

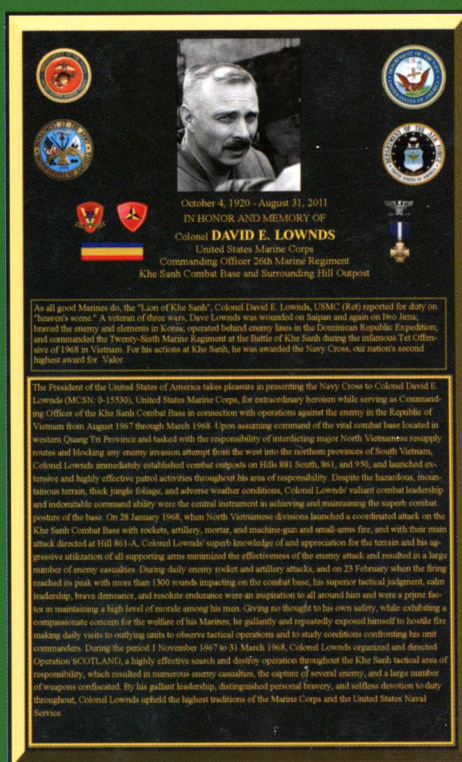
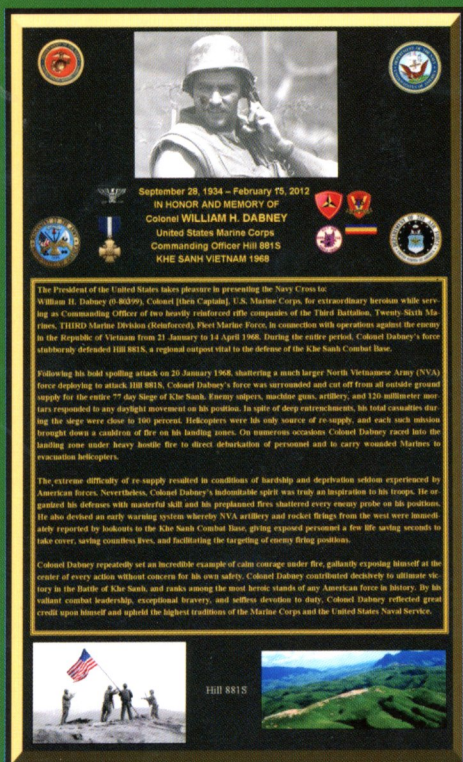
FALL WINTER
2012

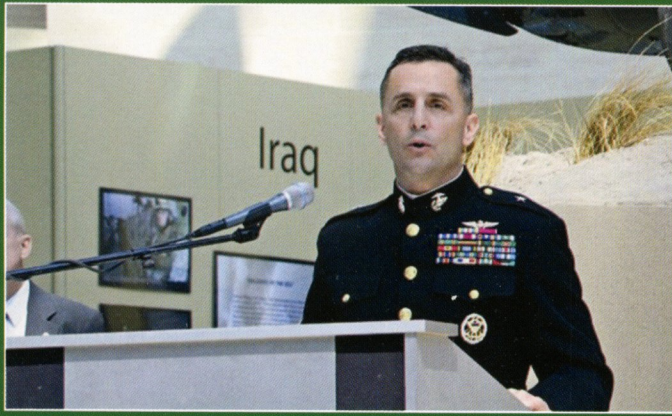
RED CLAY

ISSUE
81



MEMORIAL PLAQUES DEDICATED AT SEMPER FIDELIS MEMORIAL PARK MARINE CORPS MUSEUM. PLAQUES (BELOW) ALSO PRESENTED TO COLONEL LOWNDS' & DABNEY FAMILIES, DURING KHE SANH VETERANS ANNUAL REUNION IN WASHINGTON, DC ON 30 AUGUST, 2012. STORY & PHOTOS PAGES 49-54.





REUNION COMMITTEE

Well folks, we think the reunion went as planned, with no major miscues. The hospitality room was well stocked with food, snacks, beer, soft drinks, and hard liquor. Donna Elliott & Cathi Gaupreaux set up a complete bar inside the hospitality room and stocked it with top shelf Liquor. They operated late into the evening, serving special mixed drinks for every one. Funds for the liquor were provided by Mark Noah from "History Flights." The ladies then donated all their Tips to the KSV Scholarship Fund, in excess of \$ 300.00.

On Wednesday KSV members went on a trip to visit the many monuments in Washington DC. (Pages 62-64)

We arrived on Thursday at the Marine Corps Museum to dedicate plaques to the defenders of Hill 881S, and the 26TH Marines Regiment for the wall of honor. We were surprised to be greeted by the entire command staff of the 22nd MEU, with their commanding officer, Colonel James Christmas, the grandson of Colonel David Lownds. (Article on page 49 & 50).

With presentations of the plaques completed, the Marines from the 22nd MEU shared their combat & life experiences with the KSV. Everyone toured the museum and viewed the many exhibits. (Pictures & Article Pages 51-54,68-70).

Friday night we travelled to the Marines Corps Barracks at 8th & I street, for the traditional Sunset parade held every Friday. Unfortunately we had to wait longer than usual, due to it being the last parade of the year, and many dignitaries were late in arriving. The Marines performed as wonderful as they always do.

On Saturday, at the annual Banquet, LtGen Ron Christmas and the daughters of Colonel David Lownds were honored by the KSV. Colonel "Bulldog" Smith, past president of the KSV, presented flowers to the Daughters, and gifts from

our own PX to LtGen Christmas for both he and his sons, Colonel James Christmas C/O 22nd MEU and LtCol Brian Christmas. The Lownds' daughters honored us by lighting the POW candle during the opening ceremony.

PRESIDENT

From my own observations and comments from the membership, everyone enjoyed themselves. I have to personally thank all those involved it making the reunion a success. As always Kathy & Russ Turner, Dave Meyer & Wife Carol, John Pessoni our VP and PX Guru, Mike Fishbaugh & his assistants for taking care of the Hospitality room, Tom Ford & Wife Helen, Merle & Rita Moritz for helping out Big John, and all those others who gave of their time. A shout out to Mark Kramer KSV, and his staff at the Museum for all their help.

There were no elections held this year, as no one applied for those open positions. As a result, all current BOD members up for election, regained their seats . **Our By-Laws stipulate that members have to notify our Secretary of their desire to run for any office on the BOD, PRIOR to the REUNION.**

We also had as our guest many members of Big John's Boot Camp Platoon, 2085. There is a letter on page 46 from their spokesman Bill Simons, outlining how much they enjoyed the reunion. Many of their members have pledged to join us in Tennessee.

In this issue there is a brochure outlining the reunion in Tennessee. We have to know how many members want to go to the Grand Old Opry. The price for tickets on the Web-site with transportation comes to about \$ 65.00 a person. Russ & I are going back to Tennessee to look at a few trips away from the Hotel. We know we can get a better price if we let them know we have 200-300 people, so let Russ or myself know if you would like to attend the Opry ASAP, by email . We have to have a firm commitment as we have to disperse KSV funds for tickets prior to the reunion.

WEB BRIEFS

"A PLACE THAT ALWAYS WAS"

By Craig W. Tourte

On Tuesday, November 10, 2009, the state of New Mexico dedicated and unveiled an Official Scenic Historic Road Marker honoring those who died at "The Battle of Khe Sanh, Vietnam 1968." The beautiful wooden marker is inscribed: "The Battle of Khe Sanh claimed the lives of 2,097 United States servicemen. This historic marker is dedicated to honor and preserve the memory of New Mexico servicemen who were killed in action or later died of their wounds. The Khe Sanh Vietnam veterans will forever live in each others' hearts." In addition, the marker is inscribed with the names of nine of those who were killed from the State of New Mexico. I am sure more names will eventually be included, as that information becomes available.



and numerous other Khe Sanh Veterans assembled at the ceremonial site, along with a gathering of several hundred, including but not limited to, Rebecca Montoya representing Transportation Commissioner Gary L.J. Giron, Sarah Cobb representing U.S. Senator Tom Udall, Dan Armijo representing Congressman Harry Teague and National American Indian Veterans Commander Don Loudner. It was a privilege and honor for me to have been introduced as a Khe Sanh Veteran and afforded the opportunity to offer a few remarks.

Along with Tom Eichler and David Tonick we assisted Harold Lockwood (National American Indian Veterans Sergeant of Arms) and Jackson Gibson (District Six Transportation Commissioner) with removing the American Flag from the marker and presenting the ceremonial flag to the New Mexico Department of Transportation in recognition of their dedication to Khe Sanh Veterans and to those Veterans from the great state of New Mexico whose loss will be forever recognized and mourned.

Tom Eichler emceed the ceremony and introduced the various speakers, honored guests and provided Certificates of Appreciation from the Khe Sanh Veterans Association to all involved with making this historic event possible. In addition to those mentioned, Tom's effort included recognizing individual transportation employees who worked so hard on this project along with the 377th Force Support Squadron, Kirkland Air Force Base and the Grants High School Marine Corps Junior ROTC program, along with many other participants and supporters.

Tom's generous effort as an ambassador and representative of the Khe Sanh Veterans Association, was nothing short of Herculean as he worked late into the evening hours coordinating speakers and honored guests, gathering those participating in the ceremony in preparation of the flag unveiling, obtaining the necessary material to be included in the various Certificates to be presented and reading the name's of the deceased inscribed on the Historic Marker. This event was a testament to

I, Tom Eichler, David Tonick, Bob Greenwood

Tom's dedication to our Association and I was proud to have been a participant.

The following is the text of my presentation as a Khe Sanh Veteran:

"A few years ago I drove to San Diego and visited the Marine Corps Recruit Depot where I had spent a number of grueling weeks in 1966. It was the first time I had returned since I earned the right to wear the coveted Eagle, Globe and Anchor of the United States Marine Corps. As I stood alone on the huge parade ground I was overwhelmed with memories recalling the young men I had trained with. They came from all over this great nation and were looking forward to becoming Marines and serving their country. It was evening when I started my drive back to Northern California and dark when I reached the West side of Los Angeles on the 408 Freeway. As my mind wandered back to the Recruit Depot, Quonset huts and drill instructors, I happened to glance to my right and noticed a road sign caught in the beams of my headlights that read "Little Saigon." I knew why the sign was posted there. It denoted a portion of that city which had welcomed the multitudes of Vietnamese who had settled there after the war. The Vietnamese prospered, raised their families, started successful businesses and sent their children off to the finest American Schools. I'm sure the ceremony was well attended when the "Little Saigon" sign was set in place, and there must have been quite a showing of politicians and proud community leaders, all saying wonderful things about the opportunities America had to offer. I wonder if anything was said that day about the thousands of Americans who made the ultimate sacrifice which allowed these new immigrants to live their American Dream."

"When I saw photographs of these Historic Markers honoring fallen Khe Sanh heroes erected along the roadway in this wonderful and great state of New Mexico, I thought of that sign I had observed near the Los Angeles freeway and I knew I had to come here and attend this dedication to America's finest. I had to stand alongside this highway and

in some small way join the souls of those whose names are inscribed here. I had to hear their names recognized and I wanted their surviving families to know that the greatest sacrifice made by their loved ones truly mattered. The mention of Khe Sanh along with the great battles of Concord, Gettysburg and Normandy in the president's inaugural address, forever confirms to our nation and the world that the Battle of Khe Sanh holds a significant place in American history. Though many years have passed, we will always remember and we will forever mourn those we lost, from all branches of the military. We'll never forget the one's we stood shoulder-to-shoulder with in the trench lines, those who faced incredible hardships on the surrounding hills, those who flew above in desperate attempts to extract our wounded and dead and supply us with the critical material necessary for us to persevere. All will be forever cherished in our hearts. We survivors of that long and horrific battle will never forget the fallen. We will never forget how and why they sacrificed for us, for you, and for our wonderful country. We will never forget where they served or who they are. The fallen heroes of Khe Sanh will continue to be a part of who we are, for the rest of our lives."

"As a representative of the Khe Sanh Veterans, I am proud to have been a part of this special dedication - whose primary sponsor, recognition and driving force has been this area's Native American Community."

The location of the "Official Scenic Historic Marker" is identified as being at New Mexico 124, Mile Marker 16.5. In actuality, it sits along the old Historic Route 66 Highway, North of Interstate 40 at the 104 Exit in an area identified as Acoma, New Mexico. It was an approximate 50 mile drive along Interstate 40 from the City of Albuquerque to reach an area known as "The Sky City." The Sky City is actually an area where the Acoma people lived centuries ago atop a mesa to protect themselves from enemy attacks by neighboring bands.

The Native American's who live in the area are identified as the "Acoma" which means "Place of readiness." According to a little research, "Native American legend" describes Acoma as a "place that always was." Native history says "...it was first inhabited about 700 A.D." "Archaeologists agree that it has been continuously occupied from at least 1150 A.D. to the present." Acoma, New Mexico is generally considered "America's oldest continually inhabited city."

The drive from Albuquerque to "The Sky City" where the Historic Marker is located is not unlike any other drive I have taken along a desolated high desert highway. Long, straight and lonely for the bored and weary traveler who too often focuses attention on what's over the next rise. One could pass Acoma in the blink of an eye and never know anything was there except sand, sagebrush and red dirt. I wondered why a monument honoring these heroes would be erected in such a desolate location and not in a more densely populated area.

It was early evening when Tom, David and I drove out to the site of the Historic Road Marker where I met Harold E. Lockwood (HMH-CH-53 Sea Stallions) for the first time. Harold is a tall, proud Native American, former Marine and Vietnam Veteran who is the Sergeant at Arms of the National American Indian Veterans. We stood together as darkness approached, surrounded by red sky with a few wispy clouds off in the distance and tall red table top mountains rising up from the desert floor. Harold identified his house a quarter mile or so away from where we were standing. With the swing of his arm in a wide arc he told me about his cousins, friends, other relatives and Native Americans who lived nearby and identified those who had served and those who had made the ultimate sacrifice, all from the Reservations. We talked about the arrival of the early Missionaries, the Native American children who had been taken from their parents and even to this day, the hardships his people face.

in the United States Marine Corps and the three years he served in Vietnam. The tragically brutal injuries and death he had observed as a helicopter machine gunner, too often recovering the dead and wounded. The missions off of ships made by young boys who eagerly entered combat for the first time, all dressed in new green uniforms and combat gear and his painful recovery of their remains after the battles. Harold remembered all of these events clearly and with great sadness as he looked up into that red evening sky, silently remembering the pain that is often overwhelming, as he searched for the words that would somehow explain to the outsider, the horrors he had witnessed. Remembrances I knew were still prevalent.

The following day during the dedication ceremony there were a group of young children from one of the local Native American schools who preformed a dance. Adorned in Native American costume, I observed they all had very intense looks on their faces. I realized that the dance these children performed was a serious cultural interpretation of events and beliefs that had been handed down from one generation to the next. The dance was significant to the Native People and fitting in that it was performed in memory of those who had sacrificed for their people and our country.

As I stood alone looking out across the Acoma, viewing the red earth color of the valley and hills, not so dissimilar in color to the red clay of Khe Sanh, I glanced up into the very wide open sky and understood why fate had brought "The Battle of Khe Sanh" marker here. Somehow fate had brought this remembrance marker to this spot, because this place is a "Place That Always Was," A "Place of Readiness" and in a way, a place of safety for those who we will never forget.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 21 COLUMN 2

We spent a few minutes talking about his service

**CORPORAL LYLE S. TATE USMC
FOXTROT CO 2/3
FOREVER YOUNG**

by Eric Shierman

Yesterday 09 May 1967, marked the forty-fifth anniversary of the day Lyle Tate from Portland was killed in action on Hill 778 near Khe Sanh. Having just recently survived one of the most challenging battles of the Vietnam War, Cpl Tate was one of 24 Marines killed on a joint patrol of two rifle platoons, just over 60 men in size, which was ambushed by a substantially larger North



Vietnamese Army force.

Cpl Tate was a fire team leader in the 3rd squad from the 3rd Platoon of Foxtrot Company 2nd Battalion 3rd Marines (2/3). Built like a fireplug, not tall but with thick shoulders and barreled chest, Tate also carried his squad's radio. Called "toad" by his buddies, they marveled at his ability to carry the heaviest load on the hottest days. Under

the hardships they endured, enlisted Marines naturally bond with guys like Lyle Tate who could maintain a positive attitude that transcended the dehydration, fear, and exhaustion.

Together they had just endured one of the most pivotal battles in the Vietnam War, a battle almost forgotten by everyone but those veterans who were there that have been trying to forget it for the rest of their lives. Often called "The Hill Fights of Khe Sanh" this first major battle in that northwestern corner of Quang Tri province got less press at the time than the more famous siege of Khe Sanh did a year later, but this battle marked a major inflection point in America's role in that long war.



In 1966, the Vietnam War was still widely supported in the United States, but in North Vietnam by contrast, the toll of a seemingly endless war was having a material effect on popular support for the Communist regime. A new generation of impatient young guns on the Politburo demanded, over their defense minister's objection, to mount an offensive, seeking to annex enough South Vietnamese territory that could be seen as a tangible victory to raise moral on the home front. That cautious defense minister was none other than General Vo Nguyen Giap who famously defeated the French at Dien Bien Phu in 1954. Giap was wary of America's air power, a factor that would have prevented his victory twelve years before. The patient general was confident greater success would be found in supporting the continued agita-

tion of the South Vietnamese population by political operatives and Viet Cong guerrillas.

Giap placated the orders of his civilian leadership by occupying the virtually unpopulated mountains just across the DMZ and the Laotian border. His plan was to infiltrate an entire invading army by thinly dispersing it in fortified positions across the vast square kilometers of dense jungle so that it could not be destroyed by interdiction bombing. By Giap's reasoning, at worst his superiors would eventually order him to start mounting assaults on nearby American bases, at best however, perhaps the American leadership would order its ground forces to attack his army and its elaborate network of defensive positions.

The commanding General of American forces in Vietnam, General William Westmoreland was no doubt the most brilliant and effective general of his generation. No other four star in the American military constellation of commanders was better prepared to defend Western Europe from a Soviet invasion, and thus all of Westmoreland's professional preparation prompted him to indulge his adversary with the very battle Giap wanted. The NVA were setting up camp in I Corps, the Marine Corps' tactical area of responsibility, so Westmoreland ordered the Marines redeploy in defense of the Republic of Vietnam's northwestern borders and clear these remote mountains of the enemy.

Major General Lew Walt, commanding general of the 3rd Marine Division and Lieutenant General Victor Krulak Commander of Marine Forces Pacific objected. Both decorated veterans of the Pacific Campaign of the Second World War, Walt and Krulak did not flinch from a fight, but they understood the counterinsurgency nature of this conflict, warning Westmoreland that every Marine sent to assault bunkers in those remote mountains was one less Marine committed to the Marine Corps' effective pacification program. The Marines pointed out that an effective counterinsurgency campaign that continued to protect the population from the Viet Cong would be able to annihilate NVA units that tried to advance beyond

their mountain sanctuary, but if forces were deployed to clear the mountains, not only would the Marines be forced to waste manpower occupying indefensible land within easy striking distance from the Laotian border, but the NVA could infiltrate into the population areas with greater ease once the Marines were spread too thin.

General Westmoreland's rank, and his vision of big land units fighting a pitched battle won out. The Marine leadership saluted and began building a more elaborate forward operating base at Khe Sanh. In September 1966 a rifle battalion (1/3) was deployed as garrison. As a perfect metaphor of the war, the moment the Marines arrived, the South Vietnamese withdrew their own First Battalion Second Infantry so that General Westmoreland's demand for a Marine battalion merely resulted in the ARVN command withdrawing the same sized force from this dangerously exposed location. These Marines aggressively patrolled the area for six months, but the enemy showed no attempts to attack Khe Sanh's defenses. After the scheduled end of their tour, 1/3 was relieved by Bravo Company 1/9, Echo Company 2/9, and a Force Recon Company.

By the beginning of April, the new garrison of Marines at Khe Sanh began seeing more contact with the enemy, particularly around nearby Hill 861. It soon became evident that the NVA was occupying each of the surrounding hills with battalion sized units digging in fortified positions to command the high ground around the Khe Sanh base in preparation for an attack. The Second and Third Battalions of the Third Marine Regiment were rapidly deployed to Khe Sanh by April 27, 1967 and in a matter of hours began mounting frontal attacks to seize the surrounding hills.

These boys of 67 are second to no other generation of Marines. With discipline and courage they employed fire and maneuver against an entrenched enemy under the support of coordinated air and artillery fire. Cpl Tate, like so many Marine NCOs before him and after led by example; he led from the front. Though utterly terrified and

exhausted, the Marines of Tate's fire team followed him up those hills.

While displaying the same common virtue of uncommon valor found on Iwo Jima, these Marines faced two additional challenges. First, some genius somewhere decided to make them the guinea pigs for the first Marine deployment of a new rifle, the M-16. This lighter weapon with its lighter ammunition would become the best service rifle ever made after a few glitches were corrected, but in 1967 the Marine Corps had purchased ammunition with ball powder rather than the IMR powder Colt had tested the XM16E1 prototype with. The carbon residue of the lower grade ammunition made the chamber too sticky for the bolt action to eject spent casings. The only way to clear that brass out was to use a cleaning rod, of which there was only one for every four Marines or to pick at it with a bayonet. This proved a frustrating disaster, and yet these Marines took the hills anyway, making their single shots count.

The second challenge was exactly what Walt and Krulak warned Westmorland of – after inflicting casualties on the Marines as they charged up the hills, the NVA escaped through tunnels. Unlike an island in the Pacific where the defending Japanese had nowhere to go, the NVA could maneuver back into the jungle. Consolidating their victory proved impossible for the Marines. They occupied the hills, but the patrols they operated out of them were subject to ambush as the Marines' newly conquered real estate remained threatened by counterattack. Thus the greatest irony was that Cpl Tate's courage in the hill fights was followed by his death on a patrol two days before his battalion was scheduled to be withdrawn from the area.

The situation was so grim upon the end of the 2/3's deployment to Khe Sanh, patrols had to be large enough to survive contact with the large NVA elements they would encounter after leaving the Marines' recently secured perimeter upon Hill 881N. On May 9, 1967 Foxtrot Company ran a two-platoon patrol led by the company commander himself Captain Merle Sorenson consist-

ing of Lieutenant Patrick Carroll's 3rd Platoon in the front followed by Lieutenant Jack Schworm's 1st Platoon. The patrol route was only a distance of a few kilometers to their objective, the abandoned village of Lang Xoa, but the steep terrain and thick vegetation made the Marines take longer to cover that space than the short distance would otherwise imply. One had to wonder if the battalion's S3 operations officer failed to notice the contour lines on the military map as he created such an ambitious time table that the patrol inevitably fell behind.

Upon reaching Hill 778, the patrol was so far behind schedule that it was forced to take the risk of using the trail, as Edward Murphy in his excellent book *The Hill Fights: The First Battle of Khe Sanh* reports: Carroll's point man came upon a trail that led down the steep southwestern side of Hill 778 toward Lang Xoa. "Everyone knew we shouldn't go down the trail but we had no choice," Carroll recalled. "We had to take it to get to our objective on time."

After descending the hillside, Carroll's platoon entered a wide, flat ravine. A major ridge finger that ran northwest off Hill 778 paralleled their right flank. High terrain leading up to Hill 803 rose off to their left. Carroll halted in the center of the ravine to look at some footprints that one of his men had discovered. Another Marine pointed to a pile of fresh feces. At the same time, the point squad reported it had come to another ravine that intersected its own from the right about a hundred meters from Carroll's position.

"As I stood there I suddenly had this overwhelming feeling we were getting into trouble," Carroll remembered. "The intense feeling affected my entire body with a sense of impending doom. I knew I had to get those Marines out of that spot immediately."

Carroll whirled around. He pointed up the ridge finger running down from Hill 778. "Up there," he ordered his platoon. "Get up there."

Exhausted as anyone else, Cpl Tate led his fire team in a double time out of what was becoming the perfect kill zone. The NVA were in the process of forming a hasty ambush, but Carroll led his men away from the worst of it. Still, while some of 3rd Platoon was given a fighting chance due to their platoon commander's decisive foresight, Cpl Tate's fire team along with the rest of 3nd squad absorbed 10 – 15 minutes of intense NVA fire superiority at almost point blank range as they reached the top of that finger. Their effort prevented the enemy from sweeping down the side of the hill to the patrol's right, trapping both platoons in a turkey shoot from the high ground on both flanks. While leading his fire team's attempt to return fire and maneuver to a better position, Tate was hit by a heavy machine gun round through his arm and into his armpit. With the radio he carried and his customarily heavy load, Tate fell hard. His rapid heartbeat from the uphill sprint quickly drained his body of blood from a severed artery. He would eventually die in his platoon commander's arms when no amount of direct pressure could stop the bleeding.

This patrol of Foxtrot Company faced factors that seemed to guarantee their certain annihilation. They faced a steady rate of fire from NVA AK-47s responding with M-16 rifles that could only get off one or two rounds before jamming. They were surrounded by a numerically superior enemy force that knew every contour of this terrain, and the high ridgelines blocked the Marines' radio transmissions, preventing the assistance of air and artillery support. Twenty-four dead Marines was a high price to pay, but why was it not sixty?

These Marines lived up to the long tradition of the Marine Corps' discipline under fire. Their war fighting prowess showed through in six ways to win this fight. 1) The way 3rd Platoon quickly maneuvered to prevent the NVA from enveloping the patrol's right flank bought time for the rest of the patrol to react. 2) The M-16 failed them, but an M-60 machine gun team attached to 3rd Platoon, led by Cpl Albert Potts, aggressively maneuvered to a good firing position and preceded to mow down

the advancing NVA sending rounds down range as fast as his proficient gun team could replace new belts. 3) Just as 3rd Platoon was running out of ammunition, a nearby patrol from Echo Company came to their aid, instantly assessed the situation, and laid down a danger-close base of machine gun grazing fire at NVA soldiers that were overrunning the position of Tate's wounded squad. 4) Despite all the confusion, the Marines managed to identify and take out the NVA mortar section. 5) A F-8 Crusader returning from a bombing run happened to be flying by. The quick thinking company radio man, Cpl Joe O'Connor, used the radio of a wounded Forward Air Controller lying next to him to make contact with the pilot. The Bomber had neither any munitions nor much fuel, but he agreed to brave the ground fire and make two threateningly low passes. Fear of an airstrike appears to have convinced several NVA units to break contact. 6) Ultimately the decisive factor that prevented a terrible situation that day from becoming far worse was the quality of leadership from NCOs like Cpl Lyle Tate and the officers above them. Marine officers and NCOs wear the famous "blood stripe" on the trouser seam of their dress blue uniforms to signify the tendency of Marine small unit leaders to have a higher casualty rate than the men they lead. Every maneuver element leader from the company commander to the fire team leaders earned the Purple Heart that day, many of them posthumously.

A few days later, A Marine detail and a Navy Chaplain notified Lyle Tate's parents that their only son had been killed in action. This somber moment was cut short when Mr. Tate suddenly suffered a heart attack in response. He recovered in time to attend Lyle's burial at Willamette National Cemetery.

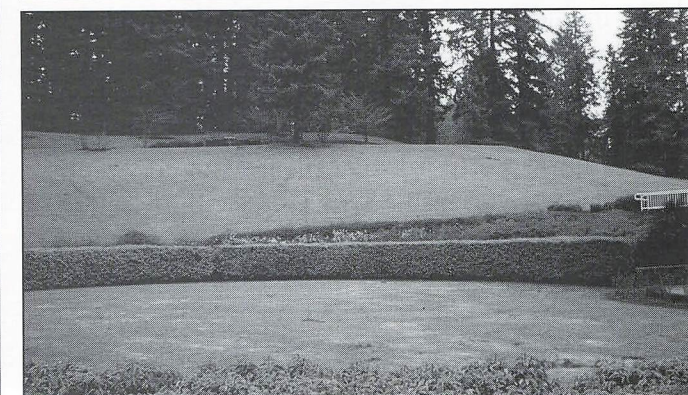
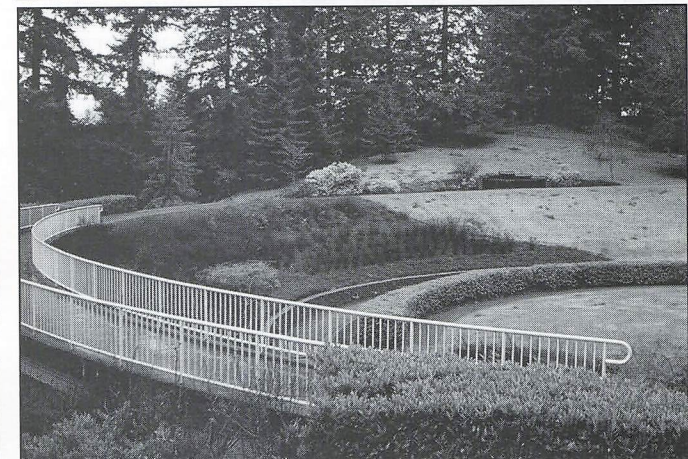
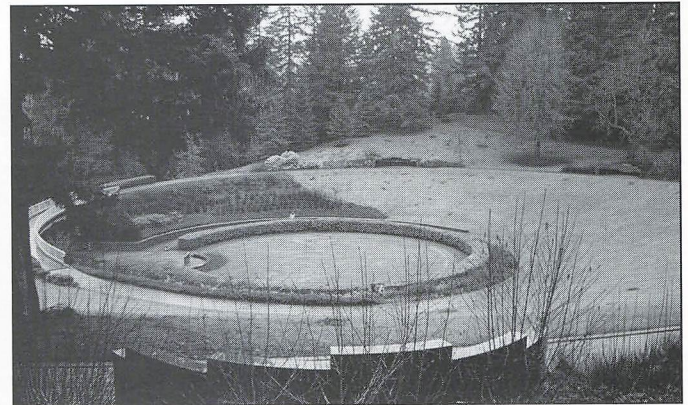
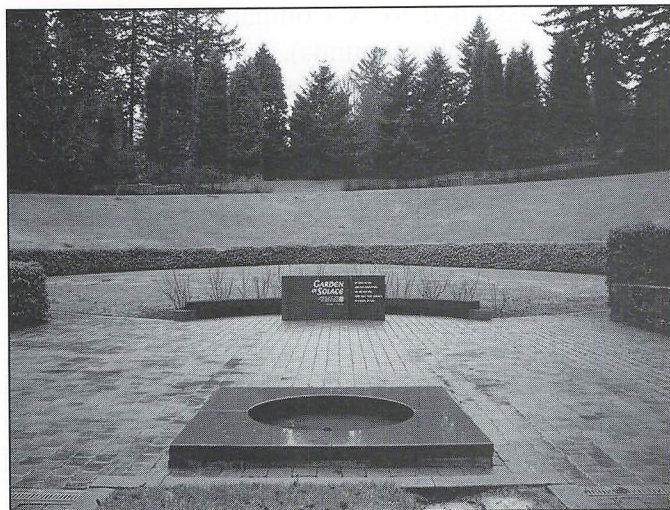
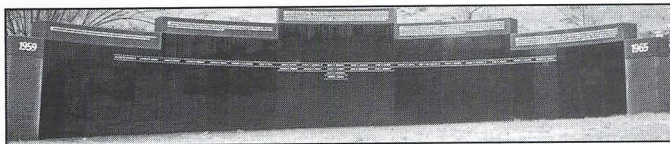
The ceremony, featured former Portland Mayor (and former Marine) Bud Clark, Brigadier General Bruce Prunk, and the Oregon Air National Guard had a F-15 low flyby. For those of you who do not have a personal connection, I write this article so that Marines like Lyle Tate will be forever loved and forever remembered long after

their generation of fellow Marines has passed from this earth.



Having attended these ceremonies so long ago as a boy, I remember when it was F-4s flying by. Indeed I was at the very first dedication of this memorial in 1987 with my father who checked into 2/3 just after the Khe Sanh hill fights and fought with them through the Tet Offensive in 1968. He knew many of the names on that wall personally, friends that will be forever young to him.

Eric Shierman lives in southwest Portland and is the author of A Brief History of Political Cultural Change, and also writes for The Oregonian's My Oregon blog.



“FREEDOM IS NOT FREE”

By Craig W. Tourte
HQ BTRY 1/13

Everyone who knew William Denman called him Buddy and that nickname appropriately described who he was. Buddy grew up in the town of Maxwell, located in Northern California. Maxwell is the quintessential example of rural small town America where everyone knows your name, family and most of your relatives if they had lived around those parts for a few generations. There would be no reason for the road traveler to take the exit off Interstate 5 and drive into the little farm community of 500 where most folks live in quiet obscurity. Some have come and stayed and raised their families while many others have moved along and are now mostly forgotten.

From the Virtual Wall - “Dau Tieng, Tay Ninh Province, 03 Nov 1966 - elements of the 196th Infantry Brigade and the 25th Infantry Division got into a heated fight with entrenched and bunkered VC troops, a fight that grew into a full-fledged battle fought over a three-day period. Landing Zone Lima Zulu, slightly north of where 1st Bn, 27th Infantry fought on 03/04 Nov, drew some of the heaviest fighting beginning after C Company, 2/27 Inf, was inserted at about 1400 on 04 Nov.”

Buddy was a popular kid, handsome and athletic with blond hair and light blue eyes and he possessed an independent and adventuresome spirit many admired. Buddy had a difficult and tragic family life; there were many challenges and hardships including a grievous personal experience between his parents that he witnessed at a very young age. After he graduated from high school Buddy volunteered for the Army and attended boot camp at Fort Ord located in Monterey California. He thrived in the Army life with direction, discipline and a sense of belonging. He found a new beginning, writing to many friends about the respect and admiration he had for the warriors he had met, respected and hoped one day to emulate.

In the summer of 1966 I was living with my aunt and uncle in Maxwell and looking forward to going off to Marine Corps boot camp. Going into the Marine Corps was an adventure I was looking forward to even though I knew I would be deployed to Vietnam shortly after my training was completed. Buddy had completed his Army training and was home visiting his mother and sister and preparing for his deployment to Vietnam. I went over to his house with my cousin and walked into his bedroom where a few of his friends were visiting with him. It was mid-morning and he was still in bed, stating that he wanted to rest as much as he could after all the training and before his deployment. He was in high spirits and looking forward to serving his country and all of what that entailed. We talked about his military training and what he expected while in Vietnam. I sensed that he too was in pursuit of action and eager for a new experience. I told him that he would be returning from Vietnam before me and when I returned home we would share and compare experiences. I wished him luck and was a little envious that he would get to the war before me. I left knowing he was doing what he wanted to do and I was looking forward to becoming a United States Marine. I entered Marine Corps Boot Camp (Platoon 1145) on October 29, 1966.

When Buddy arrived in Vietnam his Sergeant asked him what he wanted to be called, William or Bill. His response was “My friends call me Buddy.” His Sergeant said, “Then Buddy it is.” He was assigned to A Company, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry (Wolfhounds), 25 Infantry Division. Within a short period of time he went into combat against the experienced, prepared and determined Viet Cong forces. Tragically only three and a half months after arriving in Vietnam he was killed in action.

“C/2/27 moved south from LZ Lima Zulu, intending to link with 1/27, but could go only a few hundred meters before being stopped by VC dug into a tree line. Unable to move forward, with enemy troops infiltrating to their rear, the battalion and company commanders dead, and under fire from

three sides, C/2/27 pulled together after nightfall, using a left flank displacement to get out of the "horseshoe" and avoid encirclement. The maneuver worked, and C/2/27 held out through the night amidst sporadic hand-to-hand fighting. By 1030 on 05 Nov, Alpha 1/27 fought through and relieved C/2/27." "At the same time, HHC and A Company, 2/27, was coming into LZ Lima Zulu, intending to take the VC from the rear, pounding them against the anvil formed by A/1/27 and C/2/27."

"05 November 1966 - While the engagements cost the VC dearly, with several hundred known dead, the US infantrymen paid a high price with 50 men killed in action over the three day period. William (Buddy) Denman was one of the twenty Americans who were killed at LZ Lima Zulu on the 3rd day of the fight."

The community cemetery of Maxwell is located a mile west of town. William Luther Denman (August 25, 1946 - November 5, 1966) is buried near the flag pole; his final resting place is identified with a brass United States Military Headstone. He was the first to be killed from the small town of Maxwell and County of Colusa during the Vietnam War. He had the largest funeral ever attended with vehicles stretching for a couple of miles leading to the cemetery.

A number of years ago I placed a small note on the A Company, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Wolfhound web site regarding Buddy, just so others would know he had someone who continued to remember him and his sacrifice for this wonderful country.

Similar to the Khe Sanh Veterans web sites - Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc & Khe Sanh Veterans Home Page - which have contributed to bringing together those who fought in the battles on the hills and the Marine Corps Combat Base of Khe Sanh, the Wolfhounds web site is followed by those with comparable experiences.

A number of months ago I received an email in

response to that little notation I had written on the Wolfhound web site. A former Vietnam and Wolfhound Veteran Robert Park, contacted me and said that he was with Buddy during that particular battle and continues to remember Buddy's death with great sadness. Robert said he was the one who asked Buddy what name he wanted to be called. Having been in country longer and with more experience Robert felt an obligation to watch out for Buddy and has carried with him all of these years a feeling of responsibility for Buddy's death during the battle. A few years ago Robert had come to Maxwell to visit Buddy's grave and say goodbye, but was unable to locate his grave at the cemetery. He asked around town but no one seemed to recall who Buddy was nor were they familiar with the location of his grave. Robert has vowed to return someday to say his final farewell.

A few of weeks after my email communication with Robert I received an email from Chuck Dean, another Vietnam and Wolfhound Veteran who told me he had been in communication with Robert and that he had been with Buddy when he fell and was planning on driving to California and visit Buddy's grave. I shared both emails with people I knew were close to Buddy while he was growing up.

Email from Chuck Dean - "I plan on visiting Buddy's grave in May of this year (2012), something I have tried to face for 45 years. Buddy and I were very close friends in Vietnam. We were both Grenadiers in A Co 2/27 Wolfhounds. I was with Buddy when he fell. I only wish I could have done this years ago, but have only been able to come to grips with Vietnam the last couple of years. I have hooked up with some of the other "Hounds" such as Robert within the last year and have been steadily working my way out of the shadows. I will be in the Maxwell area to visit Buddy's grave site in May. Buddy will always be part of the band of brothers called the Wolfhounds, and will never be forgotten. His memory will live on as long as there is one Wolfhound alive."

"Freedom Is Not Free" Reads the program pamphlet provided at the Memorial Day Service held at the Maxwell Cemetery, May 28, 2012 - I attended the Memorial Day Service with 100 or more people from the community sponsored by American Legion Post 218 (Maxwell) - Ronald Azevedo, Commander. The Maxwell High School Band played the Star Spangled Banner and one of the high school girls sang the National Anthem. The service included a bugle playing taps and a rifle volley "Salute to Deceased Veterans." I didn't notice any politicians or back slapping significant officials, just local folks with moist eyes and heavy hearts who attended out of respect and honor for those who served and for those who had fallen.

Chuck Dean arrived for the service and was shown the location of Buddy's grave by Paul Richter (1st Lt. U.S. Army) and Gary Bowen (U.S. Navy) who were childhood friends of Buddy's. There was a large floral wreath standing at the headstone sent by Robert Park in the name of all of the Wolfhounds Buddy served with. Chuck said that he had driven out from Alabama to finally say goodbye. We had a long conversation where he reflected on the battle and Buddy's loss. Chuck said that Buddy was just a few steps behind him when he was shot and killed. He walked over to Buddy, turned him over and saw that he was deceased. Chuck said that he had the canvas helmet cover Buddy had worn that day. I held the now faded green camouflage helmet cover and observed written in black ink Buddy's blood type, unit and the words "Pat" for his high school girlfriend Patricia. Chuck said that he had kept the cover locked away for 45 years and now it was time the cover should be with Buddy's home town, family and friends.

Chuck handed the helmet cover to Buddy's friend Paul Richter for safe keeping until it could displayed properly in a place of care and honor. I recognized that Chuck's act of presenting Buddy's helmet cover to Paul and the town of Maxwell was more than just transferring some possession of property. It was a spiritual release, a dedication,

a shared memory and memorial of an item of hal-
lowed significance to be forever treasured. It was part of Buddy's spirit and represented his life and sacrifice in battle and that significance had been tucked away for 45 years in a corner of Chuck's heart and soul.

Paul told me there were efforts under development to build an appropriate incased memorial with memorabilia dedicated to Buddy which would include the now gifted helmet cover along with his military Bronze Star, Purple Heart, military photograph and additional items relating to Buddy already on display at the American Legion. The new display would not only be a tribute to Buddy but also to the many who have served in the Armed Forces and a reminder to all that, **"Freedom Is Not Free."**

SOLDIERS LOST AND FOUND: STUDENTS REDISCOVER THE FALLEN

SOME PEOPLE DO CARE

Tracing the Stories of Fallen Troops

Article From Wall Street Journal



A generation of Tom Clark's high school history students have been tracking down the families of Indiana's war dead and creating an archive of their mementos, their letters, the stories of loved ones lost in combat and lives lived in grief. WSJ's Michael M. Phillips reports

ST. JOHN, Ind.—Soon after she finished her junior year at Lake Central High School last spring, Marissa Emery visited the American war cemetery in St. Avoird, France. Walking in, she could see just the blank backs of the white marble crosses, a vast, grassy field of the anonymous dead.

Only when she was standing among the grave markers did Ms. Emery turn and see that the front of each one bore a name, including that of the man she was there to visit: Cpl. Homer "Binks" Gettler. The 21-year-old soldier was killed fighting his way across France in 1944, while pining for Betty, the fiancée waiting for him at home in Indiana.

Ms. Emery gathered a pile of small stones in her T-shirt. On top of Cpl. Gettler's cross she arranged them in the outline of a heart. She took one dark rock and threw it against the paved pathway until it broke in two. Ms. Emery placed half in the center of the heart. The other half she tucked into her backpack. That was for Betty.

Some 1,750 Indiana soldiers have lost their lives in Iraq, Afghanistan and Vietnam and many more in World War II. Ms. Emery's high-school history teacher, Tom Clark, wants his students to know that each one comes with a story.

For 27 years, Mr. Clark has had his students track down the families of the state's battle casualties. In hundreds of files jammed with letters, records, telegrams and photos, his classes have mapped the tides of the nation's relationship with its wars and its dead.

The World War II generation was revered. Men who served in Indochina often came home to hostility. Today, with U.S. troops gone from Iraq and packing up their gear in Afghanistan, the country's feelings have evolved again, with a support-the-troops ethic overriding political differences over the wisdom of the conflicts.

Mr. Clark's project began in 1985, when one of

his students launched a campaign to erect a memorial for five Lake Central High School graduates killed in Vietnam. Mr. Clark had his students interview the men's families so the plaque could include details of their lives. The project swelled from there.

In August, Mr. Clark, 58 years old, handed out files and told his new students they had a semester to find out as much as they could about the dead servicemen. He held up a history book. "This textbook is going to say 58,142 died" in Vietnam, he told them. "Is that meaningful? No. That's why I do this."

His classroom is like a forgotten corner of the Smithsonian. Mr. Clark has a letter from a Marine asking his mother to mail rain gear to Vietnam, and a photo of the private sitting on a tank wearing the coat she sent. He later stepped off that tank and onto a land mine. Mr. Clark, an Afghanistan veteran himself, also has a disarmed bazooka, the uniform of a U.S. soldier killed in Iraq, a trove of Purple Heart medals and a pile of Afghan army helmets.

He has the golden lieutenant's insignia that one cash-strapped officer gave his girlfriend in lieu of an engagement ring before he died in Vietnam in 1966.

"Are you seeing the war?" Mr. Clark asked his new class. "The war is all around you."

WORLD WAR II

Mr. Clark and his students have been working on Cpl. Gettler's history for years. They spoke to his sisters, now deceased, and collected binders filled with letters to and from the front lines.

Last year, Ms. Emery's first three cases, all Vietnam casualties, went nowhere. Then Mr. Clark asked her to interview Cpl. Gettler's former fiancée, now Betty Kolodziej. The two of them—17-year-old Ms. Emery, with her bouncy enthusiasm

and wavy golden hair, and the 87-year-old Mrs. Kolodziej, with her hunched shoulders and tinted glasses—talked for four hours, the teenager smiling over Betty's stories about her romance.

"Binks" Gettler was a star pitcher at Dyer High School, class of '41. He threw five no-hitters and signed with the Chicago White Sox, to the chagrin of his Cubs-loving father. Betty, whose parents owned an ice-cream shop, would gaze out of geography class and watch him play ball. The teachers frowned upon hand-holding.

"We passed a lot of notes in the hallway," she told Ms. Emery.

Binks and Betty became engaged before he shipped out for Europe with the 35th Infantry Division. Sometimes she would picture him overseas throwing grenades like baseballs.

On Sept. 22, 1944, he wrote to his sister Charlotte: Betty "should know by now that I am thinking of her at all times. All I do is pray for the day to come so we both can be together again, and married."

His letter must have crossed with one from Charlotte. "Write some," she said, "and I'm praying constantly for you."

The envelope, now in Mr. Clark's classroom, came back unopened and marked in red ink: "Deceased."

About a week after Cpl. Gettler had written to his sister, German troops penetrated the division's lines and drove the corporal and other American mortarmen out of position. Armed only with a pistol, he and a comrade pushed their way back to their mortar tube to repel the Germans. Cpl. Gettler was killed by enemy fire, earning a posthumous **Silver Star medal**.

His 15-year-old sister Paula was home alone in Dyer, Ind., when the taxi driver delivered the Western Union telegram that now resides, tinged in brown, in Mr. Clark's classroom.

"THE SECRETARY OF WAR DESIRES ME TO EXPRESS HIS DEEP REGRET THAT YOUR SON CORPORAL HOMER A. GETTLER WAS KILLED IN ACTION ON TWO OCTOBER IN FRANCE LETTER FOLLOWS. J A ULIO THE ADJUTANT GENERAL."

Paula screamed at the driver to get off her porch. "I didn't believe it," Mrs. Kolodziej told Ms. Emery. Even a couple of years later, she thought perhaps he had just been wounded and hadn't returned because he was suffering from amnesia.

The corporal's mother, Alma Gettler, chose to leave his body in France; she didn't want him to come home like that.

"He left four lives here and to know that it wasn't in vain and he saved four people was just overwhelming."

"Thousands of names," Ms. Emery wrote in her journal after visiting the cemetery. "Thousands of soldiers who lost their lives fighting for their country. Thousands of mothers who lost their sons. Thousands of lives, just gone."

In August, after her senior year began, Ms. Emery brought the broken stone and a candle to Mrs. Kolodziej's house in Crown Point, Ind.



Marissa Emery, above left, visits with Betty Kolodziej, whose fiancée died in WWII

Putting her cane aside, Mrs. Kolodziej hugged Ms. Emery. Ms. Emery read from her journal, "so you could feel you had been there and been part of it."

Mrs. Kolodziej held out arthritic knuckles and showed Ms. Emery her wedding ring. The engagement diamond she had received from Cpl. Gettler was set among the stones from the man she ultimately married, Peter Kolodziej, who had fought in the Battle of the Bulge and survived a German prison camp.

"She's making me go back so many years, like I was young," Mrs. Kolodziej told Mr. Clark. She held a photo of Cpl. Gettler's tombstone at arm's length. "I don't want to get any tears on it," she said.

"You did something really very beautiful there," she told Ms. Emery.

VIETNAM

Yolanda Smith-Hess was five when her father, Spc. 4 Wardell Smith, was killed in Vietnam on July 4, 1968. He was 27.

Her mother and grandmother rarely spoke of his death. "I think my mom was just so devastated that her husband was killed over there," said Ms. Smith-Hess. Her uncles kept saying how her father, and the U.S., should never have been in Vietnam in the first place.

Ms. Smith-Hess's memories are blurry and faded: Her mother sitting on a chair across from his casket; of being distracted by a puff of smoke during the 21-gun salute, as the body was lowered into the grave; turning back to see that her father had disappeared. She thought it might be magic.

Relatives always described her father as a natural leader. She grew up angry he was gone.

"It makes you wonder about everything," said Ms.

Smith-Hess, now 49. "I was just stuck in the fact that I was a child growing up, not having an opportunity to have her dad in her life."

Mr. Clark and one of his students began researching the case in the late 1980s. They contacted Spc. Smith's mother, Elnora Cast, who lent the class a small formal photo. He gazed straight ahead, betraying no emotion in his black tie and peaked Army hat.

By the time the class tried to return the photo a few months later, Ms. Cast had died, never knowing the circumstances of her son's death.

Mr. Clark eventually tracked down Ms. Smith-Hess. "I've never seen a picture of him in uniform," Mr. Clark recalled her saying. Her grandmother, she figured, had kept it in the wooden chest that she and her three siblings had always been told was off-limits.

Over the years, Mr. Clark's students pried Spc. Smith's military records out of the Pentagon. The records identified him as "negroid" and described his civilian work experience as distributing "sausages to different stores."

In 1997, the Smith case was in the hands of Melissa Wells, a 17-year-old 11th-grader who now describes her high-school self as a "girlie girl," with little interest in the military or history until she took Mr. Clark's class.

That year, she and her classmates discovered that **Spc. Smith had earned the Bronze Star and Silver Star medals**, and that they were never issued. In the spring, Ms. Wells and Mr. Clark drove to Ms. Smith-Hess's home in Gary, Ind., with the official military citations.

The Bronze Star was almost a pro forma consolation prize for dying in battle. But the Silver Star, the nation's third-highest military honor, was awarded for an uncommon act of valor.

Ms. Wells told Ms. Smith-Hess how her father

had been at a base camp when it came under enemy attack. He left a sheltered position, braved a "fire swept area" and sped to the besieged perimeter bunkers, where he brought two wounded men to safety, according to the records she read. Hearing there were more injuries, he raced back to the perimeter, but was thrown to the ground by an explosion.

He got up and despite the "heavy volume of fire" reached the perimeter bunker to begin treating the wounded. Then he dashed to the adjacent bunker in search of more injured men. He was killed by an explosion as he entered the bunker.

Ms. Smith-Hess wept as the teenager talked. "I had actual documentation that I could read about who he was," Ms. Smith-Hess recalled years after the visit. Mr. Clark "was able to give me those last hours of my father's life."

She felt a little ashamed she had been so angry for so long. She wondered whether the men her father helped had made it out of Vietnam alive. She wished she could meet them.

"He left four lives here and to know that it wasn't in vain and he saved four people was just overwhelming," Ms. Smith-Hess said.

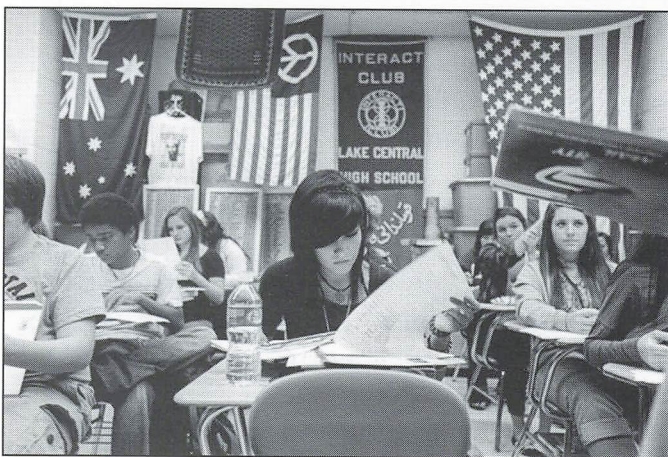
Ms. Wells, now Melissa Ferro, is a 32-year-old pediatric-oncology nurse in California. She also raises money for baby showers for the wives of soldiers overseas, volunteer work inspired in part by her experience with Ms. Smith-Hess.

"Every girl wants to believe her daddy is a hero," she said. "I gave that to her."

AFGHANISTAN

When Angie Wagner's father, a Marine sniper, was killed in Vietnam, strangers told her she should be ashamed of him. Ms. Wagner, then just a child, learned to lie and say she didn't know how her dad had died.

Twenty years ago, she received a call from Mr. Clark and his students, who wanted to know about her father. She remembers it as the first time anyone outside the family had said anything nice to her about her dad. Today, her own daughter, Allison, is a senior at Lake Central and taking Mr. Clark's history course.



MR CLARK'S CLASS

One evening in August, Allison Wagner, two of her classmates and Mr. Clark went to the childhood home of Staff Sgt. David Nowaczyk, determined to show the sergeant's parents that they weren't suffering alone. The soldier, a Lake Central graduate, was killed at age 32 on April 15 in Afghanistan.

For more than an hour, they sat in the living room, under Sgt. Nowaczyk's photo and Purple Heart medal, and asked Andrew and Patti Nowaczyk about their son. What was he like? How did he die? How has his death affected the family?

"He's not just another name to us," Ms. Wagner told them.

"Thank you," said Mr. Nowaczyk, a 57-year-old oil-company maintenance supervisor.

The 17-year-old girls—Ms. Wagner, junior Sarah Harnish and senior Natalia Ruiz—heard about the ups and downs of grief still fresh. They heard

about the comfort provided by friends and neighbors who sympathized with the Nowaczyks' loss and respected their son for his sacrifice.

Mrs. Nowaczyk, age 54, an assistant in a law firm, told the girls about David's mischievous youth. How at age 6 he had disassembled the front-door lock. "He was all boy," she said.

That's about how old the girls themselves were on Sept. 11, 2001, when hijackers flew planes into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and a Pennsylvania field. The attack got David talking about the Army. He was 22 years old and working as a truck driver. His mother begged him not to enlist, and he held off for a few years.

In 2005, he joined up, breaking the news to his mother at a restaurant so she wouldn't cry. After his first tour of Afghanistan, he met his wife, Rachel, a nurse with a young son, Conner, from a previous marriage. They had a daughter, Kiley, now 2 years old.

On his third combat tour, Sgt. Nowaczyk's vehicle hit a buried bomb in eastern Afghanistan. Of the five men inside, he was the only one to die.

The Nowaczyks were hosting a barbecue for neighbors in Dyer, Ind., when Mr. Nowaczyk saw a uniformed soldier and a chaplain walking to the house. He apologized to his guests and ushered them out the back, before he and his wife opened the front door to face the news they knew was coming.

The Army flew the couple to the Air Force base in Dover, Del., to meet their son's body. When they returned home, they found their street lined with hundreds of American flags. There was a heart-shaped wreath on the lawn with a photo of their son. Neighbors filled a cooler with ice and soft drinks, and kept it stocked for weeks. A stranger sent a handmade red-white-and-blue quilt.

The wake was a blur. "You want to go hide," Mr. Nowaczyk told the girls. "You want to go vomit.

But you have to greet everybody."

At first, they thought they didn't want the attention. The Nowaczyks soon realized the outpouring of support meant their son wouldn't soon be forgotten.

Ms. Harnish asked how Sgt. Nowaczyk's death had affected the family dynamics. Mr. Nowaczyk said he often sleeps on the floor beside his granddaughter, Kiley. For a while, the little girl, having been told her father was in heaven, would let loose balloons and wave at passing planes.

"We're still at the stage where we're still tiptoeing around each other," said Mrs. Nowaczyk, who wears a memorial dog tag around her neck.

You have good and bad days?" Ms. Harnish asked.

"It's not even days," said Mrs. Nowaczyk, "it's moments."

The third student, Ms. Ruiz, had been mostly silent. Then she broke into tears. "I was 11 when my dad died," she said, "and I didn't have the courage to speak at his funeral."

This time the Nowaczyks comforted her: "No child should ever have to bury a father," Mr. Nowaczyk said.

Ms. Wagner told the Nowaczyks of her own grandfather's death in combat and of her mother's battle with bitterness and shame. The Nowaczyks recalled the cold reception that veterans and their families received during Vietnam and how different their experience has been.

"We carry a big black cloud over our heads, and it rains every day," Mr. Nowaczyk told the girls. "The fact that you came here is incredible."

Write to Michael M. Phillips at michael.phillips@wsj.com

Socorro residents want Vietnam War MIA's name on new SISD school

**MAUNUEL R. PUENTES SSGT USA
B TROOP 1ST CAV 23rd INF DIV**

'It's time to bring Manny back to life'

By Ramon Renteria

Leno Puentes still cries thinking of his younger brother whom everyone called "Pelon."

"He was a good kid who grew up picking and chopping cotton after school, weekends and holidays," he said. "On Jan. 4, 1971, he left for the war in Vietnam. He has not returned."

Socorro Independent School District officials in December are expected to decide whether a new public school will be named after Army Staff Sgt. Manuel R. Puentes, a Socorro soldier missing in action in South Vietnam since 1971.

Puentes' friends and relatives are urging the district's board of trustees to name one of two proposed new schools in honor of the Socorro native - and others missing in action - who dreamed of becoming a professional boxer. They describe him as a war hero with an infectious grin.

"It's time to bring Manny back to life or at least for his family to have something to remember," said Eugene Trujillo, one of about 20 friends and relatives lobbying to have a public school named after Puentes.

A district committee will recommend proposed names to the school board on Tuesday, according to a district representative.

Puentes, a 20-year-old Golden Gloves boxing champion, was an Army rifleman and part of a 12-man patrol in the rugged, jungle-covered mountains northwest of Khe Sahn, Quang Tri Province. North Vietnamese forces ambushed the patrol on March 25, 1971, with grenades, wounding Puentes and patrol leader Jimmy C. Johnson.

Three other soldiers were killed - Staff Sgt. R.D. McDonell of Sweetwater, Texas, Cpl. Richard J. Rossano of New York City, and Cpl. Randall A. Thompson of Evansville, Ind. They were attached



to the 1st Squad, Troop B, 1st Cavalry, 23rd Infantry Division.

Survivors said they saw the wounded Puentes, then a private first class, take cover. Outnumbered, the patrol retreated and left Puentes and the other casualties behind.

Search teams later found Johnson, badly wounded and alive, but no trace of Puentes and two soldiers killed. Thompson's body was recovered.

The Department of Defense reported Puentes missing and then declared him presumed dead a few years later. He was promoted posthumously.

Puentes is believed to be the only soldier from Socorro who did not return from the controversial war in Southeast Asia.

The National Archives lists 58,220 U.S. casualties in the Vietnam War. The war ended in 1975 as one of the most divisive wars in U.S. history.

Ricardo Puentes, Manuel Puentes' twin brother, remembers his brother calling from Seattle before leaving for Vietnam. "He was crying," said Ricardo Puentes, a retired educator in Arizona. "He wanted to serve the country and help my parents financially, but he really didn't want to go to Vietnam."

Ricardo Puentes advised his brother to go AWOL even if it meant having to serve a few years in prison for deserting the Army. Manuel Puentes ignored the advice.

The twins were among 15 children born to Mexican immigrant parents.

Maybe it was a strange coincidence but a car ran over Ricardo Puentes in Socorro the same week that his brother was wounded and reported missing.

"I also almost lost my life," Ricardo Puentes said. "They say twins have some kind of connection."

Manuel's father, Matias, died believing his son was still alive. Mother Gavina lost hope and died believing her son had died, according to family members. Ricardo Puentes tries not to think about his twin brother.

"It still hurts," he said. "But what happened to my brother made me stronger. I went back to school and got my GED, and I went to college." Manuel Puentes was drafted soon after graduating from Socorro High School.

Carlos M. Rivera, a family friend and commander of American GI Forum (Paso Del Norte), is optimistic the family will someday learn more about

the missing soldier. He pushed for the return of remains of Eduardo Pedregon, a San Elizario soldier reported MIA in Korea in 1950.

"There's no solid evidence to show that he (Puentes) was killed," Rivera said. "I still hold hopes that he survived."



If he survived, Manuel Puentes would be in his early 60s now.

Cesar Rosales Jr. of Omaha, Neb., became acquainted with Manuel and Ricardo Puentes when both were boxers.

"Manuel was a genuine kind of person with an infectious grin and was just a good guy," Rosales said.

Diane McNamara, now living in the Boston area, wore Manuel Puentes' MIA bracelet (which honored MIAs and POWs) in high school in the 1970s. Her father was an Air Force pilot stationed in Vietnam.

"I started wearing the bracelet as my way of showing support for the soldiers who were sent to Vietnam and I think in some way as an expression of the angst I was feeling having my Dad in Vietnam for such a long period of time," McNamara said in an email. "When the war ended and the soldiers started returning home, we were living at Keesler AFB in Biloxi (Miss.). My mother would

often take us to the air field to greet returning soldiers. It was such an emotional event and it brings me to tears if I think about it today."

McNamara kept the bracelet with Puentes' name. She often wondered about the soldier and tried to learn more about him over the years. "I could not bear the idea of getting rid of it (the bracelet) as it meant so much to me," she said.

McNamara recently searched for Puentes' name on the Vietnam Memorial Web page. "It was a bittersweet moment ... it confirmed that he didn't make it home safely," she said.

A few months before he disappeared, Manuel Puentes sent a short poem he wrote, thoughts lamenting that he was going to a distant war and leaving his large family behind. "I live each day in fear 'cause I know death is near," he wrote.

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

CORPORAL REGGIE MASON USMC H&S CO 1/9 KHE SANH

Facing death was a way of life for Marines in Vietnam, but for 77 days, Cpl. Reggie Mason had a front-row seat.

The Pocomoke City, Md., native joined the Marines in 1966 at age 18. He spent most of 1967 in DaNang, as a bodyguard and driver for a colonel. He had been putting in transfer requests to be in a combat unit.

In January 1968, he had re-enlisted and joined the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, an infantry unit nicknamed "The Walking Dead" for having so many men killed in action.

"I'll never forget when I checked in," said Mason, 66. "The staff sergeant said, 'You're that crazy-ass bastard from division that wants to go in the field. Get your gear — you're going to see all you want to see.' At 1300 hours, I was on a chopper

bound for the DMZ."

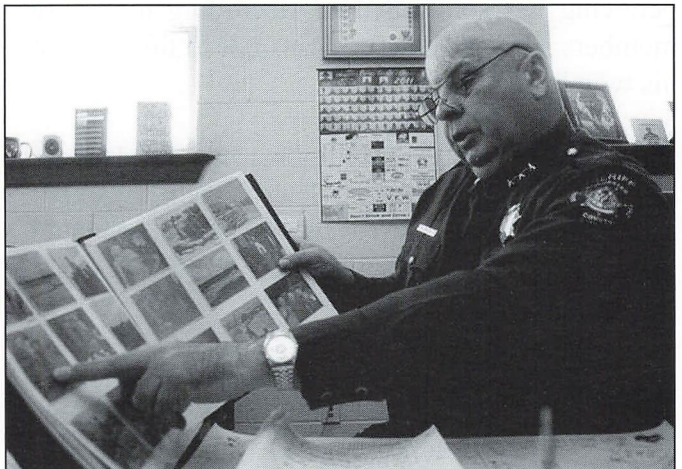
When they landed at Khe Sanh, Mason was given a new detail: Casualties.

His job was to shadow medics working with the wounded and dead, and bring them out of the Demilitarized Zone. He would radio in dog tags about who was wounded and how badly. For Marines killed in action, he would collect their personal effects from the body.

A chaplain once told him more than 500 were killed at the Battle of Khe Sanh, though official military casualty counts were lower. "You're running from one to another, and you don't have time to think about it," he said. "Most times, there weren't much left of a lot of 'em."

He remembered one Marine's death in particular. "When they unzipped the bag, I said, 'What happened? Where'd he get hit?' They turned him over. One little piece of shrapnel in his jugular vein. He bled to death. One little piece. And when I took his wallet and stuff, he had two little kids and a wife. That one bothered me more," Mason said.

He said there were 1,000 men in his battalion when he arrived at Khe Sanh, and about 700 when they left. His battalion had to put its clerks, cooks and mechanics in the field to boost manpower and hold off the relentless attack by the North Vietnamese.



Mason remembers hearing the dying cries of his fellow Marines, crying out for their mothers. He said there were times when he, too, thought he would die at Khe Sanh.

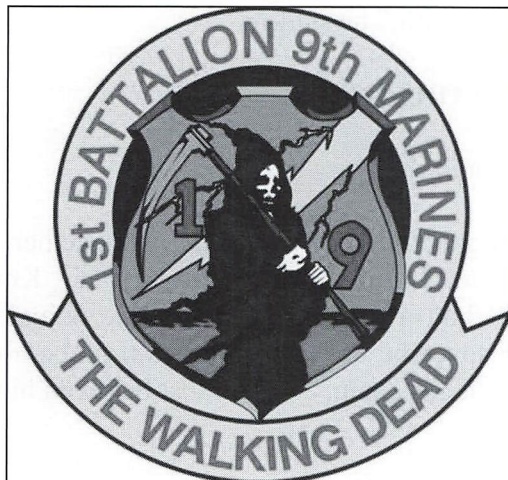
“I thought I was a pretty tough kid until I got in the war and I found out how tough I really was. It’s looking at wounded, dead bodies. Disease, guys coming down with dysentery. I about died twice from dysentery,” he said.

For the entire 77-day engagement, B-52s dropped bombs on Khe Sanh. Mason said without that airborne firepower, they would have lost at Khe Sanh. As the bombers made their nightly runs, Mason said, “you’re in a 6-foot hole and the Earth is shaking so bad, it’s unreal. And you keep praying — don’t miss your target.”

He does have many other fond memories of time in Vietnam, many of which he chronicled with an Instamatic camera he took everywhere — the times he visited an orphanage, weekends at the snow-white China Beach, tuna sandwiches at a makeshift Thanksgiving dinner

Still, he’s haunted by some of those memories. Sleeping, in particular, is a problem.

“Every noise, I get up,” he said. “I say my neighbor’s got the best bodyguard in the world. I would give anything to be able to sleep eight hours a night.”



**WEB BRIEF'S CONTINUED
FROM PAGE TWO
ACOMA SKY CITY**

By Neil Kenny

Back in the early to mid ninety's I had the great chance to visit with the 'native' population of Acoma. We traversed the route to the mesa top by the very path that had been traversed for the 1200 previous years by the people who lived there then and now. Atop the mesa was a small mission, church if you will; it was elaborately adorned with art work of 'the people' from as far back as any could recall. There was no photographs allowed, as to the Sacred nature of this place. It was refreshing to see that even in this hectic world within which we live -- some still choose to keep Sacred that which is so.

After a while in this quiet chamber, we were able to walk out into the courtyard and small graveyard. I was overwhelmed by the sheer number of grave markers & crosses that denoted the branch of military service, and that so many had died while in that service while doing the bidding of this country. It was the fact that the overwhelming number of those graves were from as early as WWI, up to the Korean Conflict. The vast majority were from WWII.

I was reminded of the verse from Barry McGuire's song; "... old enough to kill, but not to vote..." Funny how connected I was at that moment in space and time to that land and those people. I was 18 when I arrived in Nam and 19 when I left both Nam and the Corps in January 1969. The first time I was able to vote was in 1972.

The first time the people of Acoma were able to vote was 1954. It makes me wonder if time and history will keep faith with those of us who have passed before the tides of tomorrow. I know that the 'Native People' have done so in a profound manner, which humbles me as I cast my vision upon tomorrow's tomorrow.

Semper Fidelis

KHE SANH VETERANS IN THE NEWS: KEN KORKOW B CO 1/26

A VIETNAM WAR HERO'S JOURNEY

By Lance Dixon

Capital Journal 19 July 2012

It's March 30, 1968, at a place called Khe Sanh, and a Marine named Ken Korkow from rural Blunt, S.D., is about to make the best shot of his career as a mortar man. He doctors the charge on a 60 mm mortar shell so that it dollops the mortar shell only a few feet away to explode on top of a spider trap where two Vietcong soldiers have been wreaking havoc on American troops with AK-47 rifles.

End of story for two NVA

WARFARE

It's what Ken Korkow was trained to do - take out the enemy. It's part of the reason why South Dakota Gov. Frank Farrar later named a day in his honor as South Dakota's most decorated Vietnam veteran.

But that's not the story Ken Korkow remembers most about Khe Sanh. What he remembers is putting aside his weapons to bring wounded Americans back out from a battlefield blistered with bomb craters, some as deep as two automobiles stacked on top of each other - the work of the B-52s overhead that were supporting the American troops. Korkow first lay down his mortar, then his rifle, then his sidearm, the better to drag wounded soldiers to safety. Finally he was going out to retrieve wounded soldiers with only the added weight of a knife that he could use in hand-to-hand combat or to cut makeshift bandages. Some of the wounded GIs were scared of dying. Korkow had a line that worked great for them.

"I'd tell them, 'I'm a doctor. You'll be OK.'"

On his last trip out Korkow saw his commanding

officer, Ben Long, and his radio man off to one side as he ran past them.

"I was invincible and I didn't care. I shouted, 'Come out and enjoy the war.' Famous last words," Korkow said.

The next moment the world exploded under his feet.

The pieces of metal they pinned on Ken Korkow's chest afterward included the Purple Heart for being wounded and the Navy Cross for being courageous. That's the second-highest military honor a soldier could win.

But the pieces of metal Ken Korkow was most concerned about there at Khe Sanh on March 30, 1968, were the shards of shrapnel from three 60 mm mortar shells that had exploded all around him. He was hit in both arms, in the right leg, and under one eye, where a piece of shrapnel is still embedded. Flak panties and a flak vest kept his trunk intact.

But he knew he'd been seriously hit. And what he remembers afterward is that he began laughing - laughing - when he realized what had happened. It seemed funny to him because he was a mortar man himself, and his weapon was the 60 mm mortar.

"I've got a strange sense of humor," says Korkow. "They'd hit me with the same thing I'd been hitting them with," he said.

SURVIVORS GUILT

He was a mess

They didn't use thread to hold me together, they used wire, I was blown apart so bad," Korkow said. "I had a doctor tell me at one point that I would never be able to walk again or be able to use my hands again, and I almost believed him."

But Korkow the skeptic didn't; he learned to walk again. Afterward, he returned to the States, to military honor, and to his young wife, Liz.

I met Liz when we were both 15. She was a cute 4-H girl showing calves and we were putting on a rodeo in Wahoo, Nebraska," says Ken Korkow - part of the family that's famous for Korkow Rodeo stock.

Ken Korkow liked what he saw in Liz and eventually asked her to marry him. But, he adds, it amounted to a bait-and-switch routine for Liz. She didn't get what she thought she was getting. That became abundantly clear after Vietnam, and it was only partly because of the war, Korkow said. Instead, Korkow said a lot of what made him a really lousy husband is an old, old idea that Christian thinkers called "sin."

I'm amazed that Liz stuck with me through 10 years of hell," he said. "If there's been a way to make a mistake, I've pretty much done it."

Gradually, Korkow realized that part of what he was dealing with after Vietnam was survivor's guilt. Men have been programmed to lay down their lives in battle from ancient times - they're prepared for that, Korkow said. But nothing has prepared them for surviving the battle where their buddies were killed. And nothing had prepared him for an abrupt change back to civilian life where skills such as dropping a mortar shell just where you want it were no longer in demand.

Korkow returned to the States to earn a bachelor's degree in ag economics and a master's in business administration, then worked with the South Dakota Industrial Development and Expansion Agency. Afterward he began selling farm and ranch property - the only thing besides operating a mortar that he was ever any good at, he says now.

He's a former member of Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association; former president of the Central South Dakota Board of Realtors, and a former president of the North and South Dakota

Farm and Land Institute.

Yet despite the success, something was missing. That's why at age 30, Korkow said, he gave his life to Christ.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Korkow went to work full time for the Christian Business Men's Committee USA in early 1984. He is currently regional director of CBMC Heartland, serving Nebraska, Iowa, and South Dakota. He lives in Omaha.

He and Liz have three children, daughters Cory and Kacy and son, Adam who serves as a pilot in the Marine Corps

In a strange way, Korkow says, the experience in Vietnam - temporary and terrible and unnatural as it was - was good preparation for the Christian life. Most Christians don't understand that they are at war. Korkow does.

In fact Ken Korkow, the Vietnam veteran, begins each day preparing for battle, and says American Christians are woefully unprepared for something he calls "spiritual warfare." Like the apostle Paul and the early Church, or figures in church history such as Martin Luther, Korkow is convinced not only that God is real, but also that the devil is real.

He begins each day by praying God's protection over friends and family for friends and family. He prays for Jesus Christ's purposes to be fulfilled in their lives.

It's the equivalent, Korkow says, of doing what Paul describes in his letter to the Ephesians - putting on the armor of God

The ranch in the Medicine Creek valley, just east of Pierre and south of Blunt, is still vitally important for Korkow.

This is where the wheels fell off of Grandpa's

Wagon, so this is home, "says.

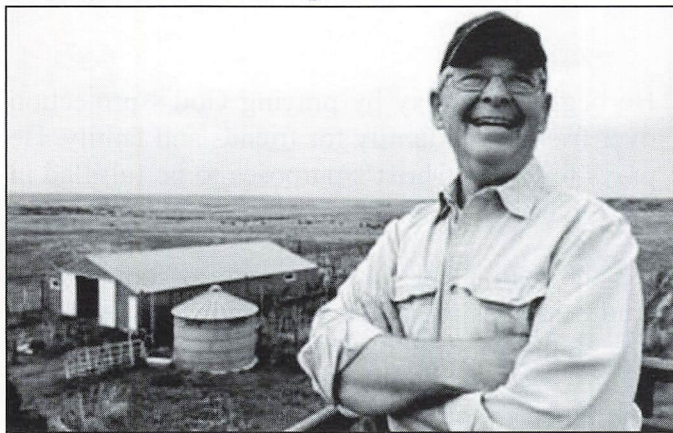
It's also where Korkow now holds Christian retreats. In conversation he emphasizes prayer, Bible reading and - for men - being accountable to a band of brothers. Christians don't understand that as well as soldiers do, Korkow says.

Korkow still has close ties to Community Bible Church in Pierre, a church he helped to found. Community Bible Pastor Harvey Friez said Korkow's faith is deep and real.

Ken still struggles with issues, especially some from what he experienced in Vietnam," Friez said. "He's taken that experience to try to implement a whole program for others coming back from battlefield situations that the military can use to help those soldiers. A lot of it is faith-based, and that's where Ken's heart is."

Korkow said in his experience, God doesn't waste pain - no matter what the pain is.

I thought combat was the ultimate adventure - but now I know there's nothing more exciting than knowing Christ more intimately and living Him more intentionally," said Korkow. "All of life's past pains and experiences are simply His preparation so we might have a better life now and a greater eternal impact."



Vietnam veteran, Ken Korkow, now hosts Christian retreats at his ranch in the Medicine Creek valley, just east of Pierre and south of Blunt.

A PURPLE HEART STORY

By Joe Oliver

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DAY MAKES!

Reprinted From MOPH, July/August 2012

ROGER MICHAEL HURD and I grew up in the working class neighborhood of East Cambridge. MA I met Roger in the first grade- at Sacred Heart Grammar School and we were friends from day one.

Growing up- in East Cambridge was a good thing. It was made up of second generation Italian, Polish, Irish and Portuguese. Everyone was Catholic: in fact, while growing up I thought everyone in the world was Catholic. This impression was fostered by the sisters of Saint Joseph.

If you were Polish you went to the Polish School and the Polish Church; If Portuguese, you would go to the Portuguese school & Church, and so forth. Everyone that is, except us Italians; we all went to Sacred Heart, the Irish School.

So there I was, an Italian going to Sacred Heart Grammar School and their Irish Church. I wish I had a dollar for every time the nuns forced me to sing, "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling."

Growing up in the 50's was great; everyone got along. All of our parents worked, and I knew of no one who was divorced. The only exception to this was my friend Roger. His mother had been divorced several times. He had three sisters and every one of them had a different last name. Also, his mother dated. These were all very strange happenings back then.

Roger and I, as well as my other friends, hung around together all through grammar and high school. In East Cambridge everyone was assigned a street corner to hang out on. I am not sure how this process worked, but my little group of friends from Sacred Heart all ended up on the same corner. Maybe the nuns had something to do with it.? Maybe not.

Growing up in the so-called inner city we shared a lot of firsts. “ we smoked our first cigarettes together, stole our first car together and drank our first beer together. We also received communion and confirmation together.

My birthday is the 15th of November and Roger’s the 16th. If I was 100 pounds, Roger was 80. When I was 130 pounds Roger was 100. When I was five feet tall Roger was four feet. All during this time we had this little saying between us: “what a difference a day makes.”

In 1965 our lives changed forever. My friend Mike Lopez and I joined the Marine Corps. We all wanted to see the world and get out of East Cambridge.

A month after I left for Parris Island, Roger also joined the Marines.

The last time I was with Roger was 1966, when we were both home on leave. I was a Lance Corporal and Roger was a PFC. Again we had our little saying, “ What a difference a day makes.”

Lance Corporal Roger Hurd was killed in action at Khe Sanh, Vietnam during the “Hill Fights” of 1967. None of us knew how Roger was killed, only the date and location. Trying to make contact with his family was impossible; his mother had remarried and we could not track down his sisters.

Several years ago I was reading a magazine article from one of the two Marine Groups I belong to. I came across the following story in the Khe Sanh Veterans magazine, *Red Clay*.

The story was written just before Memorial Day by a fellow Marine that served with Roger, someone I have never met. John Kaheny. I thought I would share this with those who did not read it. The value of the story is the same. No matter what day it is , I want to make sure that Roger is never forgotten,.

What a difference a day makes!

HERE IS THE ARTICLE

A MARINE REMEMBERS ON MEMORIAL DAY

By John Kaheny

For most of us it is a sure sign of impending summer and it is filled with parades, picnics and beach parties. Children, enjoying the day with their friends, may occasionally ask why a tear forms in their father’s eye at the sound of taps or the sight of Old Glory waving in the wind.

It is difficult for the young to truly grasp why we set aside this day to honor those gallant veterans who fell at Lexington and beyond, defending our freedom and protecting our lives. So far they have been spared the terrors of the night and the arrows that fall by day.

Not so for the aging warrior whose memory on this cared day leaps time and space to find a grassy knoll four miles from Laos on another day in May of 1967.

Marines and corpsman on patrol 43 strong, are just five miles from the safety of Khe Sanh combat base. To the North, they are the last free men between Hill 881S and North Vietnam. Suddenly, the Cat of Death jumps from a tree line on the exposed flank of the platoon. Two young riflemen, each but 19 years old, shun available cover, stand up, stand fast and fire into the charging horde. Taking the full force of the enemy’s assault, they purchase with their blood a precious gift of reaction time for their fellow Marines and corpsman. Helmets fade slowing into chest high grass and soon disappear from view.

Eventually 41 make it back to safety, some bleeding, none broken, but two go home to rest forever beneath marble crosses. Their names, Private First Class Thomas Edward Hendershott and Lance Corporal Roger Michael Hurd, Are now etched in stone beneath Lincoln’s watchful eye.

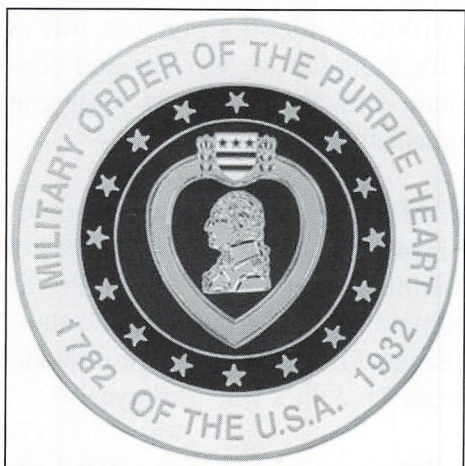
The years have passed but every day I see their

sacrifice reflected in the smiling faces of my children and grandchildren. For had not these two brave men held their ground with everything they had, Coleen, Meghan, John Peter, Olivia, Clara and Lauren simply would not be, because one of those they saved that day was me. Now you know why taps brings it all back and makes me think of those young heroes and where they are today and why I know, all too well, the meaning of that World War II epitaph:

*And when he gets to heaven
To Saint Peter he will tell
"One more Marine reporting, Sir
I've served my time in Hell"*

Joe Oliver lives in Central Florida with his wife of 43 years, Joane. They have two sons and four grandchildren. Joe is a former Marine Combat Wounded Vietnam Veteran and a Lifetime member of the Military Order of the Purple Heart. He is also a Life Member of the Khe Sanh Veterans, serving with HMM-163, S-2 Chief.

John Kaheny lives in San Diego, CA., with his wife of 41 years. They have three children and three grandchildren. John is a retired municipal lawyer and a retired Marine Corps Reserve colonel with service in Vietnam and Desert Storm. John is a Life Member of the Khe Sanh Veterans serving with HQ CO 1/26 S-3.



OBITS

CHUCK HARVELL, USMC KHE SANH VETERAN B BTRY 1/13

"Chuck Harvell passed away July 9, 2012. A memorial service was held at 3PM, Sun., July 22nd. at Rocky Creek Baptist Church, Greenville, SC. My heart is heavy today. I was thinking I needed to call Chuck. I called and did not get an answer. My heart kept telling me to get in touch with Chuck. That still, small inner voice told to go on-line to the Greenville News. There I found his obituary.

I GET MAIL

Tom;

I just received the Summer 2012 issue of Red Clay. Thanks for another great issue and continuing record of the valiant defense of Khe Sanh.

I was pleased to see that the Newsweek issue, March 18, 1968 was reproduced in Red Clay and that the members were able to see how challenging the siege was for all who were there. I have digital copies of the pages if you ever need.

It was I who sent the issue to you. At the time of the siege, I was at The Basic School and along with my classmates, closely watching the evening news and the siege of Khe Sanh. Many of us knew that we were on our way to Vietnam shortly.

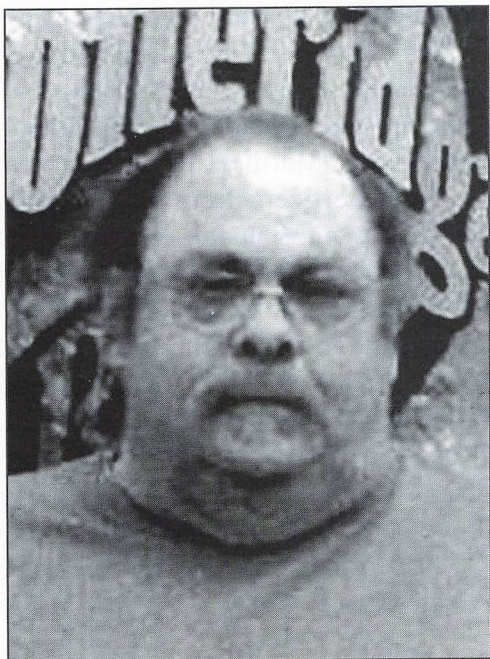
I joined Fox, 2/26 in October as a Platoon Commander and had the honor of serving with many of the men in Fox Company that had endured the siege and subsequent I Corps battles, including LZ Margo. Captain Stan Hartman was Fox CO and Tim Sabo, XQ.

Thanks For A Great Issue.

Terrence D. Arndt
Fox CO 2/26

OBIT**ROBERT C. PAINTER USMC
KHE SANH VETERAN
B CO 3RD RECON**

Robert "Wolf" Painter, born May 25, 1947, passed away October 1, 2012. He was a loving father, grandfather and brother. Robert was a hunter and fisherman at heart. He had a huge heart and strong resolve. He loved his home and family in Spirit Lake. Robert joined the Marines in 1966. He was in the 3rd Marine Division, serving his country in Vietnam. He earned many medals, including the Presidential Citation and the Purple Heart.



Although Robert may have left Vietnam, it never left him. He was first and foremost a Marine, never forgetting the brothers he had to leave behind. He was proud to serve his country. Robert is survived by his wife, Lisa Painter, brother Mike (Sunshine) Vargas, sons; Michael Gallup (and wife Jamic), Curtis Gallup, and Aries Painter, daughter, Panda Ramsdell. He is also survived by grandchildren; Samantha, Dimitri, Katana, Triniti, & Hailey Gallup, and Athena and Christina Ramsdell and many more adopted children and grandchildren

who will greatly miss him. Semper Fi Marine, You Will Never Be Forgotten. Military Honors and Memorial were held at the Spirit Lake Boat Dock on Saturday, Oct 20, 2012.

EVEN IN HURRICANE WINDS**THIS SAYS IT ALL!****GOD BLESS THE UNITED
STATES
MILITARY**

SWOOPING FOR THE LIEUTENANT

By Dennis Mannion
KILO CO 3/26 F/O

It's two in the morning when I give my wife a gentle touch on the shoulder, ease out of bed and quietly head for the dark staircase. There is no need to wake Joan as she and I have said our goodbyes hours ago. I have always been able to wake from sound sleep and be in my car and on the road in a relatively short period of time and this early morning departure in October 2010 is no exception.

I dress quickly in the kitchen -- shorts, a sweat-shirt, and flip-flops are easy -- small suitcase and travel items already in the car. Reaching into the frig for a small cooler with Arizona ice teas, I think about my Khe Sanh buddy Nick Romanetz and what he casually mentioned to me at the San Antonio reunion back in July. If it were not for his words then, I'd be sleeping now instead of easing my car down the driveway and aiming the headlights south toward Washington, D.C. Yet I'm not upset in the least; quite the contrary, I am elated to be "On the Swoop" while most of Connecticut dreams the night away. I'm about to begin a 24 hour, 600 mile, round trip drive to pay my respects to a Khe Sanh Marine killed on 15 April 68 in the shadow of Hill 881N.

Like many drivers in this day and age, I have a GPS unit, but there is no need to power it up on this trip because I've driven to D.C. countless times, and other than traffic concerns it is no more complicated than the short, daily commute I used to make during my thirty-year teaching career. It's the Merritt Parkway into New York State ... the Cross County and Henry Hudson parkways to the George Washington Bridge ... cross the Hudson New Jersey Turnpike south to the Delaware Memorial Bridge ... cross the Delaware ... I-95 toward the Baltimore tunnels ... and on down to the capital. Simple really, especially in moderate to light traffic. With luck and a single pit-stop for fuel and the bathroom, I

most certainly will be there by mid-morning. The electronic car device that I do use constantly in the car is my XM satellite radio -- a Christmas gift from Joan. I first plugged it in a decade ago and I have not listened to an AM or FM radio station since. For me it's the commercial-free music from the 50's and the 60's that takes me back in time and allows the miles to ease by whether it's a long trip or running errands around town. Most of my adult life I had steadfastly believed that "my music" had its origins in the 60's, but once I began using my XM I came to understand that my music is more closely linked to the late 50's and the 60's.

I'm at the wheel early on this chilly Saturday and using the remote to alternate between songs from the 50's and 60's because Nick happened to mention that his Basic School Class -- BOC 5-67 -- was going to dedicate a plaque on the grounds of the Museum of the Marine Corps to remember and honor all the officers from BOC-5-67 who had lost their lives in Vietnam. My instant reaction was to ask if Lt. Steve Fordham had been in that class. Nick did not recognize the name, but he said he'd put me in touch with those who were organizing the event. Three emails exchanges later I learned that Lt. Fordham had been in that class, and as I stared at the information on my computer screen from Mike Sommers, I knew immediately where I'd be on that third Saturday in October. I had to make this swoop for Lt. Fordham; I just had to.

For the uninitiated, *swooping* was the term used by Marines who rocketed out of Camp Lejeune every Friday for destinations all over the east coast. It may have been called that by Marines on other bases as well, but my personal swoop meant Jacksonville, NC to Hamden, CT. Not a 4 day, 96-hour pass, swooping was a 60 hour, boomerang-weekend -- depart Friday afternoon when work secured, drive hundreds and hundreds of extremely fast miles to destinations like Boston, Buffalo, Miami, Cleveland, even Chicago, and return to Lejeune in time for Monday morning formation!

In late 1968 and most of 1969 my swoop meant 654 miles -- one way -- from the main gate to my parents' house. Gas was plentiful and cheap; roadways were not all that crowded; local and State police were the biggest threat -- although the red Lejeune sticker on the front bumper often helped, particularly in New Jersey and New York. I had a '68 Camaro then with just about every option Chevrolet offered and it easily handled all those weekend miles. The radio was the basic, 6-button, AM unit, and it became second nature to reach out and punch up a new station whenever a song concluded and the station went to a commercial or to a song I didn't like.

Swooping was always a two-act drama set against a backdrop of speed, miles, roads, and the clock. The first act was always up-tempo, lighthearted and giddy because seeing the main gate in the rear-view mirror late on a Friday meant a free weekend with absolutely no obligation to Uncle Sam's Misguided Children until Monday. Swoops generally began in the late afternoon when a continuous line of "muscle" and "pony" cars -- GTO's, Torino's, 442's, Charger RT's, Firebirds, Cougars and the like -- slowly eased down the long access road to the main gate. Starting in daylight was crucial since the first 110 miles were narrow, back country roads until Rocky Mount, NC and the limited access highways of 301 and I-95. On the radio it might be *Love is All Around* by the Troggs and then *The Boxer* by Simon and Garfunkel. A good start.

Sunset usually around Richmond, VA and the gradual change to night seemed to alter the mood somewhat...somber and more inner-reflective. *Green River* by CCR...that'll do. Topics of conversation -- cars, girls, sports, officers and senior NCO's -- discussed and discussed again until there was little left to say. The only reality now: 400 miles. With conversation eased and mostly empty I-95 out in front, it was pure speed and non-stop music that propelled us north. The Stones and *Honky Tonk Woman* followed immediately by the O'Kaysions and *Girl Watcher*...what a song! Three or four Marines somewhere in

Maryland going 80 miles per hour and singing the words at the top of their lungs. *Spooky* performed by the Classics IV. Hearing that one was guaranteed to generate multiple discussions about Spooky in Nam and memories of that continuous line of red from the plane to the ground. The rest of the swoop tended to be even quieter as sleep overtook the passengers and now just cities, landmarks, and the last rest-stop of the New Jersey Turnpike as proof that you were getting close to home. *A Beautiful Morning* by the Rascals...the volume turned down. *The Poor Side of Town* from late 1966. Wow! Johnny Rivers' voice coming out the speakers and me hearing him sing that same song on my way to sign the enlistment papers in October 1966. *How is it possible that it's only been three years when so much has happened since?*

Depending on weather, traffic, speed traps, and passenger drop-offs, arrival time was generally around 4 in the morning. A few hours of sleep and then the freedom to do as little or as much as you wanted through all of Saturday and Saturday night. Sunday mornings were relaxed as well but always with an eye on the clock and the early afternoon departure and Act Two.

Returning always seemed to be heavier emotionally and more like performing a distasteful chore that had to be completed like it or not. The music always helped. *Kind of a Drag* by the Buckinghams sums it up for the driver and the passengers. Every southbound mile meant closer to the Lejeune and the iron reality where our choices and our decisions weren't entirely our own. Still there was some happiness in the return as our weekends got re-lived, compared, and savored. The DJ says, "And now, with one of 1968's big hits we have Bobby Goldsboro and *Hon...* Not a chance we listen to that one. The last 110 miles and the ungodly hour of the morning make that final stretch the toughest of the entire swoop. In those pre-dawn hours the 2-lane country roads are deserted but danger still lurks beyond the high beam's range and you never know. Utmost care is needed because fatigue is at its greatest. Approaching the

main gate and the ever vigilant MP's, the only realities are how much prep time do I have before morning formation and the fact that Friday can't get here soon enough.

My 2010 mini-swoop for Lt. Fordham was not an exact mirror image of those late '60's swoops, but the roadways and the landmarks were for the most part identical. Thanks to the XM radio, the songs emanating from the multiple speakers were exactly the same and help to transport me back to the last three years of the 1960's. I arrived in D.C. at mid-morning and met up with Marines who knew Lt. Fordham personally. Later on that Saturday we drove the 50 miles south to Quantico and the museum. Nowadays in D.C. those 50 miles can take over two hours despite 4 to 6 lanes of highway in each direction! There was an emotional, outdoor dedication ceremony followed by dinner in the expansive museum lobby. At both events I had the honor and the pleasure of sitting next to Barry Kowlaski -- Lt. Fordham's roommate during Basic School. The stories and the memories we exchanged were emotional, sometimes painful, and helpful. I got to learn a lot about Lt. Fordham as he was in that summer of 1967, and I was able to convey to Barry what a terrific officer Lt. Fordham turned out to be even in the most harrowing of times on 861, 881s, and 881n.

I would have gone anywhere for a dedication ceremony that included Lt. Fordham, but having the ceremony at Quantico seemed most appropriate to me. In the dozens of swoops four decades before, I'd zoom by the huge exit signs on Interstate 95 that proclaimed Marine Corps Base Quantico.

Back then it hurt to see those signs week after week and know that Lt. Fordham would have seen them as well during his officer training months. Getting through that 10 mile stretch of interstate in Virginia was never easy for me no matter the mood in the car or the song on the radio. Whether northbound on Fridays or southbound on Sundays, it was always nighttime,

and thankfully, the darkness hid the inevitable melancholy expression on my face and the occasional tear in my eye.

Safe swoop, Lt. Fordham. You're always missed and never forgotten.

Semper Fi. Dennis

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER 2012

HAPPY CARDS

By Chaplain Ron Rayner

Congratulations to the reunion committee for a successful gathering in Washington D. C.

Everyone that attended the Saturday night banquet at this year's reunion had a *Happy Card* tucked into their napkin in front of them. This card had an "Eternally Bonded" Khe Sanh Veterans logo printed on it. What made it a *Happy Card* was the fact that most everyone I saw at the reunion was smiling and having a good time. Hopefully, when the attendees see their *Happy Cards* in their wallets or purses, they will smile.

The purpose of a *Happy Card* is to pull it out of your wallet or purse and reference it when you are feeling down and your thoughts are headed in the wrong direction. A *Happy Card* could also be called a *Thought Direction Card*, *Thought Stopping Card*, *Good Memory Card*, or a *Feel Good Card*. Everyone needs to be cheered up every once in a while. People who suffer from Post-Traumatic-Stress-Disorder or just plain depression tend to isolate themselves from others with their thoughts sometimes going out of control. A readily available *Happy Card* can help fill their need to stop bad thoughts and change the direction of their thinking. A *Happy Card* can be made happier by writing the best memories of your life on it. Any thought that can bring a smile to your face can be written there. If you have a hard time thinking up something to put on your *Happy Card* try getting with your spouse or a friend and work on it together. If you have lost a spouse or good friend, review photographs or other objects that

will revive good memories and put a smile on your face. Remember that your lost spouse or friend would wish you a long and happy life.

Khe Sanh Vet Larkin Spivey, in his book, *Stories of Faith and Courage from the Vietnam War*, has a series of POW devotionals for September. September 19th's devotion concerns a POW counting his blessings while being held prisoner. I believe we all are much better off than the POWs of the Vietnam War. Whether or not you received a KSV *Happy Card*, please count your blessings and write them down to help you keep your thoughts headed in the right direction.

Dear God, when we go through wintry days, please help us to see your many blessings so that we feel the warmth of your love. Thank you that everything in our lives can be turned to your purposes and our good. Please help us to cling to your faithfulness. Amen.

KHE SANH VETERANS MEET AGAIN HONORING THEIR HEROIC CORPSMAN

LAUREN COUNTY
Daniel J. Lauer Staff Writer

As 22 Laurens County veterans were inducted into the Hall of Heroes Saturday afternoon, one inductee was thinking about his upcoming retirement. U.S. Navy Commander John Lancaster Jr., a Vietnam veteran who has led the Navy IROTC program at Laurens District 55 High School for the past 18 years, will spend his last day on the job this coming Friday. I get a lot of satisfaction from this job," Lancaster said. "But I am ready to go."

During his 18 years as the naval science instructor at LDHS, Lancaster has seen the program grow from an average of 130 or 150 kids to well over 200 in recent years. This year, enrollment is

up to 240 students.

"My main goal here is to show kids that there is more to the world than just Lauren," he said. "There are big adventures out there if they are willing to go for it."

Lancaster had his own share of adventures through the years, stories he told to his students. He was a Combat Navy Corpsman during the Vietnam War, serving as a medic for the Marines. The Marines do not have medical personnel, chaplain, doctor or dentists; those roles are filled by Navy personnel wearing the Marine uniform.

"The Navy Corpsmen actually had a much higher casualty rate, because when a Marine got hit, that Corpsman is going to get that Marine,"

Lancaster explained. "That is where lead is flying. For that year of my life, I was on the front lines."

Lancaster said too many lives were lost, names he recognizes every time he visits the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC.



REUNION OF FRIENDS- L-R
Larry McCartney, Commander Lancaster and
Jose Luis Reyes Jr., known as "Cisco."

"They are grouped by date, so in some places, I know everyone of them. I knew too many of those names."

Lancaster was instrumental, however, in saving many lives. During Saturday's Hall of Heroes ceremony he was surprised by two marines he help treat in Vietnam. Vietnam. Jose Luis "Cisco" Reyes Jr. choked up as he credited Lancaster with saving his life, allowing him to return home, get married and have a family. He was brought to Lancaster by another friend, Lawrence E. McCartney, for treatment. That was the last time Reyes had seen Lancaster until Saturday.

As Lancaster prepares to retire, he is proud of the program he has helped build at LDHS, and is confident it is in good hands with new Commander T.J. Linardi.

"I don't have a long bucket list," Lancaster said. "I can look myself in the mirror and know that I did the best I possibly could."

Now Lancaster joins numerous other Laurens County veterans in the Hall of Heroes.

"It was a very special evening," he said. "And stressful too. I guarantee all those memories (from deployment) were flowing."



RAY'S CORNER

Dear Tom,

I'm attaching an article that appeared in the Wall Street Journal about the Marine Corps mascot bulldog at the Commandant's home on 8th and I who stood his ground when the dog of the Secretary of Defense met him. The wives of the senior officers were shaken. In the 19th Century, it would be said that "they swooned." The Commandant, however, was impressed and promoted the dog to Sergeant! It's a rather humorous story which I assume you'll find amusing.

I have a couple of unusual things that have happened to me recently. Soon after my birthday, I had an appointment with the eye doctor at the VA. (One of the reasons, along with my anxiety at crowds, especially at airports, but also, I'm sure, that were in DC, for not attending this year's reunion. In past visits to the VA eye doctor, I was told that I had cataracts as well as a hole in my retina, and that nothing could be done to improve my somewhat blurred vision-the reason I don't drive outside the local area, in unfamiliar places. I really dreaded the appointment, not being sure of transportation to and from the hospital. (A local Vietnam vet friend and a neighbor did say they would take me, but it would be an Imposition). Well, I went and the doctor said my cataracts aren't all that bad, that the retina has not deteriorated further, and that now I could be given a prescription for new glasses which would enable me to see better!). Obviously, I was very greatly relieved.

Then, about the same time, I was walking along that dirt bike trail along the river near my home. We once walked that several years ago. As I walked, I suddenly saw a young man in camouflaged clothing and with a rifle! He was slowly crouching down in some bushes. There were some others along the trail, not in the immediate area, but I was concerned about someone with a rifle-

and, obviously, although I was completely aware of where I was and the situation, I still had feelings as though I were back in the Nam! Seeing a young man, in camouflaged uniform with a rifle did that! It's interesting what I did, as I now think back on it. Instead of running away, I instead slowly walked up to him! In a very non-threatening, mild tone of voice, I said, "What are you doing?" (Obviously, if we were crazy or meant to do harm, I would have been shot dead!) He replied that he was part of a group of five others that were "playing war." I asked him if he were a veteran. No. I asked him how old he was. 23. I thought "he's too old to be playing war!" He then continued that they all shot bio-degradable pellets. I then walked away.

On the Labor Day weekend, I was enjoying a get-together with my neighbors. They all know me very, very well. We've been neighbors for some 20 or more years. I related this story and then unfortunately!-said, "I felt like saying to the man (recalling my training with the Seals), "How quickly do you want to die? And how painfully?" Immediately, there was complete silence, an uncomfortable pause in the conversation. Perhaps they thought: he's really crazy. We shouldn't let our children near him. And things like that. I guess there are still some things that so dramatically affect our lives today even after over 40 years!

The night before my birthday (which fell on a Wednesday), I was, as usual, working out at the boxing gym. On this particular night, one of the trainers had some focus pads and I was throwing jabs, crosses, hooks, upper cuts as he moved the pads. Eventually, his back was against the ropes. The ring is larger than normal. Suddenly, he stopped. I turned around" and the ring was completely filled with at least 30 young men, mainly teenagers, and they immediately started to sing "Happy Birthday!"

I might add that a couple of Khe Sanh vets sent me Happy Birthday cards which made me feel very good. Like that singing of the young boxers,

I was aware I have connections with those who care, a family. Some of these Khe Sanh vets haven't sent me cards in the past, and one I didn't even know. Realizing that I probably won't have many (if any) more birthdays to celebrate, cards obviously have taken on great significance for me. Some others called. A couple called from the reunion, and one, Chick Kelly (the chaplain who relieved me at Khe Sanh) wrote me. I was told that one of the recon Marines claims that I accompanied one of their patrols, despite my denials. But, I really didn't go out with recon. I tried to after being with them after one of their Marines drowned in the river just to the north of the base, but was denied. (In fact, I spent so much time with them because of their losses, that my own CO, Lt Col James B. Wilkinson of 1/26, called me in and said, "I will remind you, Chaplain, that you are the 1/26 Chaplain, not the recon chaplain!" I suspect that many "stories" circulate about me-and about others as well!-that really aren't true, but somehow have become part of the "legends!" Well, I write too much. Take care, good friend. Semper Fidelis,

Ray

**WASHINGTON-
TONGUES ARE WAGGING AFTER
CHESTY'S MARINE CORP PROMOTION**
After snub of Pentagon's Top Dog

The Marines won't say it out loud, but everyone knows that Cpl. Chesty got promoted to sergeant this summer not for being a good Marine, but for his in-your-muzzle confrontation with the top dog in the Pentagon.

Just two weeks before his promotion, the Marine Corps mascot, an English bulldog formally known as Chesty XIII, had a run-in with Bravo, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta's golden retriever. Chesty, usually known for happily mugging or photos with kids, revealed his inner grunt when he spotted the larger dog at the conclusion of a pomp-filled military parade held in honor of the Pentagon chief. Chesty growled, barked and ignored his

choke-chain of command as he went nose to-nose with Bravo.

As Chesty's growl erupted into an angry bark, an



SERGEANT "CHESTY" XIII

officer urgently whispered in the ear of his handler, Sgt. Chris Harris: "Keep the leash tight."



Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and His Golden Retriever "Bravo" Run in with "Chesty XIII"

That kind of breach of decorum at the headquarters barracks, where the top generals and their

wives reside, could have been career-ending for most Marines.

Chesty weathered the controversy and came out of it with a new stripe on his uniform. Privately, some wives of senior Marine officers, more focused on politeness than doggedness, let it be known they didn't approve of the promotion. A whispering campaign against Chesty reached the ears of Col. Paul Montanus, barracks commander. Some said Chesty was getting too fat. Some senior wives wanted Chesty relieved of duty in favor of a more pliable bulldog private serving in another unit. .

Other senior Marines worried about the message promoting Chesty might send. In military chain of command, Bravo is second only to Bo Obama, the president's hypoallergenic Portuguese water dog. The Constitution puts the military under civilian control, and some senior officers thought promoting Chesty might appear insubordinate.

"The standards in the barracks had lowered," said one senior Marine officer. "The dog didn't really deserve it."

Col. Montanus, who had the dog's fate in his hands, acknowledges that Chesty was wrong to shove his short snout in Bravo's face. "There absolutely was a protocol break," he said. "We don't bark at guests, whether they are human or the canine variety."

But, the colonel said, much of the opposition was baseless. A barracks spokesman says senior Marine wives love and support the current Chesty. And at 54 pounds, Chesty fits nicely in the dress blues he was issued as a younger dog, thanks to being served half the daily kibble ration of his chunky predecessors.

Nevertheless, in a speech at Chesty's June promotion ceremony, Col. Montanus acknowledged the decision was "touch and go."

"There are some Marines that are destined to be

sergeant:' he said. "Then there are some whose conduct is ... questionable. Chesty is one of those Marines."

Col. Montanus said he had considered formally punishing Chesty for "disrespect to a superior commissioned dog." It is true that "Chesty made threatening gestures:' he said.

"But we decided the body of work for Chesty was enough he rated becoming a sergeant."

Left unspoken: The very act that made Chesty's promotion controversial also made it more likely. Immediately after the parade in honor of Mr. Panetta it became clear that going muzzle-muzzle with the 75-pound golden retriever was going to enhance Chesty's reputation in the ranks.

While Mr. Panetta was present, the top Marines displayed embarrassed grins and laughed nervously. But after the boss left, the high-fives and atta-boys broke out. Far from being denied his traditional post-parade Milk Bone, the bulldog found himself the object of warrior admiration. Even Gen. James Amos, the Marine commandant, approached Chesty and said, "Good job."

There is a reason the Corps has a bulldog for a mascot and that he is named after the famously gutsy Marine Lt. Gen. Lewis "Chesty" Puller. Even within a service that values discipline, there is a certain mystique about a Marine who's willing to poke a paw in the eye of power-particularly in defense of the homeland, or kennel.

Col. Montanus's successor as barracks commander, Col. Christian Cabaniss, made plain the current Chesty had only grown in his estimation.

"Chesty embodies Gen. [James] Mattis's saying about the Marines: 'No better friend, no worse enemy,'" Col. Cabaniss said. "Chesty's great. He is great with kids. Bu if you are impolite to him, if you are wrong, that is when he will defend himself."

Like Chesty, Gen. Mattis has risen through the ranks despite the occasional public display of machismo-comments such as "Be polite, be professional, but have a plan to kill everybody you meet"-that has raised eyebrows with civilians.

Gen. Mattis, who oversees operations in the Middle East and Afghanistan, said he considers Chesty a "kindred soul."

"He's a fine Marine dog," the general said. "Loyal, hard working and full of fun-while looking mean as all get-out."

Col. Montanus strenuously denies that the confrontation with Bravo helped Chesty's promotion. A well-trained Marine, he said, should be able to recognize a superior.

"I would say Chesty needs some threat-identification classes," he said. "I understand 'No better friend, no worse enemy: But generally we are talking about our enemies, not our superior officers."

Col. Montanus calls the clash with Bravo a minor infraction. Chesty, the colonel says, excels at his main responsibility: Accepting hugs from children with enthusiasm and without biting.

As for Bravo's master, there seem to be no hard feelings. "Chesty may bark a lot," Mr. Panetta said. "But he understands the chain of command:'

In an interview on a hot evening, Chesty was friendly and panted constantly. Although he didn't answer questions about Bravo, he did jump on a reporter's leg.



RAY, JUST DOING HIS THING

With music and narration, members of the 1st Brigade Band, a Civil War brass band, tell the history of the American flag at a Flag Day celebration at the Marcus Center's Peck Pavilion in Milwaukee. Ray Stubbe, a retired Navy chaplain who served with the Marines in Vietnam, shares a laugh with fellow veterans before the ceremony. Stubbe delivered the invocation.



UPDATE ON RAY HE WRITES:

Dear Tom,

Our college class of 1962 has gathered at St. Olaf College this week, and one of my classmates just sent me a copy of the sermon he will be giving tomorrow at the chapel. The preacher is Rev. Dr. David L. Tiede. I didn't really know him well while we were together at college and I don't even recall talking with him. He eventually became the President of our large Lutheran seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, which has several hundred students, and he called me a few weeks ago, encouraging me to attend. I told him that due to my problem with travel and especially with large crowds, that I wouldn't be able to attend, even though one of my "shrinks" at the local VA told me several years ago that I "must return to St. Olaf since it had such a positive influence on me."

Anyway, I sent Dave a copy of Pebbles and I guess he was impressed by some of what was in it, and the last page of the attached sermon mentions part of it. Interestingly, YOUR words that appeared on the back cover ("Lord give me the strength to watch over these brave men") are quoted! Tom, you had an amazing insight into my thought, feelings, and could capture in a few words the essence of everything that I was living at the time!

Of perhaps some interest is that I was as unable to attend this very significant college reunion (our 50th) just as I'm not attending our Khe Sanh reunion, nor going to the annual boxing tournament at Kansas City nor attended my high school reunion. It's all due to my nervous anxiety over crowds and travel outside the city-and even knowing what's going on doesn't seem to give me a handle on controlling it!

Anyway, I thought you'd be interested in that last page. You are such a good friend that you have a way of looking right into the depths of my soul! Your hand in getting that book printed obviously makes my gratitude to you very profound!

By the way, my legs seem to be fairly fully recovered. I don't have aches unless I walk more than two miles. Running is still out, but perhaps that may be possible in the future. I still go to the boxing gym and sparred on two different days last week, three three-minute rounds. The VA has had me on an antibiotic for about a month due to a blood infection, but physically, I'm doing quite well-for a man who will be 74 in August. I guess you are also 72. We are both able to look at the rest of our Khe Sanh vets and regard them as "young pups!" (even if they are in their mid or late 60s!)

Take Care, Tom
Semper Fi,

The Last Page Which Ray Refers To:

Our classmate, Chaplain Ray Stubbe could not attend because of his Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. But we had a wonderful phone conversation, and he sent his book, *Pebbles in My Boots*. It is a stunning collection of letters, sermons, prayers, and poems of a chaplain in intense, prolonged combat, particularly when besieged for two months at Khe Sahn, Vietnam.

His stationery has a cryptic Greek quotation from St. Gregory of Nazianzen.

Ray picked this out of his reading of Gregory, in Greek, while on a troop transport. The gist of the quote is, "What is not taken up, is not healed." This was Gregory's witness against those who said Jesus was not fully human. If Christ didn't take up our mortal life, we could not be healed.

For Chaplain Stubbe in the horror of war and carnage of death, it meant God has taken it all up, even the worst. God is always with us. "If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there" (Ps 139). "God is with us precisely on the cross, precisely in the midst of the horror of war, precisely with us in times when death looms ready to swallow us." (*Pebbles*, 226). Ray held worship as mortar fire rained slaughter, and he took soldiers in his

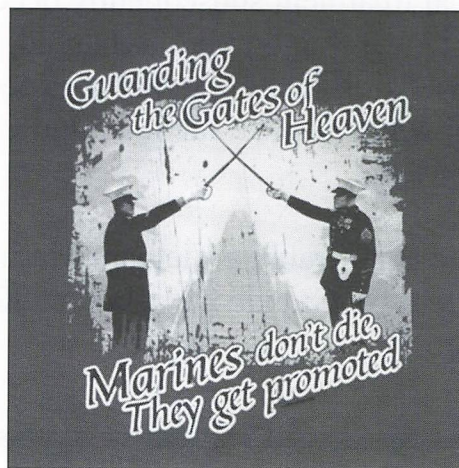
arms as they bled to death. His prayer continued to be, "Lord give me the strength to watch over these brave men."

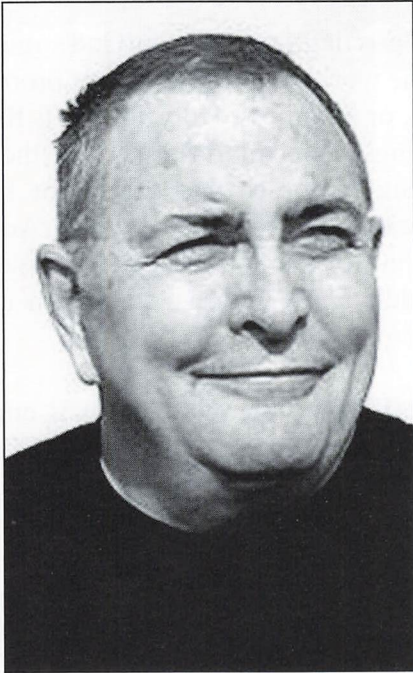
It is a wonderful privilege to be in on God's mission of love for the world, but God does not promise it will be easy, or bloodless. Holy Trinity is the story of God taking up our mortal lives that they may be healed and in order that we might be agents of this mission of healing in the world. And here we are together for reunion weekend. Classes from many decades, and God isn't done with us yet.

Come now to the Lord's table. God's love is embodied here in bread and wine. The Triune God has taken it all up, that you may be healed and the world may be healed, in part through your gifts and your struggles. Thanks be to God.



MARINES DO GUARD HEAVENS GATES



ROBERT M. CRABB, USMC KHE SANH VETERAN GOLF CO 2/26

IN HONOR OF ROBERT'S DEDICATION, GENEROSITY, AND COMMITMENT TO ENSURE THE KHE SANH VETERANS SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION CONTINUES, THE KHE SANH VETERANS HAVE NAMED THE KSV SCHOLARSHIP IN HIS HONOR.

IT SHALL NOW BE KNOWN AS:

**ROBERT M. CRABB SCHOLARSHIP
FOUNDATION**

On March 15, 2012, Marine Bob Crabb joined the honor roll of heroes who built the noble legacy of the United States Marine Corps reporting to his next duty station with our Supreme Commandant.

A Memorial Service for Marine Crabb was held on Friday, April 27, 2012. Robert M. Crabb was born December 21, 1947, in a small town located in southern Texas. On June 28, 1967, Bob enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and subsequently served with the 3rd Marine Division, 2nd Battalion, 26th Marines, Company G in Vietnam from 1967-1968. In 1969, Marine Crabb reported to Camp Pendleton for medical treatment subsequently becoming a rifle instructor until July 25, 1969, when he was honorably discharged. Bob Crabb earned the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnamese Service Medal w/1star, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal w/device, Presidential Unit Citation, Combat Action Ribbon, and the Purple Heart Medal.

Marine Bob Crabb, a Vietnam Marine veteran, is a life member of Marine Corps League Casa Grande Detachment 901, Arizona, and a Life Member of the Khe Sanh Veterans.

KHE SANH VETERANS CELEBRATE AT KOKOMO INDIANA, DURING THE ANNUAL VIETNAM VETERANS REUNION HELD IN HOWARD COUNTY, KOKOMO INDIANA, SEPTEMBER 13-16.

In 1981, local Vietnam veterans established the Howard County Vietnam Veterans Organization for the sole purpose of raising funds for a Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Howard County.

With a lot of support in Kokomo and Howard County, the funds were raised and the memorial was built on the Courthouse Square,. After that major undertaking was completed, the group's officers and members were on the hunt for their next project. Someone said half-jokingly, Let's have a hog roast for Vietnam veterans That was the beginning of the Vietnam veterans reunion now held each September on the Hearing Ground's, a 40-acre plot along Ind. 26, 8 miles east of U.S. 31.

Several of our members make the annual trip each year. While there they always manage to locate a few fellow veterans from Khe Sanh that were unaware of our organization. This year they signed up three more. Although it is called a Vietnam reunion, veterans from all previous wars are welcomed with open arms. I will be doing an article on the KOKOMO reunion in issue 82 of RED CLAY. There are a few pictures from this years reunion, on page 84



L-R Daniel Zrinski GOLF CO. 2/26, James Tavares, ALPHA CO. 1/9, Dennis Waler CBMU-301 DET B, Bill Moore 3RD ANTI TANKS (ONTOS), and KSV Secretary Jack Haigwood CBMU-301-DET B,

**MARINE OBSERVATION SQUADRON SIX MEMORIAL DEDICATION CEREMONY
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE MARINE CORPS
SEMPER FIDELIS MEMORIAL PARK TRIANGLE, VIRGINIA 17 MAY 2012**

**HISTORIC MARINE VMO-6 FLYING
UNIT GONE, NOT FORGOTTEN**

Marine Observation Squadron Six (VMO-6) can trace its origins back to the formation years of Marine Aviation. Active for slightly less than half of the century of Marine Corps aviation, the squadron served during the 1920s' Nicaragua Campaign, World War II, the Korean War, and finally through the 1960s in Vietnam. Thirty five years after it ceased operations, and in celebration of Marine Corps aviation's 100 anniversary, a monument to VMO-6 was dedicated in the Semper Fidelis Memorial Park at the National Marine Corps Museum, near Quantico, VA. It honors the 66 men from VMO-6 who died as a result of hostile actions during the four aforementioned conflicts. Not only was this ceremony a tribute to those who have given their lives for their country, but it was a reunion of many veterans who made VMO-6 more than just a page in a history book.

VMO-6's memorial service and monument dedication ceremony commenced on Thursday, May 17, 2012. A large group of Vietnam and Korean veterans, with many of their family and friends, joined several relatives of deceased squadron members at the National Marine Corps Museum. The first part of the ceremony was held inside the building, in its main atrium. Behind the speaker's podium was a Sikorsky HRS-1 helicopter, the type used in the Korean War. Nearby, a truly historic VMO-6 helicopter is displayed, the actual UH-1E helicopter that Captain Steve Pless flew when he earned the Medal of Honor hangs over the entrance to the museum's Vietnam gallery.

Retired Marine Colonel and VMO-6 helicopter pilot Larry Wright served as the Master of Ceremonies, with the local Marine Corps Base Quantico Color Guard and Marine Band supporting the program. Navy Chaplain Commander John Hannigan gave the opening invocation before Marine

Brigadier General Michael Rocco recounted some key moments in Marine aviation history and reminded those assembled that the reason for Marine Aviation is to support the troops on the ground. Then three former VMO-6 members, Larry Wright, Dave Bushlow and Red Trivette read the names of the sixty-six squadron members who were lost in combat, grouped together by the conflict they died in. After each group of names was read, a Marine honor guard member rang a bell three times in a time-honored salute. The indoor ceremony was concluded with a prayer of remembrance and ceremonial music.

SEE PICTURES ON BACK PAGE

The program continued outside of the museum. After the attendees walked in a long rank behind bagpiper Norm Weaver to the black granite VMO-6 monument in the adjacent Semper Fidelis Memorial Park. The monument is shaped like an airfoil cross-section, and has all 66 names of squadron mates lost during conflicts and figures of seven important types of aircraft used by VMO-6 etched into it. The design is the work of Wayne Wright, who incorporated the airfoil because it "is essential to flight and it represents both the core and the vitality of the squadron. The wing has been severed at its tip and rests on edge, rising from the ground. This is meant to depict the disruption of flight; the loss of life and our eventual fall to a place of rest back on earth. While the base of the wing is earthbound, its tip projects skyward, suggesting the desire to rise again to the heavens. And so, through this structure we honor those squadron members who have fallen to rest on earth, but in memory and spirit still soar above."

SEE PICTURES ON BACK PAGE

A blessing as given by Chaplain Hannigan, and a wreath was laid next to the monument. A Marine

bugler played "Taps" from afar, followed by a bag piped version of the Marine Corps Hymn. Shortly after this, a formation of three helicopters flew over the assembly low and loudly; the familiar "wop-wop-wop" of Huey rotor blades brought back memories - some with smiles, others with tears.

The striking black VMO-6 monument dedicated during May's ceremony stands in the Semper Fidelis Park near the birthplace of the squadron at Quantico more than 90 years prior. It represents a small but very important piece of VMO-6's history. The squadron's soldiers were at the forefront of many Marine Aviation firsts, from supplying ground troops during the Nicaraguan Campaign of the 1920s, to medical evacuation in World War II. Squadron members employed Marine helicopters tactically for the first time during the Korean War, and their armed helicopter escort operations in Vietnam paved the way for today's tactics. Although the VMO-6 squadron is inactive today, the people and their deeds haven't been forgotten.

PLANNING

The decision to plan, build and erect a memorial to honor and remember the 66 squadron members killed in combat operations was made at a squadron reunion in July 2010. Shortly thereafter a Board of Directors was formed including Gary Bright, Dave Bushlow, Tom Constantine, Art Friend, Red Trivette, Larry Wright, and Ed Kufeldt as the Executive Director. Bob Whaley volunteered to assist as an Advisor, Katy Stewart agreed to provide administrative support, and Wayne Wright was consulted to design the memorial. LtGen William R. Maloney and LtGen William J. White-who each completed a tour as a squadron commanding officer in Vietnam-agreed to be Honorary Chairmen of the project.

Several early concept sketches were evaluated broadly, from which many more iterations were then considered by the Board of Directors. The selection of the winning concept came unanimously-it was clear the design had embraced the

Board's aspirations to properly honor those who had bravely served and died. The meaning of the design as envisioned by Wayne Wright:

"The sculptural shape of the monument is derived from the airfoil of an aircraft wing. This shape is essential to flight and it represents both the core and the vitality of the squadron. The wing has been severed at its tip and rests on edge, rising from the ground. This is meant to depict the disruption of flight; the loss of life and our eventual fall to a place of rest back on earth. While the base of the wing is earthbound, its tip projects skyward, suggesting the desire to rise again to the heavens. And so, through this structure we honor those squadron members who have fallen to rest on earth, but in memory and spirit, still soar above."

Etched into each side of the polished granite of the memorial are the names of those killed in combat operations who served in VMO-6. The design also pays tribute to the proud history of the squadron through the depiction of some of the key aircraft flown by its members.

The final component of the design is the walkway surrounding the memorial. This path not only allows the viewer direct connection to the sculpture, but also an implied connection with the squadron through the inclusion of commemorative bricks within that will bear the name of those who also served in VMO-6.

The memorial was sculpted from a single 3-ton slab of jet black granite, quarried in India. This stone is one of the finest materials used for monuments due to its purity of color, high contrast between etched and polished surfaces, extreme hardness and overall durability. Modlich Monument Company oversaw the shaping, polishing, and etching. They erected the structure with the assistance of the Firvida Construction Company who built the foundation and surrounding walkway.

The outstanding support and generous financial contributions from squadron members and VMO-6 family and friends were key in building the memorial. Thanks to the dedication of the many volunteers, the vision and commitment of the Board

of Directors, and the donations made by over 225 people and organizations, the project became a reality in 18 months. As a result, today we are able to pay tribute to VMO-6 within our own lifetime and honor its legacy beyond.

IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO DIED FOR OUR COUNTRY NICARAGUA



NAME	RANK	DATE	HOME INTERRED
BYRD, William Carl	Major	08 MAR 1928	Arlington, VA
FRANKFORTER, Rudolph A.	Sergeant	08 MAR 1928	Arlington, VA
McHUGH, James B.	Second Lieutenant	13 APR 1929	Unknown

WWII

O'DONNELL, Richard J.	Private	06 APR 1945	Arlington, VA
MOYSES, Emanuel	Second Lieutenant	08 APR 1945	Honolulu, HI
PARSONS, John R.	First Lieutenant	08 APR 1945	Rock Island, IL
FRINK, James L.	First Lieutenant	10 APR 1945	Unknown
HANMER, Charles	Second Lieutenant	10 APR 1945	Unknown

KOREA

ALLAN, Glen	First Lieutenant	18 JAN 1953	Buffalo, MN
BANCROFT, Arthur R.	First Lieutenant	29 SEP 1950	Hillsboro, IA
DAVIS, Harold J.	First Lieutenant	27 AUG 1950	Manistee, MI
EUSTON, Thomas J.	Lieutenant (USN)	10 MAR 1953	Los Angeles, CA
FACTOR, Kenneth J.	Second Lieutenant	18 JUL 1952	Wewoka, OK
FREASE, Wilson A.	First Lieutenant	18 JUL 1953	Washington, IL
GOOD III, Rosco F.	First Lieutenant	24 APR 1951	Van Nuys, CA
GOODEN, David T.	Captain	07 FEB 1952	Elizabethtown, NC
LANGTRY, Jr., Charles S.	Technical Sergeant	03 JUL 1952	Rochester, NY
LONGSTAFF, Robert A.	First Lieutenant	03 DEC 1950	Jersey City, NJ
MARINO, Charles B.	Captain	18 JUL 1953	Youngstown, OH
MONTEITH, Robert J.	Technical Sergeant	24 APR 1951	Brooklyn, NY
MORENCY, Adelerde G.	First Lieutenant	11 DEC 1950	Cohasset, MN
MORIN, Arthur R.	Captain	04 OCT 1952	Haverhill, MA
ODENBAUGH, Thomas D.	Second Lieutenant	29 SEP 1950	Ottumwa, IA
OWENS, Robert A.	Major	04 OCT 1952	Hillsboro, TX
RANDALL, Burton W.	First Lieutenant	06 AUG 1952	Denver, CO
RIVES, Edwin E.	Captain	29 SEP 1950	Memphis, KY
TRODER, Jr., Donald K.	Captain	09 SEP 1952	East Liverpool, OH
WALKER, Emile A.	Second Lieutenant	09 SEP 1952	Atlanta, GA
WOOLEVER, Loren W.	Captain	03 JUL 1952	Pickering, OH
ZBELLA, William Edward	Master Sergeant	06 AUG 1952	Wausau, WI

VIETNAM

NAME	RANK	DATE	HOME/INTERRED
ALLEN, Paul James	Corporal	11 APR 1968	Rochester, M N
ARMSTRONG, Walter Lee	Lance Corporal	15 DEC 1967	Tucson, AZ
BENNETI, Daniel Morris	Sergeant	14 NOV 1966	Boynton Beach, FL
BILLIPP, Norman Karl	Captain	06 MAY 1969	Milwaukee, WI
BRENCICH, William Joseph	Lance Corporal	28 FEB 1969	Crest Hill, IL
CAWLEY, James Patrick	Captain	25 APR 1968	Scranton, PA
CHADWICK III, Leon Gordon	Captain	14 NOV 1966	Raleigh, NC
DEAN, Alan James	Captain	05 APR 1967	West Chicago, IL
DEMARCO, Michael Gregory	Lance Corporal	11 APR 1968	Albany, NY
GALBREATH, Bobby Frank	Captain	16 FEB 1968	Amarillo, TX
GONZALEZ, Rodolfo Marciano	Corporal	14 NOV 1966	Harlington, TX
GOODSELL, William Joseph	Major	15 JUN 1966	Seattle, WA
HACK, Benny Glenn Lance	Corporal	25 NOV 1965	Waco, TX
HAGAN, John Robert	Major	06 MAY 1969	Savannah, GA
HALL, William Gardiner	First Lieutenant	24 MAR 1968	Rochester, MI
HUNT, Jr., Ralph Edward	First Lieutenant	07 JUN 1968	Alliance, OH
JACOBSSGAARD, David Keith	Captain	28 FEB 1969	Gardner, IL
JENSEN, Paul Andrew	First Lieutenant	16 FEB 1968	Asheville, NC
KEEBLE, Jr., Edwin Augustus	First Lieutenant	28 FEB 1969	New York, NY
KIMMEL, Robert Charles	First Lieutenant	25 APR 1968	East Islip, NY
KRUPA, Richard Didacus	First Lieutenant	29 AUG 1969	Elmhurst, IL
LATIMER, Jr., Richard Eli	First Lieutenant	02 DEC 1968	Tinker AFB, OK
LAYE, J, Edgar Cartha	Private First Class	25 APR 1968	Chicago, IL
MANN, Glenn Dill	Captain	23 NOV 1965	Williamsburg, VA
McMILLAN, Bruce Francis	Captain	11 APR 1968	Walnut Creek, CA
PARKER, Thomas Aquinas	HM1 (USN)	05 APR 1967	Oxford, IN
REESE, James Robert	First Lieutenant	02 DEC 1968	Griffin, GA
RIEDE, Ronald Edgar	First Lieutenant	11 APR 1968	St. Louis, MO
SANCHEZ, Edward Charles	Lance Corporal	28 FEB 1969	Junction, TX
SCHNEIDER, Harry Warren	Corporal	17 FEB 1968	Janesville, WI
SCHOBER, Jack Ervin	Captain	29 AUG 1969	Toledo, OH
SCHRAMM, Brock Rowland	Private First Class	25 APR 1968	San Carlos, CA
SCRUGGS, Joseph Allen	Corporal	05 APR 1967	Hopkinsville, KY
SHADBURNE, Brooke McKay	Captain	05 APR 1967	Ashland, OR
TOLLIVER, Jimmy Ellison	Staff Sergeant	16 FEB 1968	Coromona, KY

SQUADRON HONORS

**PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION
STREAMER WITH FOUR BRONZE STARS**

Okinawa 1 APR-21 JUN 1945
 Korea 2 AUG 1950--27 JUL 1953
 Korea 7 AUG-7 SEP 1950
 Korea 15 SEP-11 OCT 1950
 Vietnam 1 SEP 1965-24 APR 1967
 Vietnam 6 JUN-15 SEP 1967

**PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION (ARMY)
STREAMER**

Korea 22 NOV-14 DEC 1950

**NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION
STREAMER WITH TWO BRONZE STARS**

Korea 1 AUG 1952-27 JUL 1953
 Vietnam 4 SEP 1965-24 AUG 1966
 Vietnam 16 APR-16 OCT 1968

**MERITORIOUS UNIT COMMENDATION
STREAMER**

Vietnam 17 OCT 1968-30 JUN 1969

**SECOND NICARAGUAN CAMPAIGN
STREAMER**

Nicaragua 16 FEB-1 SEP 1928

**ASIATIC-PACIFIC CAMPAIGN STREAMER
WITH ONE BRONZE STAR**

Okinawa Gunto Operation
 1 APR-30 JUN 1945

WORLD WAR II VICTORY STREAMER

20 Nov 1944-31 Dec 1946

CHINA SERVICE STREAMER

12 Oct 1945-3 Jan 1947

**KOREAN SERVICE STREAMER WITH
TWO SILVER STARS**

North Korean Aggression
 2 AUG-2 NOV 1950
 Communist China Aggression
 NOV 1950--24 JAN 1951
 Inchon Landing
 13-17 SEP 1950

First U.N. Counter Offensive

25 JAN-21 APR 1951

Communist China Spring Offensive

22 APR-8 JUL 1951

U.N. Summer-Fall Offensive

9 JUL-27 NOV 1951

Second Korean Winter

28 NOV-30 APR 1952

Korean Defense Summer-Fall 1952

1 MAY-30 NOV 1952

Third Korean Winter

1 DEC-30 APR 1953

Korean Summer-Fall

1953 1 MAY-27 JUL 1953

**NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE
STREAMER WITH ONE BRONZE STAR**

27 JUN 1950--27 JUN 1954
 1 JAN 1961-15AUG 1974

**ARMED FORCES EXPEDITIONARY
STREAMER Cuba**

7 NOV-29 NOV 1962

**VIETNAM SERVICE STREAMER WITH
TWO SILVER STARS****Vietnam Defense Campaign**

1 SEP-24 DEC 1965

Vietnamese Counteroffensive Campaign

25 DEC-30 JUN 1966

Vietnamese Counteroffensive Phase II

1 JUL 1966-31 MAY 1967

Vietnamese Counteroffensive Phase III

1 JUN 1967-29 JAN 1968

Tet Counteroffensive

30 JAN-1 APR 1968

Vietnamese Counteroffensive Phase IV

2 APR-30 JUN 1968

Vietnamese Counteroffensive Phase V

1 JUL-1 NOV 1968

Vietnamese Counteroffensive Phase VI

2 NOV 1968-22 FEB 1969

Tet 69/Counteroffensive 23 FEB-8 JUN 1969

Vietnam, Summer-Fall 1969 9 JUN-12 OCT 1969

ABBREVIATED HISTORY VMO-6

VMO-6 had a distinguished record and one of the longest combat histories of any squadron in the Marine Corps. It was always in the forefront, utilized new aircraft, tested new ideas and technology, and developed many "firsts" within Marine aviation.

VMO-6 antecedents reach back to 1920; activated as Flight E, 3rd Air Squadron and redesignated as VO-6M in 1927. In early 1928, the squadron embarked aboard USS Saratoga and began a nine month tour fighting the Sandinista guerrillas in Nicaragua. During combat operations, pilots flew in the roles of reconnaissance, aerial photography, light attack as well as aerial resupply. Two years later at Quantico, VA, the squadron formed six- and nine-plane flight demonstration teams called the "Helldivers." While the team was a favorite among spectators and the media, personnel and budget constraints caused the Marine Corps to deactivate the squadron on 30 June 1930.

As the need for aerial observation and artillery capabilities increased in the Pacific during WWII, the squadron was reactivated on 20 November 1944 and re-designated as VMO-6. From 1 April to 6 July 1945, the squadron supported the Battle of Okinawa on a variety of missions including artillery spotting, reconnaissance, message delivery, wire laying, and general utility missions. From October 1945 to January 1947, VMO-6 deployed to Tientsin, North China and flew similar missions--often under intense fire--in support of the occupation prior to the communist takeover.

On 2 August 1950, VMO-6 arrived in Korea with six helicopters and eight fixed wing aircraft. The following day, the squadron became the first to fly a helicopter in a Marine Corps combat operation. Within the first week in-country, the squadron flew the Marine Corps' first helicopter medical evacuation and night medical evacuation. Squadron helicopters immediately proved their combat

capabilities and worthiness for medical evacuations, search and rescue, reconnaissance, and command and control. Fixed wing aircraft were flown as convoy escorts in addition to observation, artillery and Naval gunfire spotting, leaflet dropping, and reconnaissance.

Beginning 27 July 1964, VMO-6 received the first turbine-powered helicopters in the Marine Corps. From September 1965 through October 1967, the squadron was based at Ky Ha, Vietnam, in combat support of Marine Forces in I Corps. Flying helicopter "gunships" armed with air-to-ground rockets and M-60 machine guns, aircrews of four conducted missions to include: escort of transport helicopters, close air support of ground forces, Tactical Air Controller (Airborne) of fixed-wing aircraft, artillery spotting, Naval gunfire control, reconnaissance, and medical evacuation. In October 1967, VMO-6 relocated to Phu Bai and a month later to Quang Tri. In November 1968, the squadron converted its high wing aircraft to twin engine turboprop aircraft armed with air-to-ground rockets and fixed machine guns.

With the drawn-down of military commitments in Vietnam, the squadron relocated to MCAS Futenma, Okinawa in October 1969.

On 1 January 1977, VMO-6 was deactivated.



WAR STORIES

By Bill Simons

Platoon 2085

Platoon 2085, L Company, Second Recruit Training Battalion, MCRD Parris Island held its first Reunion since graduating in November, 1966. The gathering was held in conjunction with the Annual Reunion of the Khe Sanh Veterans Inc. in Washington, DC in August, 2012. Of the nearly eighty Marines who graduated, twenty-one were able to attend at the gracious invitation of the Khe Sanh Veterans Inc.

Mike Boyle, Bill Simons, and Brian Vanderheyden were able to track down forty-seven of the 2085 Platoon members and at the suggestion of Big John Pessoni, invited all to participate in the get together. The Platoon was especially honored by the presence of First Sergeant Ben Leith, USMC Retired. First Sergeant Leith was Senior Drill Instructor for the Platoon and travelled from Kingman, Arizona with his lovely wife Jackie. It was universally agreed that while First Sergeant was in 1966 thought to be the meanest man alive, he may have softened just a bit. It was also agreed that the rigorous training at PI by then Staff Sergeant Leith limited the loss of life in Vietnam to but three Marines from Platoon 2085. At a Platoon dinner, a moment of silence was observed in memory of Davis A. Jones, Andrew M. Hudak, and William A. Markarian, KIA in Vietnam.

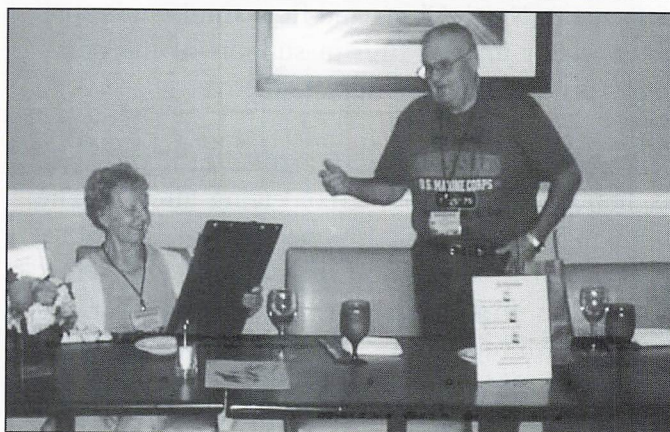
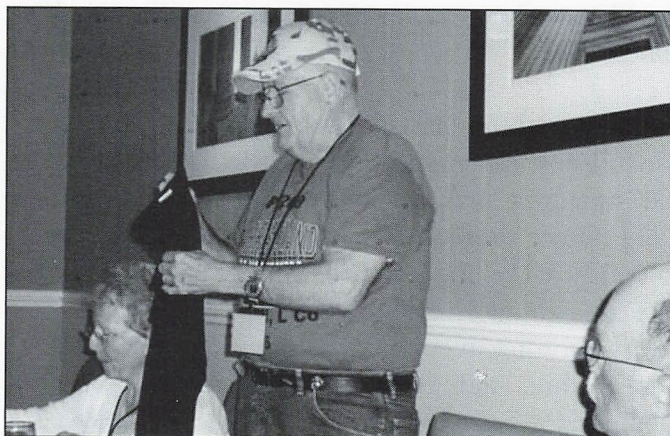
It was agreed that this would be the first of many Reunions. Phil Muth said, "I was most pleased with seeing how good everyone looked and how well everyone is doing." Jose Ruiz stated, "It was much better than I thought it would be." Ray Peterson said, "As much poking fun at each other and sharing tidbits of our lives since Vietnam with each other, I was truly taken by the amount of mutual respect we showed each other during the entire reunion. That was impressive!" Dan Depagnier to SDI Leith, "Thanks for showing us how to stay alive under such terrible conditions. Top, we owe it all to you." Art Caldwell, "Just to go back

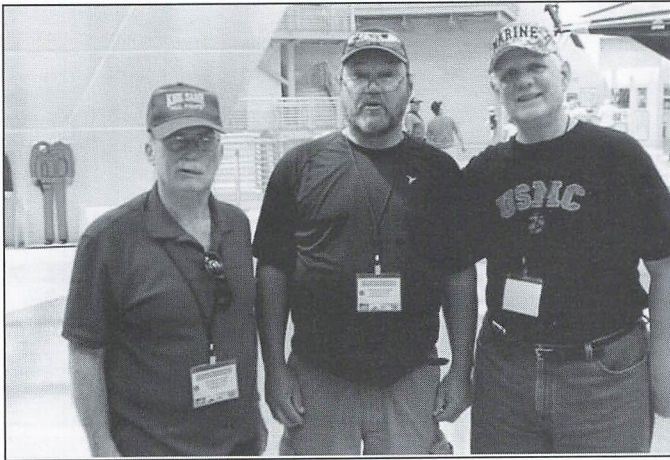
reliving those memories with the people you shared them with, was much more than I expected." Mike Boyle said, "Top, thank you for making me the Marine I still am today."

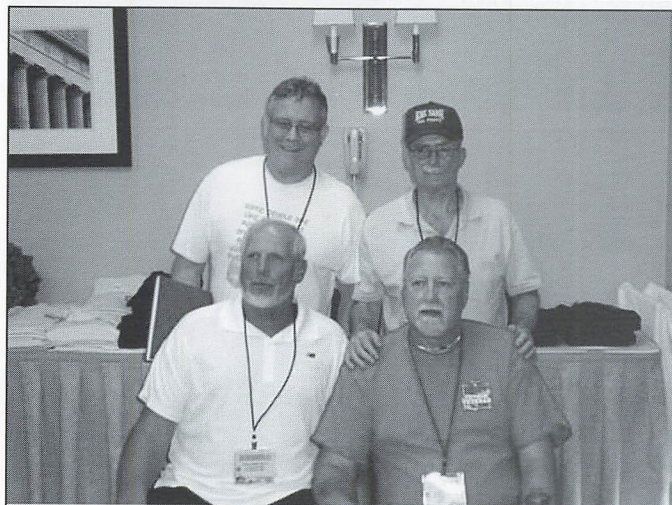
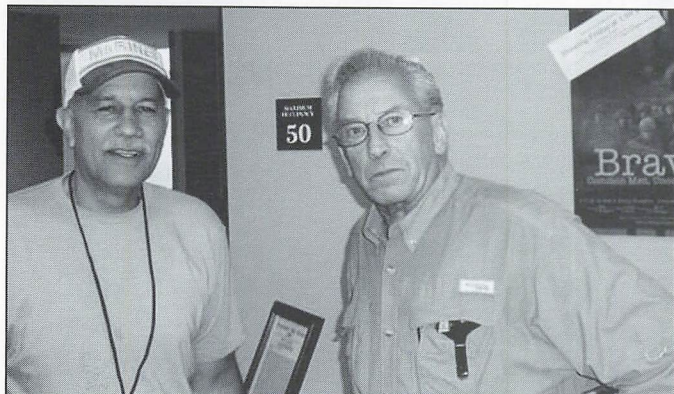
In addition to First Sergeant Leith, 2085 Platoon Marines in attendance were: Michael Boyle, Arthur Caldwell, Daniel Depagnier, Patrick Devine, John Dezso, CWO 4 Peter Frederiksen, USMC Retired, William Genovese, Pasquale Guarino, Ford Kilgallon, Phillipp Muth, Edwin Olavarria, John Pessoni, Raymond Peterson, John (Chris) Rice, Donald Romeo, Jose Ruiz, William Simons, David Thompson, John Tirino, and Brian Vanderheyden; all of whom wish to thank the Khe Sanh Veterans Inc., with special thanks to Tom Eichler, John Pessoni and Russ Turner.

If invited back to future Khe Sanh Veterans events Platoon 2085 promises not to consume **ALL** the supply of *The Glenlivet*.

No war stories were told







Marines and sailors with the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit hold a welcoming ceremony for the Khe Sanh Veterans Inc. reunion at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, Va., Aug. 30, 2012. The 22nd MEU spent time exchanging experiences with and learning from those who served at Khe Sanh. (Photo by Sgt. Amber Blanchard)



**Story & Photos by
Sgt Amber Blanchard, USMC**

In the early morning hours of 21 Jan ,1968, the North Vietnamese Army attacked the outpost of Khe Sanh with a shower of bullets and artillery that instantly killed 18 Marines and injured 40 more. Thus began the Battle of Khe Sanh, the longest and second deadliest battle of the Vietnam War. Marines, sailors and soldiers held the isolated airstrip in the Quang Tri province for 77 days before breaking through and allowing supplies to reach the siege-worn men.

Khe Sanh Veterans Inc. is an organization created to commemorate the service members who served in the Khe Sanh Combat Base and tactical area of operations from 1962 to 1972. Marines with the

22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit welcomed these veterans to their annual reunion at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, Va., Aug. 30, 2012.

The Khe Sanh veterans and their families took the opportunity to share their experiences with the young Marines and sailors of the MEU.

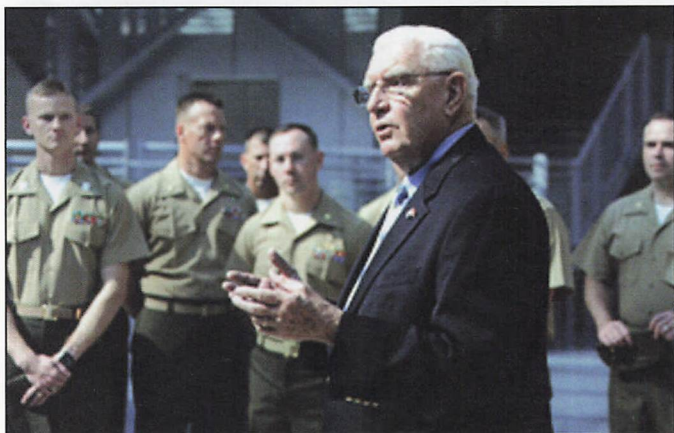
"I would like to welcome you to your museum," said Ron Christmas. "This is dedicated to every Marine who has ever served and their heritage." When the Khe Sanh Marines, sailors and families arrived, the officers of Khe Sanh Veterans Inc. took a moment to recognize current members and remember the Marines who since passed.

"We remember these people that have passed

away from our units, especially Khe Sanh,” said Ron Rayner, chaplain for Khe Sanh Veterans Inc.

“There were over 2,100 guys killed from the Khe Sanh area from 1962-1972, and they did it for us ... We owe it to them to live a good life.”

After the opening ceremonies, Col. James D. Christmas, commanding officer of the 22nd MEU, greeted the Khe Sanh Marines and encouraged them to share their stories with the young Marines.



Retired LtGen. Ron Christmas, president of the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation greeted the Marines and sailors of the MEU.

“Most of my Marines have served in combat now multiple times,” said James Christmas. “But they don’t know the rest of the story. You are the rest of the story. You’ve been in combat, you came back from combat and you lived the rest of your lives, and you’ve lived them successfully ... those in uniform today appreciate you, for you made us. You made us who we are and what we are today.”

Marines of the 22nd MEU enjoyed interacting with the Khe Sanh veterans and exchanging stories with their brothers. It was a good time, it felt motivating and encouraging,” said Sgt. Christopher Williams, a motor transport mechanic with the 22nd MEU, and a New York City native. “It makes you appreciate everything they did in the past so we can have the future we have today.”



Members of the Khe Sanh Veterans, tell their stories to Marines and sailors with the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit during the Khe Sanh Veterans reunion at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, Va., Aug. 30, 2012

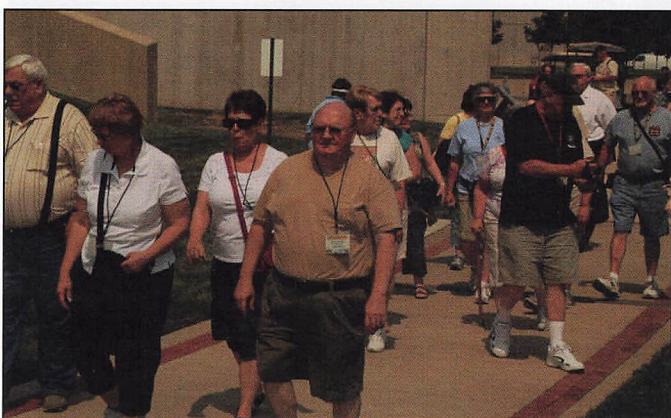
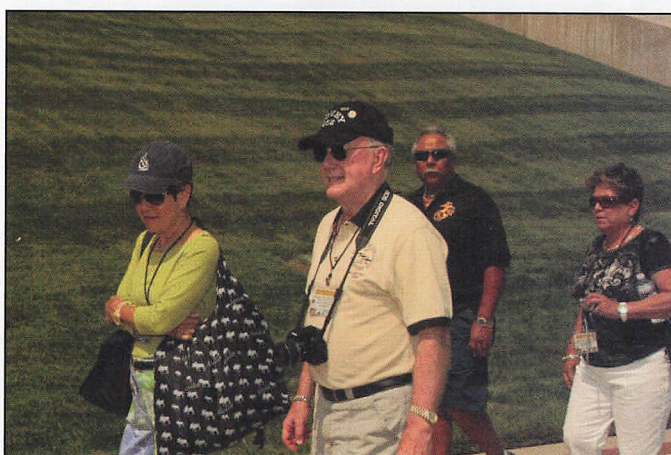


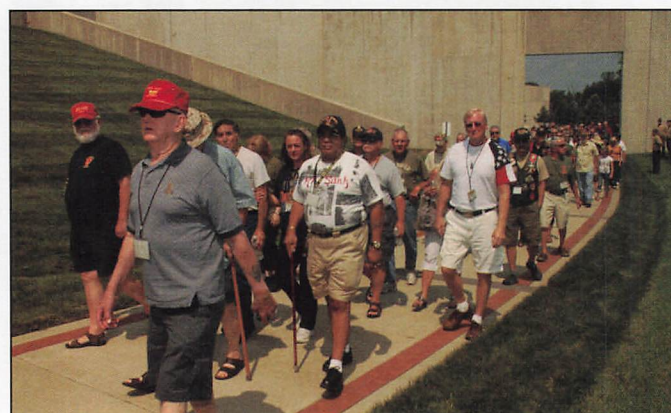
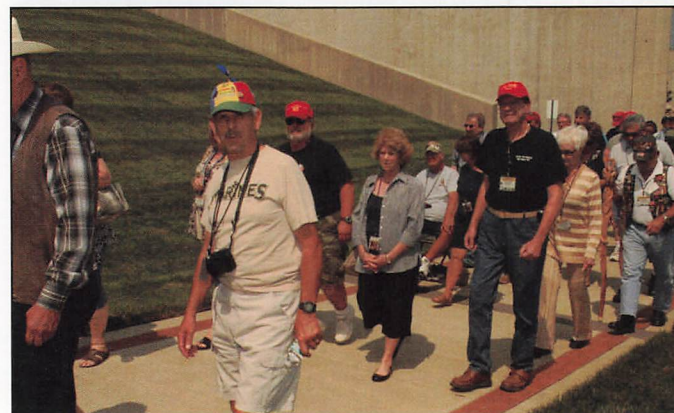
Petty Officer 3rd Class Robert Graham, a hospital corpsman with the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit, and a Cleveland native, shakes hands with members of the Khe Sanh Veterans Inc. during their reunion at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, Va., Aug. 30, 2012



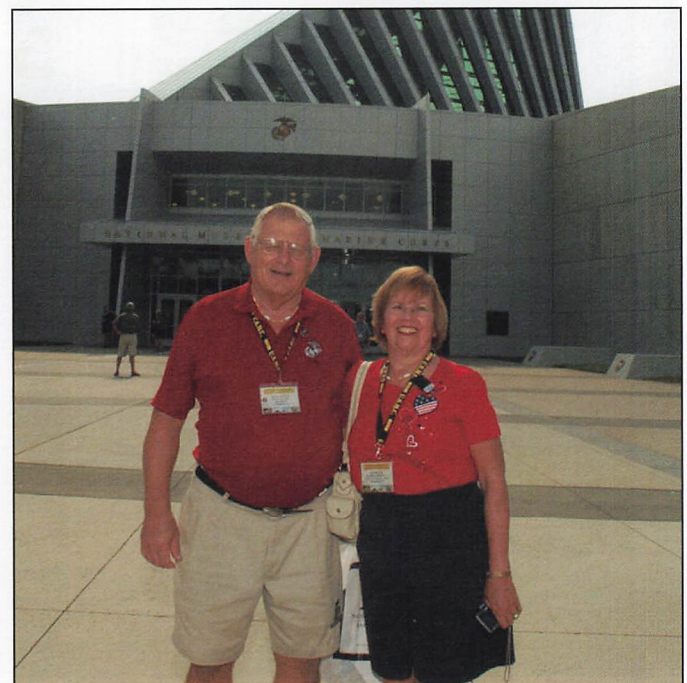
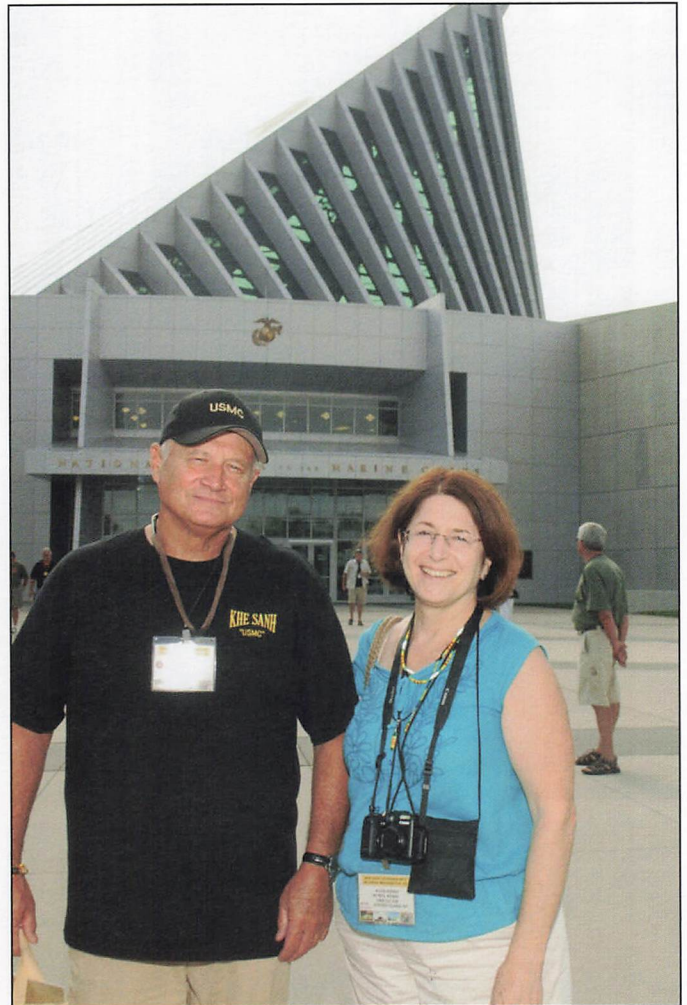
Col James Christmas Presented Plaque to KSV President Tom Eichler

DURING OUR VISIT TO THE MARINE CORPS MUSEUM WE DEDICATED PLAQUES HONORING OFFICERS & MEN OF THE 26TH MARINE REGIMENT AND THOSE WHO FOUGHT AND DIED ON HILL 881S DURING THE VIETNAM WAR. WE WERE SURPRISED BY THE OFFICERS & MEN FROM THE 22ND MEU, WHO CAME OUT TO HONOR OUR SERVICE AT KHE SANH.

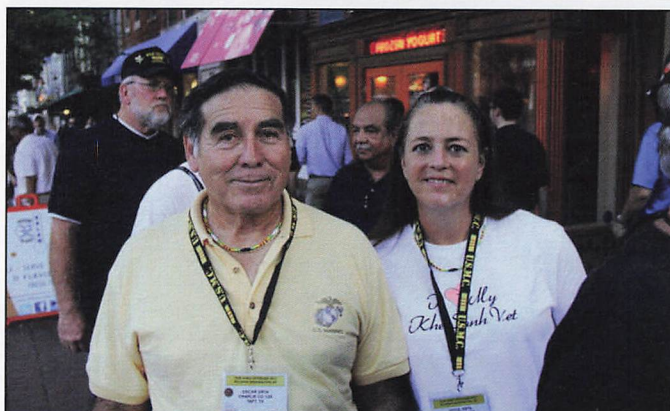








KSV MEMBERS ENJOYED THE LAST MARINE CORPS PARADE OF 2012, AT 8TH & I





AT OUR ANNUAL BANQUET THE KSV HONORED THE DAUGHTERS OF COLONEL LOWNDS & HIS SON-IN-LAW, LTGEN RON CHRISTMAS. COLONEL "BULLDOG" SMITH PRESENTED BOUQUETS TO THE GIRLS, AND KSV MEMENTOS TO LTGEN RON CHRISTMAS & HIS SONS, COL JAMES CHRISTMAS & LTCOL BRIAN CHRISTMAS.



CHAIRMAN RUSS TURNER PRESIDING OVER ANNUAL BANQUET AFTER UNIT FLAGS PRESENTATION



COL "BULLDOG" SMITH PRESENTING FLOWERS



COL "BULLDOG" SMITH PRESENTING GIFTS

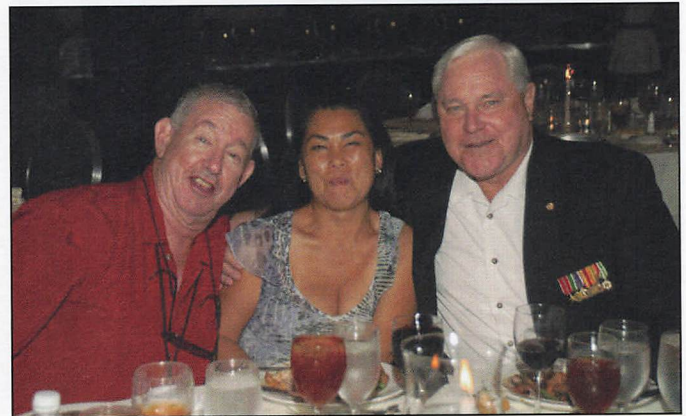


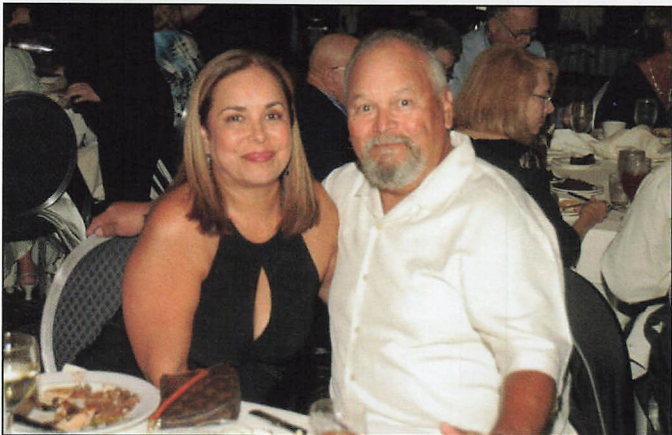
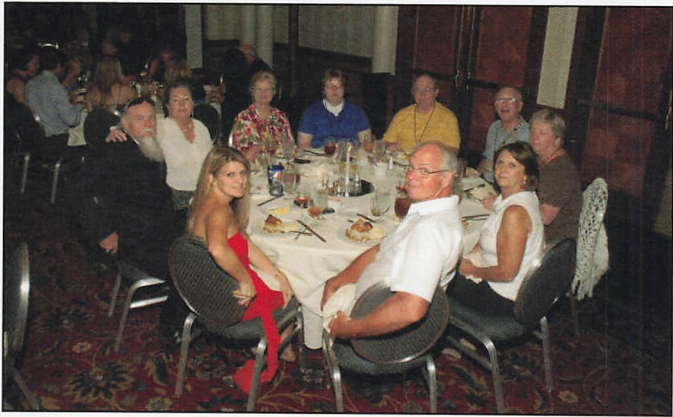
OUR OWN COLOR GUARD:
L-R BILLY MARTIN & TOM HARVEY



LOWNDS GIRLS LIGHTING POW CANDLE



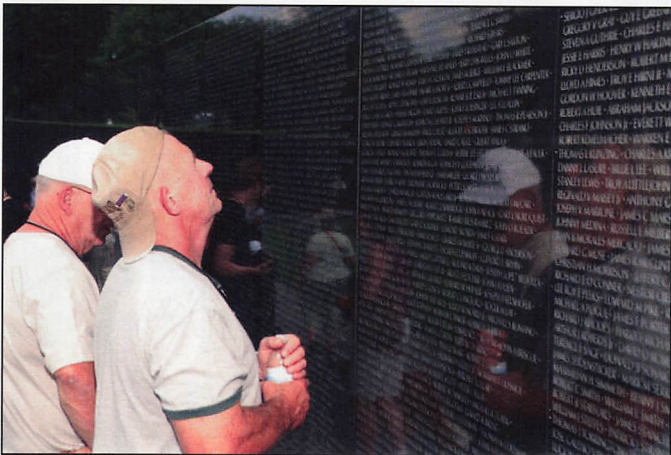


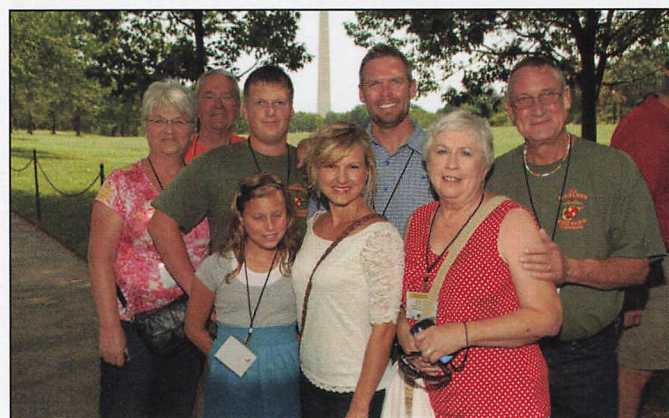
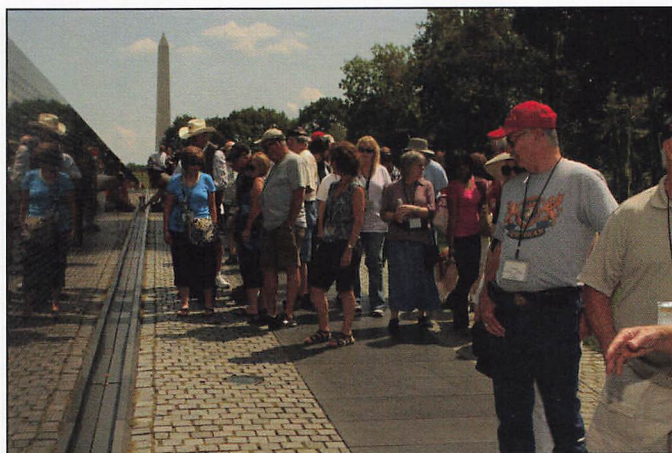


**OUR BEAUTIFUL KHE SANH LADIES
ENJOYING THEIR REUNION LUNCHEON**



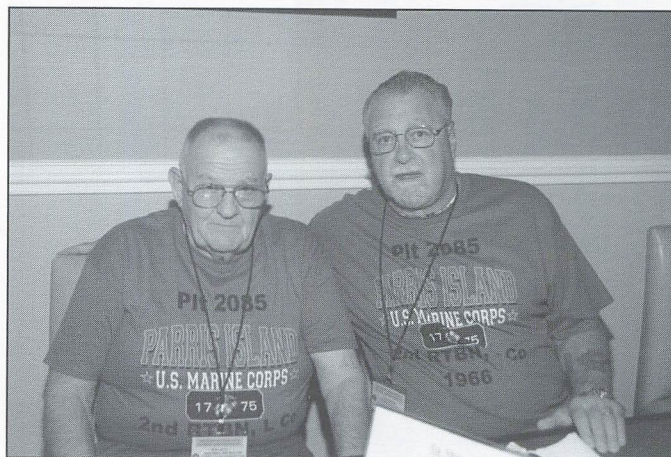
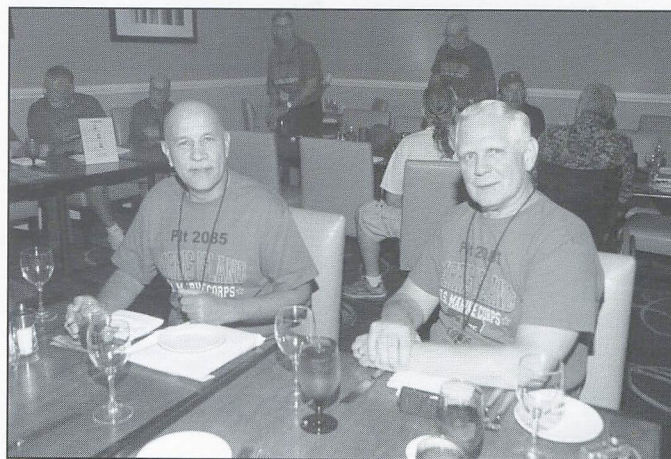
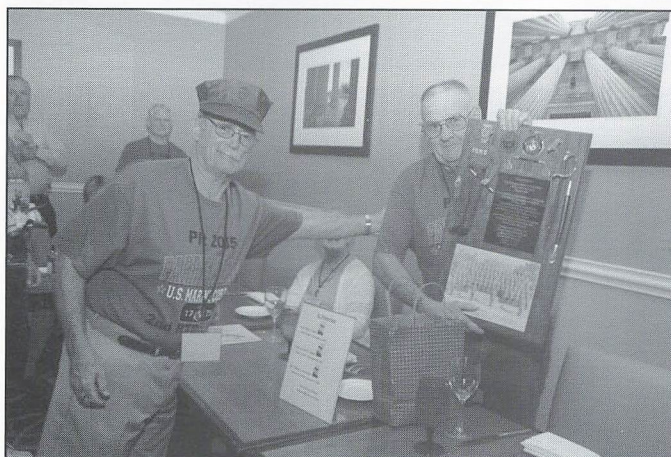
MEMBERS OF KSV POSE IN FRONT OF MARINE CORPS IWO JIMA MEMORIAL DURING THEIR VISITS TO VIETNAM, KOREAN, WWII & OTHER WAR MEMORIALS TOUR.



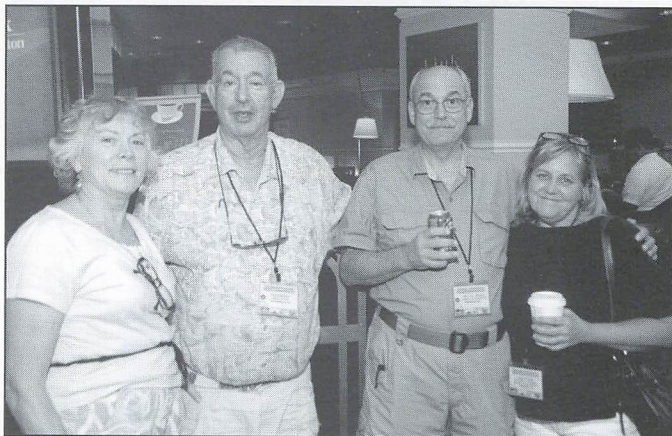
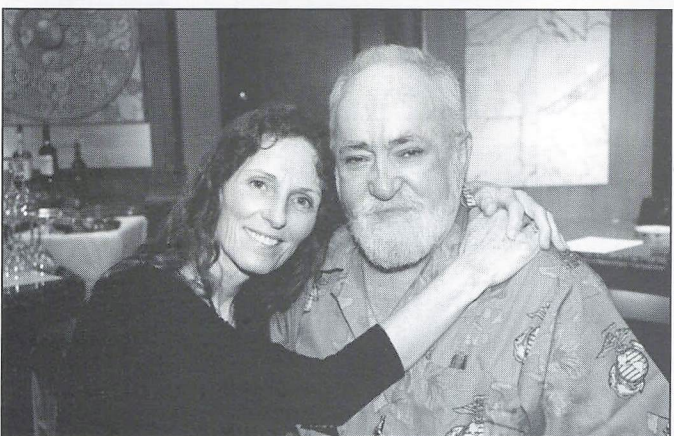
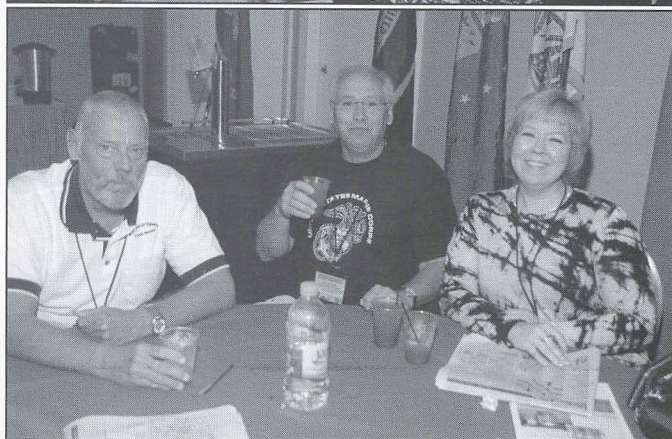
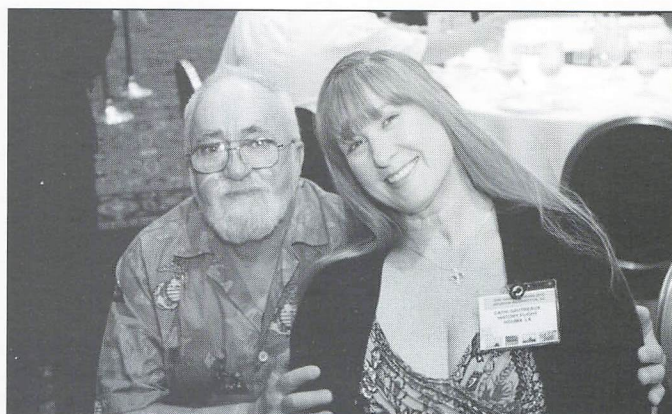


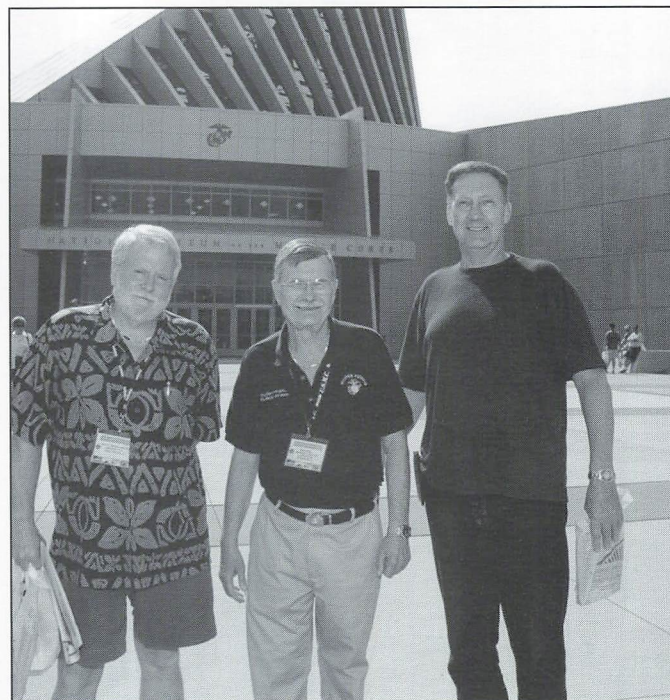
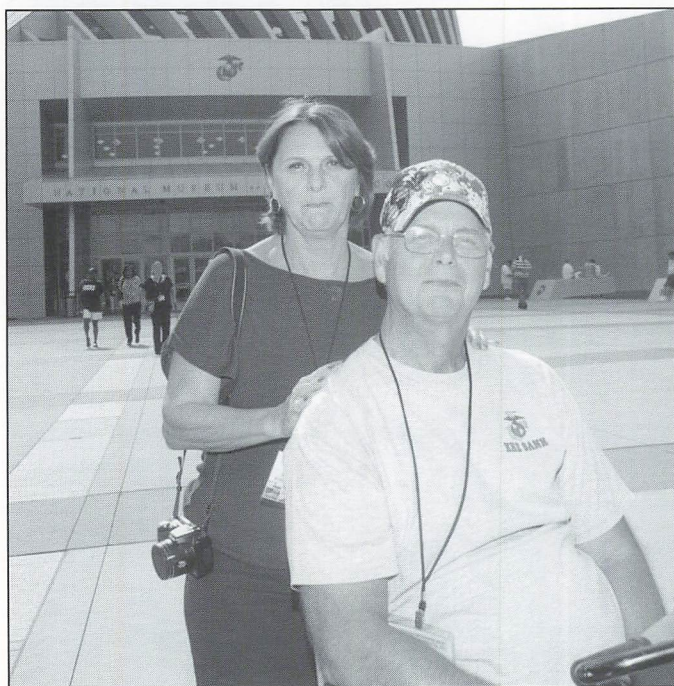
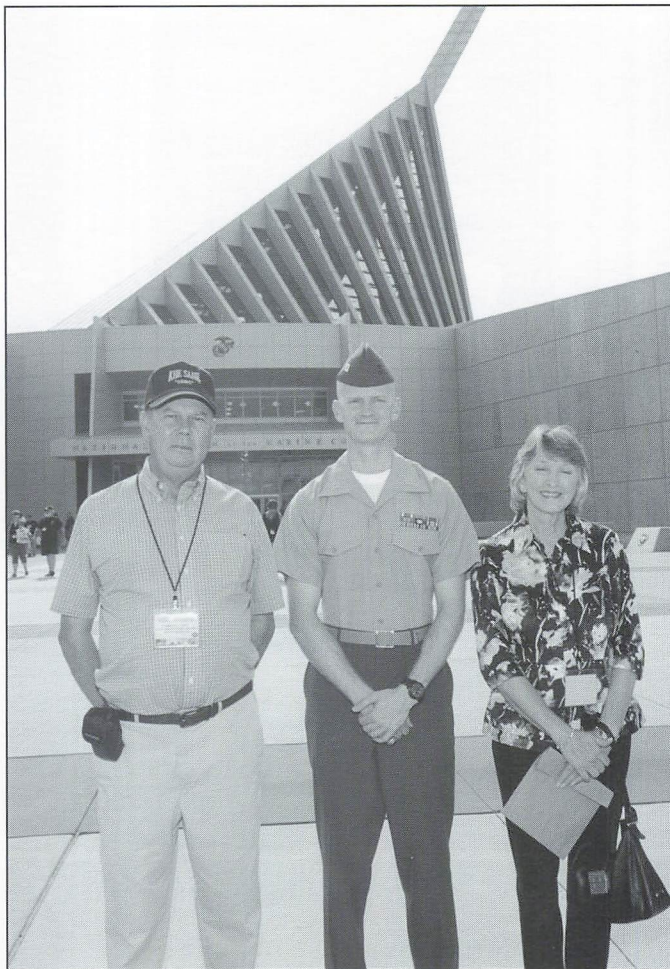
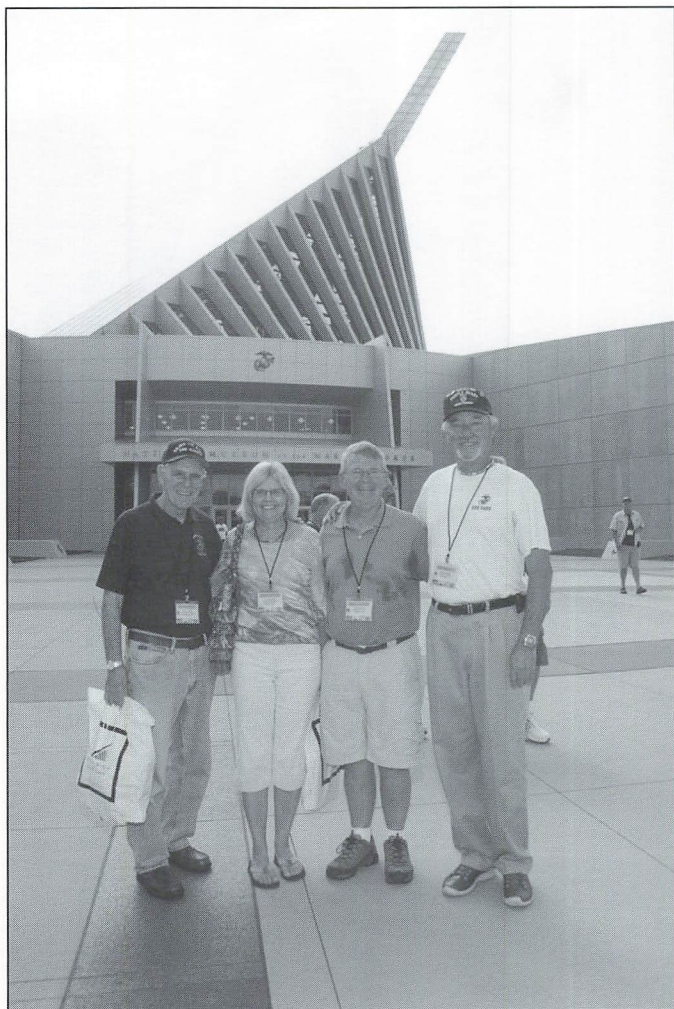


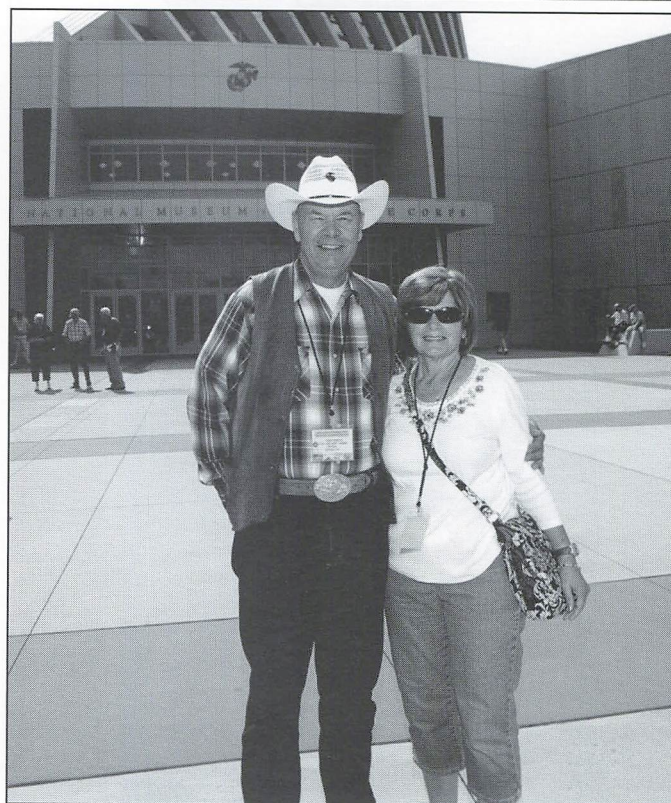
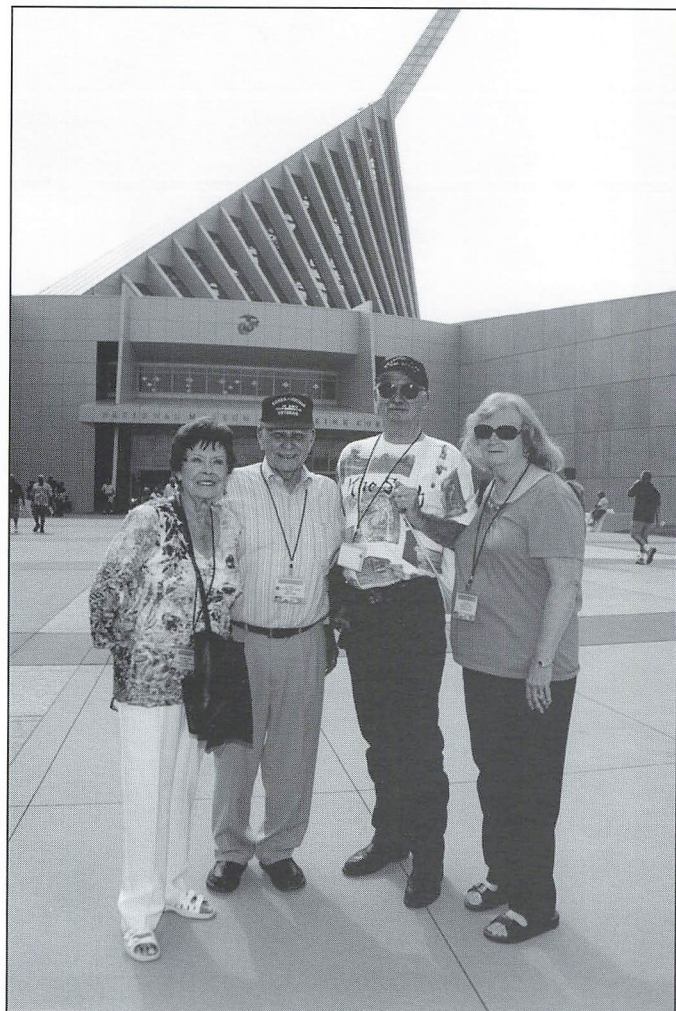
OUR SPECIAL GUEST, MEMBERS OF VP JOHN PESSONI'S BOOT CAMP PLT 2085 & THEIR FORMER DI

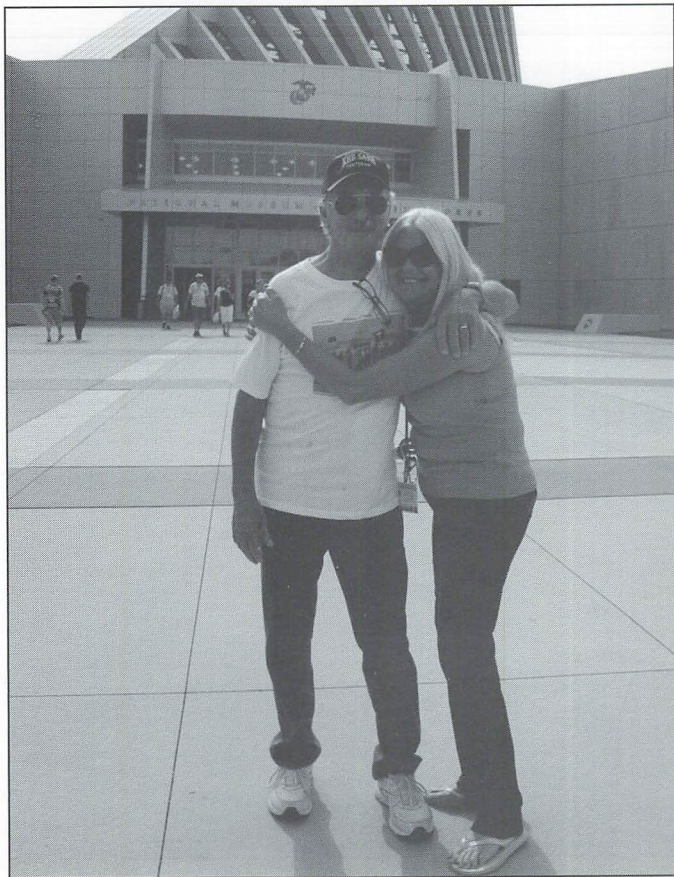
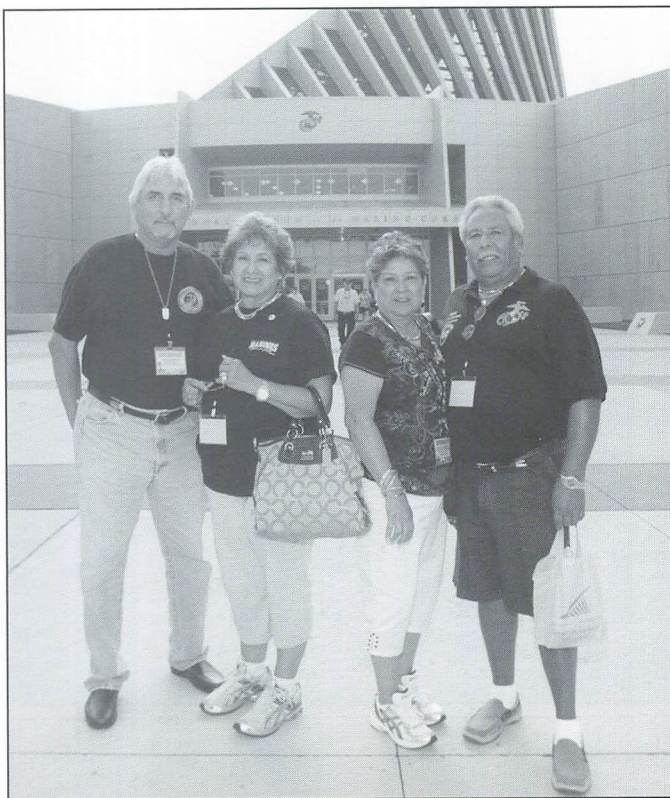
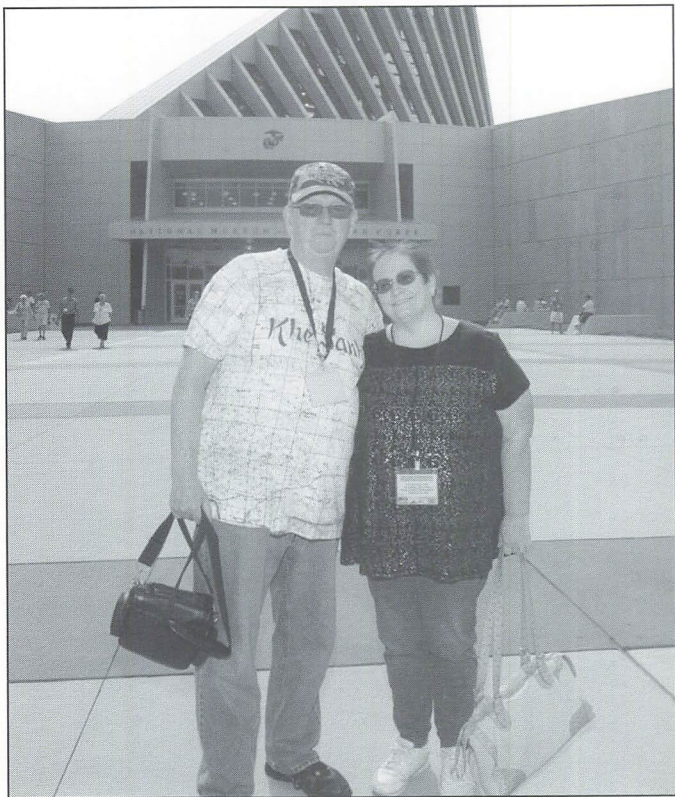




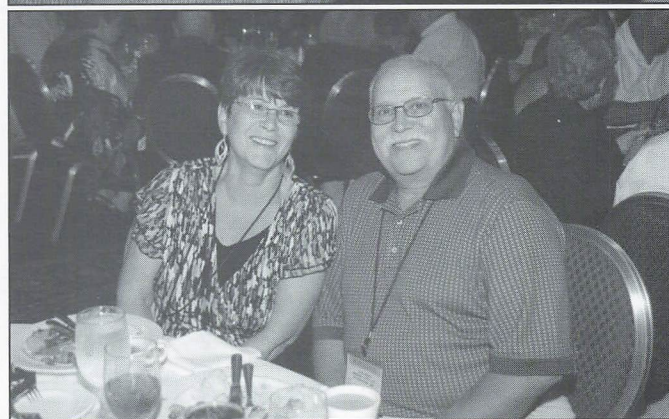
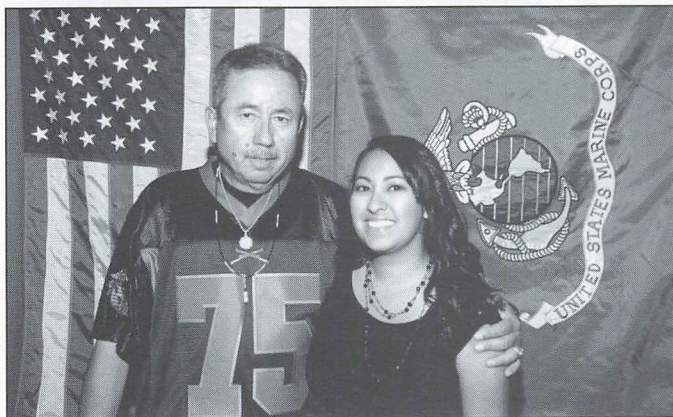










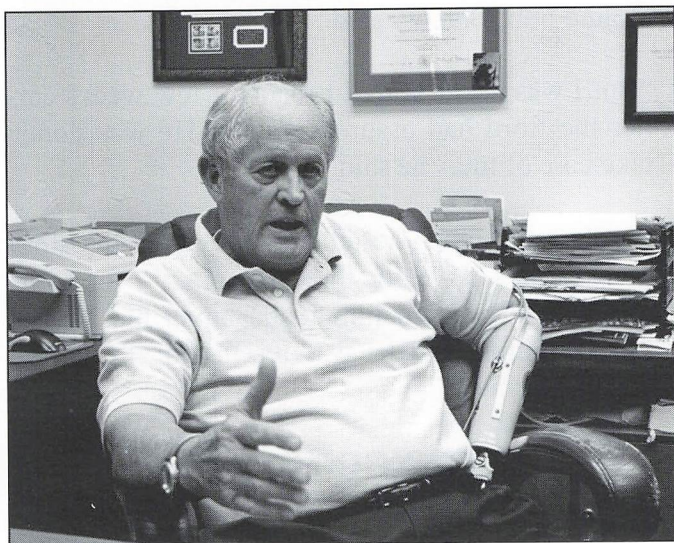


KHE SANH VETERAN IN THE NEWS

Deer Creek resident to be inducted into the Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame

MARINE PILOT SAYS GOD PULLED HIM THROUGH VIETNAM CRASH

On June 8, 1967, Marine Capt. Boyd L. "Bo" Barclay was copilot of a UH-1E helicopter gunship assigned to a visual reconnaissance mission near Khe Sanh. His pilot said he saw something along a tree line and wanted to make a gun run. They made a strafing run on that area and came back around.



"As we were pulling up they opened up on us and the first burst got the engine," Barclay said. "We started going down."

Barclay switched radio channels and started calling "Mayday. Mayday."

"The next burst came through the #####pit and hit me in the hand, blew my hand up and I didn't see any hand there," he recalled. "And I said, 'I'm hit!'"

He reached over to grab a pressure point and the next thing he heard the pilot say is, "I'm dead. I'm dead." He turned and looked at the pilot who was hanging in his straps.

A pilot has procedures to follow if their plane is hit by gunfire and loses an engine, Barclay said. They were pulling up, and normally the action would call for the use of two hands. His hand was gone so he had to use what was left of it to begin the landing procedure.



"I knew I couldn't take it into a clearing so I was looking for some trees," he said. "We're in the mountains. I wanted to be as close to a valley as I could."

He used his leg as well and hung on as they descended through the trees to cushion the landing. They hit and rolled over. Barclay laid there for a minute.

When he smelled smoke he climbed out of the crippled helicopter. The two crewman were on the ground, in a daze. Barclay asked for a tourniquet to put on his arm. A crew member began working on it. Then the enemy began firing on them from the hills. A second helicopter gunship was shooting at the enemy position.

The survivors took cover and talked about getting the pilot out of their downed helicopter. Barclay intended to go get him out by using his survival knife to cut through the canopy of the helicopter, but he took a few steps and fell on his face, thinking his leg was broken (it turned out to be his ankle).

"They pulled me back and said, 'He's dead sir.'"

Barclay said two young Marines started dragging him up the side of the mountain on their hands. As he was being dragged, he noticed his mangled hand was not bleeding.

At the top of the mountain a helicopter landed to pick them up. Barclay was transported to California where he spent about three months in the hospital recovering from his wounds.

For his actions that day, Barclay was awarded the Silver Star and the Purple Heart.



"By his courage, exceptional presence of mind, and selfless devotion to duty in the face of extreme personal danger, Captain Barclay upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service," his Silver Star citation reads.

THE HIDDEN STORY

Barclay said there's a story behind the story. He spoke about the nature of special operations missions, about how he was told during a briefing about what usually happened to crew members if they were shot down.

A couple of weeks before he was shot down, he was in bed one night and started thinking, getting scared, not about dying, but about how he didn't

want to let anybody down.

"So I started praying," said Barclay, who became a Christian at age 16. All of a sudden out of nowhere the 23rd Psalm came to him.

"Literally, in that hooch, there were about eight of us, a bright light came in. It was like the Lord came down, touched me and said, 'Never fear. I will be with you.' And the fear just flowed out of me."

When he was shot down, the valley of the shadow of death, words from the 23rd Psalm, were all around him, Barclay said.

"But I was never scared because a few weeks earlier the Lord had assured me that He was gonna take care of me," he said.

Barclay said when he tells people about the story he says he's alive for three reasons — for some reason God wanted him to be alive, his Marine Corps training and he was rescued by those two young Marines.

CHANGING TIMES

During leave back in the states, flying from airport to airport on his way to Oklahoma, Barclay was in uniform wearing a prosthesis on his arm and a walking cast on his leg.

"It was more or less like I was a leper," he said. "Nobody talked to me."

Today, Americans will go up to troops and thank them for their service, Barclay said. When he travels he wears a Purple Heart shirt and has been upgraded to first class on an airliner as a thank you. He receives thank yous for his service even.

"I'm really happy for these young troops today for the recognition that they're getting as far as what they're doing," Barclay said referring to troops who served in Iraq and Afghanistan. "These

young men and women are 100 percent volunteers.”

Barclay said they are well-trained soldiers who make sacrifices for their country including serving multiple tours in war zones.

About a month ago Barclay learned that he had been nominated for induction into the Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame.

“It’s an honor. It really is,” he said. “I’m proud of my service to our country and the Marine Corps. That’s something special to be recognized in your home state. It makes you feel good.”

Barclay said having been overseas, seeing the comparison, he tried to teach his children and his grandchildren about what a great country the United States is. He said he remembers the veterans who fought in previous wars to preserve the nation and its freedoms.

FOR LOCAL VIETNAM VETERAN WAR MEMORIES LINGER

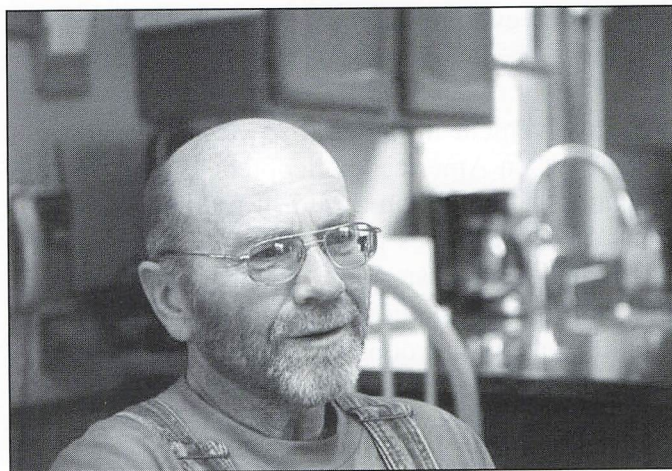
By Kirsti Marohn

ROBERT HOLSCHER HQ BTRY 1/13

A half century has changed so much, but somehow not erased anything. When Bob Holscher describes the mountain plateau known as Khe Sanh where he spent 10½ months early in the Vietnam War, you can smell the dusty red clay, feel the booms of artillery fire, taste the rubbery C-rations.

He can tell you about the day his unit of Marines arrived after a long convoy at Khe Sanh, nothing but a sea of elephant grass. The order came: “Gentlemen, build your city.” They began digging the foxholes and bunkers where they would live, and where some would die.

He can tell you the exact day — Jan. 21, 1968, his



21st birthday — when the North Vietnamese attacked the base, leaving craters, destroying the ammunition dump and setting off a chain reaction of earth-shaking explosions.

He can point to a faded Kodak Instamatic photograph of four Marines in dusty fatigues, name each one of his closest friends, tell you where they are now. Jake, injured when artillery hit their bunker, now a retired firefighter in Boston, sends a Christmas card every year. Robbie died two years ago of pancreatic cancer, likely from exposure to Agent Orange. Moose, last heard living in California but fallen out of touch, perhaps because he wants to leave the war behind him.

Holscher can relate. For many years, he never talked about Vietnam. Now he will, but only when asked. When he does, it’s with clarity and insight that only time and healing bring.

“It was hard before, but it gets easier as I get older,” said Holscher, 65, seated at the kitchen table in his home in Haven Township. “I remember a lot of the good things. I buried a lot of the bad things.”

In May, President Barack Obama proclaimed a 13 year commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War that will last until Nov. 11, 2025. Obama called on the nation to “pay tribute to the more than 3 million servicemen and women who left their families to serve bravely, a world

away from everything they knew and everyone they loved.”

U.S. involvement in the conflict began in earnest in 1962, when American helicopters carried South Vietnamese fighters on a raid. It marked the first time American forces participated in major combat in that southeast Asian country. Eventually, the conflict escalated to involve more than 500,000 American troops in Vietnam. By the time the last U.S. troops withdrew in 1975, more than 58,000 had died.

There were about 7.5 million Vietnam-era veterans in the United States in 2011, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Many still struggle with the effects of their wartime experiences, including post-traumatic stress. Like so many other veterans, Holscher’s experiences fighting an elusive enemy in an unfamiliar country and the bonds he formed with his fellow soldiers left a lasting impact that helped shape the rest of his life.

Holscher never imagined himself a Marine, never imagined spending a lifetime helping other veterans. Growing up in tiny Earlville, Iowa, he’d assumed he would be a career Navy man, following in the footsteps of five uncles who’d served in World War II.

After graduating in 1965, he’d enrolled at the University of Iowa in Iowa City as a physical education major. But after a year, university officials told him if he didn’t raise his grades, he wouldn’t be welcome back.

The buildup of U.S. troops in Vietnam was beginning. Holscher had a high draft number, but he went to talk to a Marine recruiter. The Marine Corps was offering a two-year enlistment, and Holscher signed up. It was one of the smartest things he ever did, Holscher says, although he knew he’d likely end up in Vietnam.

“At certain times I was afraid. Other times, you get gung-ho and you say OK, let’s go,” he said. “They have a way of motivating you so you want

to go out and do what you’re trained to do.”

He trained in San Diego, then was sent overseas to Okinawa, Japan, as part of an artillery unit. After two months, he was shipped to Danang Harbor, then to Quang Tri Province, then in a long convoy up to Khe Sanh, a primitive U.S. base near the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

In the beginning, it was relatively quiet. Holscher’s photos show Marines dressed casually, no bullet-proof vests or helmets. That changed on Jan. 21, 1968, when the North Vietnamese attacked. From then on, the base was under constant assault. One of Holscher’s prized possessions is a bulging photo album his mother started while he was in Vietnam, filled with photographs he sent home of the barren landscape and grubby Marines grinning for the camera. There are also dozens of yellowed clippings about Khe Sanh from the local Iowa newspapers.

Photos also cover the wall of Holscher’s office: Himself in a sharp Marine dress uniform, blond crew cut, black-rimmed glasses, mouth set in a determined line. Next to it, his son, also a Marine, like a mirror image. In another grainy shot, Holscher and two others huddled around a single bottle of booze smuggled in by a fellow soldier returning from leave, pretending to squeeze out the last few drops from the bottle. Holscher points to a smiling Marine leaning into the photograph. Wilbert “Willie” Stovall, killed just 11 days before he was scheduled to return home to Pennsylvania. Holscher was the one chosen to escort his body and stay with him while the officers went through his personal effects.

Some soldiers said they had a feeling they would be killed, or that a bullet had their name on it. Holscher never had those feelings. He never doubted he was coming back from Vietnam. The day he returned to the United States, his family met at the airport. His family wasn’t the hugging type, but Holscher’s father hugged him then, the only time he remembers.

No one spit on him or called him a baby killer. But there were no welcome-home ceremonies, either. Things are much different for today's returning troops, and Holscher is glad.

After the war, Holscher returned to the University of Iowa, but his future as a phy-ed teacher or coach looked bleak. After President John F. Kennedy's call for increased physical fitness, many students pursued phy-ed majors, and there were no vacant coaching jobs. Holscher switched his major to recreation, hoping to run an outdoors camp someday. As a class assignment, he helped organize an activity for disabled veterans at the VA in Iowa City. He impressed one of the administrators, who later offered him a part-time recreation job that eventually became permanent.

Holscher got married, divorced, quit college, started again. He finally graduated after 8½ years. He decided to reenlist in the Marines, shaved his beard and went to officer candidate school in Quantico, Va. But an old leg injury came back to haunt him, and a doctor declared him not physically qualified. For the second time, Holscher was honorably discharged.

Holscher asked the VA to give him the first recreation job that opened up, and was assigned as a recreational therapist in North Chicago. For the rest of his career, Holscher would bounce around the country to eight VAs, including Roseburg, Ore., Buffalo, N.Y., and St. Louis, first organizing recreation activities, then as the head of voluntary services.

He met his wife of 32 years, Julia. They had two daughters. Eventually, a job opened up in St. Cloud, and the family moved north.

Holscher worked with members of community organizations to donate their time working with veterans. Many of the volunteers are veterans themselves.

"They want to be useful again," Holscher said. "If they're a veteran, they have the inclination to do

something for other veterans. So they come out of the VA saying, 'What can I do?' "

Holscher saw many Vietnam veterans struggle with the same problems, but many don't want to face up to them. He understands.

"When I came back from Vietnam, I put it out of my mind, too. And I tried to join society, because society was just going along the way it was.

"You go from living like a dog and carrying a rifle and waiting to kill people ... And all of the sudden, it's 'Yes ma'am' and 'no sir,' and you couldn't swear, and you had to do things like it was before. And that was a transition. So you just throw Vietnam out of your mind.

"As you get older, it starts coming back to you. And you learn to accept it."

Compared to other veterans he saw who struggled to walk or feed themselves, Holscher would think, God, I'm fortunate. Although his employers often encouraged him to get tested for post-traumatic stress disorder, he didn't feel the need.

When Holscher finally did, the diagnosis was a 30 percent service-connected disability due to PTSD. "My girls were always fond of saying, 'Dad, you're only 30 percent crazy,' " he recalls with a laugh.

Has it affected him? Holscher isn't sure.

"Do I want to go back and do things over? I'd love to do different things," he said. "But I'm happy where I'm at."

Now retired, Holscher has seen the VA's mission expand and change, from once an inpatient program to now almost all outpatient. He's seen new waves of veterans, young but struggling with serious problems, many of them National Guard and reserve troops with families. He worries about the vets who have served multiple tours in Iraq or Afghanistan, something that didn't happen during Vietnam.

OUR ASSOCIATION

Craig W. Tourte

He hadn't thought about 50 years having passed since the start of the Vietnam War. In his family, there's a more important date: April 19, the day Holscher returned home from the war. His mother made it family holiday and flew the flag every year on that day. His daughters picked up the tradition. They still celebrate it every year.

For many years, Holscher didn't talk about his war experience, didn't trust those who talked too much about it. His wife and kids bought him books and movies about Vietnam, but he hasn't watched or read any of them.

"Everybody has a different story," he said. "And I have my story, and that's good enough for me. I really don't need to hear about somebody else's story."

Holscher says he's extremely proud of being a Vietnam veteran, but calls it a terrible war and says the United States had no business getting involved.

He recalls that when people were getting killed at Khe Sanh, the leaders told the troops they were doing an important service.

"They kept saying, 'They died for a cause. They died for a cause.' Well, after the siege was over, they closed the base ... They kept making us think it was so important, and all of the sudden they said it wasn't important enough and so they closed the base. And that bothered me."

Still, Holscher never considered joining the protest movement when he returned home.

"That would go against all the people that served there. I want to think that they did something good," he said.

"You fight for your country. Whether your country is right or wrong, you fight for your country, I guess, when called on."

I have had the privilege now for a number of years of attending the Khe Sanh Association Reunion. I have to tell you that starting off it was extremely difficult for me emotionally, but in the end I knew it would be a positive once I was able to get through the tears and memories. Through this process I have had the opportunity to get know the various members and officers of the Association. Oh I know we all thank the primary officers for all of their hard work for putting the reunion, magazine and apparel exchange together, but I think many do not really understand the commitment involved. I'll mention Tom Eichler, Russ Turner and John Pessoni as the present driving force of this Association and what a finely toned machine of committed, long term directors and board members they are.

I'll crack the door open here just a bit and let you peek into a meeting of the Board of Directors. Now through these many years I have sat in on a number of various meetings on a variety of issue which have been chaired by hard charging CEO's, company presidents, lobbyists and politicians. I'll report the Khe Sanh Association Board of Directors meetings are as fair and committed to procedures, representation and excellence as any that I have attended. I can't say this strongly enough, the commitment of those mentioned in honesty, time and dedication is indefinable and I look forward to many more reunions and the comradely they provide.

COLONEL LOWNDS HONOR AND REMEMBRANCE BRICK

By Craig W. Tourte

The 2012 Khe Sanh Reunion held in Washington D.C. was not only memorable but also historic in terms of our place in American and Marine Corps history. Tom Eichler, President of Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc. dedicated plaques at a ceremony honoring Colonel David E. Lownds and Colonel Wil-

liam H. Dabney held at the National Museum of the Marine Corps (NMMC), Quantico Virginia. The plaques can now be viewed by approximately 500,000 visitors to the Museum and the Semper Fidelis Memorial Park each year.

The location of the plaques placement is on the beautiful stacked stone memorial wall, a few steps from the General John A. Lejeune Rally Point. This dedication and the plaques will forever hold a special place in the history of our Association and the United States Marine Corps.

As those who attended the ceremony gathered together we watched and appreciated the entire Headquarters Unit from 22nd MEU stand in formation in our honor and join us for the dedication. At the entrance to the mile long winding paths at the Memorial Park and along the pathway, engraved bricks are placed with contain names of those others wished to honor or remember.

As I stood in the crowd preparing to walk to the dedication site, Steve Wiese who was standing next to me told me to look down at my feet. As I looked down I noted a brick with the engraving Col David Lownds, Saipan, Iwo Jima, Korea, Khe Sanh. In addition to the brick honoring Colonel Lownds I noted three bricks next to the Colonel placed in honor of Colonel Lownds family who were also in attendance at this dedication. Those bricks were engraved with the following:

Lt Gen Ron Christmas, 1962-1966, Hue City (Son-in-law),

Brian Christmas, Major, USMC (Grandson)

Jimmy Christmas, Col, USMC, (Grandson).

It was an honor and I was sure it was destiny to actually be standing near Lownds engraved brick and those of his family during this most historic occasion.



50 YEARS AFTER ITS START, VIETNAM STILL NOT HISTORY FOR ITS VETERANS

By Matthew Daneman

CHARLES MACALUSO E CO 2/26

For years, Chuck Macaluso lived with a secret.

The Rochester native served his country during the Vietnam War, fighting in the infamous Battle of Khe Sanh as a member of the 5th Marine Division, 26th Regiment, 2nd Battalion, Echo Company. He received three Purple Hearts for various non-life-threatening injuries. And when he came home in 1969, he shut up about it all.



“You didn’t even want to wear your uniform home,” said Macaluso, 65, of Greece. “In the airports, they used to have these groups, anti-war people, and the least hassle was just not to wear the uniform.”

Other vets, meanwhile, “weren’t backing Vietnam veterans because they said we lost the war,” Macaluso said. “There were a number of (veterans’) organizations that wouldn’t let Vietnam vets join because they said it wasn’t a real war. “So you just didn’t say much, just kept everything inside.”

Thomas DeMond Sr., who was drafted in 1970, ended up serving with the Army’s 18th Military Police Brigade and was based out of the Long Binh base.

“When I got home, I got told ‘take that uniform, throw it away.’ The attitude was forget about it,” said DeMond, today a retired Rochester School District teacher and commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9251 Pennington-Moye. “Vietnam wasn’t a popular war.”

The Vietnam War — which polarized and traumatized American society, even as it claimed 58,000 American lives — arguably kicked off 50 years ago this year with Operation Chopper, as Army-flown helicopters took South Vietnamese soldiers to fight near Saigon. That marked United States’s first combat missions against the Vietcong. The first American combat troops would arrive three years later. And by 1975, when the last Americans pulled out of Vietnam, an estimated 28,000 Rochesterians had served there, and 280 were killed or went missing.

Today, Vietnam veterans are applauded when they march in local parades. Their sacrifice is immortalized at the Greater Rochester Vietnam Veterans Memorial at Highland Park. And they are remembered on Veterans Day alongside the dwindling numbers of World War II and Korean War vets, the Desert Storm/Desert Shield vets and the growing number of people returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

But that moment was a long time coming. It took years for Vietnam veterans to shake the *Deer Hunter*/*Platoon* stereotype of the permanently damaged, borderline psychotic warrior.

“(Rambo star) Sylvester Stallone set us back probably 20, 30 years,” said Dick Grube, 64, of Perinton, who served in Vietnam from February 1967 to September 1968 as a medic with the Army’s 44th Medical Brigade. “The movies are funny. But everybody pictures you like that and we weren’t like that. There were a lot of guys who came home, got a job. I’ll be married 40 years next year. I help in the community. I’m a successful businessman. We didn’t all come home and run up and down with a big hunting knife and live in the woods. But that wasn’t news.”

The twin Iraqi/Afghani conflicts of the past decade have created a generation of another 2.3 million veterans, according to Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America.

But there are significant differences between Vietnam-era veterans and veterans today, such as far more women among the ranks, said James McDonough, a retired Army colonel and former CEO of Rochester's Veterans Outreach Center.

Perhaps most significantly is the nation having an all-voluntary force since the end of the draft in 1973, said McDonough, who now is the New York State Health Foundation's senior fellow for veteran affairs.

For Vietnam veterans, McDonough said, "You're off to a foreign land not by your own choice and I think it affects you. It affects you as you watch others around you dodge the draft, as you watch others around you not get your number called. Vietnam veterans, this issue of the draft has a direct link their feeling of being mistreated coming home."

Today, a number of Vietnam veterans still feel they've never gotten their due. "We didn't start getting any kind of credence until the Gulf War," said DeMond. "Certainly when they welcomed all those guys home, that was hurtful. They never said thank you to us."

Unsurprisingly, Vietnam veterans also carry more scars from their time in combat. The Centers for Disease Control's Vietnam Experience Study, which looked at the outcomes of Army veterans in the 1960s and early 1970s, found that Vietnam veterans suffered more from hearing loss and — more significantly — from certain psychological disorders such as depression, anxiety and combat-related post-traumatic stress disorder than their Vietnam-era counterparts who never saw combat.

At the same time, McDonough said, "The majority of individuals who returned from Vietnam — and Desert Storm and Iraq and Afghanistan come back — I don't want to use the word fine, there

are issues—but they don't come back (permanently) damaged. The majority return and do just fine."

In dealing with those wartime experiences, local Vietnam vets run the gamut from those who compartmentalize their experiences and go on to live their lives to "the other extreme, where that experience just rules their lives, controls their lives, leads to horrible problems of PTSD, drug addiction, alcohol addiction, homelessness," said Barry Culhane, a Vietnam-era veteran and former president of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial of Greater Rochester Inc.

"I'm worried we're going to have much worse than that with these men and women (involved in Iraq and Afghanistan) who've gone three, four sometimes even five deployments," said Culhane, a longtime veterans advocate who was inducted into New York state Senate Veterans' Hall of Fame in May "I can't imagine how they keep themselves together, how they can keep their families together, how they can keep a career together. Down the road were going to face a major crisis for a lot of these returning veterans."

Veterans returning today in many ways face a very different landscape than Vietnam veterans did, from the provisions of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994, to a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs that has become in recent years far more responsive to veterans needs, DeMond said.

"If you call the VA, in their message, before you punch in where you want to go, it says 'If you're a recent veteran, thank you for your service,'" he said. "We never got that before."

Grube said he spent much of his time in Vietnam as an ambulance driver attached to an Army hospital outside of Saigon, primarily supporting the 25th and 9th infantry divisions. Since returning, he's spent most of his time as a partner running an auto parts supply business. He also helped found the Rochester Regional Veterans Business Coun-

cil.

I think because I was so young (Vietnam) became an adventure rather than an event,” Grube said. “If I’d have been 21, 22, I think I might’ve had a lot of problems. It amazed me one human being could do this to another human being. I kept thinking ‘this is insanity’ — I looked at it that way.

“I came home, I never had a nightmare, never had a bad dream.”

But, he added, “It’s with you every day. At some point during the day, maybe for 10 seconds something will remind you of something.”

Through the 1970s, Macaluso and his wife, Joan, raised their two children while Macaluso worked at Eastman Kodak Co. And it wasn’t until the early 1980s when he and others began being out about their time in Vietnam. Macaluso has been part of Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 20 since its founding in 1983. “It probably was in the ‘90s a lot of the bigger cities were putting in all their own Vietnam veterans memorials and we’d take trips for their openings,” said Macaluso, vice president of Chapter 20 and president of the board of the Greater Rochester Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Serving there “definitely affected your life,” Macaluso says. “I go back to Vietnam every day. You can never really get all the things that took place out of your head. You think about it but you learn you have to cope and move on. Also it makes you more appreciative ... you realize how lucky you were you weren’t killed.

“It made me more ... I don’t know know if you’d call it religious, but I make sure to go to church. When you see a lot of people around you getting hurt or dying and it’s not you, you figure someone’s watching over you.”

BILL RIDER USMC KHE SANH VETERAN C CO 1/9 A HERO TO VETERANS

By Jamie Reno
Reno Dispatch

I'm proud to know Bill Rider. A friend and mentor to America's veterans for years, Rider, co-founder of American Combat Veterans of War (ACVOW), has helped thousands of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans make the sometimes tough transition from combat to civilian life

And for his efforts, Bill is finally getting the recognition he deserves. The San Diego Human Relations Commission (HRC) has just announced that Rider is the recipient of this year's Keith M. Turnham Humanitarian Award.

Each year this award honors a veteran who continues to be involved in public service. Bill, a Marine veteran who fought at Khe Sanh, the site of one of the Vietnam War's bloodiest battles, has dedicated his life to helping his fellow warriors.

A no-nonsense, straight shooting kind of guy, but also a man of great humor and warmth, Bill co-founded ACVOW in 2001, and ever since the organization has provided a variety of services to veterans and active warriors, including mentoring, advising and assisting veterans as well as active-duty personnel and military families. Bill and his fellow ACVOW staffers are especially skilled at helping warriors that are suffering from post traumatic stress (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI).

ACVOW, whose motto fittingly is, "Because sometimes the fight continues... even after the mission is completed," now has three offices in San Diego County.

A worthy recipient of this award if ever there was one, Bill, who'll be honored for both his military service to our country and for promoting human and civil rights in our community, will receive the

special award at the annual Human Relations Commission Recognition Reception on Friday, Nov. 16 from 5:50 to 7:30 at the Balboa Park Club.

In a letter to Rider, commission chair Bruce Abrams and executive director Danell Scarborough wrote, "The commission is inspired by the tireless work you have done to support and assist combat veterans. We would like to thank and appreciate you for your compassionate concern and service."

I second that. Thanks, Bill, for all you do for veterans and their families

As for the namesake of this award, Turnham was a World War II veteran, prisoner of war, and Purple Heart honoree who detailed his story in his book, *Death Denied*. Turnham's community service included eight years as a HRC commissioner, and membership on numerous community groups, including the San Carlos Community Council, Mission Trails Regional Park and Navajo Community Planners.....

- Depression
- Isolation
- Rage
- Alienation: Avoidance of Feelings
- Survival Guilt
- Anxiety Reactions
- Intrusive Thoughts
- Recurrent, re-experiencing of the trauma
- Avoidance to the point of having a phobia of places, people, and experiences.
- Chronic physical signs of hyper-arousal, including sleep problems, trouble concentrating, irritability, anger, poor concentration, blackouts or difficulty remembering things, increased tendency and reaction to being startled, and hyper-vigilance to threat.

ACVOW staff members also speak on behalf of military personnel and veterans through regular speaking engagements and media appearances. To book an ACVOW speaker for your organization, please email Bill Rider at wrider@acvow.org.

ACVOW has been literally a lifesaver for so many veterans. Its staff members are available to speak, one-on-one, with military personnel and family members to help individuals cope with battlefield related stress. If you or anyone you know exhibits any of the characteristics below, call ACVOW at 858-552-7501:

Jamie Reno, an award-winning correspondent for *Newsweek* for 20 years, has also written for *The Daily Beast*, *The New York Times*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Rolling Stone*, *People*, *Men's Journal*, *ESPN*, *Los Angeles Times*, *TV Guide*, *MSNBC*, *Newsmax*, *Entertainment Weekly*, and *USA Today*. Reno, who's won more than 95 writing awards, was the lead reporter on a *Newsweek* series on the 9/11 terrorist attacks that earned him and his colleagues the National Magazine Award for General Excellence, the highest award in magazine journalism. Reno is also an acclaimed author, singer-songwriter, advocate for cancer patients, and 16-year cancer survivor. He lives in San Diego with his wife, Gabriela, and their daughter, Mandy.



PICURES FROM ARTICLE ON PAGE 39 OF KHE SANH VETERANS AT VIETNAM
REUNION KOKOMO INDIANA SEPT 13-16, 2012.



CHANGES TO KSV DIRECTORY

AKINS, JOHN I

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC E CO 2/1, 1ST CAG
CAP 116, III MAF
Address 34704 52ND AVE SO
AUBURN WA 98001
Phone 425-351-0863
Cell Fax
Email NAMAUGOGO@COMCAST.NET

APPLEMAN, JAMES H

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC E CO 2/26 HILL 861A
WPNS PL T 60MM
Address 199 POPLAR RUN RD
DUNCANSVILLE, PA 16635
Phone 814-696-0376
Cell 814-414-1063 Fax
Email

ATOINE, GARY V

Nickname DOC
Branch/Unit USN B CO 1/26 2ND PLT HN
Address 2616 CABRILLO AVE
TORRANCE CA 90501
Phone 310-386-1336
Cell Fax
Email GARY551@EARTHLINK.NET

ARBOGAST, CLARENCE S

Nickname DUMP
Branch/Unit USMC C CO 1/26
Address PO BOX 27
BOWDEN WV 26254
Phone 304-636-5617
Cell 304-642-4701 Fax
Email CSARBOGAST@AOL.COM

BIGLER, DONALD G

Nickname BIGGIE
Branch/Unit USMC K CO 3/3
Address 1885 FM 2673 # 202
CANYON LAKE TX 78133-4765
Phone 830-708-2354
Cell 830-708-2354 Fax
Email DON@BIGLERS.ORG

BOTAMER, NICHOLAS M

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC 3RD ANTI TANK
A CO (ONTOS)
Address PO BOX 1412
LINDEN CA 95236
Phone 209-887-9546
Cell 209-298-3633 Fax
Email NMBOTAMER@YAHOO.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 575-937-3552
Cell Fax
Email SKIPPER861A@GMAIL.COM

BROPHY, MICHAEL W

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC HQ 26TH MARINES
Address 10 TERRACINA BLVD # 144
REDLANDS CA 92373-4877
Phone 909-307-3463
Cell Fax
Email

BUSHLOW, DAVID

Nickname BUSH
Branch/Unit USMC VMO-8 67-68
Address 1271 LAGUNA SECA CT
BANNING CA 92220-5420
Phone 951-845-8796
Cell Fax
Email DBUSHLOW@AOL.COM

CAMP, RICHARD D JR

Nickname DICK
Branch/Unit USMC L CO 3/26
Address 918 CORNELL ST
FREDERICKSBURG VA 22401
Phone 540-479-6024
Cell Fax
Email RICHARD.CAMP@COX.NET

CATON, LOUIS W II

Nickname WES
Branch/Unit USAF 315 AD, TASK FORCE
ALPHA 50TH TAS
Address 6934 VALLEY PIKE APT 7
MIDDLETOWN VA 22645
Phone 703-754-7448
Cell 540-216-4121 Fax
Email HAWK67RVN@COMCAST.NET

CAVAZOS, THOMAS B

Nickname TOM
Branch/Unit USMC HQ BTRY 1/13
Address 11441 PURCELL RD
LAURIN BURG NC 28352-1253
Phone 910-276-4149
Cell 910-318-1144 WORK 910-276-9234
Email VTC1@ROADRUNNER.COM

CHANDLER, BEDFORD L

Nickname SONNY
Branch/Unit USN 2/3 HILL FIGHTS
861& 881 HM3
Address 322 WOODCUTTERS LN
HARPERS FERRY WV 25425
Phone
Cell 907-209-9186 Fax
Work 907-463-6671
Email ICECHIP6@HOTMAIL.COM

CHATIGNY, ROBERT E

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC G CO 2/4
Address 1816 PAMELA LN
WEATHERFORD OK 73096-2318
Phone 580-772-2393
Cell 405-512-2306 Fax
Email BOBUSMC1968@HOTMAIL.COM

COPPESS, CHARLES R

Nickname COPE
Branch/Unit USAF 20TH TASS SOG COVEY 5A
Address 9350 N CLINTON TRL
MULLIKEN MI 48861
Phone 517-441-9478
Cell Fax
Email COPPEKAT@MSN.COM

CRISWELL, RONNIE L

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC F CO 2/26
Address 1923 HWY 1009 SOUTH
MONTICELLO KY 42633
Phone 606-340-8678
Cell 606-278-4270 Fax
Email RLCRISW@WINDSTREAM.NET

CRITTENDEN, STEVEN M (LTCOL)

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC H&S CO 2/26 & CO F 2/26
Address 4 TIMOTHY LN
STAFFORD VA 22554-1241
Phone 540-752-1569
Cell 540-845-6364 Fax
Email CRITENS@AOL.COM

CRUZ, RAYMOND

Nickname
Branch/Unit USN CBMU-301 SEABEES DET-B
Address 19659 NE 179TH ST
WOODINVILLE WA 98077-8115
Phone 425-788-2704
Cell 206-713-4032 Fax
Email SCANR2@HOTMAIL.COM

DAVENPORT, WILLARD C

Nickname
Branch/Unit USN C CO 1/3 HN
Address PO BOX 297
WEBSTER NC 28788-0297
Phone 828-586-8447
Cell 828-507-0756 Fax 828-586-8144
Email WCD1946@GMAIL.COM

DELANEY, MICHAEL B

Nickname SNAKE
Branch/Unit USMC E CO 2/26 HILL 861A
WPNS PLT 60 MM
Address 453 N KINGSBURY
DEARBORN MI 48128-1581
Phone 313-792-9400
Cell 313-929-4017 Fax
Email SNAKEDELANEY@YAHOO.COM

EDWARDS, ERIC L

Nickname
Branch/Unit USA 1ST CAVALRY DIV 191ST
MI DET E/52ND INF & H/75TH INF
Address 13256 HOCKLEY DR
FISHERS IN 46037-7682
Phone 317-436-7474
Cell 317-694-6275 Fax
Email INDY107@COMCAST.NET

EINHORN, GEORGE E

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC A CO 1/9
Address 212 HIGH ST
METUCHEN NJ 08840-2237
Phone 732-548-1370
Cell 732-887-8013 Fax
Email ALPHA196768@OPTONLINE.NET

ESSLINGER, THOMAS J

Nickname TOM
Branch/Unit USMC I CO & M CO 3/26
Address 8044 KAMEHAMEHA PLACE
GAINESVILLE, VA 20155
Phone 703-754-9083
Cell 301-980-7365
Work 703-640-6161 EXT 102
Email JTESSLINGE@AOL.COM

ESTES, LEO L

Nickname LEE
Branch/Unit USMC K CO 3/26
Address PO BOX 176
ESSINGTON, PA 19029-0176
Phone 610-521-0578
Cell 610-476-6471 Fax
Email BUSHWACKER5633@RCN.COM

KHE SANH VETERANS

FARRELL, BRIAN A

Nickname SPARKY
Branch/Unit USMC HQ BN 3RD MAR DIV
TF HOTEL, XRAY COC- KSB
Address PO BOX 58
PIERCY CA 95587
Phone 707-247-3303
Cell 707-497-9663 Fax
Email SPARKY2531@GMAIL.COM

FETTER, CHARLES H

Nickname CHARLIE
Branch/Unit USMC VMF-314, MAG-11
H&MS-11
Address 161 STONE HEDGE CT
LEBANON PA 17042-7807
Phone 717-273-1311
Cell 717-383-5386 Fax
Email CFETTER941@COMCAST.NET

GABLE VINCENT L

Nickname THUMPER VINCE
Branch/Unit USMC HQ 26TH MARINE
SNIPERS
Address 958 HOLLY OAKS LN
DANDRIDGE TN 37725
Phone 828-262-3305
Cell 828-964-0658 Fax
Email VINCE@BOONELAW.NET

GAGNON, THOMAS J

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC HQ CO 1/13 OPERATING
CHIEF FDC
Address 10 TERRACINA BLVD
REDLANDS CA 92373
Phone 909-894-6648
Cell Fax
Email

HAIGWOOD, JACK D

Nickname
Branch/Unit USN CBMU-301 DET B SEABEES
Address 1356 NICHOLAS DR
LOVELAND OH 45140
Phone
Cell 513-503-8980 Fax
Email JACK@KHESANHVET.COM

GIMPEL, FRANK I

Nickname GRUNT
Branch/Unit USMC B CO 1/9 2ND PLT
Address 15362 CARAVEL
CORPUS CHRISTI TX 78418
Phone 361-949-7684
Cell 361-442-5709 Fax
Email FRANK.GIMPELJR@DHS.GOV

GRANT, JAMES D

Nickname DOC
Branch/Unit USMC 11TH & 12TH MARINES
Address 7917 SELMA AVE APT 207
LOS ANGELES CA 90046-2669
Phone 415-668-1169
Cell Fax
Email SFDOCJDG@MSN.COM

GRIFFITH, WILLIAM

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC E CO 2/26 HILL 861A
Address 46 SYKESVILLE RD
CHESTERFIELD TWSP NJ 08515
Phone 609-723-1445
Cell 609-937-3471 Fax
Email

RED CLAY

GUERRERO, JOHN J

Nickname DOGMAN/CHIEF
Branch/Unit USMC 4TH, 7TH, 9TH & 26TH
MARINES 1ST ANTRACS
Address 347 E BONACRE RD
CATAULA GA 31894
Phone 706-987-5837
Cell 706-575-4473 Fax
Email JJDOGMAN@YAHOO.COM

GUESS, MICHAEL J

Nickname MIKE
Branch/Unit USMC C CO 1/9 2ND PLT
Address 1585 VIA SALERNO
ESCONDIDO CA 92026-2257
Phone
Cell 760-613-7141 Fax
Email SEMPERFI@DYNAMICMEDIA.COM

HAGGERTY, MICHAEL F

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC HQ 26TH MAR MAG-39
CRASH CREW
Address 507 GRANUM ST
HOLMEN WI 54636
Phone 608-780-9765
Cell Fax
Email

HAIR, JAMES L

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC C BTRY 1/13
Address 34943 PERSIMMON AVE
YUCAIPA CA 92399
Phone 909-797-3996
Cell 909-747-5826 Fax
Email JAMESLHAIR@GMAIL.COM

HANSEN, RONALD R

Nickname R&R
Branch/Unit USMC 3RD M/T BN COMM
Address 403 PINN OAK ST
INGRAM TX 78025
Phone 830-367-7543
Cell 830-257-0613 Fax
Email RROYUSMC@HCTC.NET

HARDMAN, EUGENE R

Nickname GENO
Branch/Unit USMC HQ BN 3RD MAF
1ST ENGR BN
Address 2111 N WASHINGTON AVE
ROSWELL NM 88201
Phone 575-623-7580
Cell 575-637-0027 Fax
Email hardman@nmml.edu

HOFFMAN, RICHARD L

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC 1/26 H&S CO
SCOUT/SNIPE S-2
Address 2469 S WASHINGTON C-411
TITUSVILLE FL 32780
Phone 321-615-1882
Cell 321-615-1882 Fax
Email RLH1229@AOL.COM

HOLDEN, JOHN F

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC A CO 3RD ANTI TANK ONTOS
Address 2109 DRIFTWOOD RD
SODDY DAISY TN 37379-3131
Phone 423-842-3879
Cell FAX
Email HRCAMPERS@EPBFI.COM

FALL- WINTER

ISSUE 81

HOUSEL, STEPHEN B

Nickname PORKY
Branch/Unit USA 515TH TC TRANS CO
36TH BN ATT TO 3RD MARINES
Address 218 GRAND ST BOX 873
GREENVILLE CA 95947
Phone 530-284-6829
Cell Fax
Email PEABOW@FRONTIERNET.NET

HUNKE, THOMAS

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC I CO 3/26
Address 34206 PRESTON DR
STERLING HEIGHTS MI 48312-56
Phone 586-939-4068
Cell 586-995-0045 Fax
Email THUNKE@WOWWAY.COM

HUTTON, JAMES L

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC A&B CO 3RD RECON
Address 106 SPRING VALLEY DR
ANNAPOLIS MD 21403
Phone 410-268-3152
Cell 410-353-2304 Fax
Email CAROLJIMHUTTON@YAHOO.COM

IWORRIGAN, AARON J

Nickname JIM
Branch/Unit USN CBMU-301 DET-BRAVO
RUNWAY & BUNKER DETAIL
Address 301 TROUTMAN DR PO BOX 51
GAMBELL AK 99742-0051
Phone 907-985-5048
Cell 907-985-2426 Fax 907-985-5426
Work 907-985-5826
Email AIWORRIGAN@YAHOO.COM

JONES, JOHN S

Nickname SCOTT
Branch/Unit USMC 26TH MARINES
SECURITY PLATOON
Address 1325 DOUGLAS DR
ELLERSLIE GA 31807
Phone 706-580-2817
Cell 706-580-2817 Fax 706-327-5335
Work 706-324-6097
Email hmautocaresj@knology.net

KENNY, NEIL J

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC L CO 3/26
Address 82 HIBLER ROAD
TOWNSHIP OF GREEN
NEWTON NJ 07860
Phone 917-575-1179
Cell Fax
Email AMERICANVIETVET@AOL.COM

KIPP, CHARLES

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC H&S CO 2/26 81MM
Address 4642 W 88TH ST
HOMETOWN IL 60456
Phone
Cell 708-642-1031 Fax
Email CPK134@COMCAST.NET

LARSEN, LARRY L

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC SUB UNIT 5 COMM PLT
Address 4175 ROAD 351/2
GREYBULL WY 82426
Phone 307-765-2018
Cell 307-272-1010 Fax
Email LARSEN44@TCTWEST.NET

KHE SANH VETERANS

LEWIEN, JERRY A

Nickname LOUIE
Branch/Unit USMC G CO 2/26 2ND PLT
Address 517 CRESTVIEW LANE
ST CHARLES MO 63301-0512
Phone 636-949-2468
Cell 636-288-4644 Fax
Email JERRYAL517@HOTMAIL.COM

LIPPE, MYRON A

Nickname TONY
Branch/Unit USMC B CO 3RD RECON
Address PO BOX 311266
NEW BRAUNFELS TX 78131
Phone 512-312-8266
Cell 512-312-8266 Fax
Email TONY.LIPPE@YAHOO.COM

LOPEZ, HENRY P

Nickname LUPE
Branch/Unit USMC B BTRY 1/13
Address PO BOX 3115
RUNNING SPRINGS CA 92382
Phone 909-939-0429
Cell 760-514-1719 Fax
Email FGIRON@VERIZON.NET

LORD KENNETH

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC C BTRY 1/13
Address 8445 SOUTH KANSAS CIR
HAYSVILLE KS 67060
Phone 316-524-4540
Cell Fax
Email

MACEDONIA, DAVE L

Nickname
Branch/Unit USA 1/501 INF 101AB
L CO 75TH RANGERS
Address 4804 DODSON
ANNANDALE VA 22003
Phone
Cell 904-599-5050 Fax
Email DAVEMACEDONIA@GMAIL.COM

MACY, VINSON L

Nickname
Branch/Unit USAF 15TH APS FLIGHT DECK
KHE SANH
Address PO BOX 175
WARM SPRINGS OR 97761
Phone 541-553-1385
Cell Fax
Email WASCO46@YAHOO.COM

MANN, WILLIAM J

Nickname BILL
Branch/Unit USMC HQ CO 26 MARINES
Address 1812 S WEST TEMPLE # B 125
SALT LAKE CITY UT 84115-1818
Phone 801-485-2967
Cell 801-577-2406 Fax
Work
Email BILLMANNRLT26@YAHOO.COM

MANSON, THOMAS C

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC G CO 2/1
Address 6903 AMSTEL BLUFF WAY
CHESTERFIELD VA 23838-8730
Phone 804-768-0429
Cell Fax
Email XMAR66@AOL.COM

RED CLAY

MATLUK, NICHOLAS JR.

Nickname NICK
Branch/Unit USMC C CO 1/26 3RD PLT
Address 170 OAK ST
BATH ME 04530
Phone 207-389-4041
Cell 207-949-9074 Fax
Email NMATLUKJR@AOL.COM

MAYNOR, PAUL K

Nickname KENNY
Branch/Unit USMC I CO 3/26
Address 132 KENNY LN
W. MONROE LA 71291-4721
Phone 318-396-5963
Cell 318-376-9360 Fax
Email KENANATT.NET@ATT.NET

MCCARTNEY, LAWRENCE E (MGYSGT)

Nickname MACK
Branch/Unit USMC E CO 2/26 HILL 861A
Address PO BOX 1215
BLACK MOUNTAIN NC 28711
Phone
Cell 419-340-6155 Fax
Email LEMCCARTNEY@LEMCCARTNEY.COM

MCKENNA, MICHAEL T

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC 3RD FORCE RECON
HILL 950 RADIO RELAY
Address 5460 PANORAMIC LN
SAN DIEGO CA 92121-4217
Phone 858-693-5662
Cell Fax
Email MCKENNA 14@HOTMAIL.COM

MCNEAL, DENNIS E

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC H&S CO 1/26 COMM
Address 3528 MOUNT HOPE LOOP
LEESBURG FL 34748
Phone 352-435-7733
Cell Fax
Email XDIP1@COMCAST.NET

MCNEW, MICHAEL S

Nickname MAC
Branch/Unit USMC HQ BTRY 1/13
Address 4859 MOUNT PILGRIM CHURCH RD
PROSPERITY SC 29127-7341
Phone 703-830-5723
Cell Fax
Work 202-526-1300
Email MSM415@HOTMAIL.COM

MEADE, WILLIAM B

Nickname BILL
Branch/Unit USMC C CO 1/26
Address 3500 W PITTSBURGH ST
BROKEN ARROW OK 74012
Phone 918-459-0589
Cell Fax
Email BM EADE1@COX.NET

MERIWETHER, GREAG E III

Nickname BUTCH
Branch/Unit USMC SUB UNIT 5 HQ BN
3RD MAR DIV
Address 2225 S DOME RD
GOLDEN VALLEY AZ 86413
Phone 928-565-5525
Cell 928-530-8988 Fax
Email MERIWETHER@FRONTIERNET.NET

FALL- WINTER

ISSUE 81

MESCHKE, DAVID L (REV)

Nickname DAVE
Branch/Unit USN 1/26 CHAPLAIN
Address 6763 S HIGH ST
CENTENNIAL CO 80122-1331
Phone 303-794-0095
Cell 720-220-2026 Fax
Email dave.meschke@cadence.org

MOYAR, CHARLES W

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC D CO 1/9
Address 1148 1ST ST
CANONSBURG PA 15317
Phone 724-746-0523
Cell Fax
Email CMONENLINE@HOTMAIL.COM

MUELLER, ALBERT R

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC 1ST SHORE PARTY
Address 68 LIGHTHOUSE RD UNIT 223
LAKE OZARK MO 65049
Phone
Cell Fax
Email AMUELLER63@YAHOO.COM

NACE, REUBEN F

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC B CO 1/26
Address 31 HARMONY HALL DR
CARLISLE PA 17013-8469
Phone 717-249-3417
Cell 717-448-2059 Fax
Email

NUNN, JOHN B

Nickname DOC
Branch/Unit USN K CO 3/4 HN
Address 1710 FAIRWAY CT
BELEN NM 87002
Phone 512-712-4617
Cell 512-914-3286 Fax
Email JOHN-NUNN@ATT.NET

OLSCHEWSKE, WALTER

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC 1/11 FDC, TAD 1/1
Address 496 MARTIN AVE
FOND DU LAC WI 54935
Phone
Cell Fax
Email W.OLSCHEWSKI@HOTMAIL.COM

OLSON, GERALD K

Nickname GUNNY, OLE
Branch/Unit USMC G CO 2/3 HILL FIGHTS
MARINE ADVISORY TEAM # 1
Address 5010 130TH PL NE
MARYSVILLE WA 98271-8649
Phone 360-659-8009
Cell 360-348-2875 Fax
Email USMCGRUNT64@GMAIL.COM

OYSTER, JAMES C

Nickname JIM
Branch/Unit USMC D CO 1/26
Address 3257 MAGNOLIA LANDING LN
NORTH FORT MEYERS FL 33917
Phone 239-217-0206
Cell 419-569-3878 Fax
Email JBORECESS@YAHOO.COM

KHE SANH VETERANS

OROZCO, RAUL JR

Nickname OZ
Branch/Unit USMC HQ CO RADIO
OPERATOR 26TH MARINES
Address PO BOX 29855
SAN ANTONIO TX
78229-0855
Phone
Cell 210-710-6949 Fax
Email OROZCO.RAUL@HOTMAIL.COM

PELOQUIN, RICHARD A JR

Nickname
Branch/Unit CIV SON OF KSV DICK
PELOQUIN SR
Address 12 CARBERRY RD
PETERSHAM MA 01366
Phone 978-724-6652
Cell 978-580-4184 Fax
Email DICK@THEPELOQUINS.COM

PELON, SHARON L

Nickname LYNN
Branch/Unit CIV HONOR OF JAMES
NEIL TYCZ KIA KSB
Address 5590 BUTTERNUT CT
GREENDALE WI 53129-1327
Phone 414-587-7922
Cell 414-587-7922 Fax
Email DIENTAE@YAHOO.COM

PERRON, WILLIAM F

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC C CO 1/9
Address 3-2 VICTORIA DR
AUBURN MA 01501
Phone 508-832-7296
Cell 508-430-8331 Fax
Email CAPECODDERS1111@AOL.COM

PITTMAN, CHARLES A SR

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC W BTRY 1/13 4.2 MORTARS
Address 10660 N OLD GRANVILLE RD
ALBANY, IN 47320
Phone 765-215-6817
Cell 765-215-6817 Fax
Email CORKYANDGRUMPY@YAHOO.COM

POPYNIA, JOHN V

Nickname POP
Branch/Unit USMC H&S CO 3/26 COMM
Address 222 ORR AVE
CHESWICK PA 15024
Phone 724-274-7798
Cell 412-737-2210 Fax
Email HARDCASEONE@YAHOO.COM

PROVENCIO, RAMON JR

Nickname
Branch/Unit SUBSCRIBER SON OF RAMON
PROVENCIO SU# 2
Address 3001 NEW RANCH COURT
CHULA VISTA CA 91914
Phone 619-656-8611
Cell 619-250-1358 Fax
Work 619-528-2298
Email PROVENCIO@COX.NET

RAY, BERNARD F II

Nickname BERNIE
Branch/Unit USMC 1ST PROV 155
HOWITZER DET
PAPA BTRY 3/12
Address 32601 PLEASANT HILL RD
KINGSTON IL 60145
Phone 815-784-5412
Cell 815-762-2374 Fax
Email LLYNNSRAY@AOL.COM

RED CLAY

RAY, THOMAS J

Nickname TOMMY
Branch/Unit USMC H CO 2/26
Address 3498 CLYDE RD
EVELETH MN 55734-8505
Phone 218-744-4444
Cell 763-807-2663 Fax
Email TOMRAY4444@GMAIL.COM

REES, RONALD M

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC B CO 1/26 3RD PLT
Address 68435 MILLCREEK LN
COVE OR 97824
Phone 541-805-9564
Cell 541-805-9564 Fax
Email REESUSMC@YAHOO.COM

RIDGEWAY, RONALD L

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC B CO 1/26
3RD PLT 3RD SQD POW
Address PO BOX 798
HALLETTSVILLE TX 77964
Phone 281-684-9493
Cell Fax
Email

RIVEZZO, MICHAEL F

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC 3RD RECON
Address 3163 COLUMBRINA CIR
PORT ST LUCIE FL 34952
Phone 570-894-1523
Cell 570-982-1313 Fax
Email RIVEZZOM@YAHOO.COM

RONAN, EDMUND T

Nickname ET
Branch/Unit USMC B CO 1/3 & B CO 3RD RECON
Address 9913 SHADY SLOPE CT
FAIRFAX STATION VA 22039
Phone 703-440-8486
Cell 703-593-0153 Fax
Email ETRONAN@BELLSOUTH.NET

ROSENAL, GEORGE E (MAJOR)

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC VMO-6
1ST Address PO BOX 88256
COLORADO SPRINGS CO 80908
Phone 719-495-8849
Cell 719-338-9800 Fax 719-495-8859
2ND Address PO BOX 383
DATIL NM 87821
Phone 575-772-5569
Cell Fax 719-495-8859
Email g.rosental@att.net & magnet-ass@att.net

ROTTINGHAUS, THOMAS

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC HDQTRS CO 3/26
Address 12217 EAGLE RIDGE DR
WALTON KY 41094
Phone 859-485-1394
Cell 859-547-7979 Fax
Email ROTTFAM1@INSIGHTBB.COM

SCHULTZ, DAVID P

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC HO CO 26TH MARINES
Address 1401 KELLY DR
EAST AURORA NY 14052
Phone 716-652-1691
Cell
Email DSCHULTZ00411@ROADRUNNER.COM

FALL- WINTER

ISSUE 81

SHERER, LARRY D

Nickname
Branch/Unit USN HMM-262 HM-2
Address 197 LAKESHORE DR
IVA SC 29655
Phone 864-348-2514
Cell Fax
Email LDS003@WETEL.NET

SMITH, SAMUEL T

Nickname SAM
Branch/Unit USMC F CO 2/26
Address 861 N TURQUOISE DR
SPRING VALLEY AZ 85614
Phone 520-777-8966
Cell Fax
Email ST3SMITH@COX.NET

THIBAUT, RAYMOND

Nickname SGT T
Branch/Unit USMC B CO 1/9
Address 3945 DOCKERS DR
RUSKIN FL 33570
Phone 903-738-9153
Cell Fax
Email TXANGELFIRE6@YAHOO.COM

THAYER, DENNIS G

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC A CO 1/26
Address 10066 PANDORA DR
LA MESA CA 91941
Phone 619-713-2490
Cell 619-244-8698 Fax
mail DTHAYER05@GMAIL.COM

THOMPSON, FRANK L

Nickname GUNNY
Branch/Unit USMC G CO 2/26 & D CO 1/9
& P-5 CAC
Address 4313 HOWELL ST
PHILADELPHIA PA 19135
Phone
Cell 267-235-9395 Fax
Email

TIPPNER, GEORGE S

Nickname TIP
Branch/Unit USMC A CO 1ST SP & C CO 3RD SP
Address 109 JUNIPER LN
FAIRMONT WV 26554
Phone 304-363-3161
Cell 304-677-0345 Fax
Email GTIPPNER@FRONTIER.COM

TRANUM, CHARLES R

Nickname CHUCK
Branch/Unit USMC B CO 1/9 & B CO 1/26
Address 968 OTTAWA DR
YOUNGSTOWN OH 44511
Phone 330-783-1607
Cell 404-432-7614 Fax
Email

WALLER, ELBERT R

Nickname RAY
Branch/Unit USN F CO 2/26 HN
Address 610 LAKE FOREST DR SE
PINEHURST NC 28374
Phone 910-295-5943
Cell 910-783-4364 Fax
Email RWALLER@NC.RR.COM

WIELEBSKI, JOHN T

Nickname SKI
Branch/Unit USMC A CO 1/26 1ST PLT
Address 2018 S SAN RAY
GREEN VALLEY AZ 85614
Phone
Cell 520-449-4233 Fax
Email JOHN2201169@GMAIL.COM

KHE SANH VETERANS

WOLFE, JOHN C SR

Nickname WOLFMAN
Branch/Unit USMC 3/26 9TH MAB
SCOUT/SNIPER
Address 310 S CENTRAL
MARIONVILLE MO 65705
Phone 417-258-7712
Cell 417-258-7712 Fax
Email JOHNWOLFE59@YAHOO.COM

ZIMMERMAN, EDWARD E

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC F CO 2/26 3RD PLT
Address 303 ALEEDA BLVD
BEARCREEK TWNPS PA 18702
Phone 570-371-3371
Cell Fax
Email ZIMMO@PTD.NET

ADDITIONS

ARTHUR, STANLEY H

Nickname STAN
Branch/Unit USMC C CO 1/26
Address 146 STANIELS RD
LOUDON NH 03307-0717
Phone 603-961-0083
Cell Fax
Email STARTHUR@COMCAST.NET

BALKOVICH, MARC

Nickname TURTLE
Branch/Unit USMC WHISKEY BTRY 1/11
Address 31413 RED OAK LN
WATERFORD WI 53185
Phone
Cell 414-731-0163
Email MBALKOVICH@GMAIL.COM

BEGAY, VINCENT W

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC A CO 1/26
Address PO BOX 31212
FLAGSTAFF AZ 86003
Phone 928-527-8852
Cell Fax
Email VWBEGAY49@YAHOO.COM

BORDELON, RONALD J

Nickname RAINMAN
Branch/Unit USMC WHISKEY BTRY 1/11
Address 15788 IRENE RD
FOLSON LA 70437
Phone 985-796-8345
Cell 504-451-1076 Fax
Email RONALDBORDELON@HOTMAIL.COM

BOWKER, KENNETH J

Nickname BOWK
Branch/Unit USMC 2/26 E CO & 1/3 & 2/9
Address 3934 RT 563
CHATSWORTH NJ 08016
Phone 609-726-1520
Cell 609-405-3994 Fax 609-726-0344
Email UMPIREBLU@AOL.COM

BOYLE, MICHAEL K

Nickname THUMPER
Branch/Unit USMC 5TH COMM BN
Address 26 WHITE TAIL LN
CANAAH NH 03741
Phone 603-523-7374
Cell 908-391-2049 Fax
Email MKBOYLE@MYFAIRPOINT.NET

RED CLAY

BROOKS-MILLER, CHRISTOPHER S

Nickname SCOTT
Branch/Unit USMC L BTRY 1/12
Address 22310 N 700TH RD
TABLE GROVE IL 61482
Phone 309-758-5199
Cell 309-857-5272 Fax
Email MARINEARCHITECT@LIVE.COM

CARBAUGH, WILLIAM B

Nickname
Branch/Unit USA 161ST AVIATION CO
Address PO BOX 908
MEADOW VISTA CA 95722
Phone 530-878-0149
Cell Fax
Email CARBAUGHBILL@MSN.COM

DOUGLAS, ELDRIDGE E.

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC H CO 2/26 HILL 558
Address 1607 MAURY ST
ALCOA TN 37701
Phone 865-983-2067 Fax
Cell 865-216-1764
Email

DOUGHERTY, ROBERT T

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC B CO 3RD TANKS
Address 4323 MOXLEY VALLEY DR
MOUNT AIRY MD 21771-4815
Phone 301-798-2220
Cell Fax
Email RTDOUGH@MSN.COM

FISH, JOHN L

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC H&S CO 3/26 ATTACHED
TO KILO CO
Address 2847 GLEN ECHO DR
LIZELLA GA 31052
Phone 478-284-9031
Cell 478-284-9031 Fax
Email JLFISH@COX.NET

FREW, JAMES F

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC F CO 2/1
81MM MORTARS F/O
Address 5405 E. GRANITE ST # 241
TUCSON AZ 85707-3004
Phone 520-300-0861
Cell
Email BLUEGRISLY@MSN.COM

GLISSON, WADE R

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC VMO-6-MAG-16 DET TO
L CO 3/26
Address 66 MEMORIAL PARKWAY
ATLANTIC HIGHLANDS NJ 07716
Phone 732-291-3855
Cell Fax
Email

GUARINO, PASQUALE

Nickname PAT
Branch/Unit USMC SHORE PARTY BN 3-1
Address 205 VALLEY VIEW DR
THOMASTON CT 06787
Phone 860-283-9433
Cell
Email PFGUARINO@SNET.NET

FALL- WINTER

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HART, EDMOND L

Nickname BUD
Branch/Unit USMC VMO-2 & VMO-6 CREW CHIEF
Address 107 E 13TH ST
PORT ANGELES WA 98362
Phone 360-417-1981
Cell 360-775-8121
Email ELFTALER@AOL.COM

HOLDEN, JOHN F

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC A CO 3RD ANTI TANK ONTOS
Address 2109 DRIFTWOOD RD
SODDY DAISY TN 37379-3131
Phone 423-842-3879
Cell FAX
Email HRCAMPERS@EPBFI.COM

HOLLOWAY, BENNY L

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC FLSSG-BRAVO
Address 13 TALQUIN TRACE LN
SOPCHOPPY FL 32358
Phone 850-962-2358
Cell 334-798-1382 Fax
Email REDHORSE1225@YAHOO.COM

KING, JAMES R

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC M CO 3/26
Address 1241 N MAIN ST
NAPERVILLE IL 60563
Phone 630-355-7241
Cell 708-306-1792 Work 708-386-9322
Email JKING@OAKPARKRC.COM

KINNICK, GENE

Nickname
Branch/Unit USN CBMU-301 DET-B BUL-3
SEABEES
Address 226201 E SR 397
KENNEWICK WA 99337-6501
Phone 509-586-7082
Cell 509-939-0032 Fax
Email

KOURY, ROBERT C JR

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC DELTA CO 1/1
Address 2961 A HUNTER MILL RD # 660
OAKTON VA 22124
Phone 703-906-5255
Cell SAME Fax
Email RCKOURY@MAC.COM

LUSHER, HOMER E

Nickname ED
Branch/Unit USMC A BTRY 1/13
Address 1610 PERDEW AVE
RIDGECREST CA 93555-8955
Phone
Cell 760-382-8800 Fax
Email

MAJERIK, JAMES E

Nickname
Branch/Unit USAF 15TH AERIAL PORT SQDN
Address 80 FAIR HARBOR RD
BIRMINGHAM AL 35209
Phone 205-879-4356
Cell 205-862-3102
Email JIMMAJERIK@AOL.COM

KHE SANH VETERANS**MCBRIDE, LAWRENCE D**

Nickname LARRY
Branch/Unit USN F CO 2/26 HILL 558 HN
Address 947 PETRAS ST
ERIE CO 80516
Phone 303-828-0509
Cell 970-948-4969 Fax
Email LMCBRIDE79@YAHOO.COM

MCNOWN, DAVID H.

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC 1/11 NAVAL GUNFIRE
SECTION HILL 424
Address 1030 MILLSTONE PT
BOGART GA 30622-2420
Phone 706-207-5719 Fax
Cell 706-207-5719
Email KOUDAV@YAHOO.COM

MENICH, STEVEN E

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC B CO 1/26 (SUBSCRIBER)
SON OF MEMBER
Address 6542 TUSCAWARAS RD
MIDLAND PA 15059
Phone 724-643-6250
Cell 724-312-4324 Fax
Email BASEBALLMOM3@HUGHES.NET

MUNOZ, RICHARD A.

Nickname RICK
Branch/Unit C CO 1/26
Address 5926 LAKE CHAMPLAIN
SAN ANTONIO TX 78233
Phone 210-657-2226
Cell 210-724-8675 Fax 210-657-2226
Email MAN104WYE@YAHOO.COM

PORTELLO, FRANK

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC A CO 3RD ANTI TANKS
Address 10901 CONNEMARA CT
BAKERSFIELD CA 93312
Phone 661-587-9612
Cell 661-706-7838
Email FPORTELLO@AOL.COM

RALSTON, ROGER

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC L CO 3/9 2ND PLT
Address 35 TORREY PINES CT
NEWNAN GA 30265
Phone 770-304-8131
Cell 770-304-0396
Email ROGER@TRI-STATECOMPONENTS.NET

ROBINSON, THOMAS W.

Nickname ROBBY
Branch/Unit USMC HQ 26TH MARINES
COMM PLT
Address 1320 CHESTER PL
BAKERSFIELD CA 93304
Phone 661-328-0820
Cell 661-615-0398-661-900-2230
Email ROBINSON_6775@YAHOO.COM

ROGERS, ROBERT H

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC HQ BTRY 1/13 S-4
Address 221 WATERS EDGE DR
TOMS RIVER NJ 08753
Phone 732-270-6435
Cell 732-245-4751 Fax
Email SCHOOLHOUSELI@VERIZON.NET

RED CLAY**SANDERS, ROGER L**

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC WHISKEY BTRY 1/13
Address 10 EMMA CT
MAH WAH NJ 07430
Phone 912-638-4144 Home Georgia
201-760-0226 Home JEW JERSEY
Cell 201-803-6673 Fax 201-760-0228
Email WEAVERSANDERS@GMAIL.COM

SCHALLER, JAMES R

Nickname
Branch/Unit USA A 1/8 1ST CAV DIV
Address 5036 BRIAN CENTER LN
WINSTON-SALEM NC 27106
Phone 336-744-8078
Cell Fax
Email BUFFALOETCJC@AOL.COM

SCURLOCK, TERRY L

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC C BTRY 1/13 F/O HILLS
881S&N, KSCB
Address 8294 BLAINE PL
CROWN POINT IN 46307-9665
Phone 219-365-4950 Fax
Cell 219-613-3565
Email TV625@YAHOO.COM

SIMONS, WILLIAM J

Nickname BILL
Branch/Unit USMC 2ND BN 6TH MARINES
Address 17 PLANTS DAM RD
EAST LYME CT 06333
Phone 860-739-3730
Cell 860-449-3424 Fax
Email JST1PUTT@AOL.COM

STEPP, WILLIAM B

Nickname BILL
Branch/Unit USMC A BTRY 1/13
Address 600 HIGHBRIDGE RD
VERMILION OH 44089
Phone 440-963-4243
Cell 440-320-8367 Fax
Email NOBS105@HOTMAIL.COM

SULLIVAN, DAVID

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC F CO 2/1
Address 632 MUSKINGUM AVE NW
BREWSTER, OH 44613
Phone 330-767-4565
Cell Fax
Email

TELLEZ, ELPIDIO JR

Nickname PETE
Branch/Unit USMC H&S CO 2/26
ADDRESS 974 COLORADO ST # 3
CHICO CA 95928
Phone 530-899-1992
Cell 530-774-8349 Fax
Email

THOMPSON, DAVID C

Nickname
Branch/Unit USMC LOX 32 ASSOCIATE
MEMBER
Address 603 SW 6TH AVE
CAPE CORAL FL 33991
Phone 239-772-4705 Fax 239-772-4705
Cell 239-849-7527
Email DAMRACING@EMBARQMAIL.COM

FALL- WINTER**ISSUE 81****VARHOLA, JOHN H**

Nickname JAY
Branch/Unit USMC A CP 3RD SHORE PARTY
Address 559 ROOSEVELT AVE
TOMS RIVER NJ 08753
Phone 732-270-3195
Cell FAX
Email JOHN2845@VERIZON.NET

WILLIAMS, ROBERT E

Nickname BUCKEYE BOB
Branch/Unit USN NEPHEW OF JERRY
BURKHEAD, A CO 1/9 KIA HILL
64 08 FEB 68
Address 1434 LAFAYETTE BLVD
NORFOLK VA 23509
Phone 757-625-1530
Cell 757-705-2360 Fax
Email REW2010REW@GMAIL.COM

ROBERT J. CRABB
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.

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 5/1/2013 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/MIA in Vietnam if family members are paid up, associate members of KSV, Inc. Children or grandchildren 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 personal essay. 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.

SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

The amount of financial award per applicant will be determined by the Review Committee’s scoring results. The awards will be granted for a maximum of 4 years per student. A new application will be required for each **continuous** year applied.

Achievement Award Levels are:

The Col. David A. Lownds Award – for top achievement in Application Review (one award or tie)

The Sgt. Major James T. Gaynor Award – for 2nd place achievement in Application Review (5 awards)

The Col. William H. Dabney Award – for 3rd place achievement in Application Review (6 awards)

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 the chairman's address on page one of this application.

Scholarship Guidelines and Purpose

1. The financial award is to be used to help defray costs of tuition, fees and books at an accredited institution of the applicant'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. An alternate of each scholarship award is to be chosen at the time of selection of recipients.

3. The KSVSF committee Chair and the treasurer of the Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc., will send a check for the full year's award amount to the selected students upon final approval by the KSV President.

4. The recipient of a scholarship shall be notified no later than the end of the month of August of the coming school year.

5. **Scholarship Applications must be received by the Committee Chair on or before MAY 1 of the school year applied for.** *** (This is an important, NEW change to previous years)***

6. 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.

7. Criteria: Point Selection System /Maximum of 100 regular points or 115 with bonus points

a. Scholastic achievement / grade point average. Max = 40 points max. (attach last school GPA transcript)
example below:

GPA 4.0 x 10 = 40 points

GPA 3.5 x 10 = 35 points

GPA 3.0 x 10 = 30 points

GPA 2.5 x 10 = 25 points

b. Extracurricular activities. Max = 30 points total

Description of personal experience in the following type of activities (Be Specific!);

Student government = 10 points max.

Community related services = 10 points max.

Other (i.e. work experience, sports) = 10 points max.

c. Personal essay (300 words min.) on educational goals, career goals, and current self-achievement
= 30 points max. (neatness, organization and content are important)

d. Bonus Points = 10 bonus points for being a military veteran

= 5 bonus points for an accredited college GPA (Grade Point Average) transcript

Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc. Scholarship Foundation**Application Form**

Date of Application: _____

1. Applicant Information: (PRINT CAREFULLY AND LEGIBLY!!)

Name: last _____, first _____ MI _____

Address: Street _____ City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Home phone: _____ E-mail address: _____

Applicant Birthdate: _____

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

Name: Last _____ First name _____

Relationship to applicant; _____

Branch of service _____

Unit served at Khe Sanh _____ Dates Served _____

3. School Information: (School to be attending)

School Name: _____

School Address: Street _____ City _____

State _____ Zip code _____

School Phone number: _____

Curriculum/intended course of study _____

School year to be funded _____

4. Applicant Personal History (Be Specific)**a. School Activities participated in: (athletics, publishing, music, art, communications, offices held, academic honors and prizes, student government participation, etc.)**

b. Community Activities participated in; (military service, volunteer service to community, church, government, environmental, health, etc.)

c. Mailing Packet (Due 01 May)

ENCLOSE THESE COMPLETED APPLICATION FORMS

- (1) A COPY OF YOUR LAST GPA TRANSCRIPT
- (2) A SMALL PICTURE OF YOURSELF
- (3) A PERSONAL ESSAY (300 WORDS min.) TELLING OF YOUR ACADEMIC, COMMUNITY AND VOCATIONAL EXPERIENCES AND CAREER PLANS

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

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

Signature of Applicant

Actual Signature of
Khe Sanh Veteran Parent or Grandparent

NOTE:

IMPORTANT!! APPLICATION DEADLINE MAY 1ST OF THE SCHOOL YEAR APPLIED

IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE DATA PRIVACY ACT, PRIVATE INFORMATION GATHERED HEREIN WILL BE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL TO KHE SANH VETERANS, INC.

KHE SANH VETERANS, INC. SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION COMMITTEE

Approved:

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

Tom Eichler, President Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc.

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY HOLIDAYS KHE SANH VETERANS
MAY YOU HAVE A HAPPY & HEALTY NEW YEAR





HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL
OUR KSV MARINES &
CORPSMAN

As we pause to celebrate the 237th birthday of our Corps, we reflect on the rich legacy of service handed down to us, we recommit ourselves to the tasks at hand, and we look forward toward a bright future in service to our country.

Marines exist to fight and win our Nation's battles. We are most proud of our well earned reputation for answering the clarion call first. This was never more evident than at the epic battle of Guadalcanal 70 years ago. Picked to lead the first allied counter-offensive of the Pacific war because they were the "most ready," Marines landed on 7 August 1942 in the Solomon Islands. They persevered through months of unremitting deprivation and bitter combat. By the time the veterans of the Blue Diamond, the Cactus Air Force, our legendary Marine Raiders, and initial elements of the Follow-Me Division gathered together to raise a canteen and toast the birthday of their beloved Corps some three months later, the battle was no longer an issue. The situation was well in hand ... victory was assured.

We carry that same legacy of resolute commitment and valor today. Over the past year, Marines have stood firm in the toughest of circumstances and on numerous occasions. We've taken the fight to the enemy in Helmand and to the Horn of Africa. We've manned the ramparts of beleaguered embassies in the Middle East and North Africa, fought alongside our allies throughout the world, while behind the scenes, afloat and ashore, other Marines did the painstaking hard work required to maintain our high levels of readiness and efficiency.

As we look toward the future, we know that our sentimental place in the hearts of our fellow Americans and critical role in the defense of our way of life are assured. America has always wanted a Marine Corps .. it's always been that way. Now, more than ever, America needs its Marines as we confront a dangerous and unpredictable world. Faced with difficult days ahead, we will continue to draw strength from our rich heritage and the shared values of the Marines to our left and to our right. We know who we are ... we know what we stand for. As ever we will strive to be found worthy of the legendary trust of our fellow Americans.

I salute the enduring faithfulness of those who have gone before, of those who wear our cloth today, and of the families who stand so resolutely at our sides. Happy Birthday, Marines!

Semper Fidelis,
JAMES F. AMOS
General, U.S. Marine Corps

Dear Mr. Eichler

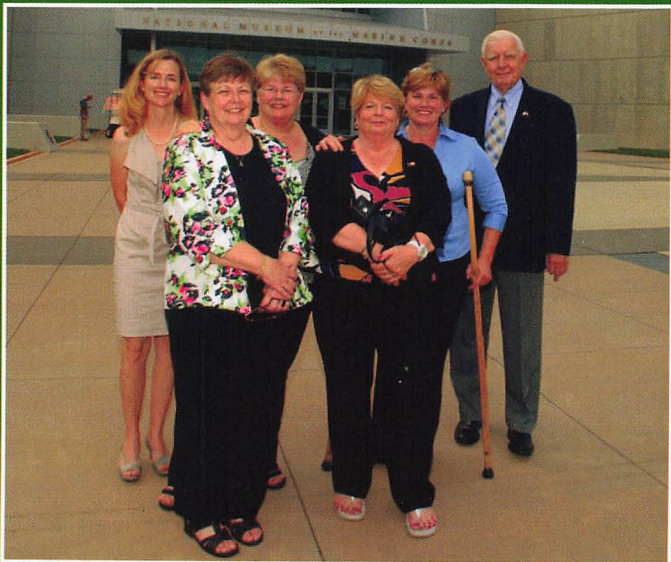
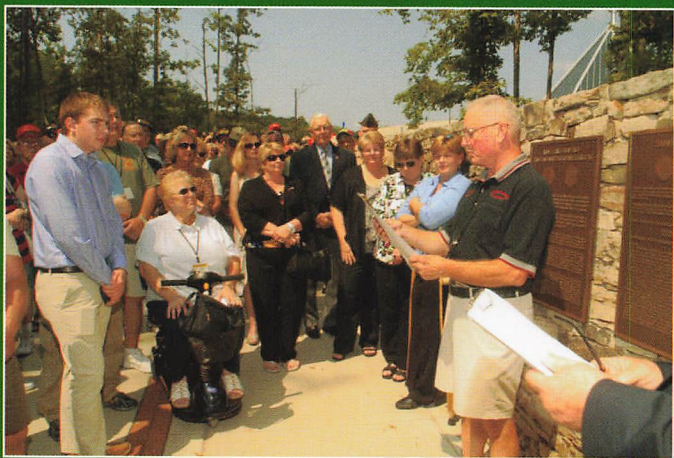
My Thanks to all the Khe Sanh Veterans for your honor to Colonel Dabney with the installation of Memorial Plaques at the National Museum of the Marine Corps. My thanks for your invitation to attend the dedication and the awards banquet following. Unfortunately due to hip surgery I am moving slowly and must regret the wonderful invitations, but I will be with you in spirit. My thanks and love to you all.

Dear Khe Sanh Veterans,

To all of you who came and wrote and called and gave in Bill's memory. This brings thanks from his grateful wife and children. Our memories and gifts keep alive the lineage he claimed with such faith and pride He was one of the lucky ones who truly loved his life and had fun living it. His greatest attribute was his faith in his "troops," whether they were his family, his cadets, or especially his Marines. I was privileged to share that life. He could have accorded me no greater honor, nor could you by your contribution to his legacy.

With Love and Gratitude
Virginia Dabney

Ron Rayner, the KSV Chaplain Opened the ceremony reading the Plaques hanging on the memorial wall, honoring the 26Th Marine Regiment & Officers & Men who defended Hill 881S. KSV President Tom Eichler presented a personal Plaque Honoring Colonel Lownds to LtGen Christmas, Son-In-Law of Colonel Lownds and the immediate members of the Lownds Family. The plaque honoring Colonel Dabney was presented to Tom Esslinger, and other KSV members who served on Hill 881S. Virginia Dabney could not attend due to a recent injury(Tom Eichler read a letter of thanks Virginia wrote to the members of the KSV.) Colonel James D. Christmas C/O of the 22nd MEU presented a plaque to Tom Eichler, thanking the KSV for their service at Khe Sanh.





**THE VMO-6 MEMORIAL...THAT OUR BROTHERS IN ARMS WHO
GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR THEIR GOD, THEIR COUNTRY, AND
THEIR FELLOW MARINES...SHALL NOT BE FORGOTTEN
DEDICATED 17 MAY, 2012**

