. He was awarded the Navy Commendation Medal with combat "V" for saving the life of a Marine who was seriously wounded by a Viet Cong explosive device in January 1968. Although Moon narrowly escaped injury when he fell into a punji pit with rotten stakes, he never was wounded.

At some point during his tour, he acquired an M1 carbine, which he carried with him in the field.

Knowing his fondness for the M1, members of the 3d Plt planned a surprise presentation for their next reunion. One of the Marines, Sgt



Doc Moon (above) is surprised by the presentation of a special gift, an M1 Rock-Ola carbine, that is very similar to the one he has with him outside this Montagnard house (below) in Vietnam in December 1967.



Joe "Bama" Whittington, located a Rock-Ola carbine with a known history. Whittington refinished the carbine and built a matching wood presentation case. Sgt Williams had a plaque made for the presentation case with a Vietnam-era picture of Doc Moon and the inscription:

"Semper Fi Doc Moon. We knew we could always count on you! Marines, H/2/3 1967-1968."

Doc Moon's relationship with the 3d Plt Marines began in Vietnam and has continued since. He at-

tended the first platoon reunion in 1995 and every one thereafter, including a return trip to Vietnam in 2001. He calls and visits some of the Marines frequently and is friends with many of them. His relationship with the Marines was and remains even closer than it normally is between a corpsman and his Marines.

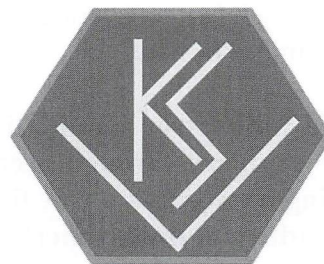
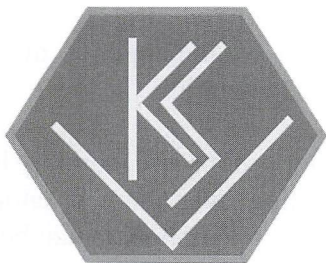
Holding his new carbine Moon said: "I always wanted one of these. This is what I carried over there. I carried it because it was little, and I could run fast with it. I really didn't know how to use it. They issued me a .45, a first aid kit, a flak jacket and a helmet, and that's what they sent me to the field with. I didn't know a soul there.

"I joined Third Platoon at a place called Con Thien, which is just a short distance from the DMZ [Demilitarized Zone]. It was rainin', muddy; I was by myself. I didn't have a friend in the world. I got off that six-by truck that day, and from that day on, I've been a Marine. I spent all of my time with the Third Platoon. I was fortunate. I was one of the few corpsmen that didn't get transferred from unit to unit."

The 3d Plt Marines were equally fortunate to have Doc Roy Moon with them.

If you served in 3d Plt, "Hotel" Co, 2/3 in 1967-68, contact Chuck Gaede at (512) 759-9265 to reconnect. LtCol Gaede is also listed in the KSV Membership Directory.

LtCol Gaede, an infantry officer and Vietnam veteran, retired from the Marine Corps Reserve in 1998, after 29 years of service. Obtaining his doctorate in 1993, he retired from the University of Texas at Austin in 2007. Presently, he is an officer in VFW Post 3377 and on the board of his local chapter of the Military Officers Association of America. He is also a Life Member of the Khe Sanh Veterans.



KHE SANH VETERANS MINI-REUNION

Khe Sanh Vets
Mini-Reunion - Key Largo FL

For the last several year a group of Khe Sanh Veterans have been gathering in Key Largo, FL in January. About the same time of year January, 21 as the 77 day Siege at Khe Sanh began. The number of folks attending has grown and so has the good time enjoyed when we gather.

The Moose Club in Key Largo (Mile Marker 98.8) is the main bunker (watering hole) where we start out. We enjoy such things as a fishing trip; visit to dolphins sometimes; some good restaurants; some horseshoes; and a ride down to the most Southern point of the US, Key West, and most importantly good brotherhood.

Key Largo is 92 miles South of Ft. Lauderdale and 63 miles south of Miami. If you fly Ft. Lauderdale is a little bit further to drive but flights there are generally cheaper. Jack Corbett (*West Dickens Avenue*) started this tradition and it is certainly worthwhile to continue. Several hotels/motels are available in the area. The Pelican, <http://www.hungrypelican.com/> is one that sounds good with 2 doubles at \$110 and single Queens at \$90. Check website for others. Mention Khe Sanh Vets when calling. There are quite a few others in the area. **CALL EARLY TO MAKE RESERVATIONS** since things book up early.

This is a VERY INFORMAL gathering and spouses, significant others, family and other veterans are always welcome. Please feel free to call or e-mail with any questions you may have. My telephone number and e-mail address is in the Membership Directory.

COMING HOME TO LESS THAN A HERO'S WELCOME

By Karl MARLANTES C CO 1/4

*Karl Marlantes is the author of
What It Is Like To Go To War.*

I returned to America in October of 1969 after 13 months as a Marine in Vietnam. While I was there, I would comfort myself by imagining all the girls I ever knew hugging



me in a huge warm group embrace. Somehow, I thought something similar would be waiting for me when I came home.

I was totally unprepared for what actually happened. My big brother picked me up at Travis Air Force Base in California. As we started to leave the terminal he put his hand on my shoulder and warned me that there might be trouble outside. "Trouble?" I asked.

I'd just gotten back from Vietnam. But the war held no hurt or humiliation like what happened as we drove through a crowd of protesters shouting obscenities at us, flipping us the bird, and pounding on my brother's 1960 Valiant with their fists and protest signs. I can still see the hate-filled face of a protester snarling at me through the passenger-side window. I can still feel my utter bewilderment and pain.

There were no hugs. My long imagined safe harbor was sewn with mines of hate.

Vietnam) held no hurt or humiliation like what happened as we drove through a crowd of protesters shouting obscenities at us, flipping us the bird, and pounding on my brother's 1960 Valiant with their fists and protest signs.

This kind of thing no longer happens. I'm immensely happy that America has learned to distinguish the kids fighting our wars from the adults making the war policies. But I worry that instead, we have become smugly complacent.

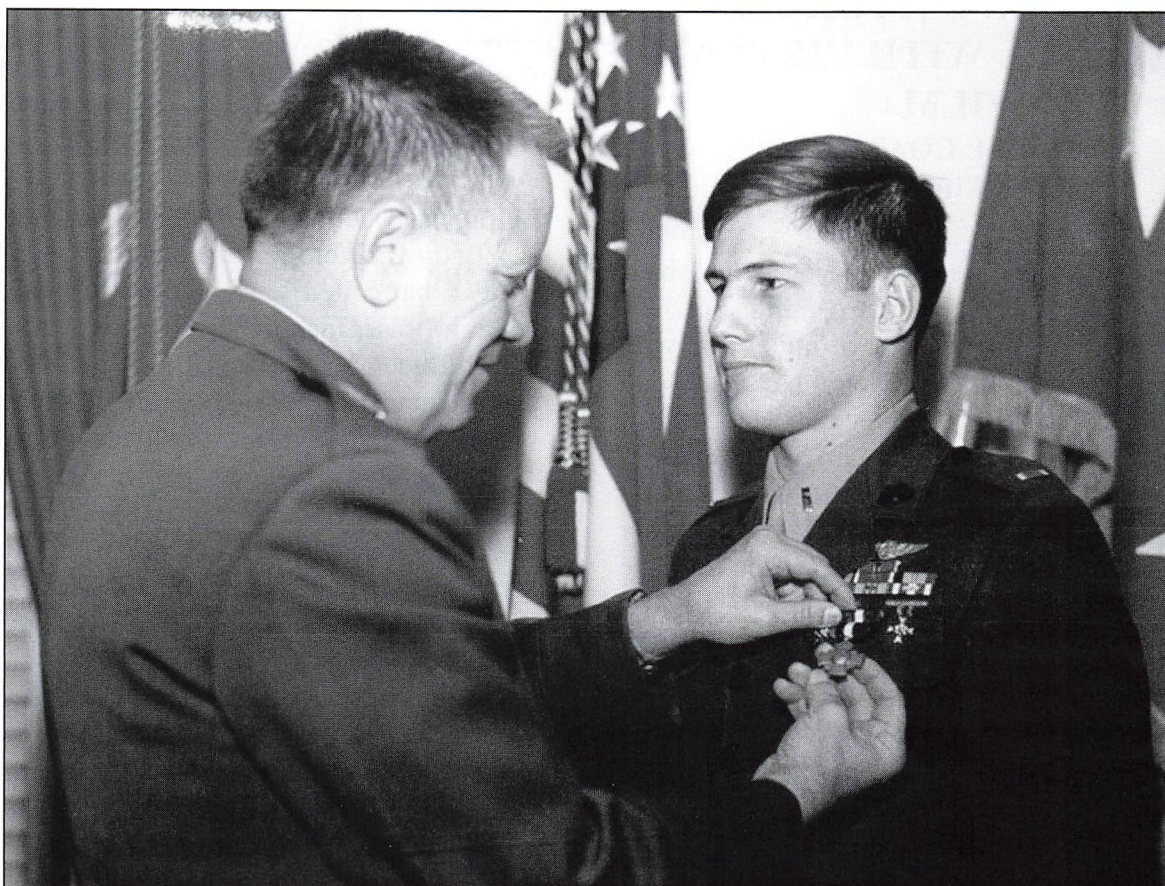
These days, there are yellow ribbons, beer commercials showing people clapping at airports, and banners on freeway overpasses. There is the well-intended "thank you for your service," and a hasty handshake. I've even received these, 40 years late. I know it is done with kind intentions, so I smile and say thank you. But inside I feel hollow — even slightly embarrassed. I know too many people who have died doing what I am getting thanked for. I also know, having gone through four decades of trying to reintegrate into my own culture, that ribbons and handshakes fall way short of what returning veterans actually need. A real "welcome home" is being helped with these challenges.

We veterans are just part of a complex and interconnected web of people who voted for the policymakers who decided war was the right response, who paid their taxes to finance it, who grew the food, who financed the factories where the weapons were built or who taught the scientists who designed them. The veterans' part of this web is that we were the ones who pulled the trigger at the end of the line — and carry the burden of that for everyone else.

I recently shared a radio interview with a young veteran from Afghanistan. He'd been back two years. While we were waiting to go on the air he told me that three of his friends from his own small unit had already committed suicide. Two years. Although suicide statistics for veterans are very difficult to pin down — is a drug overdose a suicide? How about cirrhosis of the liver? — Veterans Affairs statistics from 2010 show that 18 veterans commit suicide a day.

Clapping at airports and a handshake is way better than what happened after Vietnam, but *clearly* it isn't enough.

Our troops are coming home and our part of the killing over there is ending. Our work to end the killing over here is just beginning.

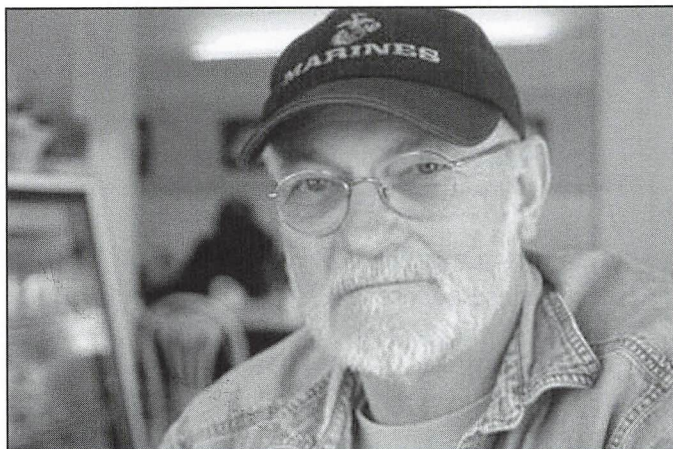


The President of the United States of America takes pleasure in presenting the Navy Cross to First Lieutenant Karl A. Marlantes (MCSN: 0-103269), United States Marine Corps (Reserve), for extraordinary heroism while serving as Executive Officer of Company C, First Battalion, Fourth Marines, THIRD Marine Division (Reinforced), Fleet Marine Force, in connection with operations against the enemy in the Republic of Vietnam. During the period 1 to 6 March 1969, Company C was engaged in a combat operation north of the Rockpile and sustained numerous casualties from North Vietnamese Army mortars, rocket-propelled grenades, small arms, and automatic weapons fire. While continuing to function effectively in his primary billet, First Lieutenant Marlantes skillfully combined and reorganized the remaining members of two platoons, and on 6 March initiated an aggressive assault up a hill, the top of which was controlled by a hostile unit occupying well-fortified bunkers. Under First Lieutenant Marlantes' dynamic leadership, the attack gained momentum which carried it up the slope and through several enemy emplacements before the surprised North Vietnamese force was able to muster determined resistance. Delivering a heavy volume of fire, the enemy temporarily pinned down the friendly unit. First Lieutenant Marlantes, completely disregarding his own safety, charged across the fire-swept terrain to storm four bunkers in succession, completely destroying them. While thus engaged, he was seriously wounded, but steadfastly refusing medical attention, continued to lead his men until the objective was secured, a perimeter defense established, and all other casualties medically evacuated. Then, aware that all experienced officers and noncommissioned officers had become casualties, he resolutely refused medical evacuation for himself. His heroic actions and resolute determination inspired all who observed him and were instrumental in a decisive rout of the North Vietnamese Army force with minimal friendly casualties. By his courage, aggressive fighting spirit, and unwavering devotion to duty in the face of grave personal danger, First Lieutenant Marlantes upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

STORY LEADS EDITOR TO PRO ASSISTANCE WITH VIETNAM FILM

By **BILL COATES**
Valley Life Editor

Ken Rodgers and his wife, Betty, shot a film about the battle of Khe Sanh in Vietnam and the Marines who fought it. They had footage of interviews with more than a dozen Marines of Bravo Company. All had endured the months-long siege at Khe Sanh in 1968. And they had footage of archival photographs and newsreels by prize-winning photographers. Assembling it all into a coherent narrative was another matter. Rodgers didn't want to tackle editing the film himself. He wanted it done professionally, but he despaired of finding a film editor up to the task. That was late last year.



Bill Coates/Dispatch (2010), Ken Rodgers and his wife, Betty, visited Casa Grande last year. The visit led to a newspaper article about a film they were making. That, in turn, led to hiring a film editor who had worked with George Lucas and Francis Ford Coppola

Then in January, he got a call from John Nutt. It was a call out of the blue for Rodgers. And one of those things that seemed too good to be true, like making \$1,000 a week working part-time out of your home. Nutt had too-good-to-be-true credentials, including 40 years' experience as a film editor, working with industry giants like George Lucas and Francis Ford Coppola. Nutt, however, turned out to be the real thing. And he turned the Rodgers footage into a well-honed documentary, one they're submit-

ting to major film festivals. First on their list is Utah's Sundance. From Nutt's end, Rodgers said, it wasn't a call out of the blue. It arose from a series of happy accidents. It led to a screening of the finished film at Lucas' Skywalker Ranch.

Before last December Nutt had no idea who Ken and Betty Rodgers were. He had no idea they had a project that called for a film editor. After all, they lived in Boise, Idaho. Nutt lived in northern California. In December, however, Nutt and his wife, Ann, just happened to be visiting their daughter in Tucson. It was the Christmas holidays, just after a Dec. 19 article about Rodgers and his film project appeared in the Casa Grande Dispatch. The Associated Press picked it up, and it ran in Tucson's Arizona Daily Star. The article came about because the Rodgers had been visiting Casa Grande earlier in December. Betty showed up at the Dispatch offices and said her husband had nearly completed a documentary about Vietnam. She thought it would make a good story. So did I. Rodgers, after all, had grown up in Casa Grande and gone to high school here. As a Marine, he was at Khe Sanh, witness to some of the deadliest fighting in Vietnam. And he made a movie about it. All it needed was some editing. The article mentioned Rodgers was looking for an editor.

By chance, Ann Nutt saw the same article. She suggested he call Rodgers in Boise. Nutt, it happened, was a Vietnam veteran himself. A film like that could resonate. Nutt balked at first, but his wife kept at it. And so he called. So out of the blue came the call from a Vietnam veteran and seasoned film editor. He also offered a good price, a very good price. Nutt got the job. "He edited the movie at his house," Rodgers said. But Nutt went a step further. He took the film to sound editor Mark Berger at Skywalker Ranch in Marin County. "We were there," Rodgers said. "We watched and actually participated a little bit, although we were kind of in awe of the place."

He and Betty spent four days at the ranch while Berger worked on the sound. "It was amazing what they do. These guys can hear stuff that I can't hear," he added, Berger worked with Nutt, who also has lengthy credits as a sound editor. Sometimes they had sharp disagreements, Rodgers said. "They were arguing over stuff, then they would look at us to settle it for them," Rodgers said.

Nutt and Berger eventually put aside their differences. They eliminated the distractions of what started out as something of a handmade movie. "We did a lot of these interviews on the road," Rodgers said. "There were buzzes and hums and the lighting wasn't right, and they cleaned up all of that. The interviews, Rodgers said, have an un glossed quality about them. That fits the material.

"It's a documentary about a rough subject," Rodgers said. It's titled, "Bravo! Common Men, Uncommon Valor." It has had a few informal screenings already, including one for the employees at Skywalker Ranch. Rodgers also showed it to a reunion of Khe Sanh Marines in July. This would be a hard audience to please. They approved, Rodgers said, joking: "They didn't yell and throw stuff at me.

"They also showed the film to most of 14 Marines and one Navy corpsman they interviewed for the movie.

At least one has refused to see it. Another has since died. "That leaves four guys that have not seen it and they don't seem to care." Perhaps for some of them, the Vietnam War has never ended. For others, it's not worth revisiting.

For younger generations, it's a war that has no personal meaning. It's a chapter in the history books, like World War II. The film, in any case, documents a battle that was something of a microcosm of the war itself. Marines took a fierce pounding and the siege was eventually broken. It was an American victory with little strategic value, according to an account in Wikipedia. It was that kind of war. Rodgers had first planned to show the film at the GI Film festival in Washington, but Nutt suggested he aim higher. So he's starting with Sundance. A submission doesn't guarantee entry. Rodgers should hear back on that next month. The Sundance Film Festival is in January. Beyond that, Rodgers plans to submit his film to South by Southwest in Austin and the Tribeca in New York City Film festival rules prohibit public showings in advance, but private screenings are OK. And, in December, Ken and Betty Rodgers will bring their film to Casa Grande for one such showing. For an invitation, contact Rodgers by email at kennetherodgers@msn.com.

BOOK REVIEW

Cammie Up!



**Memoir of a Recon
Marine in Vietnam,
1967-1968**



Steven A. Johnson

288 pages \$29.95 softcover (6 x 9)
27 photos, 4 maps, appendices, glossary, notes, index

ISBN 978-0-7864-6600-9 Ebook ISBN 978-0-7864-8839-1 2012

In this Marine combat memoir, Steve Johnson recounts his service in Vietnam from April 1967 to May 1968. Only 17 when he enlisted in 1964, Johnson deployed to Vietnam with the 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, and his tour included such now famous locations as Phu Bai, Khe Sanh, Nha Trang and Quang Tri, among others. With a sometimes humorous tone, Johnson describes a war of often terrified high school and college-aged youngsters faced with exotic plant and animal life, monsoon rains, harrowing reconnaissance missions and death. Details are plentiful about tactics, equipment, geography and, always, fellow Marines.

Steven A. Johnson served more than 17 years in the Marine Corps on active duty and in the reserves (including a call-up for active duty in Desert Storm). He spent 20 years with the Jamestown, New York, Police Department, and six with the Chautauqua County Sheriffs Office. He lives in Jamestown.

AN UNEARNED APOLOGY

Chaplain William R. Hampton

The place was the valley known as Khe Sanh in the jungle mountains of South Vietnam. This valley had been a coffee bean plantation operated by a Frenchman until the war. The 26th Marine Regiment was tasked to cut off the Ho Chi Minh Trail, over which supplies were carried from North Vietnam into South Vietnam. The Marines had built an airstrip and encircled it in a one mile square with trenches, bunkers, land mines and concertina wire to protect the 5,000 Marines and Navy personnel inside.

Thirty thousand NVA (North Vietnamese Army) took positions in the immediate deep jungle and on the surrounding mountains and began what became the famous "Seventy-Seven Day Siege" of Khe Sanh, attacking from all sides and firing rockets and mortars 24 hours a day for 77 days. Continuous fog and clouds made air support extremely difficult.

It was 29 February 1968, a little more than a month into the "siege". Planes were hit by rockets when they landed, so they would sometimes "pretend" to land but push off pallets of supplies and deposit passengers and then take-off again without completely stopping.

On this day there were pallets of mailbags which were quickly distributed to the respective battalions. When my 3rd Battalion received its mailbags, our postal clerk went to work in the mail tent. I didn't think he was sorting the mail fast enough, so I appointed myself to assist him.

At one point I picked up a mail bag and moved it some six feet across the tent floor. Just then a round came through the tent and detonated exactly where I had been standing. Had I not moved, it would have been a direct hit. Even then the concussion from the explosion knocked me to the ground, and I lost consciousness for a few seconds. When I regained con-

sciousness I could see but not hear. I quickly looked around to see if all my body parts were still there, while my hearing was returning.

The mail clerk was shrieking in pain. That round had torn into him, and he was bleeding profusely. A corpsman responded to the cries, and we moved him to the battalion aid station. After some medical attention from the battalion surgeon, we carried him to the airstrip medical bunker and waited for a med-evac chopper to take him out to the hospital ship. He was in such bad shape that I was sure he wouldn't make it alive. I never heard from or about him again until

On Saturday, 12 Jun 2010, I received a phone call. The caller identified himself as a Marine I had assisted in Vietnam when he was wounded. He described the mail tent incident and said he was calling to apologize!

I was stunned! Apologize for what, I asked. "I know it has been 42 years, but I need to apologize for all the expletives I used when you were trying to help me. When you helped me to the airstrip you looked at my dog tag and said something about me being a "Lutheran" the same as you, and I cursed at you. It's taken me 42 years, but I want you to know that I'm sorry for the way I treated you."

In the following conversation I learned that his name is Bradley Barton and he was from Illinois. He was discharged from the Marine Corps and is a paraplegic. He currently lives in Portland, Oregon and says that he is a "happy camper" and grateful to be alive.

That's all I know as of now. I have sent him a packet of appropriate propaganda-about my return to Vietnam a few years ago, etc. He located my name from the Khe Sanh Veterans Association directory. I'm looking forward to more conversation

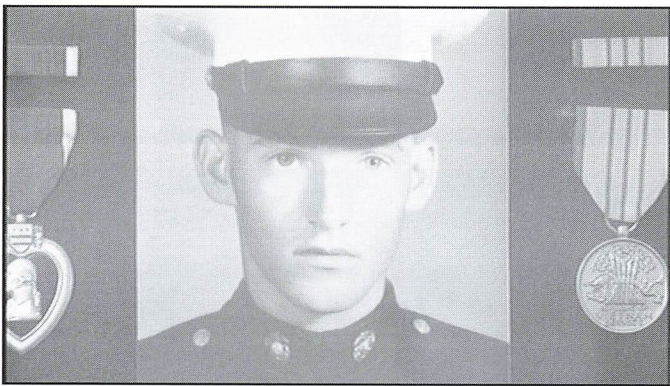
Chaplain Wm. R. Hampton CAPT, CHC, USNR,
RET

DEAD MARINES DOG TAG IN VIETNAM IS DISCOVERED 43 YEARS LATER

Valerie Chinn

NEW ALBANY, IN (WDRB) From outside of the Davis family home, you can see they are Marine proud, as the American flag is flying.

For four decades, Larry Davis has been on a mission to learn more about the death of his brother, Marine Randy Davis. Medals, including the Purple Heart, and pictures of his younger brother, an 18-year-old machine-gunner, are displayed in the home.



Larry Davis was emotional as he said, "It's been 43 years and there isn't a day that goes by that I don't think of him. He was a damn good kid."

Randy was killed by enemy fire in Khe Sanh, in North Vietnam back in 1968. A non-profit organization Tours of Peace Vietnam Veterans amazingly found his dog tag that he wore around his neck when he died. After verifying Larry was his brother, the organization recently sent the Davis family the dog tag. It's still in great condition although it's hard to read and is even dusty from the Vietnam soil.

He says, "It just brings the thing whole circle for me and I can't begin to tell you what it's worth to me...It's like he's right here with me. It's like getting a piece of him back home."

Valerie Chinn asked, "How do you think your parents would feel knowing you have this?" Davis says, "Well, that's another subject. His death actually killed my mother. She died nine months later at 51. She never got over it and we haven't either. But I don't know...they'd be ecstatic to get

something back other than what they sent in a sea bag."

They never had a chance to say good-bye because his casket was sealed. His father even questioned if Randy's body was inside. He had wanted to open it to make sure, but didn't.

Even in one of Randy's last letters, it's as if he knew what was going to happen to him. He told his family that his time was running out.

Deidre Davis, Larry's wife says, "I've read all his letters. I feel like I know him. I've got a brother-in-law that was killed in Vietnam and he's in my heart."

Larry says when talking about the dog tag, "He was just a young kid, but he did his job well. There's nothing I'd take for this."

And their search for answers about Randy is not over. They're hoping to talk to the men who served with him, when he died.

LATE OBIT

**JAMES J. MILES HM-3 USN
KHE SANH VETERAN
RAS HQ CO 26TH MARINES**

Miles, James J. Age 62, Beloved husband and best friend of Carolyn for 41 years. Loving father of James J. Jr. and Stephen (Mary). Proud papa of Jamie III and with one on the way. Cherished son of the late Eileen and Charles. Devoted brother of Pat (Grover) Weiss and Edith (late Donald) Olson and the late Charles, Robert and Mary Agnes. Fond uncle of Susan, Mary Lynn, Carol, Robert, Michael and Timothy. Life time member Khe Sanh Vet., Marine Corps. League Kevin Clarke Detachment Post #2791 and Life time member of Bremen V.F.W. Post #2791. Proud member of I.B.E.W. Local 134. In lieu of flowers memorials to Marine Corps League Kevin Clarke Detachment Post # 2791 17147 S. Oak Park Ave. Tinley Park, IL. 60477.

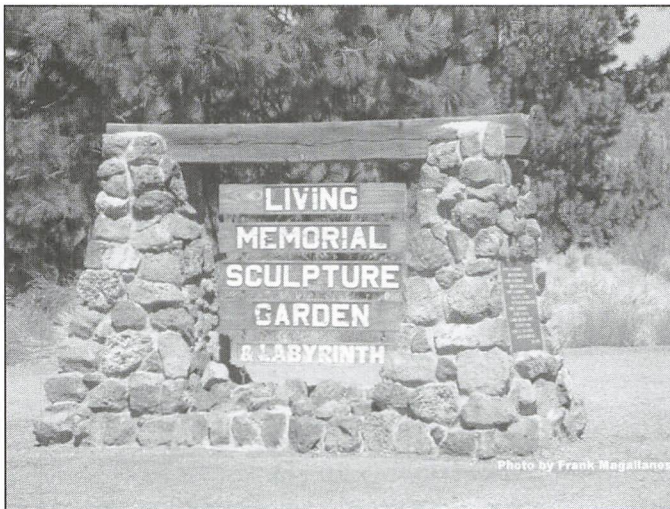


THE LIVING MEMORIAL SCULPTURE GARDEN

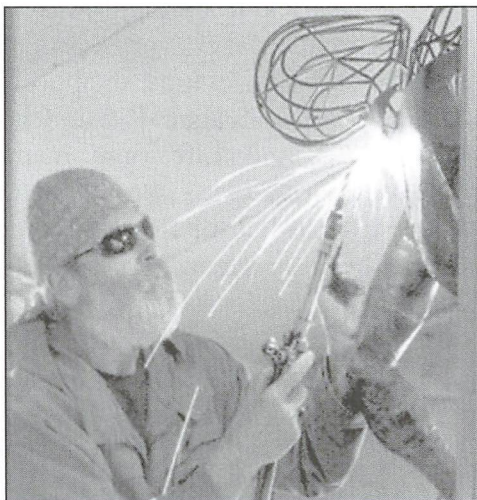
VISIT BY KHE SANH VETERANS

By Craig Tourte

The Garden is located at the southwestern base of Mt. Shasta, on the Klamath National Forest Land in the Goosenest Ranger District. It was founded in 1988 by a group of Siskiyou County veterans and is sponsored and maintained by the Weed/Lake Shastina Kiwanis Club. A Memorial Wall celebrates the honorable discharged veterans of our nation's conflicts from the Revolutionary War to the present.

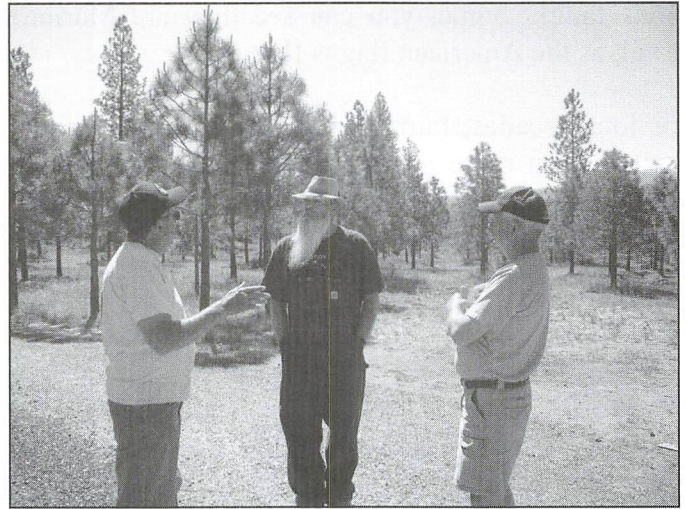


Dennis Smith, a Vietnam War Marine Corps sergeant and veteran of the siege of Khe Sanh, is the metal sculptor whose works grace the Sculpture Garden: "Each sculpture has personal meaning for me in terms of life experience and personal incidents. Through the arts we have the means to peacefully consider violence and to ask questions." His work is specific yet symbolic, monumental yet intimate, patriotic yet cautionary. "I



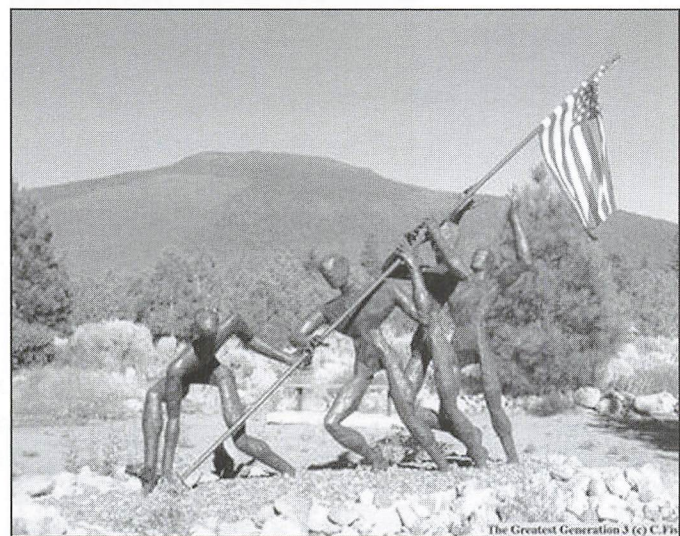
don't think the purpose of art is to entertain, but to uplift, edify and educate.

We got out of our vehicles and walked around the 100 or so acres and viewed the 10 sculptures.. As an



example, quotes from the literature inspired by the Sculpture Dennis Smith states - A tall figure with one arm raised - The Peaceful Warrior. There must be those who, loving peace, will fight against aggression to preserve that peace The Peaceful Warrior honors those who step forward when asked to do so.

A female figure with hands out holding an American flag - Those left behind. Who can repay those who have lost loved ones in combat. Sculpture depicting the second raising of the flag on Mt. Suribachi, Iwo Jima. The Greatest Generation. A soldier exists in a cage - POW & MIA, outside the cage on a simple metal arch hang POW and MIA bracelets, wreaths, flags and flowers placed by visitors. Dennis states in the literature.



A soldier exists in a cage. Imagine confinement, mosquitoes, leeches, rats, rotten rice, rotten fish, abusive guards, and little chance of survival. Hope is reaching for the will to hang on. Couple embracing - Coming Home. Vets feel a lot of emotional pain upon returning home. Wounded Warrior with amputated left arm - All Wounded Warriors symbolizes all serviced-connected wounds. there are many ways to be wounded. Sculpture of nurses carrying stretcher - The Nurses- courageous souls who bring the healing arts to places rife with injury



and death. A tall elegant figure plays a flute.- The Flute player symbolizes peace and tranquility. At the 38th Parallel a sword lays broken - Korean War Veteran who remembers the Korean War Vets? The Memorial also has an area titled Hot LZ Memorial Wall which contains names of veterans etched on Granite Memorial Wall.

We must have spent an hour visiting the sculp-



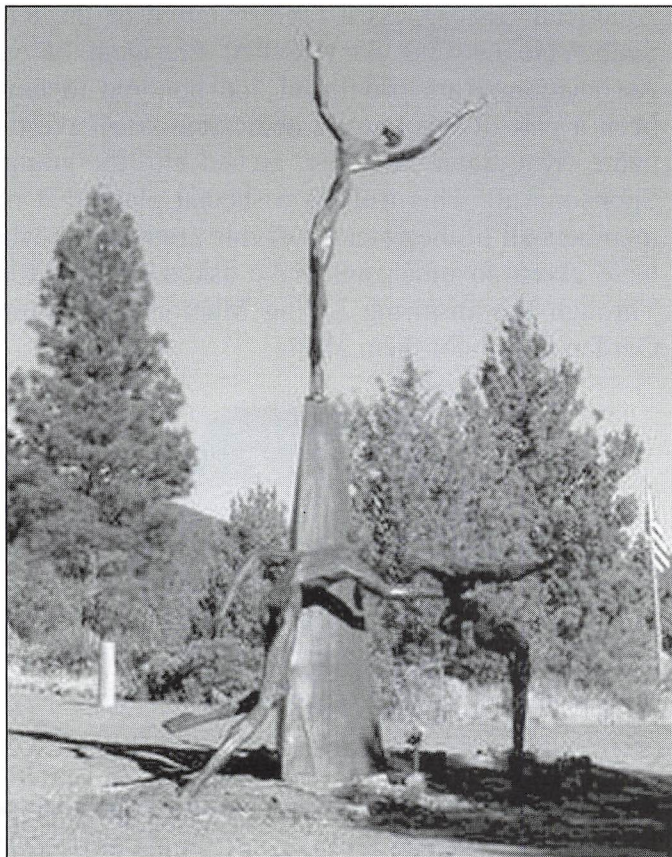
tures, each with our own interpretation of what an



individual sculpture signified to us. It was fascinating to hear Tom, Dave and Ned discuss how they thought a particular sculpture was relevant to their experience. Dave Tonick placed a Khe Sanh coin at the base of the POW - MIA arch where that coin joined the many bracelets of MIA's, Vietnam colored beads, feathers and other assorted tributes and symbols all with significant meaning to those who placed them there.

2011, the name "Khe Sanh Veterans" will be etched on this granite wall, like the Khe Sanh roadside Memorial in Albuquerque New Mexico, our name, battles and those lost will be perpetually remembered.





**STORY AND PHOTOS OF THE ACTUAL
CEREMONY WHICH WAS
ATTENDED BY NUMEROUS KHE SANH
VETERANS, ON VETERANS DAY 11 NOV
2011**

**Veterans Day, November 11, 2011 -
Living Memorial Sculpture Garden,
Siskiyou County, California
By Craig W. Tourte**

The twice annual dedication of names placed on the granite-clad Memorial Wall located at the foot of Mount Shasta was well attended with 300 of those who paid tribute to the memory of those who served in our military. At this particular dedication the words “**Khe Sanh Veterans LM**” (Life Member) was forever etched into the richly dark granite of the Sponsor Wall which will forever remind all who view that monument of the sacrifice and perseverance of those who served.

The dedication was well attended by over twenty veterans of that Battle.

Master of Ceremonies, Dr. John B. Runnels, Capt. U.S. Navy Retired - delivered the words I presented as a representative of the Khe Sanh Veteran Association.

“All who have served are honored here, their names may not be inscribed in these beautiful granite stones, but they are still remembered for their service and for their sacrifice. We also take this moment to honor those who did not return home with us and to remember those who to this day, carry the wounds and memory of war in their hearts, minds and bodies. Today we remember not only those whose names appear on this wonderful granite memorial but also those who continue to fight for the freedom of all Americans. “

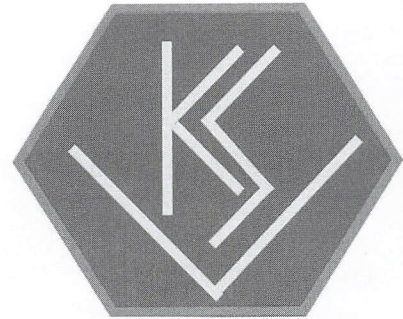
“There is a poem in the Living Memorial Sculpture Garden pamphlet that starts with the words “A place to remember where we have been. A place to remember what we’ve been through. A place to remember those faces so well of friends and loved ones....” As stated in the pamphlet Dennis Smith, the artist and the creator of these wonderful sculptures is a former Marine and survivor of the historic Siege of the Marine Corps Combat Base of Khe Sanh in what was then the country of South Vietnam. Dennis is quoted as saying “Each sculpture has personal meaning for me in terms of life experiences and personal incidents.”

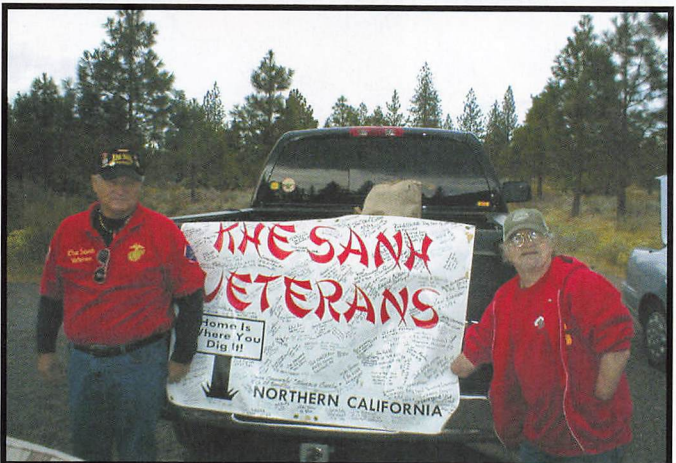
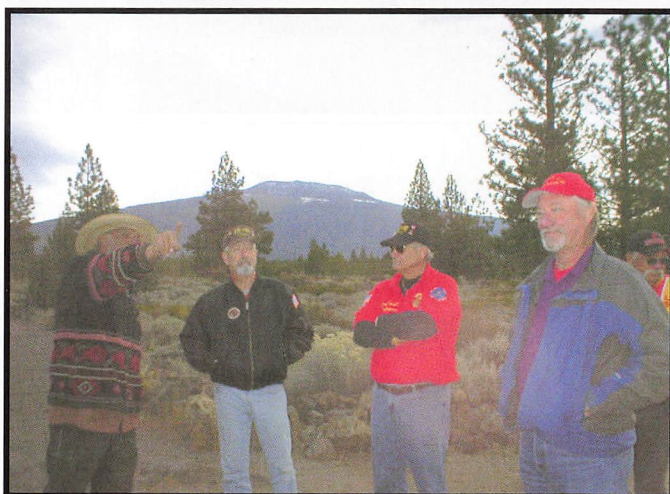
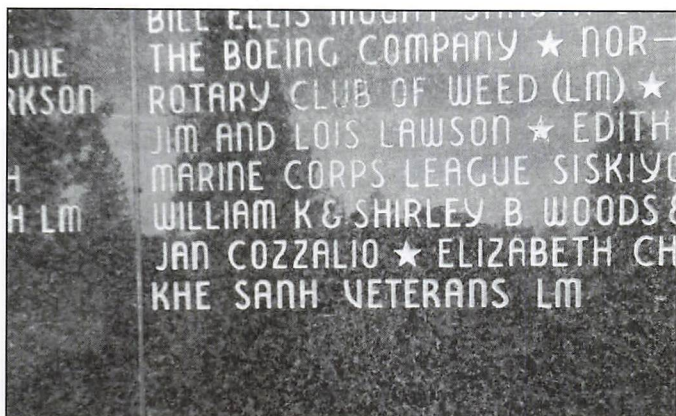
“Please note the presence here of the many who served on the Khe Sanh Combat Base. Through Dennis’s vision and creations, this place holds a special and even reverent significance for those who served at Khe Sanh. As an example the “Wounded Warrior” sculpture with right hand reaching up into

the air and the left arm missing a limb was inspired by Dennis's friend and our comrade Lloyd Scudder and the struggles that Lloyd and all the other wounded have had to endure. Lloyd is a Khe Sanh Veteran and an inspiration to all of us for his strength, courage and perseverance. The Sculpture the "The Nurses" depicting three nurses, carrying a stretcher was inspired by the tragic death PFC Jonathan Nathaniel Spicer who was killed in action at Khe Sanh on March 14, 1968, another friend of Dennis and also our comrade."

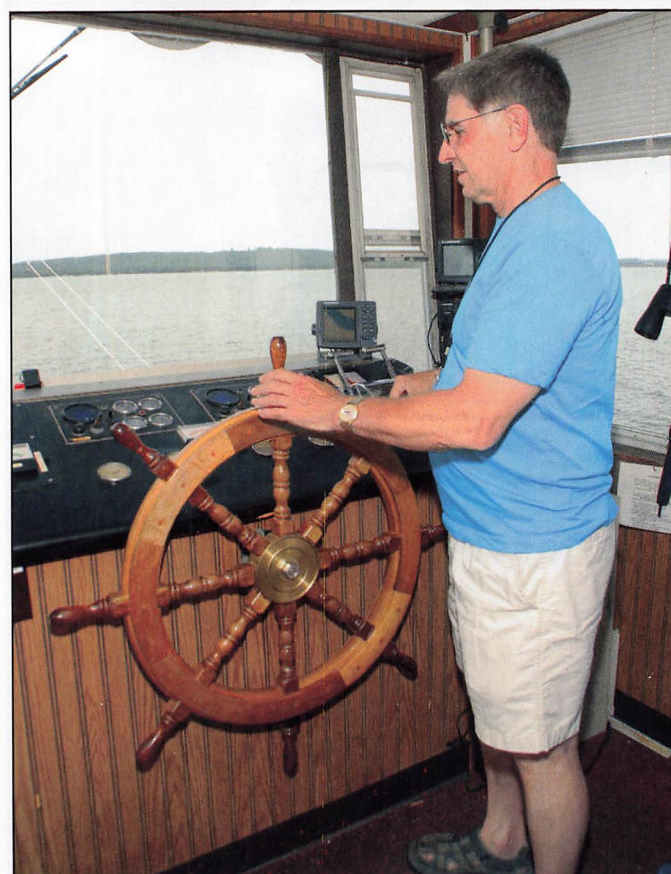
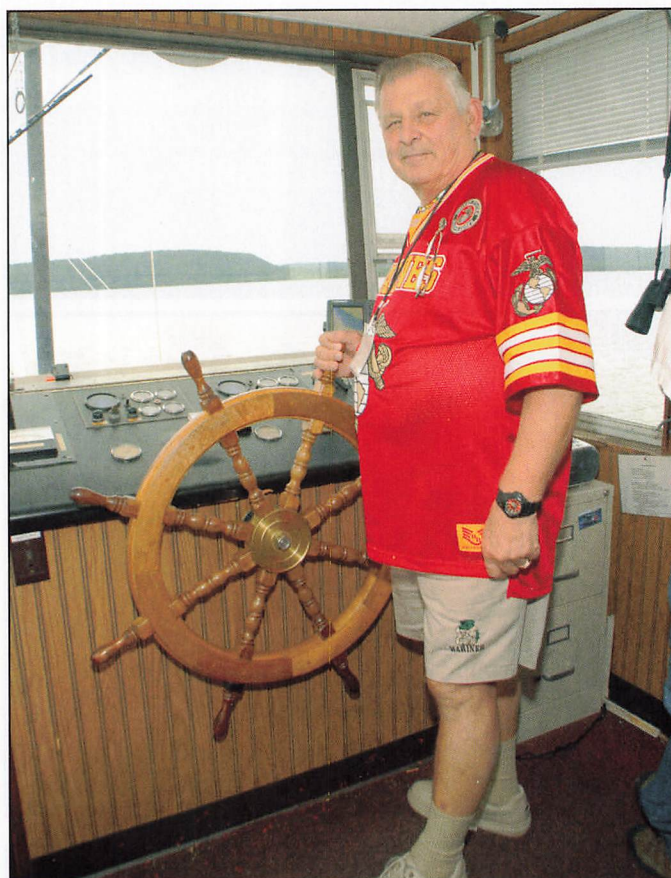
"We each have our own interpretation of what an individual sculpture signifies and how it is relevant to ones own experience and memory. The Siege of the Marine Corps Combat Base of Khe Sanh was an historic event. The mention of Khe Sanh along with the great battles of Concord, Gettysburg and Normandy in President Obama's inaugural address, forever confirms to our nation and the world that the Battle of Khe Sanh holds a significant place in

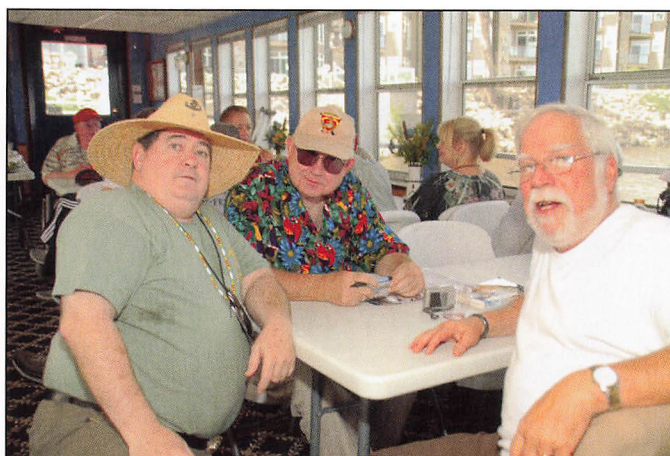
American History. As a representative of the Khe Sanh Veterans and Tom Eicher, President of our Association, I am privileged and honored to have been a part of this special dedication - to have the name "Khe Sanh Veterans" etched into the granite Sponsor wall. This truly is a special place that remembers all of the veterans of this great nation who have given so much and have asked for so little. Through this inspiring Living Memorial Sculpture Garden, we honor them all. "

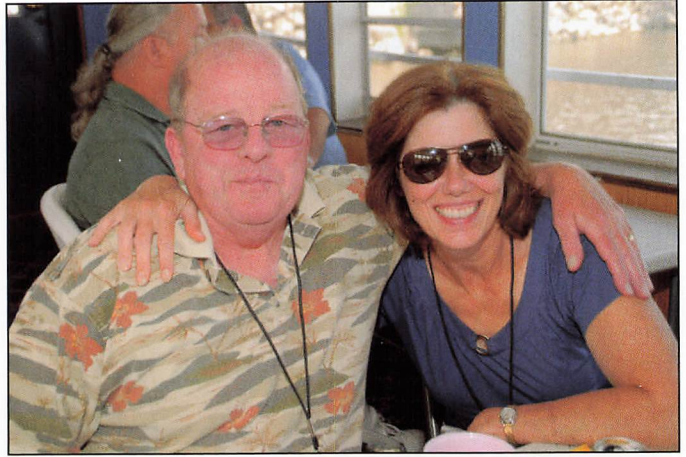


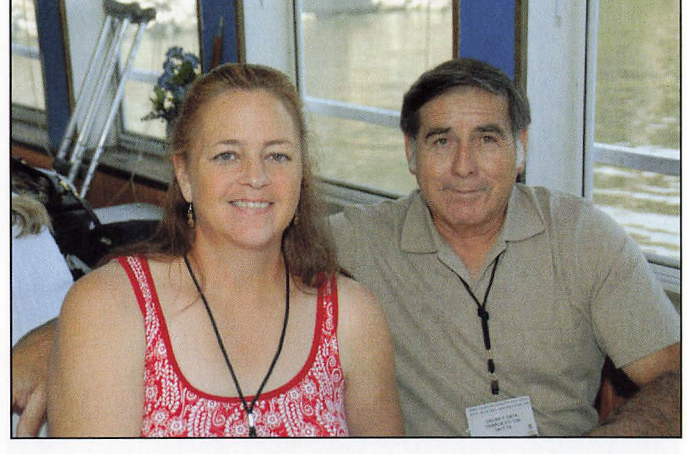
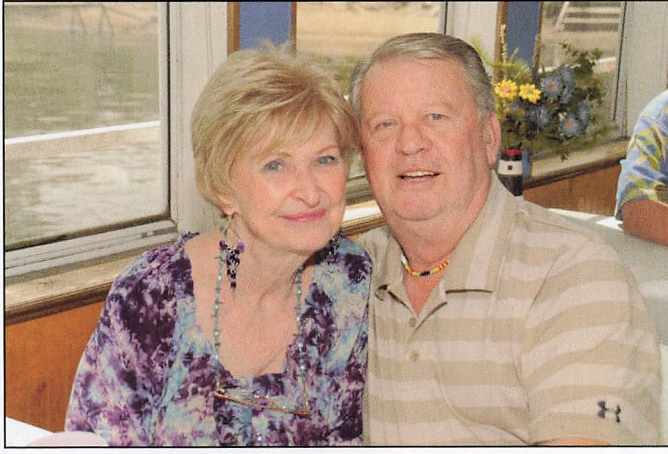
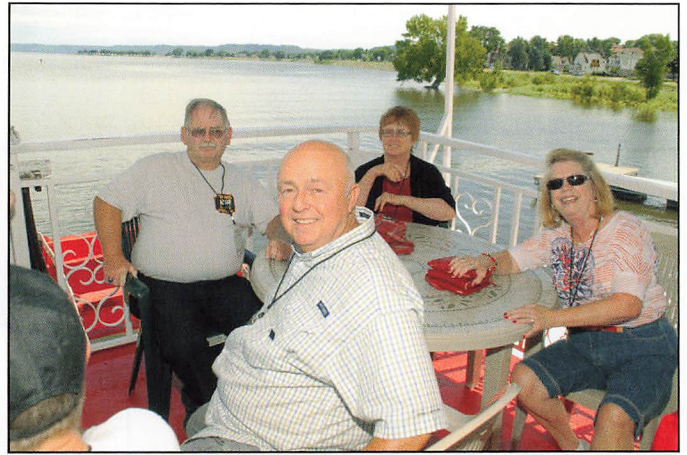
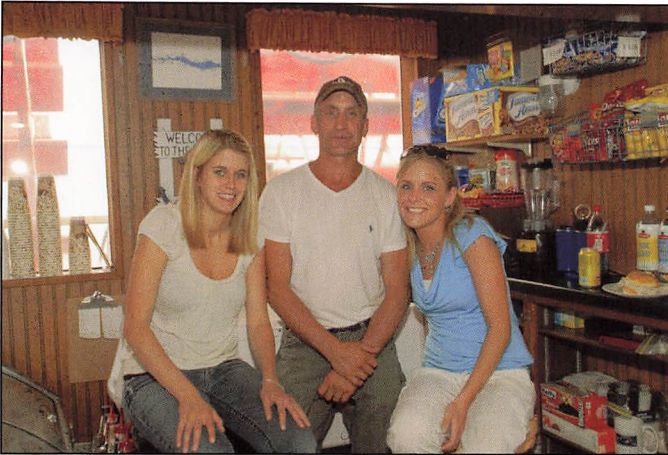


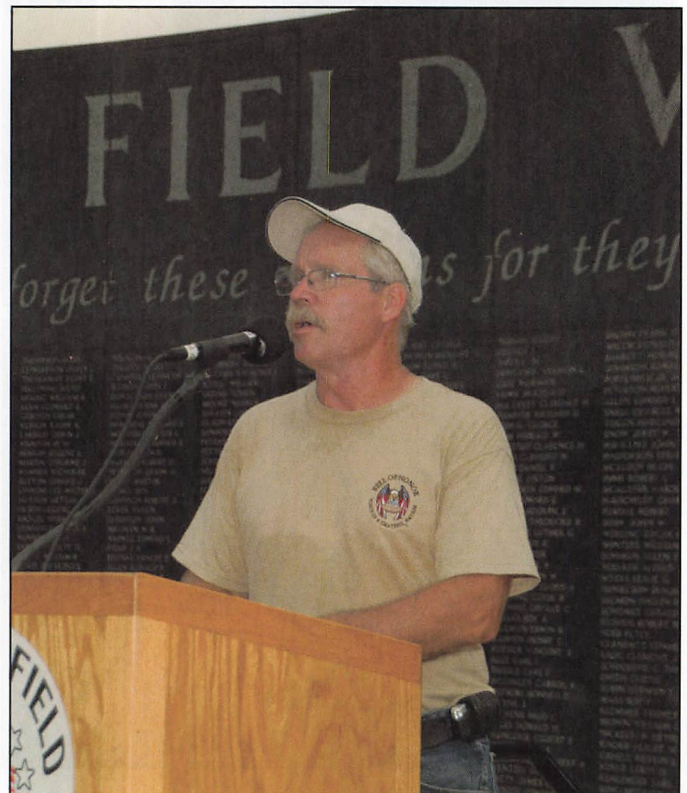
OUR KHE SANH VETERANS ROLLING ON THE RIVER BOAT QUEEN. "ROLLING", "ROLLING"







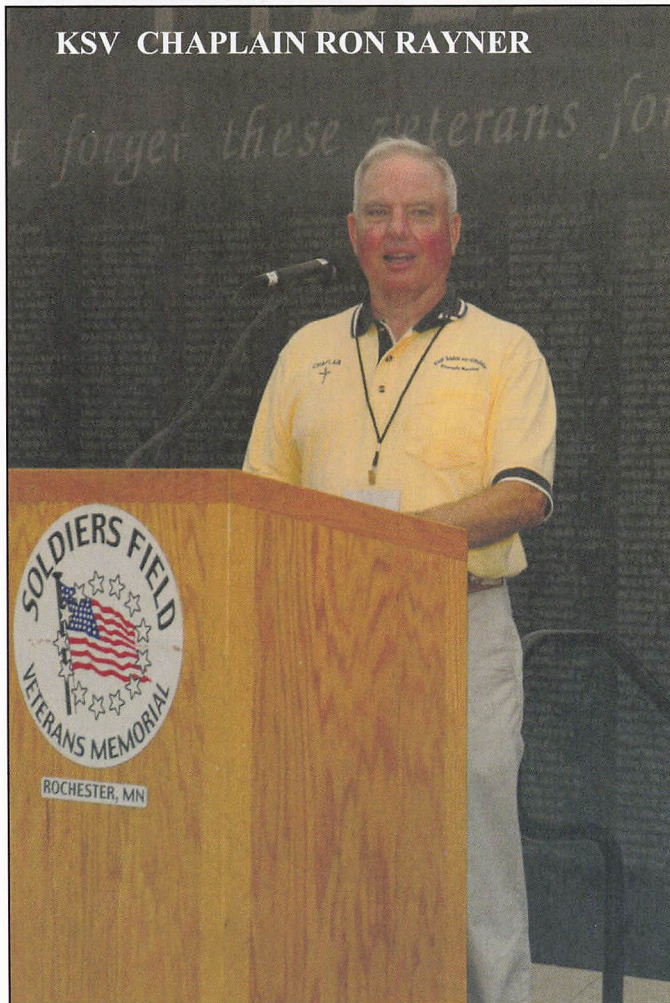




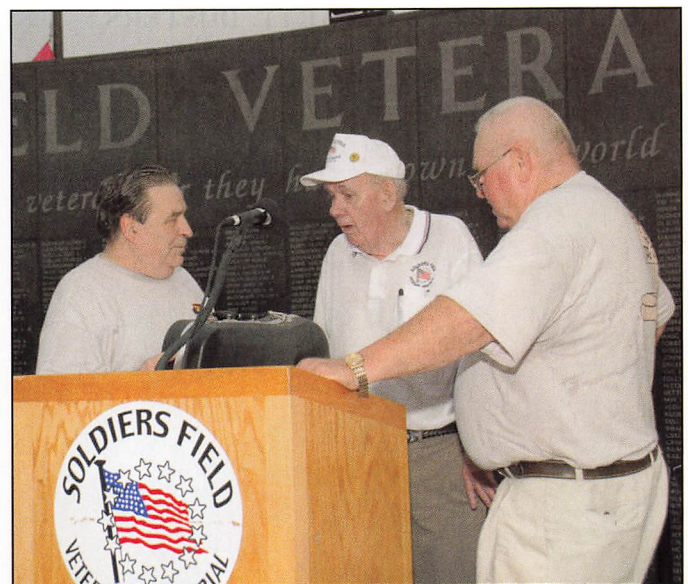
KSV PRESIDENT "BULLDOG" SMITH



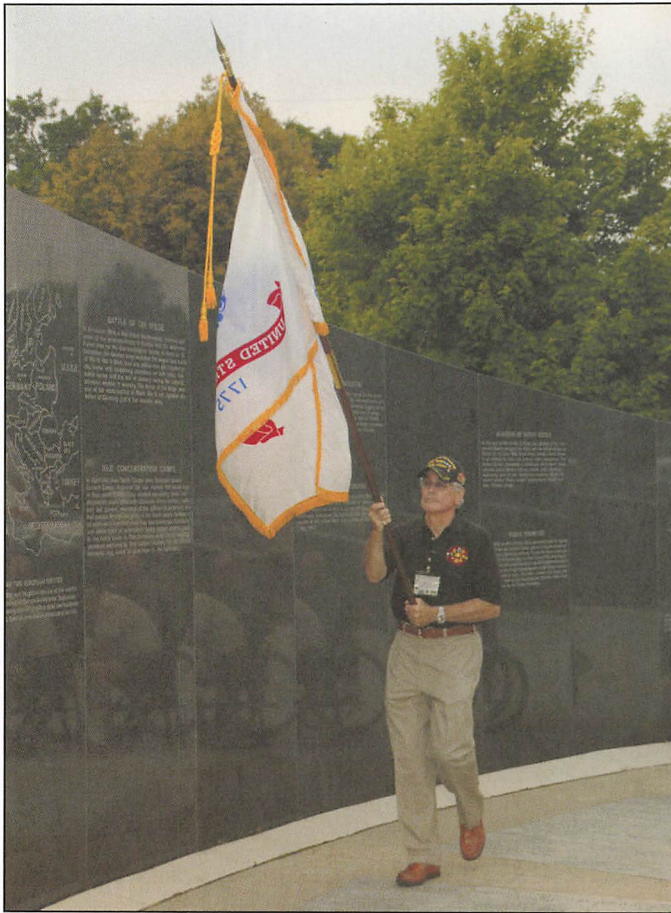
KSV CHAPLAIN RON RAYNER



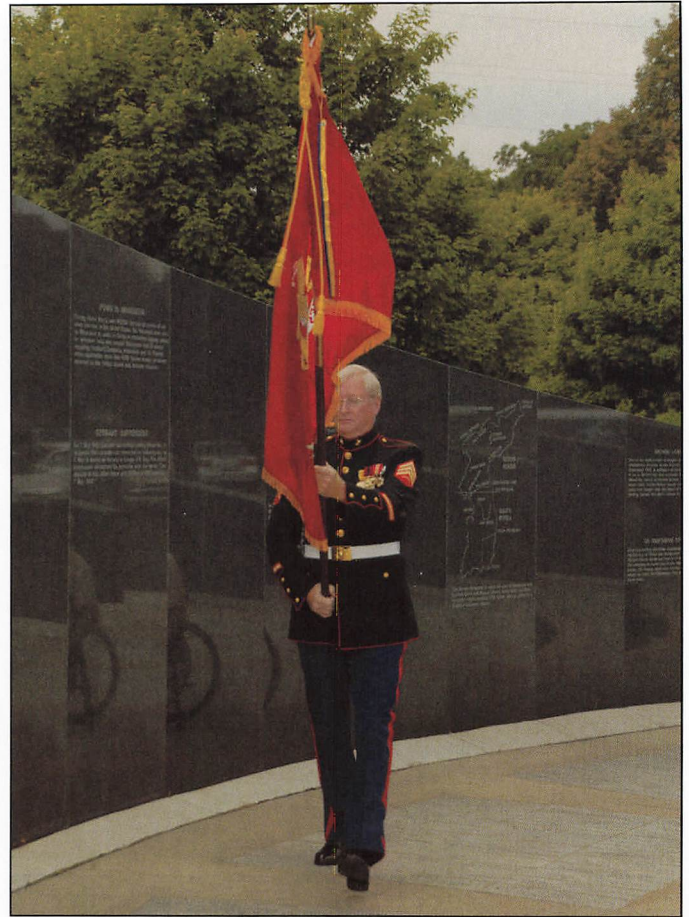
COLORS BEARER TOM HARVEY



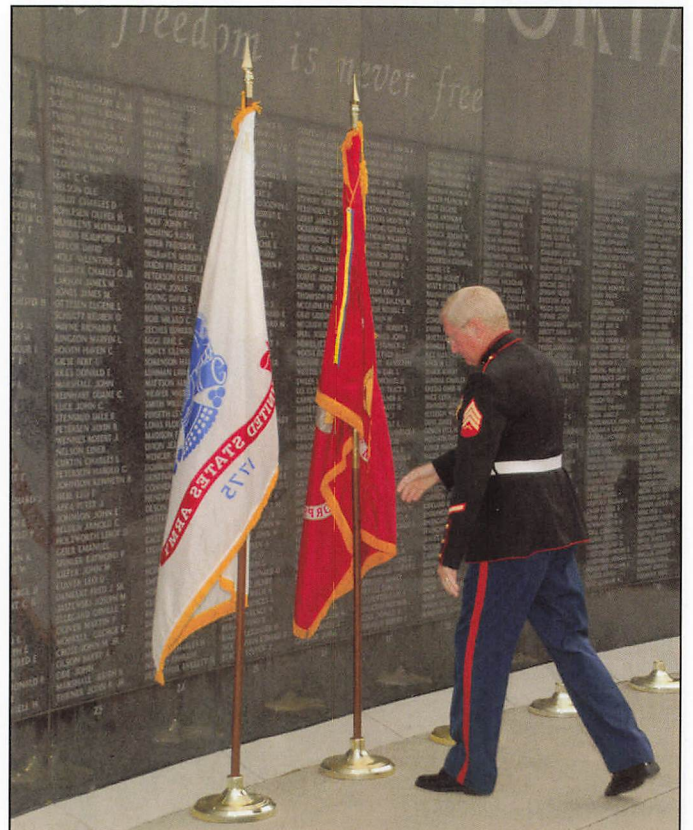
L-R TOM EICHLER, WAYNE STILLMAN, DAVE "BULLDOG" SMITH, KSV PRESIDENT. TOM & BULLDOG PRESENTING WAYNE WITH AUTOMATIC CEREMONIAL BUGLE, FOR USE BY THE VETERANS AT THE MEMORIAL & OTHER EVENTS.

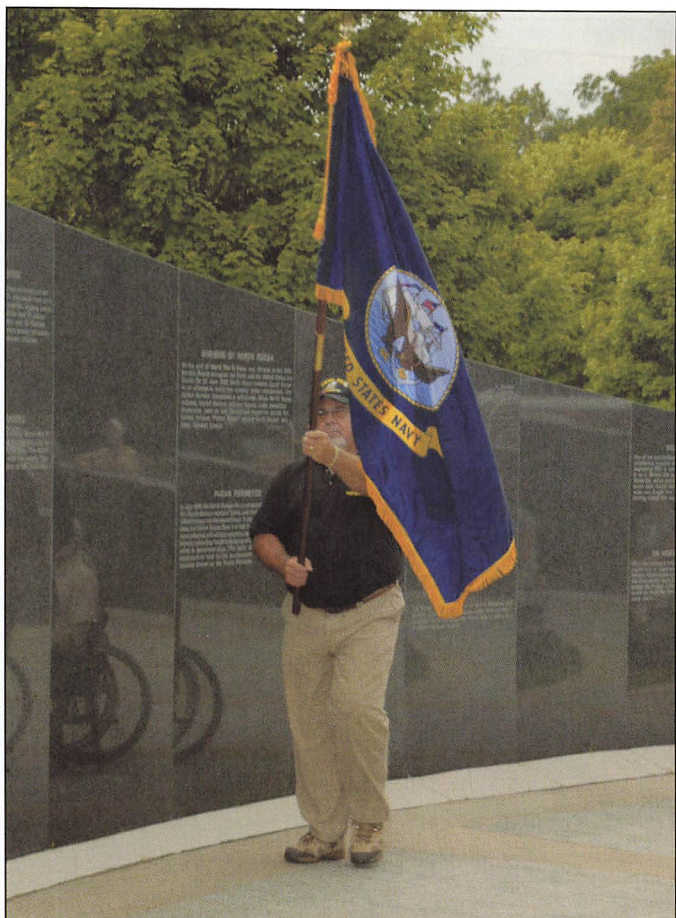


**REPRESENTING THE US ARMY : BRUCE
GEIGER A BTRY 1/44 ARTY DUSTERS**

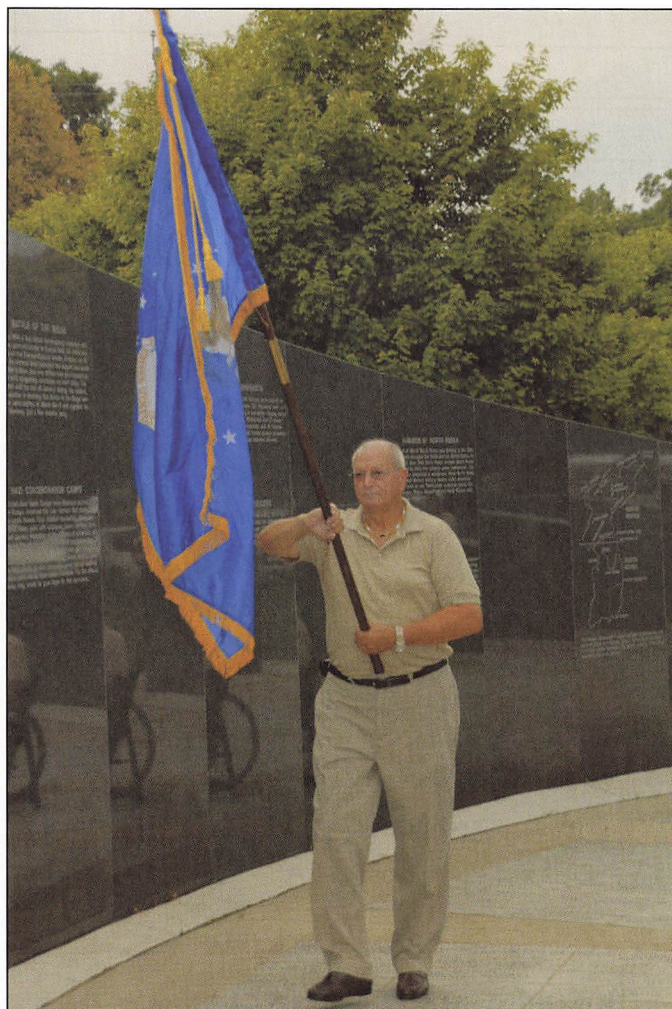


**REPRESENTING THE USMC:
TOM HARVEY HQ BTRY 1/13**





**REPRESENTING THE USN : JACK HAIGWOOD
CBMU-301 DET B SEABEES**



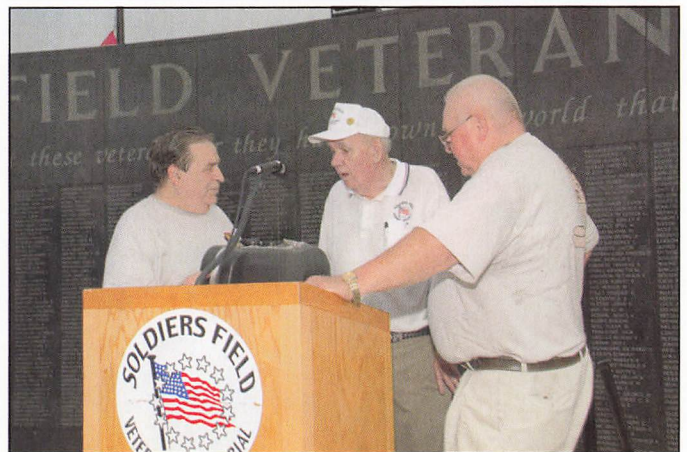
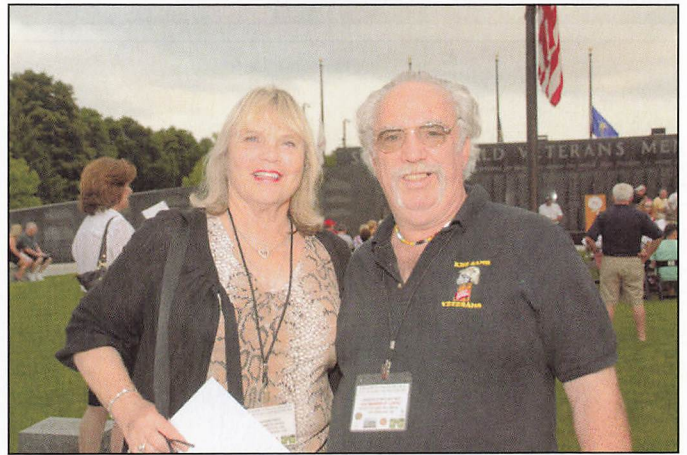
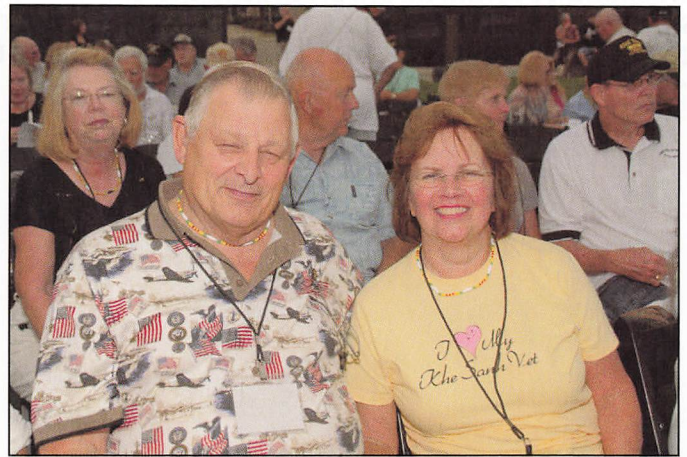
**REPRESENTING THE USAF: RON PARSONS
15TH AERIAL SQUADRON**



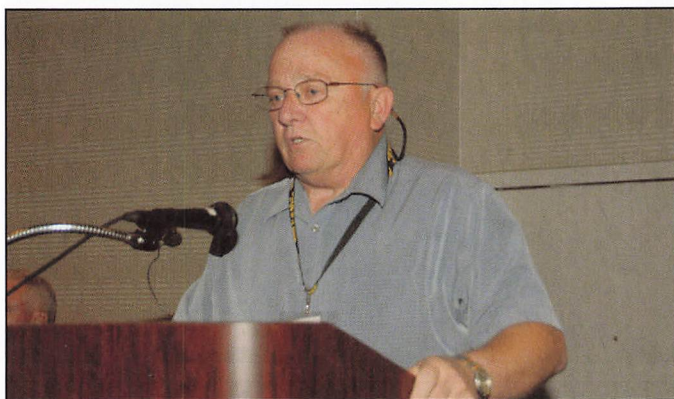


**HONORING ALL THE MIA'S GUNNERY
SERGEANT BILL MARTIN HQ BTRY 1/13**

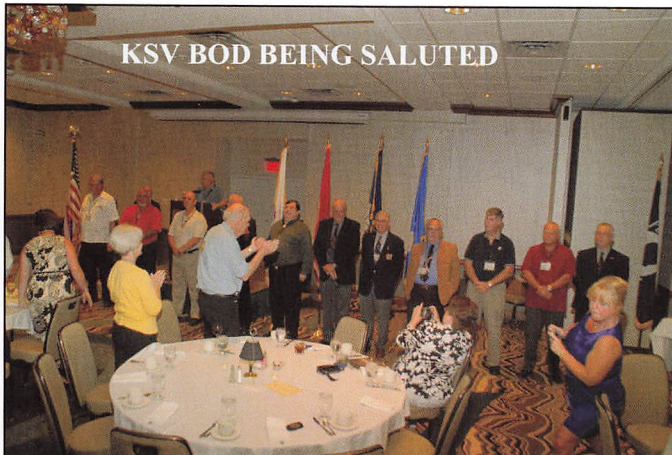




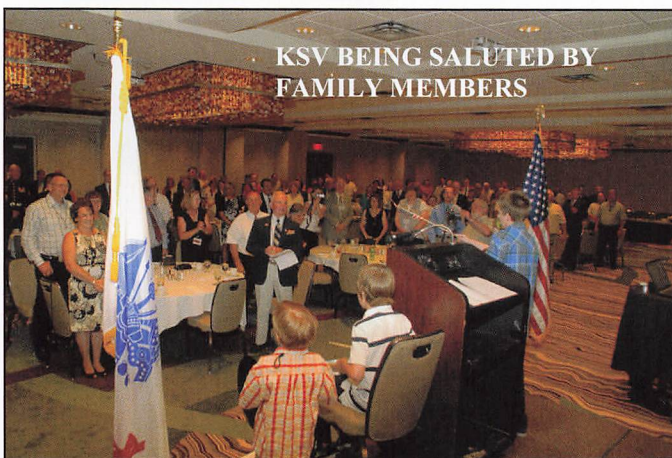
RUSSELL TURNER, REUNION CHAIRMAN & PAST PRESIDENT OF KHE SANH VETERANS WELCOMES KHE SANH VETERANS & EMCEES THE ANNUAL BANQUET WITH THE PRESENTATION OF COLORS & PARADE OF UNIT COLORS OF KSV & MIA FLAG. GUNNERY SERGEANT BILL MARTIN LIGHTS THE MIA CANDLE



KSV BOD BEING SALUTED



KSV BEING SALUTED BY
FAMILY MEMBERS



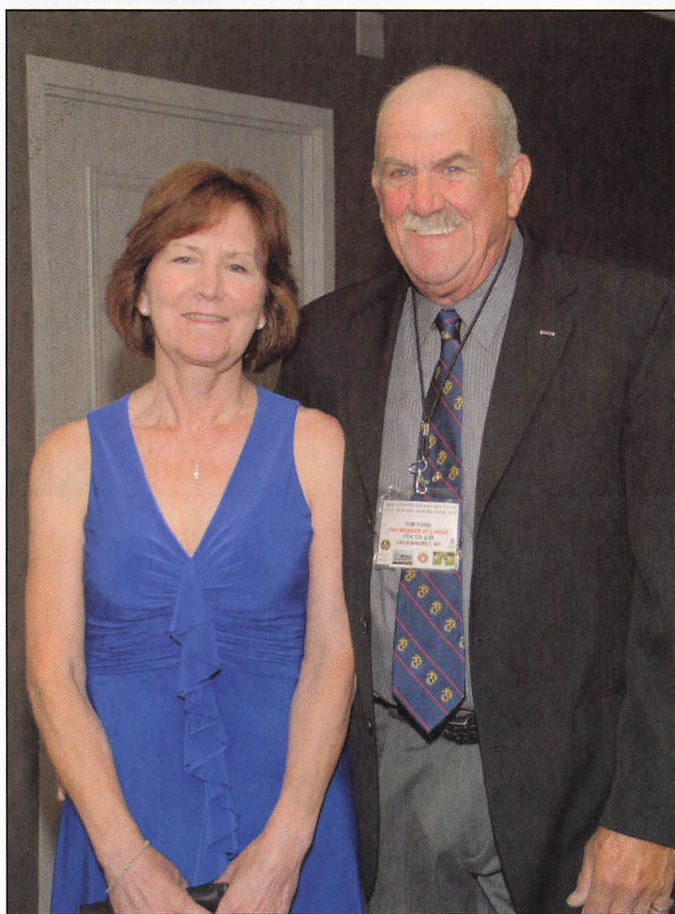
BRAVO CO FAMILY



AMAZING THEY STILL FIT ?







THE BEAUTIFUL KHE SANH WOMEN AT THEIR LUNCHEON



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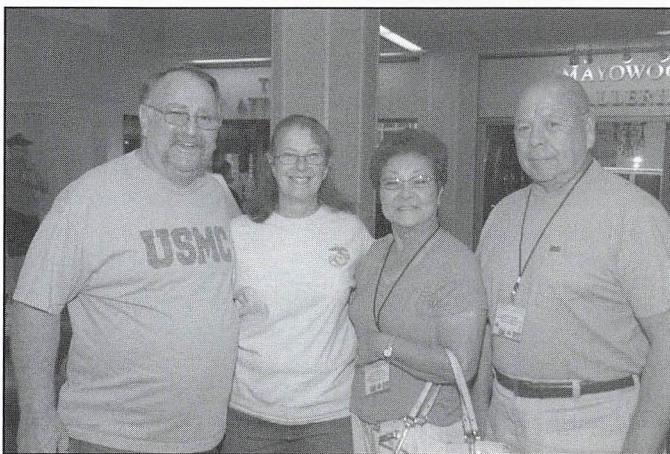
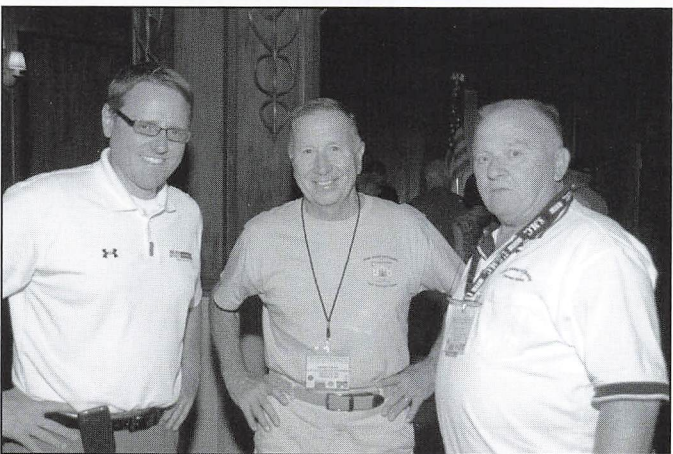
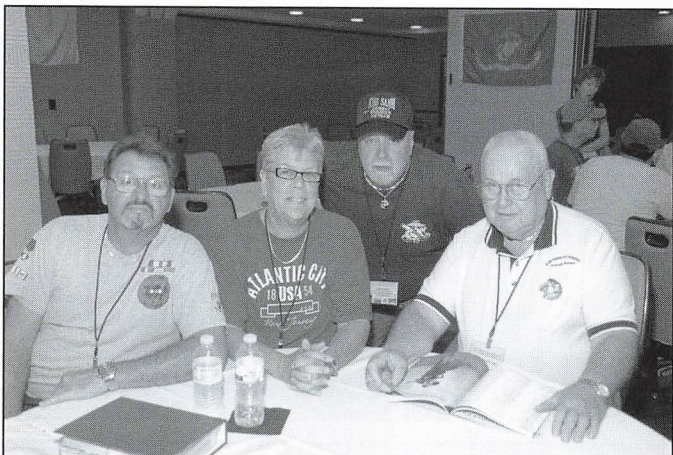


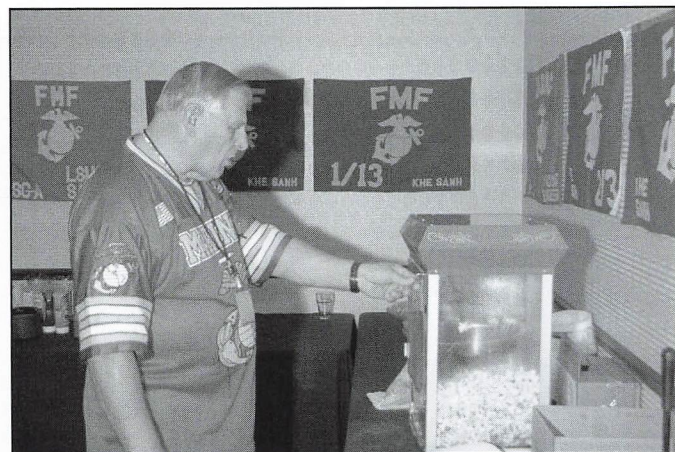
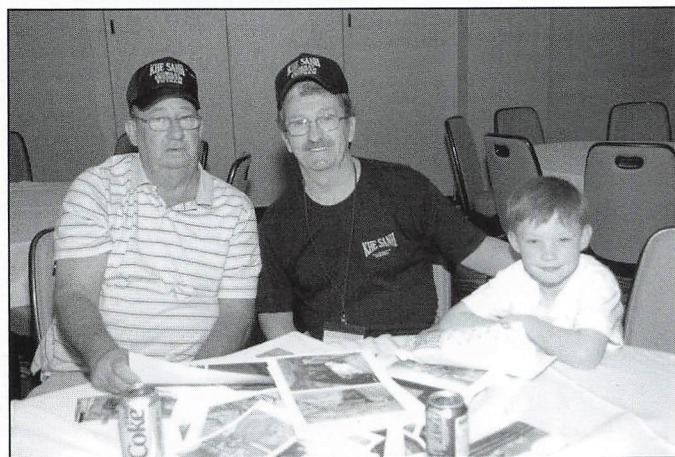
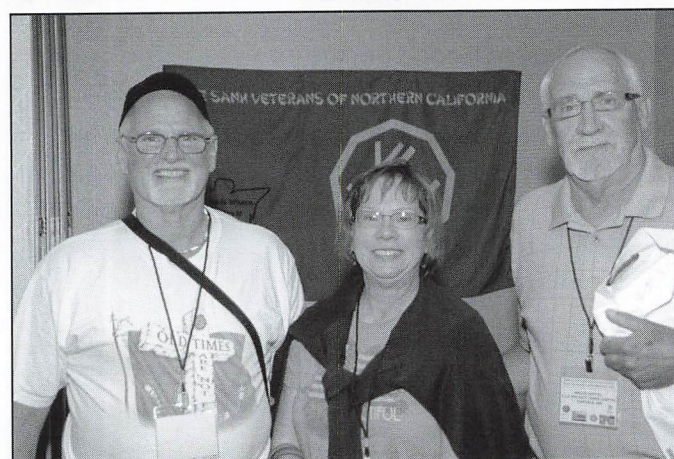
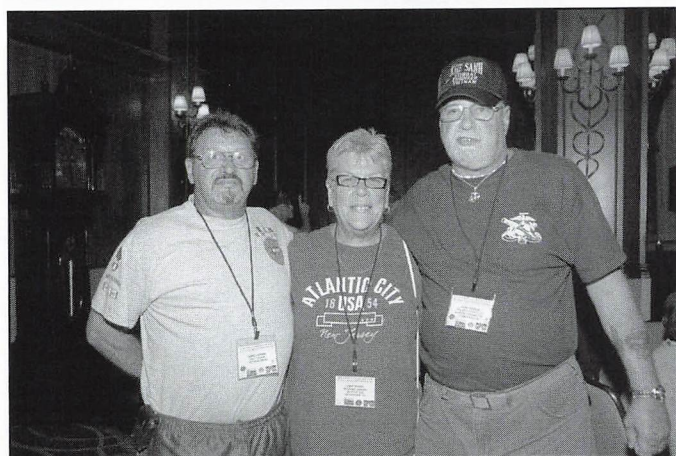
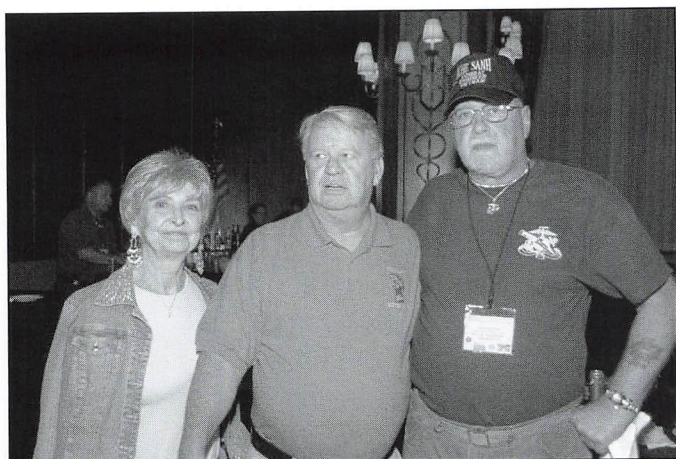
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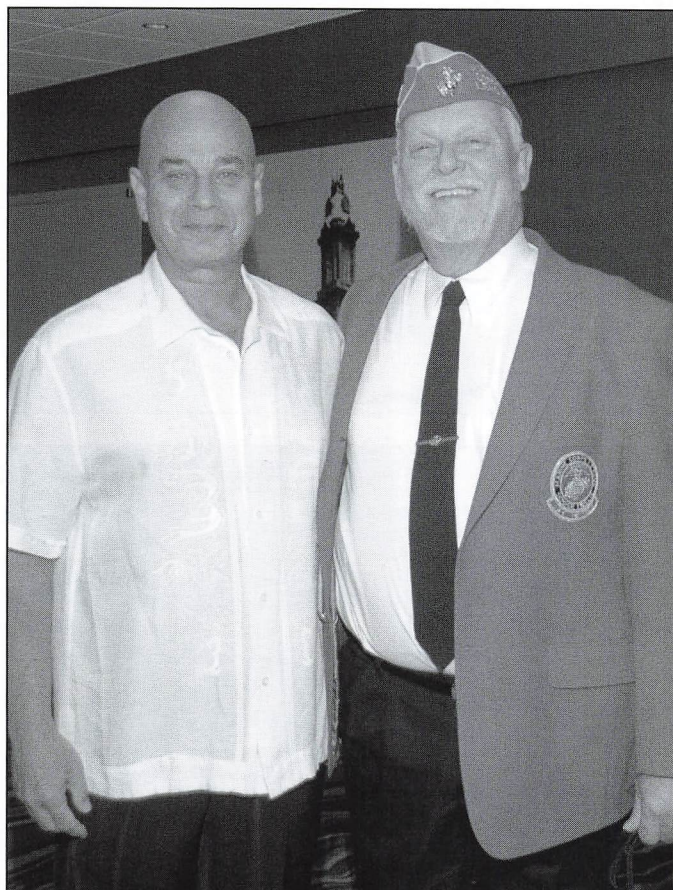
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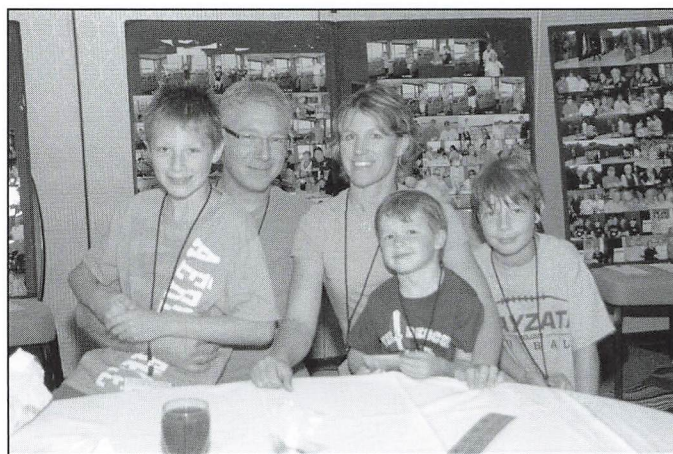
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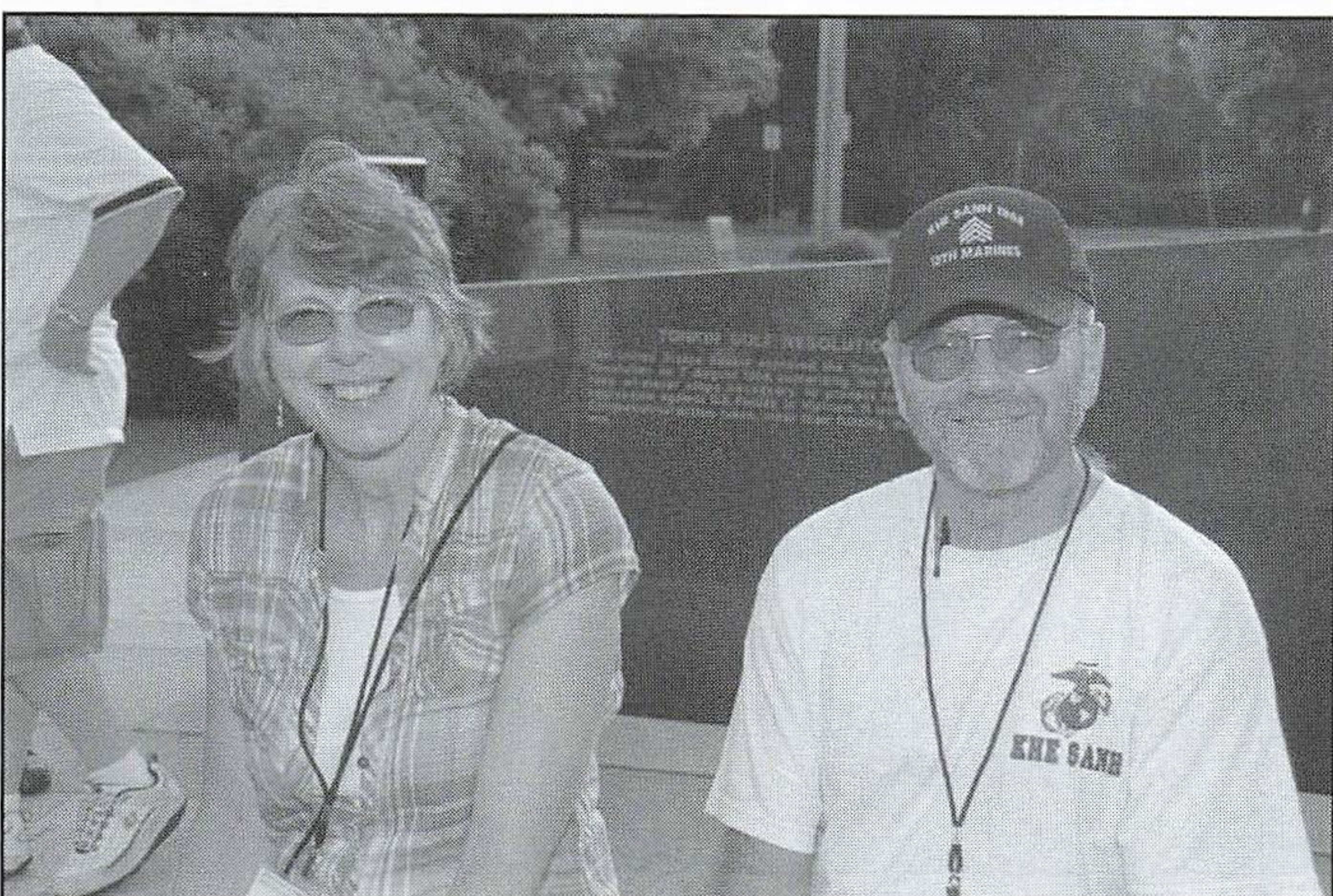
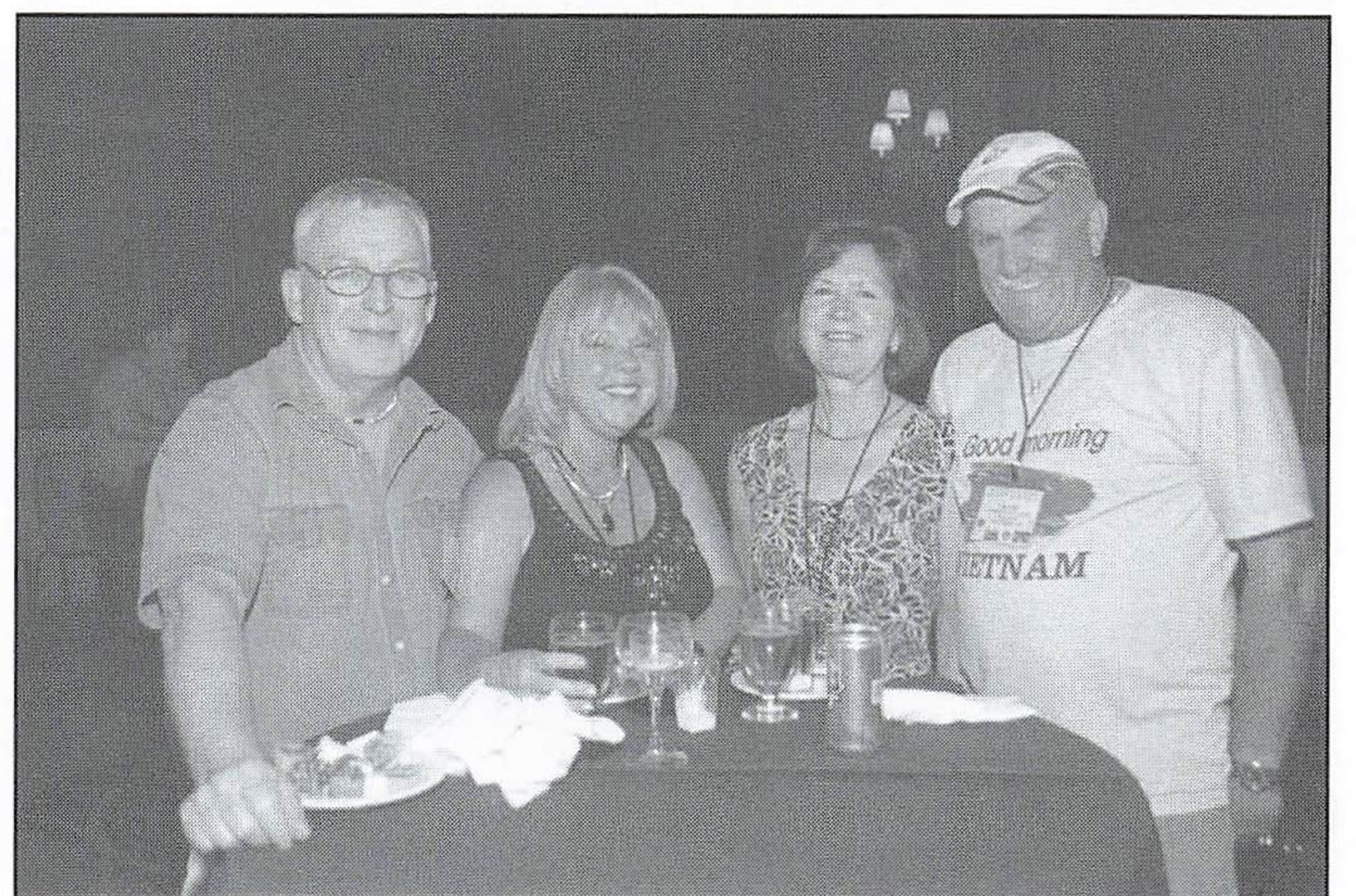
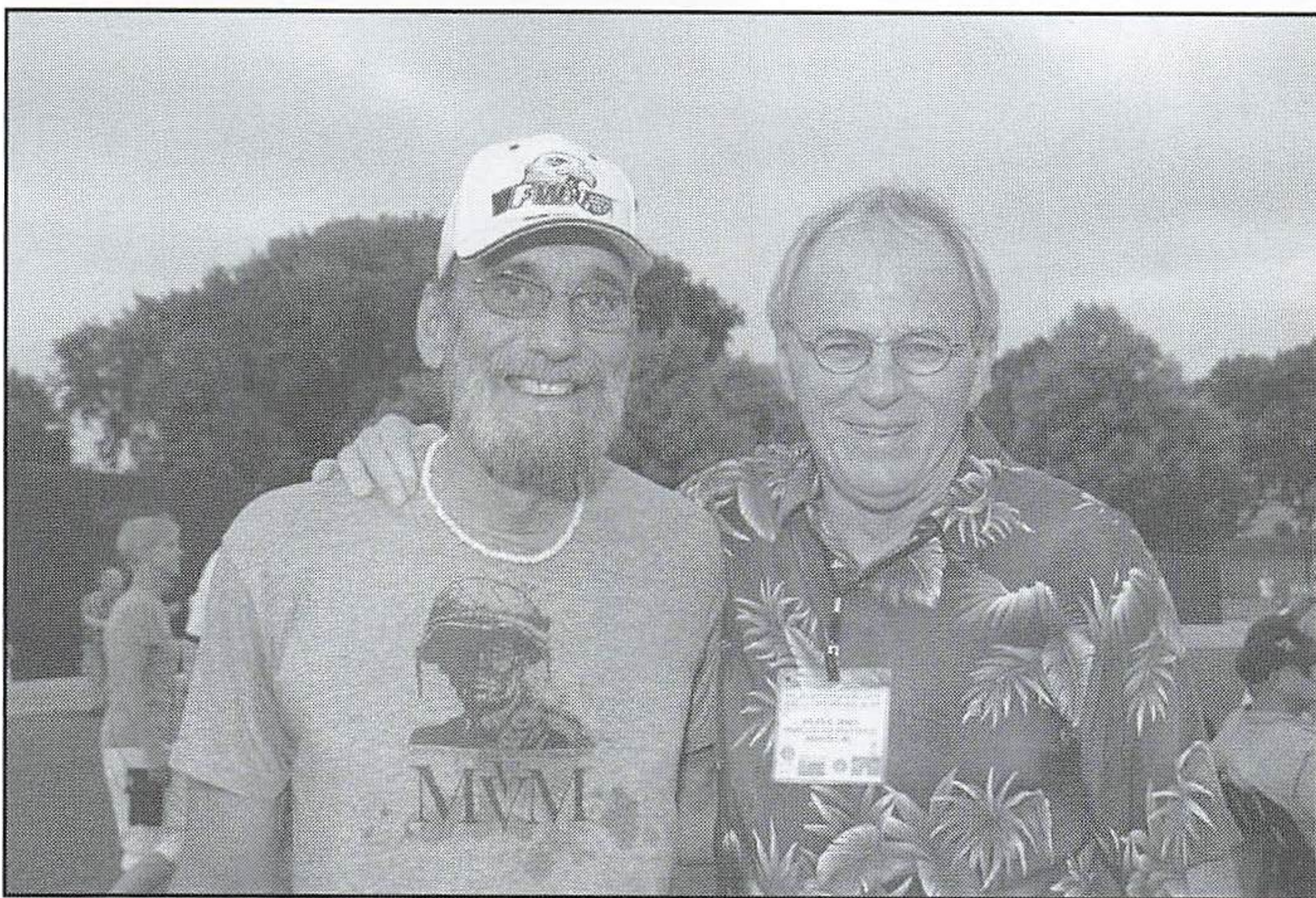
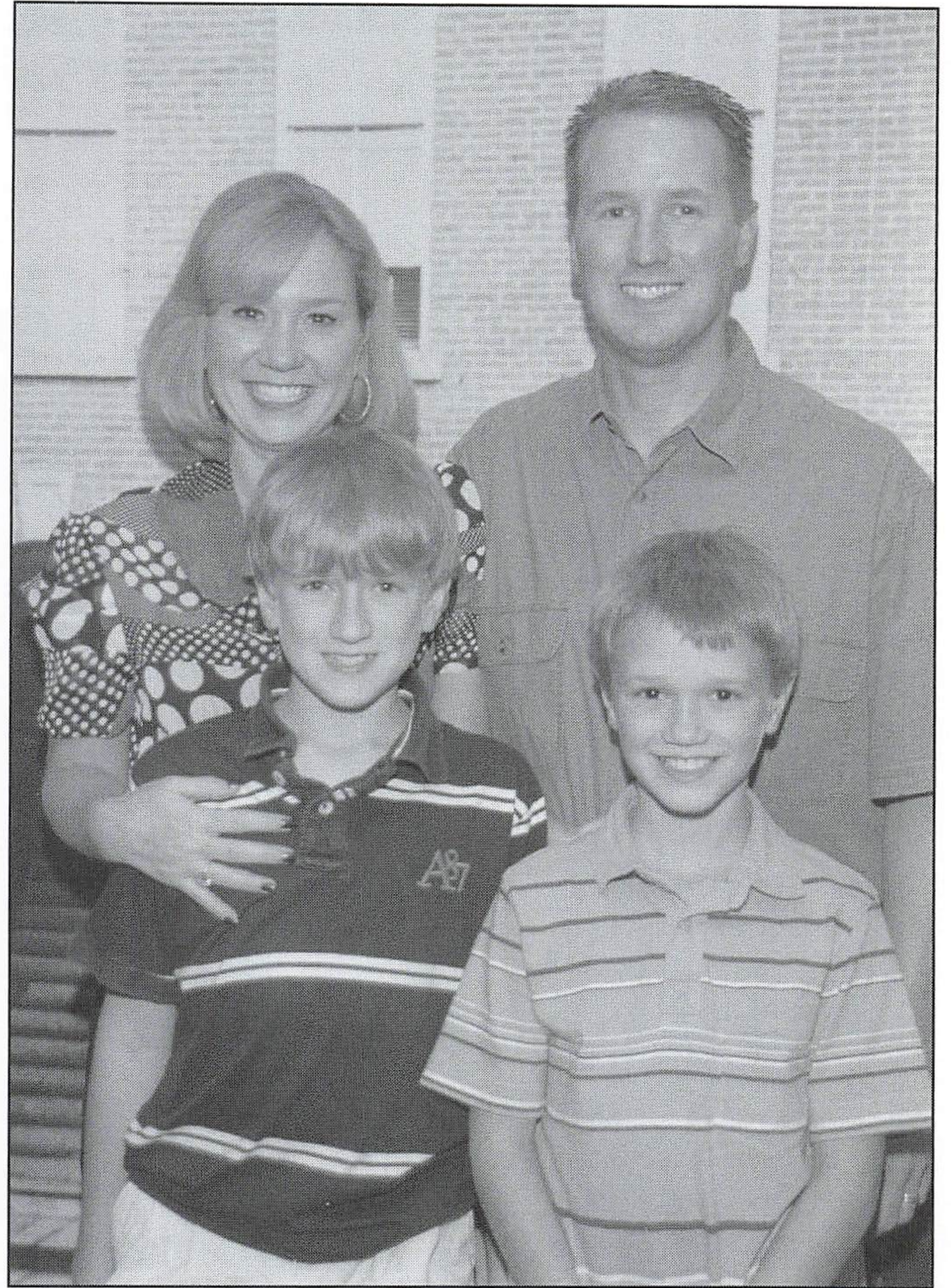
GOOD FRIENDS ENJOYING THEMSELVES AND MEETING NEW FRIENDS





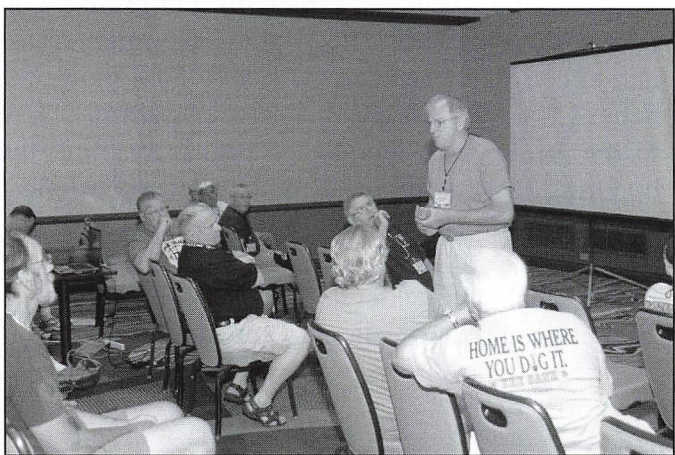
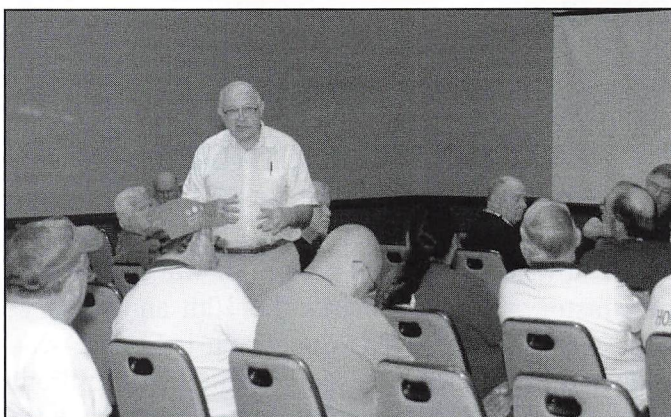
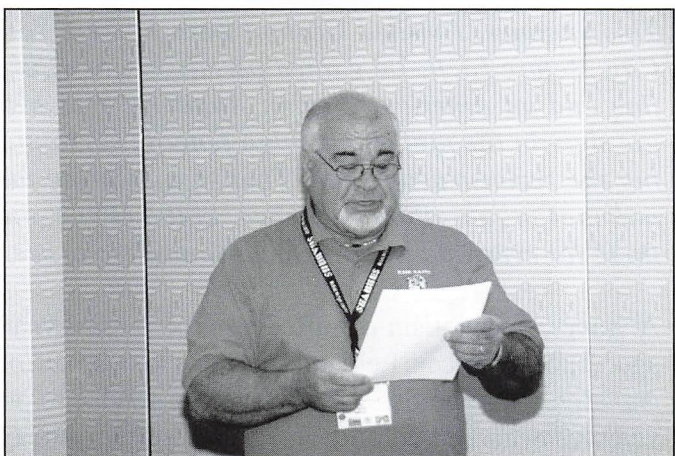








**WE MUST ALSO CONDUCT A LITTLE BUSINESS AT OUR MEMBERSHIP MEETING WHILE
OUR WOMEN ARE HAVING THEIR LUNCHEON**



I GET LETTERS

Dear Tom,

I am a Legionnaire and a member of the KSV. Enclosed is a copy of a response I sent to the American Legion Auxiliary Executive Director/National Secretary, Ms Mary "Dubbie" Buckler, regarding a portion of her article, "Dubbie's Message," in the August, 2011 American Legion Auxiliary Magazine.

In her article she stated that she visited Ground Zero in New York City, and prior to her leaving she asked and gained permission to affix a flag and an American Legion Auxiliary 9/11 Tribute sign on the multi-story high fencing that surrounds the construction site; she said that sign bearing the American Legion Auxiliary Emblem, is the only one there for everyone to see.

I believe Ms Buckler's action should inspire our organization to follow suit and I hope you agree. This is a golden opportunity and should be a national goal for our association.

Sgt. Vincent Rios
USMC (Ret)

THE ARTICLE

A COUNTRY CHANGED: Reflecting on 9/11-10 Years Later

We are now in the longest period, of war in our nation's history. Sept. 11 marks the 10th anniversary of the worst attacks ever to occur on U.S. soil. Al-Qaida and its 19 hijackers spent about a half million dollars plotting and hijacking planes they used to attack the United States, killing 2,995 people and causing more than \$50 billion in direct economic damages. A recent "Costs of War" report from the Eisenhower Research Project at Brown University's Watson Institute for International Studies assesses that costs associated with the U.S. military response to the 9/11 attacks will exceed \$3.7 trillion.

War is indeed costly - at home and abroad. More than 6,000 U.S. military service members have given their ultimate sacrifice in Operations Iraqi Freedom (OIF), Enduring Freedom (OEF), and

New Dawn (OND))) under Commanders-In-Chief from both political parties. More than 1,700 who have fought in OIF/OEF/OND are amputees, more than 150,000 have Traumatic Brain Injury, and more than 67,000 have Post Traumatic Stress diagnoses. Federal obligations to care for past and future veterans of these wars will likely total between \$600-\$950 billion, and the Watson Institute study projects those costs of war will not peak until mid-century.

Our brave Navy SEALs eliminated Osama Bin Laden, but Al-Qaida remains a multinational force that continues to threaten our security. Nearly 10 years after declaration of the War on Terror, we live very differently than we did before we were attacked. Our youngest generation is known as the "Homeland Security Generation." Travel forever changed. U.S. airline passengers annually spend a collective 46,000 years in security lines. Airport security alone grew by the billions. Oil is a confounding cost, off living factor. Costs have driven the exodus of U.S. manufacturing. And our country's "post 9/11 era" debt is beyond what most of us can even imagine.

This summer, I visited Ground Zero in New York City. Before I left, I'd gained permission to affix a flag and an American Legion Auxiliary 9/11 tribute sign on the multi-story-high fencing surrounding the reconstruction site. That sign, bearing our national organization's emblem, is the ONLY one there for everyone walking to Ground Zero to see.

A wave of patriotism engulfed our country 10 years ago. The American Legion Auxiliary keeps patriotism alive. As members, we devote our service to our veterans who served and our troops serving today. They sacrifice dearly to protect us and preserve our heritage of freedom. The American Legion Auxiliary knows that freedom isn't free. I think most of us believe it's priceless. And, so is our right to belong to the ALA. As a member, I positively think that honoring those who make me eligible to belong is worth an extra \$5 bill.

Mary "Dubbie" Buckler
Executive Director/National Secretary

MEMORIAL PAGE

THOSE REMEMBERED

SSGT JON R. WOODARD USMC KIA 15 MAR 68
CPL KENNETH B. NORTON USMC FOX CO 2/1
KIA 5/8/68 HILL 881

CPL REUBEN C. MCMAKINS USMC L CO 3/26 KIA 14
APR 68 HILL 881N

DELBERT L. LEASURE BROTHER OF DELBERT
TO ALL SPECIAL FORCES WHO SERVED AT LANG
VEI & FOB-3

SGT MAJOR JIM GAYNOR H&S CO 1/26
KIA 15 Feb 68

REMEMBERED BY

GLENN T. GRIFFIN DELTA CO 1/1
GEORGE E. FINLAY F CO 2/1

THOMAS PIERCE L CO 3/26

THE KHE SANH VETERANS

LAWRENCE T. COOPER FOB-3 CO C 5TH SF

LATE OBIT

MAJOR JAMES R. CANNON USMCR KHE SANH VETERAN ECHO CO 2/3 1936-2011

Major James R. Cannon, USMC (retired), of Los Lunas, died on July 14 after suffering a heart attack on the morning of July 7 and was kept on total life support for seven days. Jim was born in King George, Va., on Oct. 2, 1936, and was the son of Clyde and Tishie Belle Cannon of Fredericksburg, Va.

Jim was a 24-year veteran of the Vietnam War and the recipient of the Silver Star, the Bronze Star with Combat "V" and two Purple Hearts. He was an active member of many military associations and enjoyed helping many service men and woman to receive their benefits from the VA.

Jim left behind a wife, Judy. He was the loving father of two sons, Kevin R. Cannon and Corey J. Cannon; two daughters, Dawn C. Smith and Faith C. Cook; and two stepdaughters, Paula Spear and Naomi Spear. Jim had 11 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his brother, Joseph, his former wife, Freda L. Robinson, and wife, Marilyn Spear, Jack L. Cannon and Lonnie A. Cannon; and sister, June Trigger.

His funeral service was held at French Mortuary on July 20, and was interred at the National Cemetery

in Santa Fe with full military honors. He will be missed by all of the men who served with him, the veterans and their families who knew him, his friends, his brothers and sister and by his children, who thought the world of him. His favorite charity was the Fisher House Foundation, which helps servicemen and their families.

Visit www.fisherhouse.org if you would like to make a donation



WALKING WITH GIANTS-THE TIGERS OF HMM-262

By Beth Crumley

*If they ever tell my story let them say that I walked
with giants. Men rise and fall like the winter
wheat, but these names will never die."*

One of the things I love most about my work in Marine Corps history is the opportunity to interact with both active duty Marines, and with veterans. Over the course of the years, I have spent time with many veterans groups, and I have cherished every one of those experiences. This past weekend, however, I experienced something extraordinary. I was a guest at a reunion, held on Marine Corps Base Quantico, of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 262. The gathering was much like that of any other unit held aboard Quantico. It was marked by a great trip to HMX-1, the Evening Parade at Marine Barracks, 8th and I, and a trip to the museum. Friendships were renewed, meals were shared, great stories told.

And what, you may ask, was so extraordinary about this? HMM-262 is not one of the more recognizable squadrons. Their history is not spoken in the reverential tones sometimes given to other aviation units. While someone with an in-depth knowledge of Marine Corps helicopters in Vietnam might be aware they operated out of Ky Ha, Marble Mountain, off the USS *Tripoli*, and in Quang Tri, the importance of their mission in Vietnam remains largely unknown. They are, in so many ways, the forgotten squadron, and that is almost criminal. Their accomplishments, their sacrifices, their devotion to duty should be legendary in the annals of Marine Corps history.

HMM-262, under the command of LtCol Ural W. Shadric, arrived in Vietnam on 4 December 1966.



Shortly after their arrival the command moved to Ky Ha, in Quang Tin Province. By February 1967, HMM-262 established a record for CH-46 squadrons in Vietnam by flying some 2198.2 hours in support of combat operations. (A large number of missions were flown in support of Operation Desoto.) Major General Louis B. Robertshaw sent the following message:

"Your monthly record of 2198 hours during February impressive. All time high for CH-46 in combat. Achievement made more impressive by lack of any operational aircraft accident while operating strenuous hours during inclement weather. Record provides sound evidence that operational effectiveness and flying safety are mutually supporting. My congratulations for inspiring squadron performance."

In April, HMM-262 moved from Ky Ha to Marble Mountain Air facility. Throughout the month, the squadron flew 1,425.7 hours, transported 6,602 troops and 737 tons of cargo in support of several operations, prompting General Westmoreland to send a message to all hands which read, "Your achievements mark you as the finest men our nation has ever sent into battle; you deserve the honor, respect, and the support of all the American people..." LtCol Shadrick simply said, "each of you passed through the 'valley', and have proven yourselves to be the toughest 'Mothah' there..." But it was at this time that the squadron began to be plagued by a shortage of pilots, a problem that would continue throughout the war.

By July 1967, Major David Althoff, a Marine who would come to be described as "the finest CH-46 pilot in the Marine Corps." arrived for his second tour in Vietnam, serving as Operations Officer with HMM-262. It was also during the month of July that the squadron began receiving missions titled "Khe Sanh Augmentation" and "Dong Ha Augmentation" as the war in Northern I Corps heated up.

It should be noted by the summer of 1967, the Marine Corps had ten squadrons of CH-46 helicopters. Of these, approximately half were being equipped with the new "D" model, while the rest were still flying the "A" model. Three of those squadrons were in Vietnam and one was on board the assault ships of the Special Landing Force operating in the South China Sea.

During that same year, there were several catastrophic incidents involving CH-46s. On 3 May, a CH-46D crashed at Santa Ana. Subsequent findings led to the grounding of all CH-46 helicopters. Ten days later all helicopters were released for flight by the Navy. That same day, a CH-46A crashed off the coast of Vietnam when the tail pylon broke off in flight. Over the course of the next few months, other crashes resulted in a comprehensive study of CH-46 problems by order of General Keith McCutcheon. Yet another crash on 3 July resulted in a "CH-46 Reliability Review Conference," scheduled to convene in August. On 31 August a CH-46A of HMM-262 "yawed at 3000 feet and lost the tail pylon." Major General Norman J Anderson, commanding the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, ordered all CH-46s be "restricted to emergency combat requirements which could not be met by other aircraft."

Technicians from Vertol, Naval Systems Command



Ernesto Gomez, Receiving Navy Cross

and several other agencies converged on Vietnam in an effort to pinpoint the cause of the failures. They concluded, "although the specific causes of the CH-46 accidents were varied, the ultimate structural failures occurred in the area of the aft pylon." Several structural and system modifications were suggested. The entire modification program was to be performed by personnel of the Boeing/Vertol Company, but Marines were required to assemble and disassemble the aircraft.

In Vietnam, rather than undertaking such modifications on airfields under sporadic enemy attack, General McCutcheon established a plan under which all repairs take place at MCAF Futema, Okinawa. The Marines of HMM-262 were selected to move from the Special Landing Force to Futema to prepare all of the aircraft.

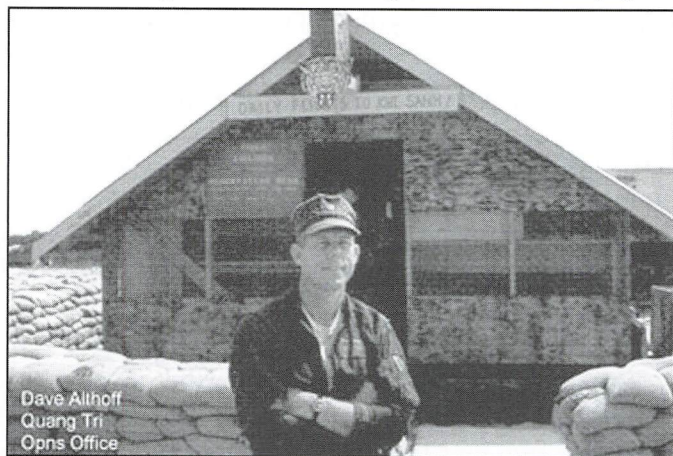
On the twelfth of October, a detachment from HMM-262, consisting of 9 aircraft, 19 officers and 25 enlisted Marines embarked aboard the USS *Tripoli* to provide emergency medium lift capabilities to the Special Landing Force. This detachment came to be known as "The Poor Devils." In late November, Major Althoff took command of the detachment, now equipped with modified aircraft.

The modification program was completed in December 1967. On 10 January, the Poor Devils detachment was dissolved and joined her parent unit at HMM-262's new location at Quang Tri Air Facility. Once relocated to Quang Tri, the average helicopter pilot was flying 100 hours per week.

Command chronologies for the period covering the siege of Khe Sanh and surrounding hill outposts clearly show that HMM-262 flew almost constantly in support. An entry of 23 January, 1968 clearly states, "HMM-262 continued to put forth an all out effort to Support Operation Scotland and the besieged Khe Sanh." The command chronology for February further states, "The squadron's mission during Operation Scotland was to provide aircraft for resupply and medevac to the Marine outposts on Hills 881, 861, 861A, 558 and 950 as well as the Khe Sanh Airfield." It also notes that near the end of February a strike system was evolved to resupply the outpost near Khe Sanh. (This would be the advent of the SuperGaggle. While many have taken credit for the genesis of the SuperGaggle tactics, there is compelling evidence that it evolved during a conversation between Major David Althoff and two

other officers of HMM-262.) The narrative summary of events in March, 1968, notes, "HMM-262 flew in support of Operation Scotland, Napoleon, Kentucky and Lancaster II, with the majority of operations being in support of Operation Scotland....Generally, three factors were involved in limiting total flight time. From approximately 1 March- 15 March, 1968 numerous hits in support of operation Scotland created a shortage of aircraft." There was also an issue with a shortage of Helicopter Aircraft Commanders. The April command chronology reads, "The squadron's mission, concerning Operations Scotland and Scotland II, was to provide aircraft as necessary, for resupply and medevac to the Marine outposts on Hills 881, 861, 861A, 558, 950, 689 and Khe Sanh Airfield.

All of that said, what made this gathering so extraordinary? The veterans, themselves. These are extraordinary men...I will say again, that their accomplishments, their sacrifices, their devotion to duty should be legendary in the annals of Marine Corps history, but that is not the case. One would expect such giants of the Corps to continually pat



themselves on the back. They do not. They are an incredibly humble group of men, who believe that they were simply doing their job.

Among them, are a number of crew chiefs who did a remarkable job of keeping their birds in the air despite an incredibly grueling flight schedule and severe damage due to enemy fire: Corporal Joseph "Jake" Jacobs, Corporal Kreig "Hip" Loftin, and Corporal Robert "Lead-Ass" Harrison, so named because he was shot down or crashed so often. Said Harrison, matter-of-factly,

"Shot down/crashed... several times....I crashed into 950 and rolled down the mountain once, I was shot

down a few times, but got the plane out each time. I was shot down (up) the first 30 seconds of my first combat flight, with Althoff, at Finger Lakes."

Another exceptional Marine served as crew chief with HMM-262. Lance Corporal Ernesto "Gooie" Gomez, received a Navy Cross for his actions during a medevac on Hill 881S, a Marine outpost situated between Khe Sanh Combat Base and the Lao-tian border, manned by India and Mike Companies, 3d Battalion, 26th Marines:

On 25 January 1968, LtCol Melvin J. Steinberg, commanding officer of HMM-262, flying the medevac mission, told Gomez, "We're going to get bloodied on this one." Gomez later wrote, "The clouds were very low and it was very cold and it was drizzling...On the way there I listened on the radios for any information that would help me complete my mission. I was told that two Marines would load the wounded."

As the aircraft touched down, they began taking enemy fire. Said Gomez:

"There was a lot of action on the hill. Tracers coming in and going out....There were shells hitting the zone we were going to land in. The smell of powder hurt your lungs. Through the smoke I saw two men running towards my bird with the wounded Marine between them....He had bandages over his eyes. I could see the blood on the bandages.... He couldn't see. We were taking .50 cal fire. They started shooting RPGs and mortars. They were trying to get the bird, and they were using the wounded Marine."

Steinberg asked, "What's going on, Gomez?" He replied, "I have to disconnect, I have to go get him." Cpl. Gomez, without hesitation, ran out of the helicopter and rushed across the fire swept terrain to the side of the wounded Marine. Enemy fire followed him. He reached the wounded man and tackled him, shielding him with his body from the hostile fire. Lifting the wounded man to his shoulder, Gomez ran back towards the chopper. "The small arms fire was very, very accurate...it hit him in the leg and spun him around....I covered him and told him, 'We're almost there, I'm gonna get you to the bird.'" He motioned for the left gunner to help, and together they carried the blinded Marine to the helicopter.

Reconnecting to the intercom system, Col Steinberg said, "Something big has hit us, Gomez...I'm going to try to make it to Khe Sanh. We've gotta get out of here." It wasn't until the next day that Gomez discovered two zippers on his flight suit and part of the heel of his boot had been shot off.

Nominated for the Medal of Honor, Gomez learned in early 1969 that he had been awarded a Navy Cross. Part of the citation reads,

"Corporal Gomez's heroic actions were instrumental in saving his companion's life and inspired all who observed him. By his courage, selfless concern for the safety of his fellow Marine, and unswerving devotion to duty at great personal risk, he upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps."



Gomez later wrote;

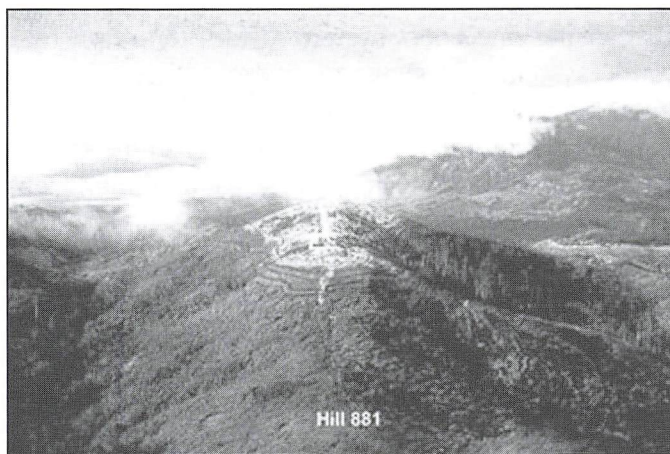
"I'd grown old in this country....It was getting worse around Quang Tri. Not only was there Khe Sanh, but there was Hill 881S, Carol and the Rockpile. You could die at any one of those place. Some of the extracts were so hard to perform, with wounded Marines and hard to land places....Being awakened and told 'you got another mission.' I thought I had just laid down two minutes ago.HMM-262 lost twenty crew members in the month of February alone. We had been serving the Khe Sanh area alone....One squadron couldn't possibly do the job. We were ragged and tired beyond words...."

And then there is LtCol David Althoff, an extraordinary Marine, and an extraordinary pilot:

Major Althoff arrived in Vietnam to join HMM-262 in June, 1967, and it wasn't long before he became

known as "Balls to the Wall Althoff." First Lieutenant Michael Mullen, a young pilot assigned to HMM-262 once stated,

"He was the squadron's idol. We all thought the world of him as a man, an officer and a pilot....He would never ask one of his junior pilots to fly a mission he had never flown. When we went on a 'hairy' mission went with the knowledge that it could be



completed, because the Major had already done it several times before."

Corporal Vernon Crews, echoed the sentiment,

"I used to like to fly with the Major because he was so damned cool when the going got rough. I guess it used to rub off on the rest of his crew, too....We got into real scrapes with him, and at times he would return back to base with a chopper full of holes. But in 13 months he never lost a man on a mission. I doubt if you can find a better helicopter pilot in the Marine Corps."

Major Althoff was nominated for the Alfred A. Cunningham Award in 1968. Awarded to the outstanding Marine Corps aviator each year, the nomination package, prepared by LtCol Mel Steinberg, details Major Althoff's service with HMM-262. It includes the following resume of award recommendations:

"On 2 February 1968, Major Althoff launched as section leader of two CH-46s assigned a night emergency reconnaissance team extraction. The ceiling was 700 feet and gave only 300-400 feet clearance over the zone. The recon team was surrounded by an estimated 100 NVA and were pinned down by automatic weapons fire. After making radio and visual contact with the team, Major Althoff com-

menced an immediate approach. Fire was received during the approach in spite of the gunships and the 46's own suppressive fire, however, the approach was resolutely continued. Numerous hits were taken in the controls closet and cockpit as the aircraft landed, but Major Althoff calmly remained in the zone and directed suppressive fire for the gunships on several automatic weapons positions. Not until every member of the team was aboard did he lift from the zone. Immediately the aircraft took several hits causing one boost system to fail, the ramp hydraulic system was shot out, and one fuel quantity gauge fell to zero. Despite the heavy enemy fire and now IFR conditions, Major Althoff was able to return the aircraft to a friendly area and make an emergency landing."

"On 13 February 1968, Major Althoff was leading a flight of Ch-46s resupplying the hills around Khe Sanh. As his wingman took an external load onto Hill 881S, he came under heavy .50 caliber and small arms fire. The drop was completed in spite of this fire, but as the helicopter lifted a 122mm rocket exploded in the zone just behind the aircraft seriously wounding three Marines. As the pilot headed his aircraft towards Khe Sanh, a call for an emergency medevac came from Hill 881S. Major Althoff, having monitored the actions on the radio, and with full knowledge of the enemy .50 caliber and rocket positions, immediately volunteered to pick up the critically wounded men. Approaching the zone under the cover of fixed wing jets, UH-1E gunships, and his own .50 caliber machine guns, he came under intense fire. Resolutely, in spite of numerous hits, he continued into the zone. Still taking fire and more hits, he calmly waited until all the medevacs were loaded before lifting. More fire and battle damage was received while departing the hill, but Major Althoff managed to fly the crippled aircraft successfully to Khe Sanh to desperately needed medical aid."

"On 20 February 1968, Major Althoff launched in below minimum weather from Quang Tri to Khe Sanh to pick up emergency medevacs. Upon arrival the medevacs were not all ready. Given a secondary mission to resupply Hill 881S, Major Althoff proceeded directly to the hill to first pick up external cargo nets and slings. As he approached the zone he saw that no one had been alerted of his coming and waved off. One of the Helicopter Support Teams,

however, had seen him approaching and was mak-



ing his way to the hook-up point. At this time the hill exploded with incoming mortars and .50 caliber fire meant for the helicopter. The exposed Marine was severely wounded. The unit immediately called for an emergency medevac. No fixed wing or gunships were available, however, Major Althoff immediately started another approach to the hill. Upon landing, the Marines in the trenches started forward with the wounded man. Again, the zone came under heavy .50 caliber and mortar fire. The Marines took refuge in a shell crater, still Majotr Althoff remained on the ground. It took at least one minute to get the wounded man aboard. During this time, the aircraft received battle damage to the controls from the mortars and .50 caliber fire. Nevertheless, Major Althoff was able to lift off and get the critically wounded man to medical aid. The aircraft was declared unsafe for further flight due to the severe battle damage."

"On 21 February, 1968, Major Althoff led a flight of two CH-46s to Khe Sanh to resupply the outlying hills. The two aircraft delivered 88,000 pounds of desperately needed ammunition, water and rations. Hostile fire consisting of small arms, automatic weapons, .50 caliber and mortars were received on 15 different occasions during the day and both aircraft received numerous hits. In addition the LSA at Khe Sanh was under constant artillery, rocket, and mortar barrage, making the pickups extremely hazardous. Late in the afternoon, the weather at Khe Sanh deteriorated to the point that all the hills and even the LSA were completely socked in with a large clear area separating the two. The fog and low ceiling, however, did cause the enemy to quit shelling the hills and the LS, giving the hook-up crews a

relative degree of safety. In view of this fact, Major Althoff elected to continue and led his flight for another hour and a half in these hazardous conditions. This was accomplished by air-taxiing from 1 ½ miles out of the LSA in to the pick up point, guiding along a dirt road at an altitude of five feet, picking up the load and departing IFR to the clear area. The drop zones were also obscured and the same air-taxiing procedure was used except this time it was up the side of a mountain. The hazards of vertigo and minimum ground clearance made the successful completion of this mission extremely noteworthy." (It should also be noted that the hills had not been resupplied in three days due to the inclement weather.)

"On 13 May 1968, Major Althoff launched as leader of a two plane section assigned the mission of extracting a four man reconnaissance team. The team had walked into the area the previous night to attempt to recover the body of a Marine killed in an earlier action. As the team searched for the body, they were ambushed and one member was killed and two others seriously wounded. It was determined that additional men would be needed to be inserted in order to aid the wounded to a pick-up zone. Major Althoff picked up a quick reaction force and inserted them within 100 meters of where the team was pinned down by mortar and automatic weapons fire. As the reaction force moved toward the recon team, they sustained two wounded, but managed to get the recon wounded. At this time, due to intense mortar and automatic weapons fire, the team became separated into three groups and each headed for a potential landing zone. All of the zones were within 200 meters of known active enemy positions. Major Althoff unhesitatingly landed in the first zone, and while awaiting the team to board received shrapnel from mortars through the cockpit. He steadfastly remained in the zone, however, until all members of this group were loaded. Only then did he lift and proceed to the next zone. Again, the aircraft came under mortar fire, again he waited. The third zone was no zone at all, but a bomb crater on the side of a steep slope. The steepness of the slope precluded entry through the rear ramp, so Major Althoff maneuvered to a position sideways just over the crater and hovered with the crew dropped the side door and pulled the Marines on board. While in this precarious hovering position with only inches of rotor clearance from the side of

the hill, the aircraft came under automatic weapons fire and again sustained battle damage. Major Althoff, however, resolutely remained in the zone until the last man was aboard, the departed taking all members to safety." (One of those recon Marines,



Corporal James D. King, later stated, "For Major Althoff to turn and one more time fly straight into what he knew was an extremely life-threatening situation for himself, his crew, and the other Marines on board was far beyond what any Marine would view as duty. If not for his devotion to God and country and extreme bravery, myself and others certainly would have been in God's hands.")

"On 18 May, 1968, Major Althoff was diverted from resupply work at Khe Sanh to an emergency reconnaissance team extraction. The team was located on a steep ridgeline bordered on one side by trees, and covered with 8-11 feet high elephant grass. Mortars were seen impacting in the team's position and by the time Major Althoff arrived, seven of the eight men had been seriously wounded. Neither the team nor the UH-1E gunships or the 01-C Spotter overhead could spot the source of the mortars. Due to the gravity of the situation, however, Major Althoff decided to attempt an immediate extraction. During the approach two mortars landed within ten meters of the team's position, but the approach was resolutely continued. The ridge line could only accommodate two wheels so Major Althoff backed in with only his main mounts touching and the nose of the aircraft hanging over a 200-300 ft. drop to jagged rocks below. Several of the

recon team were unable to help themselves to the aircraft, so the two side gunners left the aircraft and began carrying them on board. The loading was extremely slow, and mortars continued to land within 10-30 meters of the aircraft, Major Althoff resolutely remained in the zone maintaining his precarious position for eight minutes. Automatic weapons fire was received during this time but was quickly silenced by the crew chief using the starboard .50 caliber machine gun. Not until every member was aboard did Major Althoff lift from the zone and depart."

"On 3 June, 1968, Major Althoff launched as section leader of two CH-46s with a mission to resupply Khe Sanh. They were diverted to an emergency medevac mission. The unit was located atop a 1500 ft mountain with the top 1000 ft in a cloud. The unit reported taking incoming mortar fire all morning. Major Althoff then asked the unit's radioman if he could hear the sound of his rotors. He reported that he could. With this Major Althoff disappeared into the cloud as he air-taxied up the side of the mountain (once again one of the most dangerous maneuvers in helicopter aviation) Between this aviator and the ground radio operator, neither of whom could see the other, the zone was reached and the wounded loaded on board. He was further informed that further down the mountain were five more critically wounded men, but that the steepness of the slope would not allow them to be carried to where the helicopter sat. Once again, relying solely on the directions of the radioman, Major Althoff airtaxied, in completely IFR conditions, down the mountain to a point where the wounded Marines could reach the helicopter. The five men were picked up and all were expeditiously taken to medical aid."

During his time with HMM-262, Major Althoff earned three Silver Stars, three Distinguished Flying



Dave Althoff
Quang Tri 1967

Crosses and more than 50 Air Medals. (There are any number of Marines who flew with Althoff, or who were rescued by Althoff, that feel those Silver Stars should have been Navy Crosses or Medals of Honor.) Additionally, he was awarded the Cunningham Award and it should be noted that both the nomination package and the award citation clearly credits Major Althoff with the development of the Super Gaggle, despite the fact that many others have claimed to be responsible for its implementation in resupplying the hill outposts:

"During his squadron's commitment to the support and resupply of the Khe Sanh Combat Base, Major Althoff conceived, developed and coordinated unique tactical concepts to insure mission accomplishment. His development of fixed-wing tactical jet, helicopter gunship, and helicopter transport time sequences and delivery techniques coupled with flawless coordination of the committed air elements before and during each resupply mission made a signal contribution to the survival of this outpost."

It should also be noted, that is was Major Althoff who flew United Press International photographer David Powell onto 881S. Powell's photographs of life on the hill are some of the most notable of the Vietnam War, and captured the grim realities of life under siege. Said Powell, "The best thing I have ever done was photograph the Marines who held the outpost on Hill 881S. I would not have been able to do that without Major Althoff and the Marines of HMM-262."

UPI photographer David Powell

And so I can only ask, why is it, that this squadron's history is not better known? Why is it that David Althoff remains largely unknown except to those very well-versed in Marine Corps history? The Marines who served with HMM-262 represent the VERY BEST of Marine Corps aviation, and this squadron deserves to have their history shouted from the rooftops. Perhaps LtCol Althoff said it best,

"When I first checked into HMM 262 in June of 67 I knew that I was joining a Squadron that had a great combat reputation. After I was there a short while I discovered the reason for that well deserved reputation. I soon had total confidence in all members of the team that made up this top-notch combat

outfit. From top to bottom, or rather from one end to the other, I developed a very deep respect for each and every one of you. I knew I could depend on the quality of the maintenance, the skills of the HACS and the Co-Pilots, the expertise of the crew chiefs and gunners and the support that was provided by everyone else on the "Team" (the bravest and most dependable men I have ever met).

What I saw was complete and total dedication and commitment to the mission that we were assigned. I especially enjoyed the closeness and camaraderie that we shared as we flew, worked, laughed and partied together. We also cried together over those Marines we brought back in body bags or shot to pieces, and our roommates and friends who gave their all in that strange land so far away.

I had the privilege of serving with you on the SLF aboard the Tripoli and the Valley Forge. The "POOR DEVILS". We then went ashore at Quang Tri in December of 67 and supported the troops all along the DMZ from the mouth of the CuaViet river on the coast to Dong Ha, Con Thien, Gio Lin, Camp Carroll LZ Stud, the Rock Pile, Razorback Ridge, Khe Sanh, Lang Vei, all of the hills around Khe Sanh, Hue, Phu Bai, and a whole lot of other "bad assed" spots, too numerous to mention. I left the squadron in July of 68 with tears in my eyes, knowing what those of you that were staying behind would be facing in the months to come.

I will never ever look at a young American in his late teens or very early twenties, and have any doubts about what he can and will do if he is called upon to fight for his country. I saw so many of you risk everything and willingly go far above and beyond the call of duty to rescue your fellow Marines from the most desperate situations; never hesitating to go back and do it again, day after day, night after night.

The Squadron was aptly named the FLYING TIGERS and each of us will carry the mark of the TIGER to our graves because it was so indelibly inscribed on our bodies, our hearts and on our minds. I'm proud to be numbered among the finest group of fighting Marines in the history of the Corps, HMM-262."

Well said, Col Althoff, and to all of the veterans of

HMM-262, my thanks for allowing me the honor and privilege of spending time with you, and "walking with Giants." Your accomplishments, your devotion to the mission at hand, your sacrifices, were nothing less than extraordinary.

** The photos in this blog are courtesy of Colonel David Althoff and David Powell.*

YES THERE WAS ARTILLERY

AT KHE SANH

By Brian P. Heslin

G BTRY 3/12

Dear Tom, I do not remember where or when I heard or read the statement "If you were not 0311 you were just support." The author or speaker of that statement could not have really served at Khe Sanh, if they truly believed that. Our unit, G Btry 2/12 had convoyed via route 9 to the KSCB., in late March or early April, 1968.

I do remember that my friend and bunker-mate, Leslie G. Aputen was killed during a mortar attack on 15 May 1968. That was shortly after we arrived, so I guess we were not Siege Marines. We took a great deal of incoming, whether or not that qualified our unit as "Siege Marines".

Our Arty unit saw a lot of action in support of 0311 Marines. I recall one direct fire mission supporting a special forces unit that was being over run about a mile northwest of our position on the base. They requested artillery help with the NVA already in their wire. We informed them that some of their own troops could be hurt, and they still requested the mission, due to the critical situation they were in.

We killed a lot of NVA and stopped the attack, without hurting a single one of the special forces soldiers. The special forces unit C/O gave our C/O an M-14 with an engraved plate, thanking us for our support.

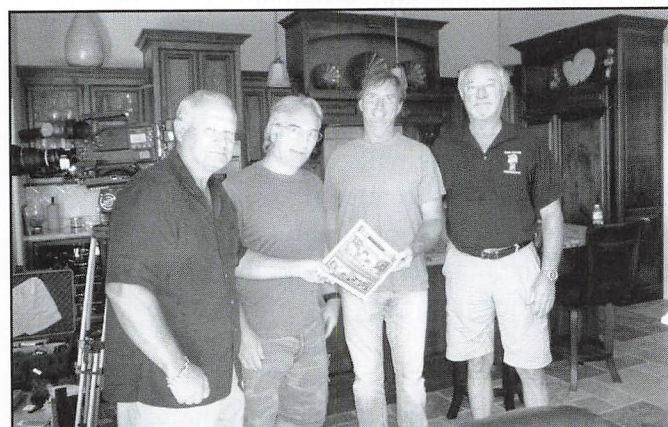
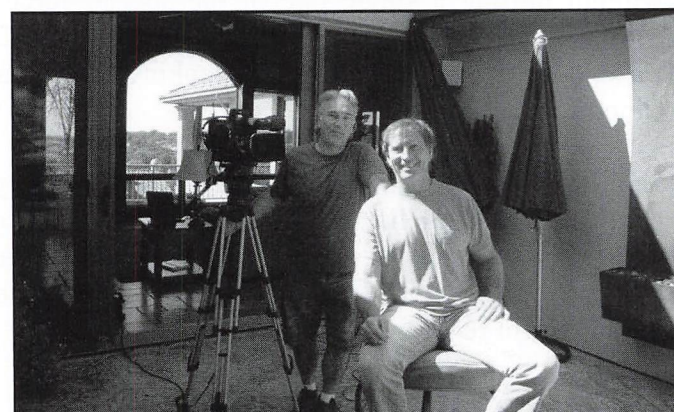
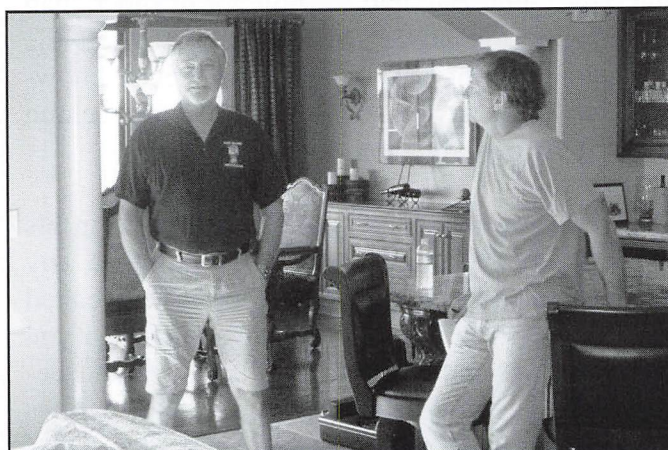
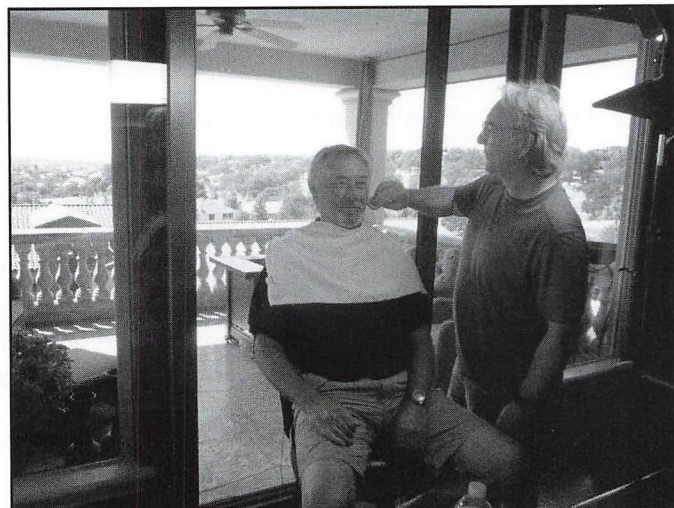
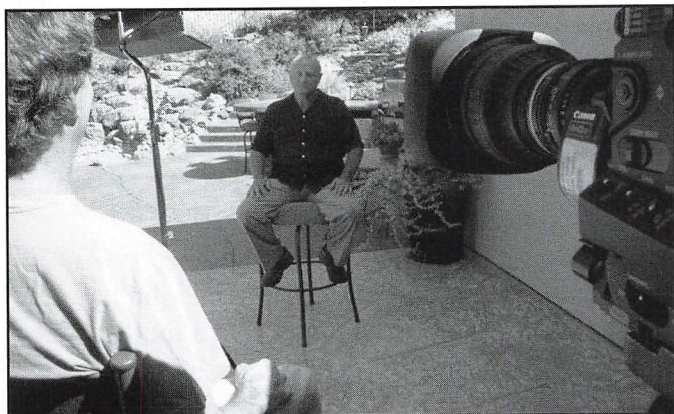
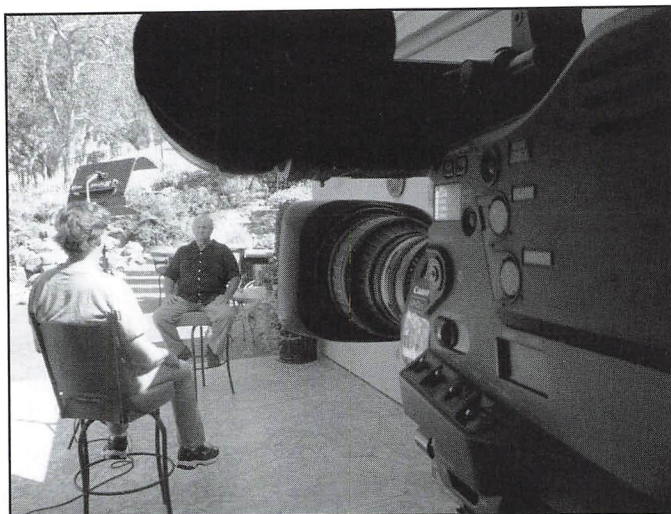
Nothing was ever said about our grubby artillery men's outstanding life-saving mission, so I guess we were just "support". Tom I guess we can't all be heroes so if you ever see the "Rambo" that made the statement regarding 0311's, give him my best.

KSV VETERANS IN THE NEWS

By Craig Tourte

It started innocently enough with a short email from Tom Eichler copying an email to me he had received from a Military Channel documentary producer. Since the producer was in Southern California and Tom lived in Chicago, Tom requested that I assist the producer in any way that I was able. See email:

Hello Mr. Eichler, I hope this finds you well. My name is Greg DeHart. I am producing a series of



three documentaries for The Military Channel titled, Battle Gear. The episodes are Bombers, Armor, and Remote Operated Vehicles. Basically, the series tracks the evolution of each technology. In the bomber show, one of the bombers I am highlighting is the B-52. Specifically, I am covering their involvement at the Battle of Khe Sahn (sic). My hope is to get the perspective of those on the ground during the time of B-52 bombing runs. Respectfully, my hope is that you, or someone you recommend, would agree to do an on-camera interview about their experience with the B-52s. Ideally, that person would be on the west coast. But I am happy to go where ever you see fit. Is this something you might help with?

Thank you for your time. I look forward to your response.

All the Best

Greg DeHart

Producer - Battle Gear: Bombers
Workaholic Productions

After a brief conversation with Mr. DeHart, I made several attempts to find someone who lived in Southern California as Mr. DeHart related that he would be doing some filming at the Marine Corps Base of Camp Pendleton. I tried to interest someone who had expertise as it related to this subject and in-front camera talent and experience, but they all were unavailable. Mr. DeHart told me that he was behind in production, so the last person I recommended was my good friend and close neighbor - of seven miles - Steve Wiese (B/1/26). Steve has done this sort of things on more than one occasion including a local Northern California filing on a Vietnam related subject; his latest experience was the documentary film Bravo, Common Men, Uncommon Valor.

Steve is gregarious and articulate; I on the other hand, am just a bit reserved. I told Mr. Dehart that Steve would do a wonderful job in his oral recall of his experience with B-52 bombing runs around the Khe Sanh Base but that neither of us had anything to do with the planning, directing or guidance of the aircraft. Reminding Mr. Dehart that we were both rather lowly enlisted personnel. Mr. DeHart told me our experience of the bombings was just what he was looking for. I spent a few minutes with Steve discussing the subject and he agreed to participate, not knowing I had already volunteered his participa-

tion.

Mr. DeHart arrived at my house along with cameraman Lon Magdich, and set up their equipment. I was a bit surprised when Mr. Dehart said that he wanted to interview me in addition to Steve for the documentary. I explained to Mr. DeHart that my experience on the subject was limited and that because of the incoming during the Siege, my world was small and limited to just what was occurring around me and that I was really not that aware of what was occurring elsewhere on or near the base. Mr. DeHart told me that was what he wanted to hear and the next thing I knew I was sitting on a chair with makeup on my face, a little microphone attached to my shirt and a camera in front of me. The filming was much like having a conversation with a friend, with Mr. DeHart just out of camera view while I answered a few questions.

I hummed and hawed, repeated myself and basically did a terrible job of explaining that my recall of B52 operations around the base was primarily at night when I could hear the bombs falling from the aircraft, the bombs hitting the ground and off in the distance the sound of the high flying planes leaving the area. I'm afraid I made quite a mess of the whole interview but of course Mr. Dehart told me that I did just fine and my recall was what he was looking for.

After Mr. Dehart finished with me they situated the camera on Steve as he sat on a chair. I found it pretty darn funny when they placed a bib around his shoulders while makeup was applied. I thought Steve looked much better with the makeup and suggested that he might consider using it more often ; Steve did a wonderful job during his interview, recalling his many experiences and observations.

I found the whole filming experience both entertaining and educational, but I fear most of my interview will find itself on the cutting room floor, as it should be. I would frame my performance as inadequate and disappointing. I was grateful Steve agreed to participate in this and I did not try to go it alone. Steve's performance on the other hand was Academy Award material. Mr. DeHart told me that he expected the series to be shown on the Military Channel sometime in December.

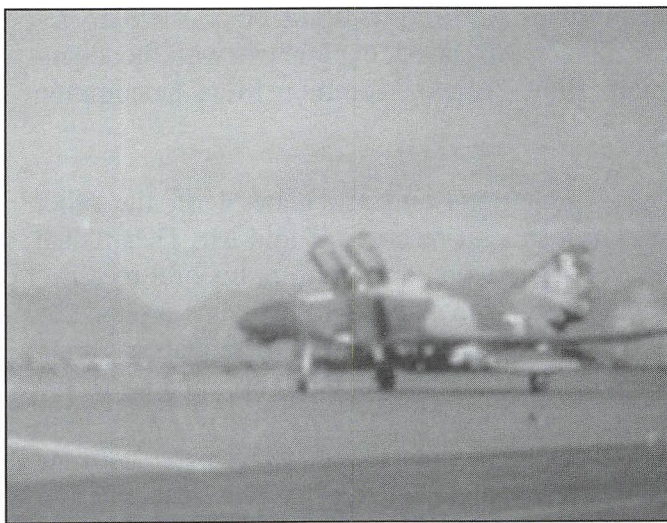
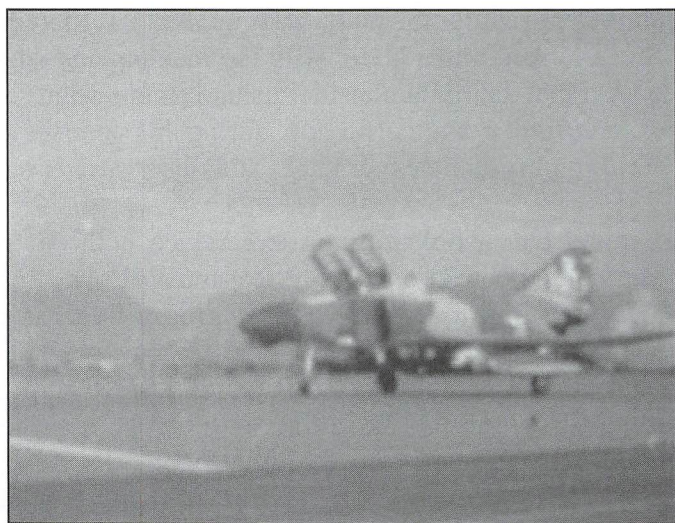
SUMMER CAMP 1968

Mike Bradbury's Response to a War Critic

Having just posted off from an aggravating blog, the timing is perfect for this one. This was already scheduled to be my next piece anyway, so with that in mind, it's only fitting to "re-title" it, and dedicate it to the JUNKYARD DOG, a contributor who has taken delight in taking "Post-Shots" at the military, retirement benefits, etc. But the snide remark about that "summer camp" I attended in 68, well, you know the old saying, a picture is worth a thousand words, and sometimes you do have to "draw pictures" for some of these liberals, and "ARMCHAIR RAMBO's" .so I certainly wouldn't want to disappoint anybody!!



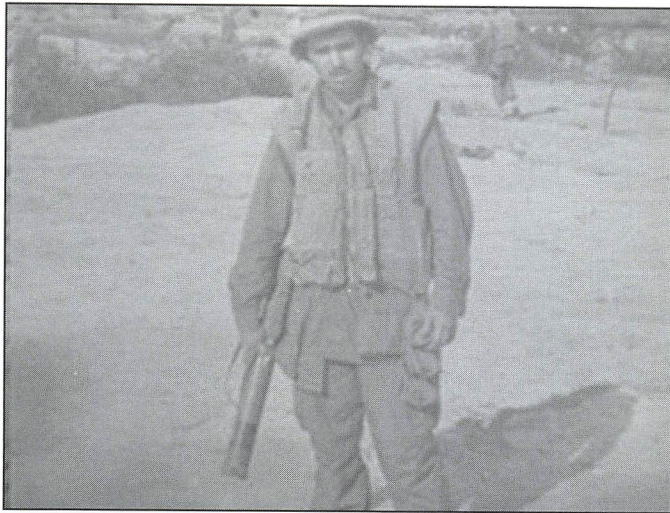
My Vietnam tour began in September of 1967 with "K" Company, 3/26, here at Camp Evans (not too far from Da Nang). As my 3 room air-conditioned apartment wasn't wired & plumbed yet, I am seen here filling sandbags for a bunker.....at the right are my two other room mates, Randy Mapel and Doug Weber.



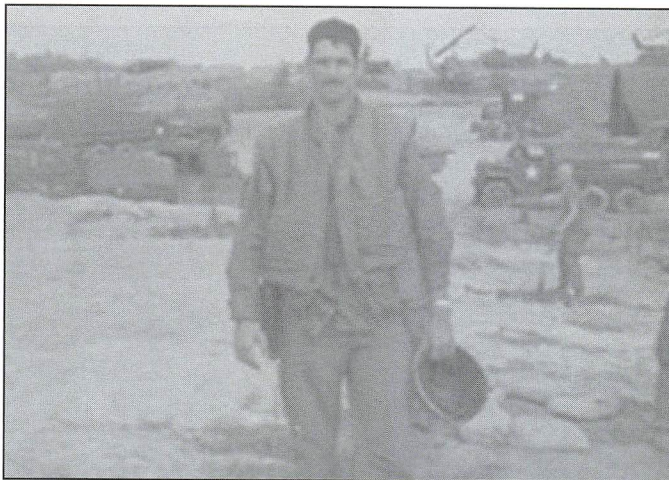
While I was over there, the bulk of our air support came from the Marine Air Wing in Da Nang, with their F4-B's. The Marines had airplanes too



**There were Skyraiders and Huey
Cobra's as well (we didn't have "stealth & drones" back then)**



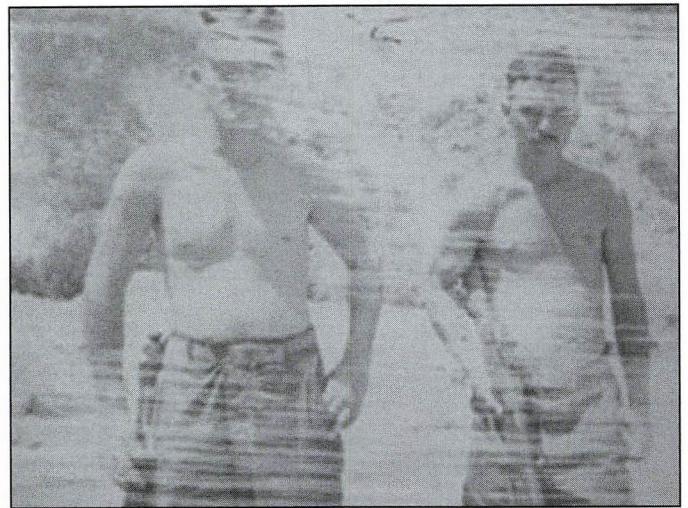
As we had no shower facilities, sometimes we'd get to smelling pretty bad, so we'd get "evicted" from one "campground" to the other, as pictured here, from Hill 55 to Quang Tri



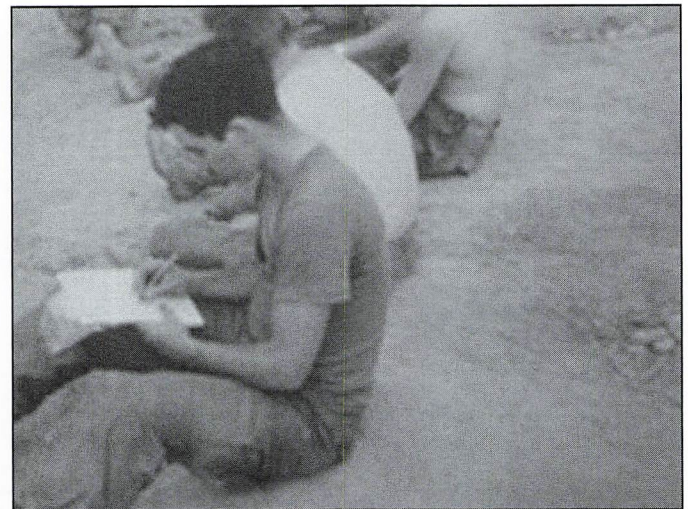
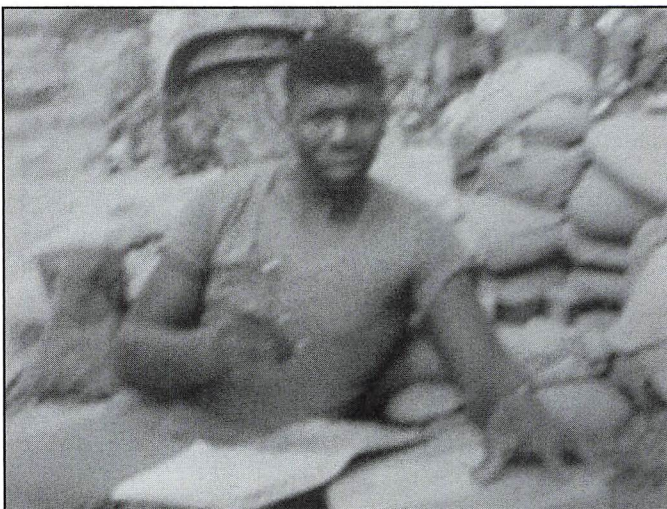
Navy Corpsman Jim "Doc" Thomas. To this day, we're best of friends. "Doc" loved to "camp out" too, so we turned down a barracks in Saigon with "houseboy & maid service", to dig our own apartment here at Dong Ha. (We knew if we did a good enough job, the Colonel might give us our merit badges.)



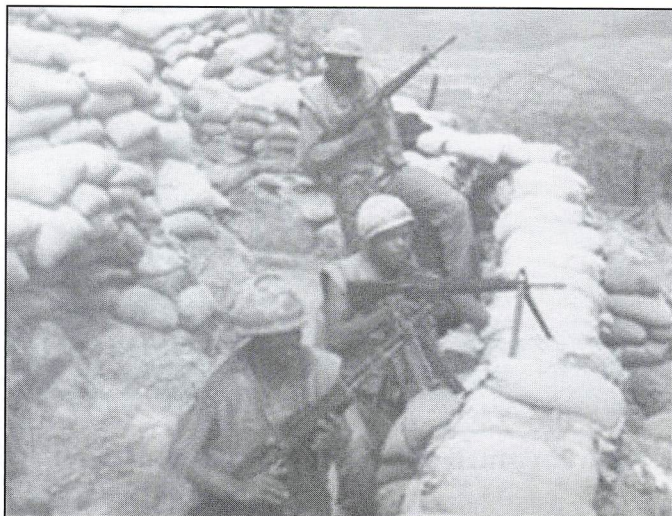
Women & kids a mile or so on the outskirts of Hue City. I took this shot just before we SLAUGHTERED them all! (We were well-known for "baby-killing" and "village-burning", as any professor from Berkeley can attest to-----those guys know EVERYTHING!)



**" Hey, did you guys hear we're going to Khe Sanh for Christmas?"
NEAT!!.....do they have hot chow and internet service there?**



At Khe Sanh, when Isaac Walker & I found out we were gonna have to HIKE up to Hill 861 with all of our gear, we decided to write the ACLU to PROTEST this kind of treatment by LBJ!



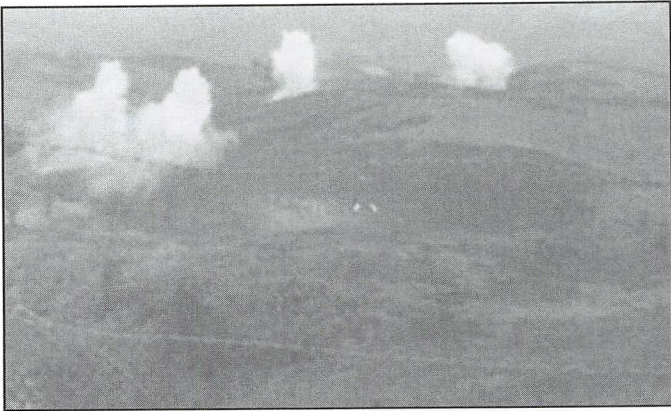
Doc", in the trenchline of our new home on 861.....and our 3rd Platoon M-60 machinegun team, Padgett, Moore & Robinson. "Hey guys, wanna send out for pizza tonight?...and a case of brew?"



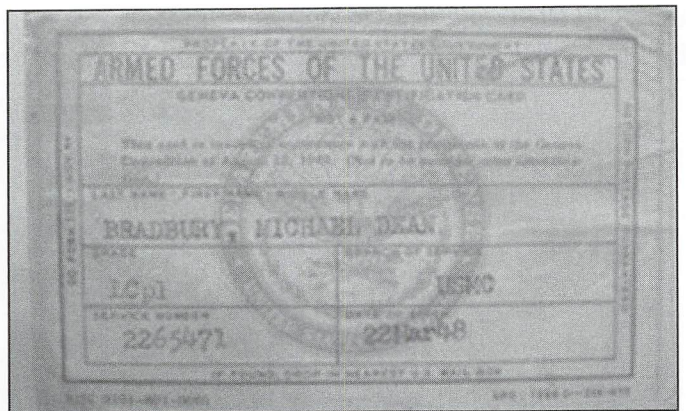
At this point, I'd Like to thank Kodak for building such a solid product. I'd bought this 124 at Camp Pendleton, carried it in my pack, all over 'Nam, and it still works TODAY.....if there were still the old 126 cartridges for it!



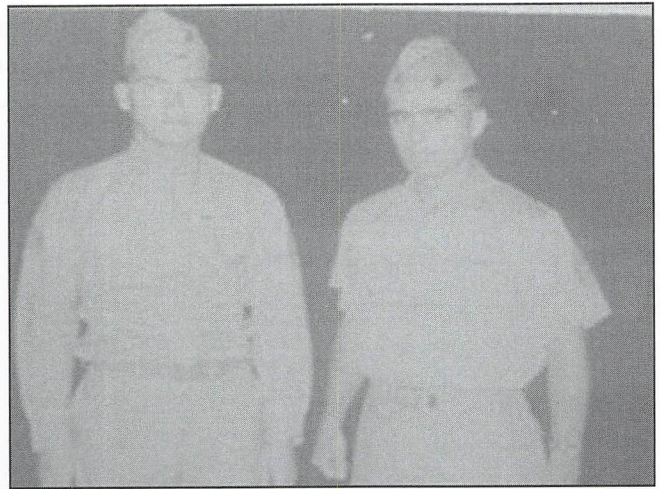
We weren't at 861 long, when the NVA's neighborhood "welcome wagon" started inviting us to picnics and BBQ's You should have been there with us, JYD.....beats any high school or college "tailgate party" you've ever attended!



But the smell of burning cordite was so offensive, the Air Force flew C-123's through our valley to give the place a sweet "orange" scent.



As you can see right here from our trenchline, they dropped that crap right in our laps. At right is my Geneva Convention Card. (because I'd enlisted, I never HAD a DRAFT CARD TO BURN!)



Left: expressing my feelings about those "First Aid Kits to the NVA from Berkeley, and the rest of the yellow-bellies back home. And the last shot is Doug Weber & I in Okinawa in November of '68.....13 months later & heading home to the "tickertape parades", free dinners, and minted commemorative coins!" You REALLY MISSED OUT, JYD.....but it's good that the youth of America has all of you well-read professors to keep us all straight about "what really happened at SUMMER CAMP."

PLEASE NOTE THE ZIP CODE CHANGE FOR MAILING REGISTRATION WAS LEFT OFF ORIGINAL WHICH WAS MAILED TO THE MEMBERSHIP

REUNION WASHINGTON DC REGISTRATION FORM

Listed below are all registration and event cost. Please enter number of people attending, which event and the Saturday Memorial Banquet. Send amount payable to the KSV. Make a copy of this form before mailing. Your check or money order will serve as your confirmation.

Refunds-Cancellations (2) weeks prior to reunion (If Non-Emergency). For questions call Tom Eichler 773-625-2101 Fax 773-625-8021
Email teic1448@aol.com Russ Turner 636-282-2263 Email RKT88@PRODIGY.NET

REUNION REGISTRATION & EVENTS		Price Per Person	Number Attending	Total
Registration Fee Includes Hospitality Room & Administrative Cost, Liquor, & Food Licenses & Snacks. DJ, Van Rental, Etc		\$ 40.00		
Sunday 26 Aug 12 FREE DAY ENJOY THE SIGHTS OF WASHINGTON				
Monday 27 Aug 12 FREE DAY ENJOY THE SIGHTS OF WASHINGTON				
Tuesday 28 Aug 12 Registration Opens 1000-1700 Hospitality Room & PX Opens				
Wednesday 29 Aug 12 -Registration Opens 1000-1700 Hospitality Room & PX Opens, Beer, Soda, Snacks. Bus Trip To Vietnam, Korean, & WWII, and other Memorials 1200-1700. Group Photo At Iwo Jima Memorial		15.00		
Thursday 30 Aug 12 Registration Opens 1000-1200-. Hospitality Room & PX Opens, Beer, Soda, Snacks. Bus Trip To Marine Corps Museum 1200-1600 Lunch Available At Museum Cafeteria. Stop at Marine Corps PX		15.00		
Friday 31 Aug 12 Registration Opens 1000-1200. Hospitality Room & PX opens, Beer, Soda, Snacks. 1800 Trip to 8TH & I for the Marine Corps Sunset Parade. Buses Depart Hotel at 1800.		15.00		
Saturday 01 Sep 12 Hospitality Room Open 1000-1800. The Memorial Banquet will begin at 1800 Hours (Cocktails) 1900 (Dinner) Music & Dancing after Dinner. DJ		50.00		
Sunday 02 Sep 12 CHECK OUT (HAVE A SAFE TRIP SEE YOU NEXT YEAR)				
TOTAL AMOUNT PAYABLE TO Khe Sanh ASSOCIATION				
MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO: Khe Sanh Veterans				
OFFICE USE ONLY Check# _____ Date Received _____ Name Tag Completed _____		Send Check, Money Order or Credit Card Information To: The Khe Sanh Veterans Russell Turner 3168 Meadowfield DR Arnold, MO 63010		
CREDIT CARD INFORMATION				
Name On Card:	VISA	MASTER CARD	DISCOVER	
Card Number:	OTHER CARD TYPE: OUR BANK DOES NOT TAKE AM/XPRESS			
Address For Credit Card:	THREE DIGIT CODE ON BACK OF CARD:			
EXP DATE:	NOTE: Address Must Be The One Card Is Issued To:			
NAME TAG INFORMATION: PLEASE PRINT				
NAME:		UNIT SERVED WITH:		
SPOUSE or COMPANIONS NAME:				
Other Guest Names (1)	(2)	(3)		
Address:	City:	State:	Zip:	
Phone:	Emergency Contact:			
Email:				
Special Needs:				
Arrival Date:	Departure Date:	Are You Staying At Hotel: Yes — No Circ		

1.**KHE SANH VETERANS, INC. SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION*****GOVERNING RULES FOR OPERATIONS OF THE KHE SANH VETERANS, INC. SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION:***

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

2. Scholarships will be awarded to applicant students who have at least one parent, legal guardian, or grandparent who is a paid member in good standing of Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc., a 501(c)(19) charitable organization. Your contributions are tax deductible.

3. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT TO SEE THAT THE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS ARE FULLY COMPLETED AND SENT DIRECTLY TO THE SCHOLARSHIP CHAIR BEFORE 6/1/2012 AT THE ADDRESS BELOW;

Mr. Dan Fisher
KSVSF Committee Chairman
6050 52nd St. North
Oakdale, MN 55128-1317

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Applicants must be the legal child or grandchild of a paid- up member of Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc. (See member definition in the KSV Association bylaws.) This includes deceased, life members of KSV and those Khe Sanh Veterans listed as KIA in Vietnam and if family members are associate members of KSV, Inc. Children of KSV associate members are not eligible.

Information provided by each candidate on the attached application forms will focus on the following qualities considered for selection to KSVSF financial aid: good grades, character, citizenship, leadership experience and financial need. A point selection system is included in the application forms. Examples of these above mentioned qualities could be in the classroom, in extracurricular activities or in service to the community, church or nation.

A Scholarship Foundation Review Committee will serve the President of Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc., and will accept, review and grade each correctly completed application. This committee will provide a scholarship financial report and short summaries of the selected candidates at the annual KSV reunion for publication in the "*Red Clay*" Newsletter.

THE AWARDS

The award will be **\$300.00 minimum** per school year for a maximum of 4 years per student. A new application will be required for each year applied.

2.

The KSV Scholarship money will be awarded upon presentation of proof of registration for the appropriate term. Proof of registration should be sent to:

Mr. Dan Fisher
Chairman, KSVSF Committee
6050 52nd St. No.
Oakdale, MN 55128-1317

1. The money is to be used to help defray costs of tuition, fees and books at an accredited institution of the candidate's choice as a full time student.
2. If a recipient of the KSVSF scholarship does not enter a post high school institution during the next school year, the award for his/her benefit shall be cancelled and the money awarded to an alternate applicant.
3. An alternate of each scholarship award is to be chosen at the time of selection of recipients.
4. The Treasurer of Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc., will send a check for the full years' award amount to the selected students upon proof of registration sent to the Review Committee Chairman when it becomes available.
5. The recipient of a scholarship shall be notified no later than the end of the month of July of the current school year.
6. Scholarship Applications must be received by the Committee Chair **on or before June 1 of the current school year to be attended.**
7. KSV, Inc. Scholarship recipients must agree to maintain a standard of personal performance both in and out of school that conforms to the moral standards set down by Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc., members.
Criteria: Point Selection System /Maximum of 100 points
 - a. **Scholastic achievement / grade point average. Max = 40 points (attach last school GPA transcript)**
 - GPA 4.0 = 40 points**
 - GPA 3.5 = 35 points**
 - GPA 3.0 = 30 points**
 - GPA 2.5 = 25 points**
 - b. **Extracurricular activities. Max = 35 points total**
 - Military veteran = 15 points**
 - Student government = 10 points**
 - Community related services = 5 points**
 - Other (i.e. work experience, sports) = 5 points**
 - c. **Short essay (60 words) on education goals and self = 10 points**
 - d. **Financial Need. Max = 15 points (the Fund is designed to help those in need of educational financial support).**

3.

Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc. Scholarship Foundation Application Form

Date: _____

1. Applicant Information:

Name: last _____, first _____ MI _____

Address: street _____, city _____ state _____ zip _____

Home phone: _____ E-mail address: _____

Birthdate: _____

2. Sponsor Information (Khe Sanh Veteran, Inc. Regular or Life Member):

Name: last _____ first _____

Relationship to applicant _____

Branch of service _____

Unit served at Khe Sanh _____ dates _____

3. School Information:

School name: _____

School Address: street _____, city _____

State _____ zip code _____

Phone number: _____

Curriculum/intended course of study _____

School year to be funded _____

4. Applicant Personal History**a. School Activities participated in: (athletics, publishing, music, art, offices held, etc)**

b. List school honors, prizes, community activities participated in, military service, volunteer service to community, church, or government.

4.

- c. ENCLOSE THIS APPLICATION FORM, A COPY OF YOU PROPOSED OR CURRENT TRANSCRIPT, A SMALL PICTURE OF YOURSELF, GPA TRANSCRIPT AND A BRIEF PERSONAL SUMMARY (60 WORDS) TELLING OF YOUR VOCATIONAL PLANS AND FINANCIAL NEED ADDRESSED TO THE SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN.

BE SURE TO RETAIN A COPY OF ALL FILLED FORMS FOR YOUR RECORDS!

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

Signature of Applicant
Grandparent, or Guardian

Actual Signature of KSV Member Parent,

Note* APPLICATION DEADLINE June 1ST OF THE CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR

* IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE DATA PRIVACY ACT, ALL INFORMATION
GATHERED HEREIN WILL BE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

KHE SANH VETERANS, INC. SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION COMMITTEE

Approved:

Dan Fisher, Chairman, Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc. Scholarship Committee

Thomas Eichler, President Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc.

ADDITIONS AFTER NEW KSV DIRECTORY PRINTED

BOAN, WILLIAM S

Nickname SHERILL
 Branch/Unit USMC H&S CO 81's
 Address 2 PELICAN LANE
 LUGOFF SC 29078
 Phone 803-438-1743
 Cell Fax
 Email 1SHERILL@ATT.NET

CALDWELL, SCOTT

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC H&S CO 2/26
 Address PO BOX 866
 TAMPA FL 33601
 Phone 813-245-5548
 Cell Fax
 Email BEIT79@HOTMAIL.COM

CARTER, NICK

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC L CO 3/1 9TH MAB
 Address 2618 WESTRIDGE LN NW
 ROCHESTER, MN 55901
 Phone 507-280-4000
 Cell 507-202-4247 Fax
 Email GEROITER@CHARTER.NET

CORNELL, FRANK

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC 2/26
 Address 660 WOODBY RD
 BEAVERTON MI 48624
 Phone 989-435-7238
 Cell Fax
 Email

CRUZ, RICHARD

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC B CO 1/26
 Address 3099 W. BROAD ST
 COLUMBUS OH 43204
 Phone 614-272-2265
 Cell Fax
 Email

GARCIA, ADRIAN J

Nickname SONNY
 Branch/Unit USMC H&S CO 1/9
 Address PO BOX 1717
 EL DORADO HILLS CA 95763
 Phone 916-870-9411
 Cell 916-939-0784 Fax
 Work 916-939-2497
 Email PF010084@SBCGLOBAL.NET

GOHL, ANDY

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC 1/13 MORTAR SECTION
 Address 1308 CHRISTY CIR
 ROSEVILLE MN 55113
 Phone 651-639-8147
 Cell 651-398-7936 Fax
 Email ANDY@MNLOTTERY.COM

GONZALES, RAMON O

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC H&S CO 3/26 106 PLT
 COMMANDER
 Address 8032 STONYBRPPK PL NW
 ALBUQUERQUE NM 87120
 Phone 505-831-4358
 Cell Fax
 Email

HILL, DAVID B

Nickname DAVE
 Branch/Unit USMC G CO 2/26 & L CO 3/9
 Address 6705 SW 16TH ST
 DES MOINES IA 50315-5444
 Phone 515-238-0509
 Cell Fax
 Email

HILL, DAVID K

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC 2/3 BLT SHORE PARTY
 HILL FIGHTS
 Address 9540 SPARROW PL
 MASON OH 45040
 Phone 513-398-3275
 Cell 513-509-7833 Work 513-946-8750
 Email DHALL1@CINCI.RR.COM

KRAMER, MARK T

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC C CO 1/26
 Address 4821 REGIMENT CT
 WOODBRIDGE VA 22193-3205
 Phone 703-670-4041
 Cell 703-477-4074 Fax
 Email MTKRAMER@COMCAST.NET

LEE, JAMES R

Nickname ROBERT
 Branch/Unit USMC MASS-3
 Address 200 PEBBLE TRAIL
 ALPHARETTA GA 30009
 Phone 770-777-7477
 Cell 678-710-5593 Fax
 Email RLEE1@AOL.COM

MILLER, ROBERT W

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USN CBMU-302 MCB-3 RUNWAY
 SEABEE
 Address 3126 CO HWY 27
 TWIN LAKES MN 56584
 Phone 218-784-3227
 Cell 218-784-8482 Fax
 Email seabee6969@gmail.com

RAFFERTY, ROGER P

Nickname POP
 Branch/Unit C BTRY 1/13
 Address 66846 ISLAND LAKE RD
 NORTHOME MN 56661
 Phone 218-897-5965
 Cell 218-760-2855 Fax
 Email RKRAFF@PAULBUNYAN.NET

SCHOENFELDER, GARY D.

Nickname SCHOENY
 Branch/Unit USMC
 Address 154 INTERLACHEN LN NW
 ROCHESTER MN 55901
 Phone 507-282-3022
 Cell 507-254-1569
 Work 507-288-3388
 Email GARY-SCHOENFELDER@DALCOONLINE.COM

STOLTZ, TERRY A

Nickname BUNKY
 Branch/Unit USMC HQ BTRY 1/11
 Address 713 HILLSIDE DR
 HUMBOLDT TN
 Phone 731-487-1776
 Cell Fax
 Email STOLTZTEC@ATT.NET

STEPHENS, DONALD R

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC C CO 1/26
 Address 1019 WHIRLAWAY CIR S
 JACKSONVILLE FL 32218
 Phone 904-757-4486
 Cell 904-254-4145 Fax
 Email DONSTEPHENS@BELLSOUTH.NET

WITT, EDWARD J

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC VO-67 FLIGHT SUPPORT
 Address 2591 BUSBY RD
 OAK HARBOR WA 98277
 Phone 360-675-2055
 Cell
 Email WITTEJ9220@COMCAST.NET

RECENT CHANGES TO KSV DIRECTORY

ASHFORD, RICHARD E

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC H CO 2/1 3RD PLT
 Address 2151 INDUSTRIAL BLVD # 101
 LAKE HAVASU CITY AZ 86403
 Phone
 Cell 928-266-7967 Fax
 Email ENIRAM21@MSN.COM

BREEDING, EARLE G (MAJ)

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC E CO 2/26 C/O HILL 861A
 Address 221 TIMBERLINE DR
 RUIDFOSO NM 88345
 Phone 505-258-3772
 Cell Fax
 Email SKIPPER861A@GMAIL.COM

CHAMBERLIN, CHARLES N

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC C CO 1/26 RADIOS
 Address PO BOX 131
 JEFFERSON CITY MT 59638
 Phone 406-451-1868
 Cell Fax
 Email BBUDC126@YAHOO.COM

CHERICONE, DENIS J

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USA FOB-3 USSF
 Address 4555 SE FRANKLIN ST
 PORTLAND OR 97206-3114
 Phone 541-426-3864
 Cell Fax
 Email DENISCHERICONE@HOTMAIL.COM

CHOC, CHARLES W

Nickname WES
 Branch/Unit USMC A CO 1/26 HILL 55
 Address 532 CAMINO DE NEVADA
 BISBEE AZ 85603
 Phone 520-432-0575 HOME
 Cell 406-431-4160 Fax
 Email W@CHOCS.US

CICALA, JOHN A

Nickname DOC
 Branch/Unit USN B CO 1/26 3RD PLT HM
 LT JACQUES PATROL
 Address 35413 TIMBERWOOD CT
 CLINTON TOWNSHIP MI
 48035
 Phone 586-634-9892
 Cell 586-634-9892 Fax
 Email DOCKHE@AOL.COM

COLE, BERNARD D (CAPT)

Nickname BUD
 Branch/Unit USN HQ BTRY 1/13
 Address 5116 DONOVAN DR UNIT 306
 ALEXANDRIA VA 22304
 Phone 571-970-3634
 Cell 703-395-3523 Fax
 Email COMDESRON35@COMCAST.NET

CONDELLO, SCOTT J

Nickname CON
 Branch/Unit USMC A CO 1/26 60MM
 Address 345 GOSLING DR
 NORTH WALES PA 19454-2727
 Phone 215-699-8064
 Cell 215-527-9771 Fax 215-699-0521
 Work 215-699-0520
 Email IRONGATEMKTG@YAHOO.COM

COWAN, WILLIAM V III

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC I CO 3/26
 Address 311 E MAIN ST
 PURCELLVILLE VA 20132
 Phone 540-785-5463
 Cell Fax
 Email WVC3@EARTHLINK.NET

DEVERNEY, WAYNE L

Nickname BUTCH
 Branch/Unit HQ CO 2/26
 Address 304 ADAMS DR
 MIDLAND MI 48642
 Phone 989-839-6692
 Cell 989-600-9864 Fax
 Email BUTCHDEV@MSN.COM

ELARDO, NICK

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC E CO 2/26 HILL 861A
 Address 63100 FRESCA ST
 BEND OR 97701-1580
 Phone 530-255-8586
 Cell 530-515-1313 Fax
 Email NE4400@GMAIL.COM

ENNEKING, DENNIS J

Nickname DJ
 Branch/Unit USMC 2/3 LSU
 Address 723 CHANDLER AVE
 GENEVA IL 60134
 Phone 630-262-8169
 Cell 630-802-2709 Fax 847-745-0406
 Email DENNIS.ENNEKING@DHL.COM

ETHRIDGE, VICKIE M

Nickname
 Branch/Unit WIDOW OF CARL D CO 1/26 2ND PLT
 Address PO BOX 1882
 REIDSVILLE NC 27323-1882
 Phone 336-342-0224
 Cell Fax
 Email

FULLER, JOSEPH H SR

Nickname JOE
 Branch/Unit USMC HQ BTRY 1/13
 Address PO BOX 177
 53996 ST RTE 30
 ROXBURY NY 12474
 Phone 607-326-6038
 Cell Fax
 Email JOEFULLERSR@YAHOO.COM

GILLESPIE DONALD J

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC C CO 1/26
 Address 19 GORDON RD
 ERDENHEIM PA 19038-8218
 Phone 215-219-0609
 Cell 215-219-0609 Fax 610-270-1617
 Work 610-270-3604
 Email DGILLESPIE49@GMAIL.COM

GREENWOOD, ROBERT E

Nickname CHIEF
 Branch/Unit USMC D CO 1/9 WPNS PLT
 Address 2824 SE 45TH ST
 OKLAHOMA CITY OK
 73129-8710
 Phone 405-672-4582
 Cell 405-431-9794 Fax
 Email KHESANH_GRUNT@WEBTV.NET

HAMILTON, HANCE T

Nickname DOC
 Branch/Unit USN CHARLIE MED & L 3/3 HN
 Address 5201 BRIKWORTH PL NE
 ATLANTA GA 30319-5324
 Phone
 Cell Fax
 Email

HEIM, STEVEN T DECEASED

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC 1/26 D CO
 Address 1441 CHADSWORTH DR
 SUN PRAIRIE WI 53590-4469
 Phone 608-884-3471
 Cell Fax 714-847-3082
 Email

HOPKINS, PATRICK J

Nickname HOPPIE
 Branch/Unit USMC H&S CO 1/26
 Address 11721 OLD BALLAS RD APT 408
 ST LOUIS MO 63141-3405
 Phone 344-452-0728
 Cell 314-395-6877 Fax
 Email PJHOPKINS@CHARTER.NET

JASMUND, RUSSELL J

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC C BTRY 1/13
 Address 12145 LEWIS AVE
 TEMPERANCE MI 48182-9651
 Phone 734-854-6075
 Cell 419-356-0643 Fax
 Email RUSSELL@JASMUND.COM

KEATING, MICHAEL E

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USAF 15TH AERIAL PORT SQDN
 Address 5602 SW MENEFEER DR
 PORTLAND OR 97239
 Phone 503-246-9973
 Cell 503-452-2180 Fax
 Email OARSMAN13@COMCAST.NET

LOOKER, JOSEPH P

Nickname JP
 Branch/Unit USMC B CO 1/26
 Address 307 SHAKER LN
 WEST CHESTER PA 19380
 Phone 610-647-4556
 Cell 484-802-7997 Fax
 Email JSPHLOOKER@AOL.COM

MCCAULEY, FRANK B

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC B CO 1/26
 Address 235 RHUM RD S
 KERRVILLE TX 78028
 Phone 830-367-1393
 Cell 501-276-1333 Fax
 Email LAREEVES@HCTC.NET

MCGOVERN, JOHN C

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USA FOB-3 MACV 5TH SF CCN
 Address 1405 LOWELL CIRCLE
 BOONE IA 50036
 Phone 515-433-0120
 Cell 515-230-1440 Fax
 Email MSGMUSTANG28@GMAIL.COM

MCNULTY, TERRY P

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC F CO 2/26 1ST PLT
 LEADER
 Address PO BOX 84214
 LOS ANGELES CA 90073-0214
 Phone 310-472-9927
 Cell Fax 310-268-4767
 Email

MEYERS, BRUCE F (COL)

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC CO 26TH MARINES
 Address 22975 SE BLACK NUGGET RD
 APT 401
 ISSAQUAH WA 98029-7306
 Phone 425-391-6666
 Cell Fax 425-837-3566
 Email INTRIGUE6@AOL.COM

MOONEY, JAMES

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC H&S CO 2/26 COMM PLT
 Address 21 INDIGO PLANTATION RD
 OKATIE SC 29909
 Phone 914-739-4385
 Cell Fax
 Email

MULLOWNEY, RICHARD

Nickname RICH
 Branch/Unit USA FOB-1
 Address PO BOX 950
 KENAI AK 99611-0950
 Phone 907-283-4333
 Cell 907-953-7185 Fax
 Email N185RK@HOTMAIL.COM

PROVENCIO, RAMON JR

Nickname
 Branch/Unit SUBSCRIBER SON OF RAMON
 PROVENCIO SU# 2
 Address 825 E PALOMAR ST UNIT 1611
 CHULA VISTA CA 91911
 Phone 619-656-8611
 Cell 619-250-1358 Fax
 Work 619-528-2298
 Email PROVENCIO@COX.NET

RESNICK, KENNETH H

Nickname REDNECK
 Branch/Unit USMC I CO 3/26 HILL 881S
 Address 5441 DOWNING ST SW
 ROANOKE VA 24014-4902
 Phone 540-774-4099
 Cell 540-797-1619 Fax
 Email BOONIES225@COX.NET

ROHRLICK, MYLES A (COL)

Nickname MIKE
 Branch/Unit USAF 834TH AD/USAF
 Address 3391 CELINDA DR
 CARLSBAD CA 92008-2073
 Phone 619-255-9405
 Cell Fax 760-458-5437
 Work 760-458-5433
 Email M.ROHRLICK@COX.NET

SAVAGE, JAMES R JR

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC D CO 1/26 GUNS
 Address PO BOX 206
 ARTHURDALE WV 26520-0206
 Phone 304-864-5311
 Fax
 Email JPSAVAGES93@MSN.COM

SIRCHIA, PAUL S

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC H CO 2/1
 Address W 6156 SNUFFBOX RD
 HERMANSVILL, MI 49847
 Phone 906-498-2437
 Cell 906-221-0286 Fax
 Email HOTEL2-1@HOTMAIL.COM

SNYDER, RAYMOND G

Nickname RAY
 Branch/Unit USMC A CO 1/26
 Address 9161 GROSSMONT BLVD
 LA MESA CA 91941-4141
 Phone 619-465-4935
 Fax
 Email MARIS2@COX.NET

SOUSA, RICHARD G

Nickname DICK
 Branch/Unit USMC HMM-164 PILOT
 Address 120 TOUCH OF GOLD DR
 HAVRE DE GRACE MD 21078
 Phone 443-502-2756
 Cell 732-682-5171 Fax
 Email RSOUSA2@CSC.COM

STEWART, RICHARD A

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMCA&B CO 1/26-H&S 9TH MARINES
 Address 15825 N 62ND ST
 SCOTTSDALE AZ 85254-1989
 Phone 480-951-5950
 Cell 602-739-7273 Fax
 Work 602-506-6183
 Email RICHARD.STEWART@AZBAR.ORG

SWANSON, JOHN A

Nickname DOC
 Branch/Unit USN E CO 2/26 HN
 Address 473 W. ELUSIVE DR
 PAYTON AZ 85541
 Phone 623-931-0900
 Cell Fax
 Email

TROUP, EDWARD D

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC A CO 1/9
 Address 519 BOSCOE CT
 SANTA MARIA CA 93454-5977
 Phone
 Cell Fax
 Email

WHITE, JAMES A JR

Nickname SNEAKY
 Branch/Unit USMC HMM-262
 USA C/4THI77TH (ARA)
 MAC -V-SOG-CCN MLT-2
 C/2ND 17TH CAV
 101ST AB LAM SON 719
 Address PO BOX 2199 C-27182 C5-202L
 BLYTHE CA 92226-2199
 Phone 310-328-8608
 Cell Fax
 Email NANCYWHITE@INSOINC.COM

WILKERSON, RICHARD J (LT COL)

Nickname DICK
 Branch/Unit USMC SUBSCRIBER
 Address 373 RAYOS DEL SOL DR
 SAN JOSE CA 95116-2894
 Phone 408-453-0110
 Cell 408-623-0943 Fax
 Work 408-623-0943
 Email JARHEAD05@AOL.COM

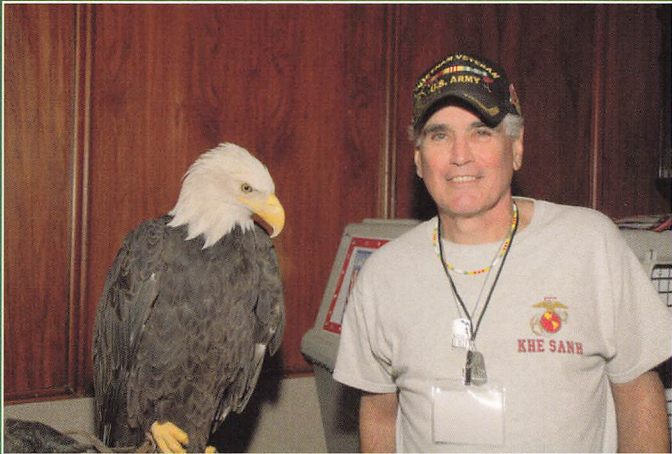
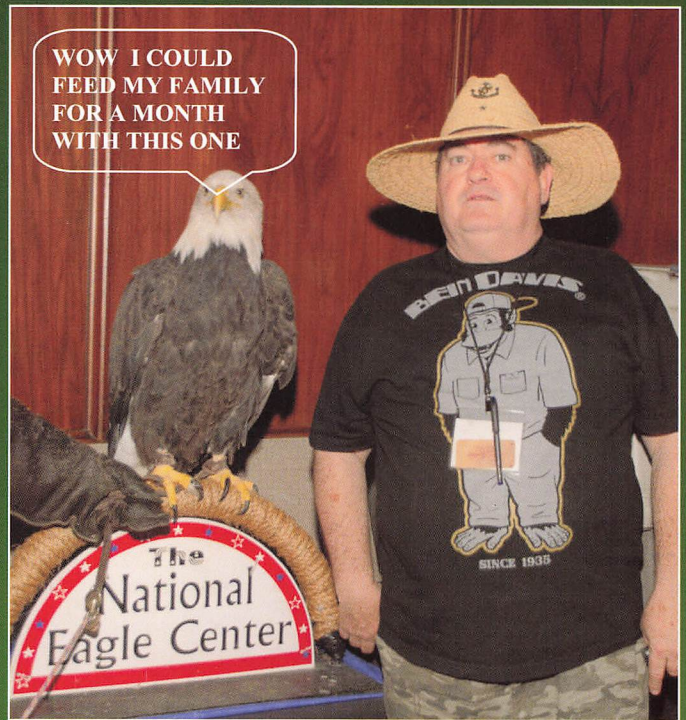
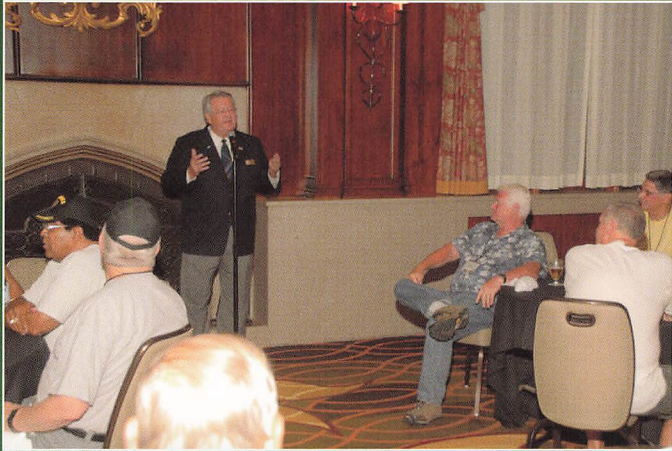
WILLIAMS, JOHN P JR

Nickname
 Branch/Unit USMC B CO 1/9
 Address 303 EDEN AVE UNIT 4A
 BELLEVUE KY 41073
 Phone 859-292-0226
 Cell 513-6 75-8548 Fax 859-292-0426
 Email JPWLMS@FUSE.NET

ZEITTS, JOHN C

Nickname FISH
 Branch/Unit USN MCB-11 STAT TEAM
 AIR STRIP KSB SEABEES
 Address 134 N 36TH ST UNIT 8
 OMAHA NE 68131
 Phone 402-345-3992
 Cell Fax
 Email

AKDELL BREDE, THE MAYOR OF ROCHESTER
WELCOMED THE KSV. HE WAS PRESENTED
WITH GIFTS FROM THE KSV

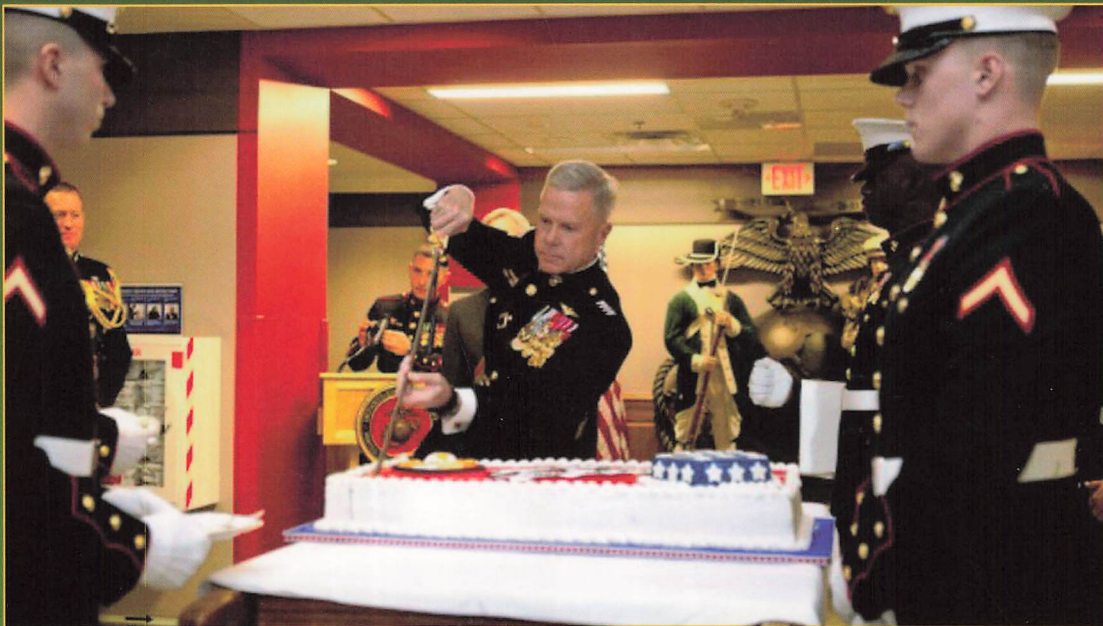




**HAPPY BIRTHDAY
AND MERRY CHRISTMAS
KHE SANH MARINES**



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**HAPPY 236TH
BIRTHDAY**

