Heroes for America

By Bernard Edelman and Roy Asfar

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Heros for America - Contents

Introduction 5

Paul Giannonce:
Winning Hearts and Minds *7*

Mike Kelley:
Changing the Veteran Stereotype *12*

Dr. Skip Burkle:
Doctor's Destiny *16*

Gerry Byrne:
Service was Degree in Leadership *21*

Al Peck:
Helping Homeless Veterans *23*

Michael Naranjo:
Artist Who Sees with His Hands *26*

Ed Vick:
Learning about Leading
on the Mekong *29*

Rich Liebler:
A New Battle in an Urban War Zone *32*

Joe Rich:
From Reporting about to Helping *35*

Monte Wilson: Fighting for Fellow
Veterans *37*

Duery Felton:
Artifacts at the Wall, a 'Sacred Trust' *40*

Tyrone Dancy:
Passion and Committment *42*

General Martin Steele:
Instilling Tradition *45*

Clebe McClary:
Overcoming the Odds *47*

Ed McSorley:
Teaching Service and Sacrifice *49*

Vince McGowan:
The Moving Force *52*

Jim Kallstrom:
Fighting Against Terrorism *55*

Paul Newman:
Matinee Idol with a Social Conscience *57*

Bob DeAngelo:
Focusing Kids on a Good Start *60*

John C. Whitehead:
Redeveloping Lower Manhattan *62*

Father Phil Salois:
Priest with a Silver Star *64*

Andy Baumgartner:
Ex-Marine, Teacher of the Year *67*

Bob McFarland:
VA's Chief Information Officer *69*

Mike Plummer:
'Adopt-a-Platoon' *72*

Dr. Frank Scarpa:
Sugical Classroom in War Zone *75*

Bob Macauley:
Adventure in Philanthropy *59*

Paul Buddy Bucha:
For Those Unrecognized *77*

Bob Peragallo:
'Vets with a Mission' *82*

Jim Manley:
For Children of Fellow Marines *85*

Jack Farley:
Teaching Disabled Vets to Ski *87*

Robert Glassman:
Banker Dedicated to Justice *90*

Claudia Kennedy:
Helping Vunerable Children *71*

John Townsley:
Healing Psychological Wounds *94*

Chuck Meadows: Clearing Exploded
Relics of War *96*

Paul McHale: Leads at the Front Line
as the DoD's Chief of Homeland
Security *99*

Bill Cosby:
An Abiding Belief in Education *100*

Bob Hollingsworth:
Reserve and Guard Advocate *103*

Terry Allvord:
Honoring Heroes, at Home and
Abroad *106*

Mitchell Paige:
Exposing Medal of Honor
Imposters *108*

Ray Kelly: Top Cop's Baptism
of Leadership in the Corps *111*

Ned Powell: Reaffirming the
Message of the USO *114*

David Robinson: An All-Star On
and Off the Court *117*

Bonnie Carroll:
When a Loved One in
Uniform Dies *119*

Gen. Nels Running:
Commemorating the Korean War *122*

Pat and Kevin Tillman:
Proud to Serve *124*

Rick Rescorla:
Remembering Special 9/11 Hero *126*

Admiral Richard H. Carmona:
Nation's Top Doc *128*

Anthony Principi:
VA Secretary's Balancing Act *130*

Adm. Barry Black:
Celebrating Diversity of
Our Nation *133*

John Warner:
Lifelong Dedication *135*

Steve Ritchie:
Air Force Ace *138*

Tom Corey:
Battling for Disabled Veterans *141*

Lt. Col. Andrew Lourake:
Role Model for People
with Disabilities *146*

Introduction

What do these people have in common?

These are the men and women who have offered up their lives for the protection and freedom of the United States and its citizens. And then after their service, they continued on, succeeding continuing to help our country, as well as their fellow service men and women and their families.

They come from all walks of life. They have found their niche in government service, in business, in philanthropy. Their service stretches from World War II until today's conflict in Iraq. Celebrities, businessmen, sports figures, retired military -- a mix of public and private life. Some served a single tour, some were awarded the Medal of Honor.

But they all have one thing in common. They are heroes.

Let us salute these heroes, and once again honor them for their bravery, determination, compassion, and success.

I am proud to honor these men and women. I am sure that after you read their stories, you will be proud, too.

H. Scott Higgins
Founder and CEO
Veterans Advantage

P.S. We recognize and honor a new HeroVet® each month on www.veteransadvantage.com, and each HeroVet is awarded a lifetime membership in Veterans Advantage. If you know of someone who you believe should be nominated as a HeroVet, please email us at herovet@veteransadvantage.com.

This book is dedicated to Pat Tillman,

who never got to be a veteran.

Paul Giannone: Winning Hearts and Minds

It was early in 1968, and the repercussions of the Communists' surprise Tet Offensive were dominating the headlines. Tet had shaken the waning belief of many both in Vietnam and back in The World that the war was still winnable. But Paul Giannone, an Italian-American son of the New York heartland, wasn't focused on the politics of the war. He enlisted in the Army, volunteering to be a medic. He was eager. He was searching. He was 19.

"I knew I didn't want to shoot anybody, but I did want to go to Vietnam," he reflects from his home in Marietta, Georgia, forty-five minutes from downtown Atlanta, where he works now for CARE. "I guess I believed all the John Wayne movies I ever saw. And I had this thing in the back of my head about communism. I just wasn't sure whether all the stuff I had heard was right or wrong; I thought I ought to go and find out for myself."

He was, he admits, also flunking out of college. He had just broken up with a girlfriend with whom he had thought he was incredibly in love. Vietnam "just seemed like the place to be at the time." He would be there for 24 months. True to the terms of his enlistment, he trained at Fort Sam Houston in Texas as a 91 Bravo 20: combat medic. He arrived in Vietnam in April 1969. By then, he was getting a little scared.

When he was assigned to the "29 CA," he admits he "kind of really panicked. 'Cause I thought 'CA' stood for 'Combat Assault.' And this unit was up in I Corps, which at that time was Marine country. I mean, I was just shakin' in my boots. They flew me up to Danang, and some sergeant picked me up at the airport. When I questioned him about 'CA,' he just laughed. You're with Civil Affairs."

For the next year, he was based at Hoi An, a dusty village near Danang. His platoon worked mostly with refugees in rural health care, and he wasn't particularly thrilled with the assignment. "Part of me was relieved, but part of me said, 'Wait a minute, I'm trained as a combat medic, not in public health.' I didn't really know how to do anything. I was teamed with this guy, Jim Durbin, who'd been there a while. He was sort of my mentor and protector. He was probably one year older than me, but he was much older in so many ways. 'Lookit,' he told me, 'this is a skate operation, just let it ride.'" But Paul couldn't just let it ride.

At one point, frustrated, he volunteered for the infantry. "Can you believe that?" he says now, still incredulous at his almost folly. "My orders actually came through. But in the interim, I had seen a couple of people killed." And for Paul Giannone, the human toll of combat became an unwelcome companion. One morning, he went to a refugee camp in a small hamlet south of Hoi An. The night before, it had been hit, and the bullet-riddled bodies of some young Viet Cong were lying in the street. "It just shocks you, your first dead," he says. "You start realizing right away that, hey, this is for real. When you go down, you're not gonna come back up again. Or if you do, your guts are splattered all over the place or you're missing a leg or an arm."

He somehow managed to talk his way out of his orders. For a time Paul was assigned to the political prison in Hoi An "to do bandaid stuff. The capacity of this prison was around 400, but

there were something like 1,400 to 1,600 men, women, and children, from newborns to people in their 80s, shoved in there. People were pretty much being openly tortured. Beriberi and scurvy were rife, but I was not permitted to bring in drugs to help anybody."

"One day, I came across a premature baby in the dispensary. That was a real hellhole. There were birds up on the ceiling crapping on the patients. The floor was the beds: there were no beds, just a writhing mass of bodies. It was obvious to me that if we didn't get this infant out of there she was going to die. But they wouldn't release her because she was a Viet Cong. Because her mother, they said, was a Viet Cong. Now, a lot of the people in there were just on the wrong side of the Thieu government. I argued with them. I screamed at them. I even offered to take the baby with me; I told them I could find people who would take care of her. But no, this baby was a Viet Cong Communist. And one day I came in and she was dead."

For a long time, Paul was haunted by that. "What could I have done to save that baby? Would I have been savvy enough to call someone in the States or communicate with a congressman or senator?" Of course, he knew that to have done so, to violate the chain of command, would have meant a quick trip to the boonies with a platoon of grunts. Around that time, Paul "ran into Harry Smith, who was with the civil affairs platoon up in Hue, the old imperial capital. Harry was pretty aggressive and his platoon was very, very active."

Paul, who by then had become emotionally entwined, as he puts it, in Vietnam, volunteered for a second tour with the stipulation that he be assigned to the platoon in Hue. "The guys up there were topnotch. Will Gentry. Harry Smith. Mike O'Neill. Steve Cunnion. Neal O'Leary. Dean Coleman. They were all ex-Peace Corps, appalled at the bloodletting, but very much into trying to do the right thing with the Vietnamese civilian population. We thought we were actually there to help the Vietnamese civilian population where everybody else seemed to be thinking that we should be blowing them up. Both sides, us and the Viet Cong. It was a crapshoot on the civilians."

While his Vietnamese counterpart in Hoi An was, Paul says, a crook, in Hue, Dr. Do Van Minh and Mr. Kien were very, very much into getting things done. "They wanted us there; they wanted to see what we could do, and for me that was a big, big jump. We used to have tea together every morning, Dr. Do, Mr. Kien, and Dennis Barker, my CORDS boss. There I was, a 21-year-old advisor with no college education, a Spec 5, and they'd be listening to my ideas."

Beyond the medical and dental teams that went into the villages to treat the villagers, Paul and Steve Cunnion, who went on to a career as a doctor in the Navy, built a small hospital outside the American base at Phu Bai. Paul set up dispensaries, including one in An Duong which, he was later to learn, was still operating ten years after the fighting ended. After a while, Paul came to see the war through Vietnamese eyes. "Sometimes you felt it was all so futile; sometimes you thought to yourself, what are we saving them for? More war? Are we saving these kids so they can go on to become soldiers? But I actually said to the people in An Duong when we were building the dispensary that public health was neutral. When wounded would come into the dispensary, I don't care what uniform people are wearing, you're supposed to treat 'em."

"I don't know if any of us looked at what we were doing as 'winning hearts and minds' 'cause that was such a hollow thing. I think most of us were just trying to save as many Vietnamese civilians or make as many people's lives as okay as we could. That was our bottom line. We may have been stuck in a bad situation, but we were trying to help a lot of people who were stuck in a worse situation." And they didn't get to leave the war zone when their tour of duty was up.

“I really fell in love with the An Duong village people,” he recalls. “We were out there a lot. During one of the big festivals, I sat at the head of the table with the whole village surrounding me while we ate. The day I was leaving Hue to go back to The World, I got word that I needed to go back to the office. What kind of trouble am I in now? I wondered. Instead, when I got there, there were five people from that village who had traveled for two hours to say good-bye to me and give me gifts. To hell with the medals. That really meant a lot. And you know what the feelings of the Vietnamese were towards the Americans by 1971: we weren’t exactly popular any longer.”

In 1971, Paul Giannone’s second tour was up. After 31 months - “and seven days, but who was counting?” - he was a civilian. Before Vietnam he was “flunking out of college with no direction in life whatsoever.” Now, he was focused. “I found out what I was very, very good at. And that’s getting things done in crisis situations. Especially refugee situations. Especially disaster situations. “I think basically I’m a humanitarian, a professional humanitarian. I’m not Sally Struthers crying in a refugee camp. I know what has to be done and I do it fairly well. You know, sometimes I wish that God had made me a brilliant lawyer; then I wouldn’t be living in tents in Albania.”

After he earned a BS in community health services at the State University of New York at Brockport, followed by his Masters from the University of Michigan, his career began in earnest. It has turned into an odyssey of altruism: working with refugees, working in disasters, working to rid countries of unexploded ordnance and land mines, one of the unwanted legacies of war. He couldn’t to go back to Vietnam, as he had intended, because the South fell to the Communists in 1975.

“I got a job offer in Nicaragua and I got one in Iran. So I looked both of them up. Nicaragua was all barbed wire and machine-guns and ambushes. In Iran, the Shah was strong as the Rock of Gibraltar. I’m telling myself I’m not gonna go to another war zone, so I’m gonna go to Iran and work for a small group out of New York called the Near East Foundation. And one year just about to the day that I arrived, I was evacuated out. The Shah wasn’t the Rock. It turns out that if I had taken the job in Nicaragua, I would have been evacuated out of there, too.”

After Iran, he started looking for another overseas assignment. After a brief stint in Indonesia, he and Kate, who had come to Iran to marry him, headed to Singapore. “This is when the boat people situation was booming,” Paul recalls. “My idea was that we would fly into Singapore and I was gonna go straight up the coast, to Malaysia, to Thailand, and offer my services. This was my chance to help the Vietnamese people. “So we land in Singapore, and I check with the U.S. Embassy, and the Embassy tells me that the United States Catholic Conference is just starting to do processing of Vietnamese refugees in Singapore. I go to their office the next day. I’m ready to take a job as a truck driver, or work in a refugee camp. I walk in and I end up becoming deputy director of refugee screening operations. A really quick promotion. Our offices were on the thirtieth floor of the International Towers Building overlooking Singapore harbor. Here I’m thinking I’m gonna be in refugee camps again, and all of a sudden I’m in this skyscraper in charge of interviewing refugees. I wound up being director of the program.”

In two years, Paul interviewed over 25,000 refugees. But after a while “it became a body count.” Singapore was followed by the Sudan and more refugees from the war then raging in Ethiopia - and a life-threatening bout with giardia, one of the parasitic infections rampant in Africa. At Kate’s urging, they settled in for a while in Rochester, New York, working first for the Lutheran Church resettling refugees, which “sort of closed the loop” for Paul. After four years, he went over to the

Red Cross - and back to the Sudan, which was again in a crisis situation.

"They knew I'd been there and they asked me if I'd volunteer and go back there. Immediately. Now, the last time I'd been there nearly killed me. Going back into the ring after you'd lost a bout to the same fighter was not exactly what I wanted to do, but I'd just written a manuscript in which I'd argued that it's not conscionable to ever turn your back on human beings in need. So I couldn't not accept the assignment. This was one of the hardest decisions I'd made since Vietnam. "So I committed to leaving my wife for six months. Initially I was supposed to be coordinating a team of about sixteen delegates and we were gonna be handling about 60,000 refugees.

In no time, we had 70 delegates and we were trying to deal with 280,000 refugees. To feed them across supply lines that were nonexistent, where everything we did we had to create. At one time, I had something like 50 trucks and four or five C-130s [transport planes]. We were using camels, we were using every means we possibly could to get food out to people. And we saved lives."

"Of course, it was always 120 degrees. I got sick again a couple of times, with giardia. My weight dropped to 130 pounds. I worked fourteen-, sixteen-, eighteen-hour days, probably only ate one meal a day, and it just beat me into the ground. God bless those who stayed on longer, but six months was all I could do. "When I got home, I was brown as a berry. So I take my shirt off to show myself off to my wife. And she starts crying. Because I guess I looked like I'd just walked out of Dachau. I really hadn't noticed, but you could literally count my ribs. And I realized what a toll this had taken on me, not only physically but mentally as well. The only reason I think I haven't had delayed-stress syndrome is I haven't had time to have it yet."

Paul then pingponged to Family Health International, in Research Triangle Park in North Carolina, doing public health and AIDS prevention in North Africa, Kenya, Turkey, Thailand, the Philippines. But to stay with FHI would have meant moving to Asia, and Kate didn't want to move again; "she — we — wanted to have a baby." When a job with the American Red Cross opened up in Rochester, Paul couldn't say no.

Care Calls

For awhile, it was a perfect fit. And Paul and Kate had Kara in 1993. Before long, Paul found himself on the quick response team for the national Red Cross. He was sent to Florida in the wake of Hurricane Andrew, and to California after the earthquake in Northridge. He worked on disaster preparedness plans and emergency social services operations. But his heart was elsewhere. And when he started looking and CARE had an opening for somebody for their emergency group who had a degree in health, who knew refugees, and who could manage disasters, he knew it was time to move on. In his four years with CARE, Paul has been to almost every war zone in the world.

"I'd like to spend more time with Kara and with Kate," he says. "And sometimes I look at people driving the big cars and I wonder about some of the choices I've made. Sometimes I wish there wasn't so much pressure. If I could get on a beach somewhere with a book for more than a few days, I'd be about as happy as I could be."

But Paul has a debt that he is still repaying. "Lookit," he says, "I went through a war and I was fairly lucky. I lived pretty well. I really felt that I didn't have a right not to do well for those who

didn't make it. It sometimes bothers me when I see vets who had all these opportunities and chose to ignore them. I had both my legs, both my arms, I had my mind. And I'd think of the guys who were just completely wrecked by that war. To me, that would have been cowardice if I didn't do well."

Asked about the nature of heroism, Paul reflects. "You know, when you go to Vietnam you feel a little macho. I mean, you've got your flak jacket on to protect you. You've got a helmet, bandoliers of ammunition, grenades. Firepower. Air support. One night in Hoi An, our compound, which was right in the middle of the town, was being mortared. The VC were walking in the rounds, probably towards us, or toward the provincial building right next to us. We took cover in our eight-layer high sandbagged bunker. We had two .60s [machine-guns] down underneath; we had a .30 on top. We were waiting to see if there'd be a ground assault coming behind the mortars."

"I was pumped. I felt like I was really somethin'. And I squinted out through the gun slits, and there was a house very, very close to our compound, and there was a family just cowering at the side of their house with all the firing going on. And I'm thinking to myself: I think I'm brave? From then on, I sort of changed. Every refugee I saw, they were the brave ones. It's one thing to carry a gun; the odds are semi in your favor. You've got helicopters, you've got artillery, you know your men are gonna pull you out if you get into trouble; there's always somebody's gonna help you out. But when you're a refugee, when you're a woman with your husband killed and you've got a squad of kids, those are the brave ones. To me, those really are the brave ones."

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Mike Kelley: Changing the Veteran Stereotype

The numbers were shocking: Ten years after the end of the Vietnam Era, more than 50,000 veterans who had served in Southeast Asia had taken their lives. The misbegotten war, it seemed, was still claiming victims. As the years passed, the number of suicides, so often quoted in the mainstream media, continued to grow at an alarming rate: 100,000, 150,000, even 200,000, according to some accounts. More than three times the number of Vietnam veterans who were lost to the war were dying from their own demons.

Or so it seemed.One veteran, Mike Kelley, didn't buy the numbers. Kelley had spent eleven months as an infantryman trudging through the mountains southwest of Hue, the ancient Imperial capital, and close to a year recovering from wounds suffered when a medic tripped a mine. He had spent more than a decade fighting his own demons. But the men in his infantry unit — Delta Company, 1st Battalion of the 502nd Infantry, 101st Airborne Division — were not killing themselves, he knew. Were they an anomaly? Or were the numbers skewed? Armed with a desire to learn the truth and set the record straight, and blessed with a persistent nature, he delved into the makings of a myth. And exploded it in an Op-Ed piece in the Washington *Post* last year.

Vietnam veterans were NOT killing themselves in frightening numbers, he found.

Misleading Manual

The genesis of this fantasy, Kelley discovered, was a 1980 manual titled "Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders of the Vietnam Veteran." Published initially by the Disabled American Veterans, "the manual was used widely throughout the VA. Its first edition (but none after) noted that more Vietnam combat veterans have died since the war by their own hand than were actually killed in Vietnam." And mortality studies "tell a completely different story. The bulk of the evidence," Kelley concluded, "suggested our suicides totaled, as of 1997, somewhere between 2,000 and 5,000. "

"Many of us knew veterans who were troubled — or were troubled ourselves — by drinking, drug use, and divorce. And when we began to hear that more of us were killing ourselves than had died in the war, we may have subconsciously found the story plausible."

For Mike, the war was a synthesis of opposites. He was no fan of the fighting, a point of view he came to embrace with even more conviction after his experiences in Vietnam. Yet he went willingly, even eagerly, he recalls, glad to be there as "part of one of the great affairs of mankind," as some World War I romantic had put it, whether it was right or wrong.

He still marvels at the courage he saw "in the hearts and deeds of your basic grunt and draftee who simply hefted the incredibly heavy loads we carried onto our backs, and then stumbled off into the jungle looking for trouble but praying not to find it. It was an extremely dangerous, relentlessly demanding, insanely tedious and ultimately thankless job, but we did this all day, every day, and with little complaint."

Mike Kelley didn't complain much when he was drafted. The son of a career Army officer – his

mother, too, served, as a corporal in the Royal Canadian Air Force — Mike grew up on military bases around the world. He attended 35 elementary schools, a trio of high schools, got beat up a lot, he recalls, and has no childhood friends with whom he can reminisce.

Despite his background, in which military tradition played a central role – listening to uncles and cousins sit around telling stories about their wartime experiences was "a much anticipated treat" – Mike was not gung-ho. Although his brother, Pete, served as a Navy corpsman attached to the Marines, flying medevacs out of Chu Lai and Ky Ha in '66-'67, Mike did not enlist.

"The draft caught up with me the day I graduated from college," he recalls. "In fact, my draft physical notice

was waiting for me when I came home from the graduation ceremony. Later that same day, the news that my best friend, Larry Keister, had been KIA in Vietnam also came home to level us. That sad day – January 29, 1969 — altered my view of the world forever."

Humping the Boonies

After arriving in-country in November 1969, he was assigned to the "First Strike" battalion, operating out of Phu Bai. "We saw very little contact during my tour despite the fact we were out there in the bush incessantly looking for Chuck and his boys," Mike says. " That was the serendipitous result of two things: rivers of blood spilled by the U. S. troops who'd fought so hard in Thua Thien Province before us, and a change in the enemy's strategy following their staggering, post-Tet '68 manpower losses. I later learned that, in our area of operations at any rate, the enemy broke up into three-man cells and made it a point to avoid major contact of any kind."

What Mike remembers most about his year "humping the boonies" was how extremely difficult and uncomfortable it was out there in the mountains, beating the bush and looking for Charlie. He reflects: "You were always filthy; always soaking wet; freezing or roasting your butt off; leeches in the trees and in the grass; leeches in the streams; mosquitoes buzzing in your ear, bugs of every sort crawling all over you; spiders the size of your hand in webs at eye-level across the trails; jungle rot on your arms; ringworm in your crotch; hunks of congealed grease in your cold c-rats; real rats crawling over you at night; sleeping on rocks; sleeping in the mud; trying to sleep in the rain; never sleeping; sweat pouring down your face, perpetually fogging your glasses and soaking your fatigues when it wasn't raining; trying to figure out ways to make your 60- to 80-pound rucksack comfortable on your shoulders; throwing away gun ammo to lighten your load; wishing you hadn't thrown away gun ammo; straight uphill; straight downhill; slipping and sliding in the muck; weapons rusting; ammo dirty; gasping for breath; so exhausted you could hardly lift an arm day after day after day; dysentery; chronic diarrhea; fevers; common colds, hot beer; hot Diet Fresca; cold food; deafened and driven to tears by artillery fire; deafened by popped Claymores or LAWs; lonely as hell; homesick as hell; occasionally scared beyond words; pulling guard night after night with 5,000 pound weights on your eyelids; no paper for letters; no re-supply 'cause of the rain; out of toilet paper; out of bug juice; starving; thinking about killing somebody for their peaches and pound cake. And those were the good days!"

Although his unit never saw heavy or prolonged contact with Viet Cong units, his tour was not without incident. The one incident incised in memory happened "on the evening of 16 September 70," he says. "My platoon moved to the top of a hill so we could be extracted the next day after a

hard, 40-day mission near Hill 885 – known as Fire Base Blitz – and the Ruong Ruong Valley. At about 5:30, while we were putting out our Claymores, my platoon medic stepped on a big mine next to me, although I really didn't know what had happened at the time."

"When I woke up in the Intensive Care Unit at the 85th Evac Hospital at Phu Bai the next day (I guess), I didn't realize that anybody else had been hurt. Doc Smitty was still in surgery then, and I really didn't feel much pain or discomfort at all. I didn't feel very bad — until they wheeled Smitty out and put him in the bed next to mine."

"When I saw Doc and realized who it was, I was really flattened! They'd taken off both his legs above the knee, his genitals, and much of both hands. Above the waist he looked perfectly normal. Below the waist, he was pure hamburger."

"Though I would see a lot of horrific sights during my ten months in the hospital, nothing shocked me like my first look at Smitty. It seemed impossible anybody that badly mangled could still be alive." He didn't stay alive for long. His kidneys failing, Stephen T. Smith died on a C-130 flight to Saigon, where the only dialysis machine in the war zone was located.

Too Many Stereotypes

Mike Kelley was evacuated back to the World, where he spent ten months at Letterman Hospital in San Francisco recuperating from his grievous wounds. Over the years, he has come to believe that "far more Vietnam veterans were strengthened by the combat experience than were damaged or destroyed by it. Although what we see in the press is a negative image, I'm convinced that virtually all of the stereotypes that have been hung on us are either false or, at best, greatly misleading and unrepresentative."

"By any empirical measure of success or health one might care to use, we are the equal of or superior to our non-vet peers, mythology and the popular media notwithstanding. As a percentage of our population, fewer of us are in prison or on drugs than our non-vet peers. We're healthier, wealthier, and in many respects a lot wiser and more prepared for dealing with difficulties in life than our peers are. And if you don't believe me," he says, "just prove me wrong!"

Which is why he tackled the suicide myth so ferociously.

Mike lives with his wife, Cathy, in Sacramento, California, where he is now a Senior Real Property Appraiser and chief of the Sacramento County Assessor's Assessment Standards Division. He is nearing 30 years with the Assessor's office,

While his day job and Cathy's work as district manager for the AAA's new life insurance division pay the mortgage, it is his work as an artist and writer that give him his greatest satisfaction. He had graduated from college with a degree in art, but his "serious wounding, long recovery, and general disenchantment with life following the war" caused him to put away his brushes and pencils. They didn't find their way back into his hands until he was inspired by an invitation to participate in The Vietnam Experience art exhibit in New York City in November 1981. He subsequently lent his considerable talents for getting things done and making connections between veterans to the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial Commission, for which he served as an associate member from 1984 to 1991.

His desire to draw faded almost completely about eight years ago, he says, after his introduction to the wonderful world of personal computers. His current project, aided immeasurably by the power of the PC, is to complete an encyclopedic manuscript, more than 12,000 entries deep, of all American military installations in Southeast Asia during the years of the war. It is, he acknowledges, a monumental effort to identify the name, grid coordinates, relative location — and offer a concise history — of every fire base, landing zone, base camp, port, air field, named facility, and signal site of the American presence in Vietnam.

A daunting undertaking, perhaps, but Mike Kelley is a peaceful warrior now.

Note: Mike Kelley published his landmark volume Where We Were in Vietnam: A Comprehensive Guide to the Firebases, Military Installations and Naval Vessels of the Vietnam War, 1945-1975 *in 2002.*

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Dr. Skip Burkle: A Doctor's Destiny Blooms under the Bombs at Delta Med

He was 28 years old, the Senior Resident in Pediatrics at Yale. He was married with three very young children. Life was hectic. Life was good. Then he was drafted.

The sign says it all, Dr. Skip Burkle, 12,000 miles from home and a short helicopter flight from hell. Christmas Day, 1968, Dong Ha, Vietnam.

It was on July 7, 1968, the bloodiest year of America's involvement in Vietnam, that Frederick M. Burkle, known to all as Skip, entered the service. Two weeks later, Lieutenant Burkle found himself in Vietnam at Delta Med, a Forward Casualty Receiving Facility for the 3rd Marine Division in Dong Ha. He was six miles from the Demilitarized Zone.

On his first night there, Skip Burkle knew his life had changed forever. "It was chaotically busy," he recalls from his home in Baltimore, Maryland, where he is Visiting Professor and Senior Scholar at The Center for International Emergency, Disaster & Refugee Studies at the Johns Hopkins University Medical Institutions. "I stumbled about to find a place to sleep. I felt totally out of place, awkward and in the way. I was given my first set of camouflage fatigues off a wounded Marine. His blood-stained name tag remained on them."

"That night, exhausted, soaking wet with sweat, I somehow fell asleep in a bunker, on a cot closely lined up next to a dozen others. I never felt so alone. Soon after drifting off into some vague state of sleep, we were abruptly awakened by the roar of choppers landing immediately outside, and by fine pellets of sand and gravel propelled like shrapnel through the cracks in the bunker.

"I had no idea what was happening. I got up and followed the others. In the triage bunker, what seemed to be pandemonium, with the incessant roar of the chopper engines, with dust flying all around, was in fact almost a symphony of coordinated activity."

"I stood there, transfixed, recognizing that I had to do a tracheostomy. I could only utter, 'We need a surgeon here.' In milliseconds, without a word being said, a corpsman sliced open the skin on the blooded neck and trachea and expertly forced a tube into the Marine's airway. A surgical drape was rapidly placed over the man's face and his litter was quickly removed out the triage entrance and onto a chopper hovering two feet off the pad. I later learned it took him to a hospital ship about 30 minutes away in the South China Sea."

"Almost total silence returned in what seemed to be only seconds from when I first heard the arriving choppers. I stood mute, as corpsmen worked feverishly around me, cleaning up, hosing water to wash the blood into a drain around my feet. I was neither noticed nor needed."

Primitive Arrangements

Mortar and artillery rounds pounded Dong Ha almost every day. It was a rare event when Delta Med didn't have fresh casualties. Much of the war in I Corps, Skip quickly learned, was fought at night. Which meant that he and his fellow MDs and corpsmen would be up all night, triaging, operating, working with what they had to save the savaged bodies medevacked, often in moments after they'd been hit.

The practice of medicine at Delta Med was "a real culture shock," Skip reflects. Because his beleaguered band had little in the way of diagnostic tools, they had to learn to diagnose unusual illnesses like plague, scurvy, and beriberi with their eyes and ears. Only one of their 21 nurses, who had only the rudiments of nursing skills, even knew the world was round. Saving Viet Nam from communism was never part of their consciousness.

"At Yale, we had everything a doctor could want," Skip says. "At Dong Ha, we had to scrounge. We had few of the conveniences of modern medicine: the first surgical pack I opened contained sulfur powder, which had not been used since the Second World War, to treat wounds before the advent of antibiotics."He implored colleagues from Yale to send aid boxes of special antibiotics and packages of delicate needles for children to bolster the supplies Delta Med was not able to get through regular channels.

Despite the almost primitive conditions at Dong Ha, he says, "We saved a lot of lives. All of us were draftees, a bit unruly, somewhat of a rebel bunch. We pulled a lot of pranks to stay sane. But I never saw medicine practiced so well."

X Marks the Spot

Delta Med was a group of ten to twelve bunkers, mostly small wards and treatment rooms with one operating theater. Some were built below ground, where casualties could be treated when the compound was under fire. The operating bunker was patched over in hundreds of places where it had been hit by shrapnel. A 10-foot thick blast wall filled with dirt towered above the cramped buildings inside. The chopper pad was immediately outside the triage bunker entrance.

The blast wall, with a big red cross painted on each side, was itself a target. Two months after he arrived, Delta Med took direct hits from artillery based in hidden bunkers in the mountainsides of North Vietnam. "We had about 12 killed and an equal number wounded," Skip says, "mostly civilians who had begun to come to Delta Med for treatment of everything from wounds to malaria, scurvy, and plague."

Delta Med, the only medical facility in all of northern I Corps that could, and would, care for civilians, would never be the same. "Villagers felt it was now cursed and an unlucky place to be," he explains.

Learning the Ropes

Skip Burkle adapted quickly to his new circumstances. Some of his experiences during his year in-country were haunting: "The worst was the guys you knew you couldn't help," he says. One day,

the triage bunker was filled with the dying, young Marines whose flesh had been ripped by bullets and shrapnel. “One casualty started calling out, *Mommy, Mommy, Mommy*, and soon there was just a cacophony crying, *Mommy, Mommy, Mommy*.” There was nobody among us who didn’t have tears in our eyes.”

Others were inspiring: “One day on a hot LZ, a corpsman was forced to improvise,” Skip remembers. “He used part of a pen to perform a tracheostomy to get a soldier breathing again.”

Skip and his fellow medics saved countless lives that otherwise might have been lost to the war. One evening as the gate to the inside perimeter was being shut, a young ARVN soldier handed a corpsman a newborn. “The infant was comatose, septic, suffering seizures and meningitis. I gave the baby antibiotics, steroids. Nothing was working. I decided to do a full-body exchange of blood; it was the only procedure I thought might save the baby’s life.

”Three-quarters of the way through the procedure, by then it was daybreak, and we had been under fire all night, it looked like the baby was going to make it. When the perimeter gate was opened, the baby’s parents came in. They brought a tiny white wooden coffin, they were so sure their baby would be dead. The mother just knelt down in front of us, with tears streaming down her face. Her child had survived.”

In Dong Ha, Skip Burkle learned emergency medicine as no textbook could teach it. In fact, there were no textbooks: “emergency medicine” didn’t become a discipline until the mid-70s.

Unwelcome Home

Skip Burkle, by then a Lieutenant Commander whose service was acknowledged with a Bronze Star with Combat “V,” the Navy Commendation Medal, a Combat Action Ribbon, the Vietnamese Meritorious Medical Medal, and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry, among a slew of others, returned home in 1969.

He was assigned to the Naval Hospital in Newport, Rhode Island. As it was for so many returning troops who still had time to serve, this was not a fulfilling experience.

The same corpsman who had administered the tracheostomy on the hot LZ was there, mopping the floor in the ER, getting reamed out by a nurse for some minor infraction.

It was two different worlds, Skip recalls. “I went from one population that was so appreciative of our efforts to another group that was just pampered. I felt so out of place. At home, my parents never asked me a thing about the war. I had to be reintroduced to my kids. I felt more comfortable in Vietnam; I felt like there I was really practicing medicine. I’d felt guilty about having to leave. I wanted to go back.”

And he did.

Happy Ending

At the end of April 1975, as Communist forces were closing in on Saigon, Skip Burkle returned to

Vietnam, part of a feverish attempt to rescue the youngest victims of the carnage. He was in charge of the last orphan lift, a C-141 that took the final group of 362 kids out from the airport at Tan Son Nhut.

For years Skip wondered what became of those children. Six years ago, a nurse friend at the University of Hawaii, where he was Professor of Pediatrics, Surgery, and Public Health, took him to dinner. There he was introduced to the nurse's son and his girlfriend, a young Vietnamese graduate student who was majoring in foreign affairs. As their conversation progressed, he learned that this beautiful young woman was one of those 362 kids on the last flight from Viet Nam.

Seeking Meaning

At Delta Med, Skip Burkle had found his calling: emergency medicine. Those months at Delta Med, Skip reflects, "were the most meaningful work I had ever done." They set the stage for his medical career.

"I swore I'd never let anyone go into a situation like we did at Dong Ha without being properly trained. I was determined to do it better the next time." While at the University of Hawaii, he founded and served as Director of the Center of Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, a partnership of the University, the Pacific Regional Medical Command, the U. S. Pacific Command, and the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. While there, he developed the first training course in civilian-military coordination in complex humanitarian emergencies and disaster situations. He put these lessons into action while serving in Northern Iraq, Somalia, the former Yugoslavia, and Kosovo.

This reluctant draftee, who remained in the military, is now a retired Captain in the Naval Reserve. When the war broke out in the Gulf in 1991, he was recalled to active duty, serving as the Senior Medical Officer at the largest field hospital ever built by the Marine Corps, the Khanjar Navy/Marine Trauma Center on the Kuwaiti border. He was the only doc with combat experience.

"Everybody there was scared to death," he says. "We were told to expect 1,500-3,000 casualties in the first 24 hours. Biological and chemical weapons were on everyone's mind. Oh, the docs were at times an arrogant, cynical bunch of people who complained about the lack of equipment and support to the higher command. But their cynicism was a mask. I told General Chuck Krulak" -— he was Commanding General of the 2nd Force Service Support Group and 6th Marine Expeditionary Brigade —- "as soon as the fighting starts, you'll be very proud of these guys. He was. They performed brilliantly, much like those I served with in Viet Nam."

Finding Closure

Using the GI Bill, Skip earned a degree in psychiatry, partly in an attempt to understand the turbulence and the changes within himself. "We all have some guilt," he says. "We all do some second-guessing about the decisions we'd made."

He drifts back to the triage bunker one not-so-fine day long ago, where he's putting a chest tube

into a badly wounded soldier when the compound comes under attack. “I can’t leave him. A chopper comes in loud, blowing little chunks of dirt and gravel into the bunker. As we pull him up from the dirt floor to place him on the litter for evacuation, the chest tube is stepped on and pulled out. We stand there, motionless at first, when a corpsman says, “Doc it’s the only one we have!” To save his life, I wipe it off and shove it back in the hole.” Immediately, I thought that I had violated one of the basic tenets of medicine and the Marine would end up suffering from my decision.”

The soldier was medevacked out, “but I worried about what I’d done for the longest time. It wasn’t until fifteen, seventeen years later that, during a trauma training course a similar scenario was presented and the correct approach was to do what I had done many years before. It was then that I realized, Oh my God, it’s all right now.”

And it is.

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Gerry Byrne: Marine Service was a Graduate Degree in Leadership

"The worst part about going to Vietnam was coming home," Gerry Byrne says. He is sitting in his unfinished tenth floor office across the street from the United Nations in New York City, where he's nearing his one-year anniversary as partner, President and Chief Executive Officer of "Stagebill," the magazine of the performing arts.

"For me, growing up in the Bronx, it was a given that you contributed to society," he reflects. "It was part of the deal, at least I thought it was. I knew I wanted to serve with the best possible outfit: the Marines. They have a rich historical heritage going back to 1775. Every aspect of the Marines is built on the idea of a band of brothers, and teamwork."
Gerry started his Marine education attending platoon leaders' class at Fordham College. He graduated in 1966 with a degree in economics and a commission as a lieutenant. Sent to Vietnam shortly after the Tet Offensive in 1968, his year-long tour of duty was split between Phu Bai, where he was assigned to the 1st Marine Air Wing, and Marble Mountain, near Danang, where he was Officer-in-Charge of the airfield.

One evening shortly after he arrived at Phu Bai, he found himself in a bunker with a young Marine, seeking refuge from a barrage of VC shelling.

"'Lieutenant,' the Marine said, holding a Zippo lighter,' did you ever see this before?'"

"Then he shows me the inscription: 'For those who have fought for it, freedom has a taste that the protected will never know.' That inscription has stayed with me ever since. I've developed an enormous respect for those who put on the uniform, for those who are willing to fight and defend."

Change of Direction

When Gerry came home in 1969, few of those he encountered, it seemed, shared this sentiment. An economics major in college who had intended to pursue a career on Wall Street, he found a home instead at the New York Daily News, where a lot of the key people had been Navy pilots or Marine Corps officers. "It was like going back to the cocoon," he says. "At most of the other places I interviewed, having been a Marine Corps captain in Vietnam meant nothing. To some people, it was a graduate degree in stupidity."

Even at the Daily News, he was not inured against this attitude. One day, he recalls, "we were entertaining executives from major retailers at a luncheon. One guy asked me what I did before I came to the paper. I told him I'd been a captain in the Marine Corps. 'Did you serve in Vietnam?' he asked me. 'Yeah, I got back three, four months ago.' After a moment of silence, everybody started talking to each other. Nobody spoke to me. Nobody wanted to talk about Vietnam, to explore what it did to those who served."

Gerry put his Veterans status in his pocket.

A Belated "Welcome Home"

It didn't remain out of sight for long. A few years later, his wife, Liz, started a MIA-POW bracelet campaign in the city. "She was sensitive to the issue and got very involved," he says with a note of pride. "She had a big event planned, they were going to plant a tree in Madison Square Park for an MIA, Michael O'Connor. But her younger brother had been killed in an auto accident, and I had to step up."

This event, and the repatriation of the POWs in 1973, got him thinking. About service and sacrifice. About honor and integrity. What really got him involved, though, was the "Welcome Home" parade in New York City on May 7, 1985, the tenth anniversary of the end of the Vietnam Era. The parade, Gerry says, triggered my future involvement with Veterans. As we were walking across the Brooklyn Bridge, we really didn't know what kind of a reception to expect. When we reached the other side and saw all the people, crowds of people, cheering and throwing confetti, we knew they cared. It was a wonderful, if belated, welcome home.

It was then that Gerry decided to become an activist of sorts. With his career on an upward arc - he was working for Crain Communications, for which he was the start-up publisher of both Electronic Media and Crain's New York Business he became involved with the Vietnam Veterans Ensemble Theater Company in New York. His career blossomed: after 14 years at Crain's and one year as senior vice president of planning and international development at Norman Lear's ACT III Publishing, he joined the entertainment weekly Variety as executive publisher, quickly rising to group vice president and publisher.

His community involvement also began to proliferate. He accepted offers to serve on the boards of the American Museum of the Moving Image, the African Medical and Research Foundation, the Environmental Media Association, the Westhampton Performing Arts Center, American Friends of the National Film and Television School, the Catholic Youth Organization.

He also serves on the board of Operation Smile International, which sponsors reconstructive facial surgery for children around the world including, at Gerry's behest, Vietnam.

And last year, he joined the Board of Advisors of VeteransAdvantage, seeing how his beliefs and the mission and goals of VeteransAdvantage dovetailed.

Four years ago, Gerry and his friend and fellow Marine, the actor Harvey Keitel, started the Marine Corps Birthday Ball. Their immediate goal was to "celebrate the respect we have for the Marine Corps and all it had given us, spirit, drive, ethics, integrity, a belief in ourselves as much as a belief in the Corps and what it's all about: Because when you combine integrity and ethics with hard work and teamwork, you get the job done." And part of their job at the ball is to raise money for the Toys for Tots campaign and the Intrepid Museum Foundation.

Gerry Byrne is proud of his service, and proud to have been a Marine. "It's this special spirit, this esprit de corps, that I've tried to make prevail in everything I've done in my professional life, and my personal life as well."

Semper Fi.

Note: Gerry Byrne is currently a board member of Veterans Advantage.
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Al Peck: Helping Homeless Veterans Learn to Help Themselves in the Jungles of New York City

On Veterans Day in 1987, the City of New York opened a new, 400-bed shelter for the homeless in a converted belt and pocket-book factory in Queens. What made this facility different from others scattered across the five boroughs was its clientele: to be admitted to the Borden Avenue Veterans Residence, a man had to have served in the Armed Forces. This was a condition imposed by the community and agreed to by the city, which wanted to site a shelter in the solid, lower middle class community of Long Island City.

At that time in New York, the plight of the homeless was an ongoing public issue, garnering intensive media attention. Thousands of unkempt, bedraggled men, and not a few women, wandered about the city, panhandling, sleeping in the subways and begging commuters for handouts at the bus stations and railroad terminals. Advocates railed against the warehousing of the homeless in shelters inadequate to meet their needs and bemoaned the lack of affordable housing. Beleaguered administrators seemed dismayed as much by the criticism and invective hurled at them as by the scope of the problem.

In this atmosphere, everyone wanted Borden Avenue, as it quickly came to be known, to succeed. The efforts of one man essentially made it so: Al Peck.

Encouraged by the Mayor's Office – encouraged by Mayor Ed Koch himself – the Salvation Army, which operated Borden Avenue under contract with the city, advertised for a new shelter director. They sought someone who had a master's degree, who had worked with veterans, who had experience with drug and alcohol addiction, and who had run in-patient programs.

The job description seemed tailored for Al Peck.

Gaining an Insight

For a dozen years, Al had been the executive director of a drug and alcohol family counseling center on Long Island. In the early 80's, he perceived the need and founded the Vietnam Veterans Resource Center in Hicksville. There, he became one of the first to successfully bill the government for post-traumatic stress disorder counseling.

He tells this story: "One day, a guy jumps out of a dumpster and tries to stab me with a bayonet in a weak attempt to rob me. Once I subdued him – he was emaciated and I'm not exactly a small guy – I took him to the counseling center. Through him I came to the realization that a lot of the homeless were veterans, a lot of the veterans were suffering from PTSD, and many of them just weren't coping very well."

Later on, he came to another understanding as well: War effects people profoundly. Those affected the most, however, talk about it the least.

Al sought funding, and local chapters of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Vietnam Veterans of America came through. So did Long Island-born singer-songwriter Billy Joel, through his Charity Begins at Home foundation. For scores of veterans and their families over the next several years, the Resource Center was a beacon of hope, a place where they could find compassion and assistance and learn to deal with the demons that were haunting them – to a great extent because of the vision and understanding of Al Peck.

Search and Avoid

Al, who grew up on Long Island, attended Pennsylvania Military College in Chester, Pennsylvania, not far from Philadelphia. He graduated in 1968 with second lieutenant's bars, entered the Army, and in October 1969, two months' married, was sent to Vietnam.

Assigned to the 9th Infantry Division, then under the operational control of the 25th Infantry, he was, he says, one of the few platoon leaders who happened to be an officer. Operating out of Ben Luc, in IV Corps, "we were fairly good at figuring out where the enemy was, where there were booby traps, and trying to avoid them," Al says. This was a time when a lot of platoon leaders didn't go out of their way to pursue an elusive enemy – and take unnecessary casualties in the process.

Out in the boonies one day on a multi-company sweep, Lieutenant Peck was humping along, reading a map, when he heard an explosion close by. Then he saw blood. "At first I didn't know where the blood was coming from, or even whose blood it was," he recounts. "Then I looked down and my M16 was gone, my map case was gone. I looked up and my radio operator looked aghast. And it dawned on me that it was me who got hit."

Medevacked out in his colonel's chopper, he wound up in an emergency room "where five kids who had been hit by a Claymore [mine] were in various stages of dying. It was a bloody mess." Later, in the 3rd Field Hospital in Saigon, he figured he was going home. "But while I was chopped up pretty good, the mine didn't hit anything vital, and six weeks later, I was back in the field. My colonel promised me I'd have the best platoon sergeant in the Army – along with 24 fresh replacements. On more than a few occasions" over the next several months, he says, "I missed being dead by inches."

For his service, Lt. Al Peck received 2 Bronze Stars, a Purple Heart; and a Combat Infantryman's Badge ("the only medal I really cherish").

He came home sadder and wiser for what he had experienced: "You learn what you're capable of," he says, "and you know what you can do under enormous stress." His regret was the circumstances under which he had to learn this lesson.

"When you're a kid," Al reflects, "you play soldier and you don't comprehend what it's really all about. Then you become a soldier, for real. And while the reason you're fighting is abstract, you quickly learn that there is no greater glory: in combat, you fight to keep your buddies alive."

Career Choice

After Al returned to Long Island, he "planned to make some money. But I knew that being in a helping profession was where I should go. Part of it was I was suffering from survivor's guilt:

When I stepped on that mine, I wondered, Why didn't I get killed? I felt compelled to help others, to give something back."

Today, homeless veterans are better served for his involvement and his commitment. Under Al's leadership, Borden Avenue, which he ran until May 1995, was a pathfinder. It became a model. There are now eight shelters for veterans around the country that are in many ways beholden to Borden Avenue, Al reports.

"We had people tripping over one another to help the vets of Borden Avenue," he says. "Local community groups. Veterans service organizations. Ad hoc groups of vets concerned about their homeless brothers. Their support, and the active support of Mayor Koch, were invaluable."

"The key, though, was that we were able to look outside the box and see what was possible and give it a shot," Al says. "We could buck the bureaucracy to try new and untested programs." Like getting some Borden Avenue residents to work with the local precinct, patrolling, looking to quell any problems that might be attributed to Borden Avenue residents. This initiative, dubbed V-Cops, went a long way to defuse potential tensions in the community. A dozen years later, it still exists.

Today, Al Peck is Director of Homeless Services for the Greater New York Division of the Salvation Army.

He is in charge of 15 programs – four are dedicated to veterans – with seven under development, including an adult home for veterans in Northport, Long Island. (The Northport Veterans Residence, a shelter for 87 men and women, is one of the outgrowths of the program at Borden Avenue.)

This promotion has allowed him to do what he wanted: to understand the intricacies of how and why programs get funded, and to be better able to help those who need help the most. And many of those who need help the most are getting it because of . . . Al Peck.

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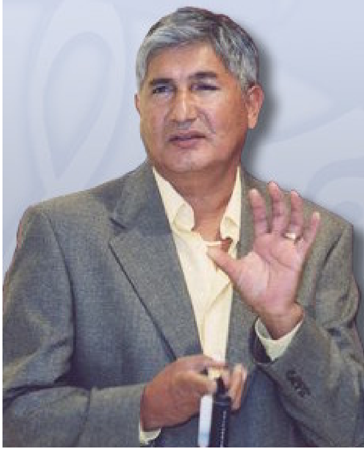
Michael Naranjo: The Artist Who Sees With His Hands



He remembers, in exquisite detail, the last person he ever saw: the Viet Cong soldier who threw the grenade that took his sight, maimed his hand and threatened his dream of becoming an artist.

Michael Naranjo, a Tewa Indian of the Santa Clara Pueblo in north-central New Mexico, was still green, a novice to the ways of combat, in country less than two months, when his life was shattered on a day he can never forget: January 8, 1968.

Assigned to the 9th Infantry, his platoon was on patrol, searching for the VC who had mortared their base camp the night before, when they were caught in an ambush.

His squad was maybe fifty yards from the jungle when they started taking automatic weapons fire from the tree line.

"We hit the dirt," Michael remembers, and despite the chaos, he felt "a sudden dead calmness." His instincts took over—sometimes "you can never know why people do what they do" in combat, he says—and, jumping up from the relative safety of his position, hunched over, moving in spurts, he rushed the tree line where enemy soldiers were entrenched.

Fifteen yards from the edge of the jungle, nuzzled by the protective wall of a dike, he could hear the VC move around even as he saw some of his buddies get hit. His sergeant and a medic slid in beside him and, before Michael could dissuade him, "Doc just got up over the dike and rolled off," trying to make his way to two wounded comrades.

Michael and his squad sergeant followed, dashing into the jungle. Michael found cover in a little mud depression. He could see the spider holes that provided camouflage for Charlie. And he could see one Viet Cong "who quick-turned his head toward me. For a split second," Michael remembers, "I was looking into his eyes." What Michael didn't see was the grenade, which rolled next to him and exploded, maiming his right hand and destroying his eyes.

"I knew then I was going to die," Michael says. "My last thought before I lost consciousness was, 'Dear God, don't make it too hard on my parents.'"

Key to Recovery

Michael Naranjo didn't die. He was pulled out of more immediate danger by his sergeant, whose name he wishes he could remember. Four fellow grunts then hoisted him onto a poncho and, dodging the intense ground fire, flung him into a waiting medevac chopper. Slipping in and out of consciousness, he woke up a day and a half later at the 24th Evacuation Hospital in Saigon, confronted by the new reality of his life: one eye was gone—the other would have to be removed a few years later—and his right hand was badly damaged, leaving him with minimal feeling and dexterity. His childhood dream of becoming a sculptor seemed as shattered as his body.

Days later, recuperating in a hospital in Japan, Michael asked to be moved from a private room where the doctors thought the quiet would assist recovery, but where he felt he was going crazy. It was in the ward where he was sent, among rows and rows of the mangled and the maimed, many faced with life-threatening injuries and uncertain futures, that Michael Naranjo began his rehabilitation. Queried by a volunteer if there was anything she might bring him, he asked for some water-based clay. A few days later, she fulfilled his request.

And Michael began the slow and painful process of regaining his life. Tearing off a piece of clay with his left hand, he rolled it up into a golfball-sized sphere, then elongated it. He gave it a head and a face. At that point, says Michael, "I knew I could do it. It was exhilarating! Soon I progressed to goldfish and squirrels. And this made all the difference in the world."

Fulfilling a Dream

For Michael Naranjo, becoming a sculptor had been his dream since boyhood. His mother, Rose, and many of his relatives made the acclaimed Santa Clara black pottery from the abundant clay on the reservation near Santa Fe. Young Michael molded this clay, creating little creatures he'd seen in the forest. In college, he took art classes, which he figured would help him fulfill his ambition. Then he got drafted.

After he was wounded, his grievous injuries did not dissuade him from pursuing his goals. On the first day of December, 1968, sitting at the kitchen table of his parents' home in Taos, Michael informed them he wanted to move to Santa Fe, to begin his career.

"How will you eat?" his father wanted to know. "I'll learn to cook," Michael replied. He did move to Santa Fe, and wound up eating a lot of canned soup and TV dinners before he learned to navigate around the kitchen. He found an artist who taught him how to sculpt using the lost-wax process.

"Then," he knew, "it was all up to me."

In the years since, Michael Naranjo married—Laurie became his bride in 1978—and fathered two daughters now in college and became a sculptor of note: The Artist Who Sees with His Hands. During a visit to Italy, scaffolds were constructed so that he might touch and find inspiration in Michelangelo's David. Which inspired Michael to work in stone as well as in bronze.

Today, his creations—of nudes and Native Americans, mythical creatures, centaurs and cherubs—are in museums and prominent collections around the world, including the White House and the Vatican. While most of his works are life-size, several are monumental: he is currently working on a 12-foot tall Native American hoop dancer.

Michael is philosophical about the wounds that interrupted his life. "Being blind makes the pace of life slower; you can't walk fast or grab for things quickly," he says. "Life is more gentle and soft and the change brought my creative energies out."

None of his human figures are created with eyes, however, which he attributes to an unconscious decision on his part. "Maybe it's because I don't see the world using eyes," Michael muses. And he has never done a soldier, although he says he may, some day.

Because he “sees” with his hands, Michael encourages visitors to touch his work, to experience the artwork in the same manner that he does—through sight and feel. He believes that texture is an important element in artwork, and that it can make a difference in how a piece is interpreted. He wants visitors—to the museums where he exhibits, and to galleries which show his work—to fully experience the “liquid feeling” with which he imbues his creations.

For Michael Naranjo, it’s not enough simply to have had success in his chosen field, or to accept the accolades offered—among them the “Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year” award in 1999 from the Disabled American Veterans. It is more important to give something back. He lives his belief that “disabilities should not prevent anyone from reaching their potential,” and makes time to teach art to people, young and old. In one recent workshop, he and four students created a bronze elk; none of the four had ever worked in this medium before.

In spite of, and perhaps because of, his encounter with a grenade on that January morning 33 years ago, Michael Naranjo’s life and accomplishments have come to reflect an adage from which all of us can all profit: Success and defeat both are teachers.

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Ed Vick: Learning about Leading on the Mekong

"Vietnam," says Ed Vick, "was about growing up. As bad as it was, Vietnam changed my life for the better, all things considered."

Ed, formerly the CEO of Y&R Advertising, hails from a family that served. In his senior year at the University of North Carolina, the draft looming over his future possibilities, Ed sought advice from his father, who had been in the Navy. Yes, his dad told him, you can see some hazardous duty in the Navy, "but you can still get a warm bed and a good meal."

In October 1966, Ed enlisted.

In 1967-'68, Lt. (j.g.) Vick served aboard the *USS Mauna Loa*, an ammunition ship in the South China Sea. He never set foot on Vietnamese soil. His tour up, he received orders that would have made him commanding officer of a fleet tugboat operating out of Boston Harbor. The toughest duty he would face, he was assured, would be the lobster fests on Cape Cod.

"If I'd have taken that assignment," he reflects, relaxing in the conference room on the top floor of the Young & Rubicam skyscraper in midtown Manhattan, "I knew I'd have felt that I'd dogged my responsibility, that I'd skipped out on the war."

A four-striper named Louis Bogan knew the commanding officer of the river patrol force along the Mekong River and its tributaries. The river patrol was nearly all volunteers, Ed learned, volunteers who suffered a 50% casualty rate. "For career officers, you'd get your ticket punched," he was told. Not that he entertained visions of a career in the Navy, but Ed was intrigued. He pushed for the transfer. In December 1968, after going through survival school and Vietnamese language school, he arrived in Vietnam, assigned to Task Force 116.

They were right about the hazards.

Learning the Ropes

The Navy played a major role patrolling the Mekong Delta during the fighting in Southeast Asia. "For a while we were operating near the Parrot's Beak, right at the Cambodian border, in very unpacified territory" Ed relates. "Working with our SEALs, Vietnamese Special Forces, Cambodian mercenaries, and troops from the 9th Infantry, our mission was to try to stop the infiltration by the VC into III Corps.

"On the night of January 18, 1969, at 0130 hours, under the light of a quarter moon, we were traveling up a really narrow part of the river—a 300-yard gauntlet, really—when the entire riverbank erupted. I was standing on the coxswain's flat with a gunner when the first rocket passed between us." Life and oblivion, Ed learned, were, literally, separated by inches.

"Then a second rocket hit us below the water line. The gunner in the stern was blown up. The

stern was awash. We were sinking. We were dead in the kill zone. It was the most terrifying night I'd experienced."

Then the cavalry came: Their sister boat pulled in behind them "and we managed to transfer all of my team onto the second boat just before the Seawolves got there firing runs at the riverbank."

Changing the Rules

Playing cat and mouse with the enemy, Ed learned to think creatively if he was to succeed in his mission: interdicting the teams of infiltrators coming into Vietnam along the waterways from Cambodia. Trying the untried was a lesson that would serve him well throughout his career. While standard operating procedure had been to never stray from the middle of the river, Ed concluded that this was a recipe for failure. Besides, he was, as he indelicately puts it, "sick of getting greased."

So he innovated. He and his crew slept during the day to patrol at night. They hid their boat in the overhang along the bank to wait in ambush for infiltrators.

Sure enough, on their second night, their newfangled patrol tactic paid off. "Through the starlight scope, we saw a sampan with five or six guys in it: NVA. We opened up on them. Before this," he notes, 'nobody had ever caught them red-handed. What we tried quickly became a tactic commonly used by boats patrolling the Mekong."

By the end of 1969, though, when it was clear that the United States was looking for a way out of Vietnam, Ed soured on the mission even as he continued to play the game. On October 6, 1969, a month before his tour ended, he wrote home: "[T]hey are starting a new operation in the U Minh Forest area of the Ca Mau Peninsula in the southern Delta. It has been a VC base area since before the French were here, when they were the Viet Minh. The U.S. has *never* before been there except for air strikes. No one is there now except for 10 PBRs [which] began patrolling two days ago and have already lost two boats and one killed and 10 wounded. At this stage it's just insane – it's suicidal for the boats and can never be pacified by 10 little boats. The Army won't touch it. I'm glad I'm through with it all. . . ."

The government was "buying time with our lives to get a politically acceptable solution," he says in retrospect. "But anyone there could have told them what would happen when we left the country."

Ed left the country with a slew of medals, including two Bronze Stars with combat 'V," the Combat Action Ribbon, the Presidential Unit Citation, and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry, among others. He also left with something else.

For a young man with a privileged upbringing who barely got through college, Ed's experiences in Southeast Asia focused his life and instilled in him a sense of responsibility. It matured him. It gave him perspective.

But while he was through with Vietnam, Vietnam was not quite through with him. As his career blossomed—Ed is one of the most successful advertising executives in the business—he never forgot to give something back.

As an advertising executive, he's used his expertise to create public service announcements for Vietnam Veterans of America; created a fund-raising video for the Soldiers', Sailors', and Airmen's Club in New York City; As a member of the Executive Committee New York Vietnam Veterans Memorial Commission, he devised the "It's Time" campaign to focus attention on the need to accord veterans of the Vietnam War the respect both he and the commission felt they were due.

Because, he says, "I owe something back to those who served."

Note: Ed Vick published Slingshot: Based on Actual Events *in 2002. He is currently a board member of Veterans Advantage.*

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Rich Liebler: A New Battle in an Urban War Zone

"When you land a fighter plane on an aircraft carrier in the rain and crosswinds in the middle of the night, " muses Rich Liebler, "there's nothing you can't do after that."

Liebler is relaxing in the bare classroom of the only building standing on its weed-invaded block in the South Ward of Newark, New Jersey. It houses a program he has conceived and nurtured, a memorial to a son whose life was tragically cut short by an automobile accident: the Youth Automotive Training Center (YATC), where young men and women learn the life skills and acquire the technical knowledge that can be their ticket out of poverty. The Center is Rich Liebler's dream, and his passion.

Looking boyish despite the telltale white invading his still full head of hair, Liebler doesn't contain his enthusiasm. A self-described "rich white guy," he gets excited by his calling: helping young people in the "war zone" of an inner city learn the skills they need to get, and hold, well-paying jobs as auto technicians.

As he talks about his passion, he interjects recollections of his life thirty years ago. "If it was not for my Marine experience," he says, "I don't think I would ever have tackled this. Marines teach a can-do attitude. Here, you've got to keep bustin' through walls till you get what you need. And then bust through more walls because there's more you need, and more you want to do."

Top Gun

In 1970-71, Rich Liebler, the son of Army veterans—his mother won a Bronze Star for her work as a triage nurse in North Africa during the Second World War—forsook the Army for the Marines, for whom he became a flier. Piloting an A-6 fighter over flak-filled skies, the Seton Hall graduate and his mates provided close air support for recon units slogging through triple canopy jungle. They dodged surface-to-air missiles to blow up fuel depots in North Vietnam. They flew sorties along the Ho Chi Minh trail, seeking to disrupt the influx of men and material to the south.

One time, he recalls, he violated protocol. Instead of making two passes over a convoy of trucks along the trail, he made five—and destroyed fifty trucks. "We got 'em all," he recalls, not without pride, and he got a Distinguished Flying Cross.

He did a stint at the forward air controller for a battalion of South Korean Marines. "They looked for fights all the time," he says. "I was a head taller then they were. When we were out in the bush, me next to a radio operator, it was as if I had a sign saying 'Kill me' on my chest."

As a FAC, I'd be sitting on top of some hill out in nowhere in the middle of the night. It was pitch black, raining like hell. We'd be shot at and mortared. There'd be sappers in the wire. On the ground, you smelled the war. And you heard it. It was then that I really appreciated being up in the air."

"Every day I witnessed very common people who were doing extraordinary things. Pilots who'd get hit one day would go out again the next. Maybe," he reflects, "I spent a year totally insane, but back then we believed we were doing work that needed to be done. And that work, as a Marine

flier, absolutely defined me as a human being. It started the rest of my life. And it actually got me hired by Ford.”

Crushing Reception

When he returned home in ‘71, still recovering from a million-dollar wound that ended his flying days, “I thought I was a conquering hero,” he says. “Back on U.S. soil, in the San Francisco Airport, some young people called out to a group of a dozen of us: ‘You should be ashamed.’ I was crushed. Absolutely crushed. I really knew nothing about politics. I had gone to war to defeat communism. It took me years to understand the politics of the war. But that reception soured me so much that I got out.”

With $5,000 he’d saved during his tour in Vietnam, Liebler, who’d worked for Ford for two years, bought into a failing Lincoln/Mercury dealership in Elizabeth, New Jersey. It was the height of the energy crisis, and “you couldn’t give away large automobiles,” he says. “Then we had a recession in ’80.” But the Marines had taught him well. And today, that dealership, which he moved and rechristened Hillside Auto Mall, is the largest Ford dealership in the state, and one of several he now owns.

It was in 1995 that Liebler approached Msgr. William Linder, founder of the New Community Corporation, a nonprofit corporation that is helping transform one of America’s most troubled cities, with a plan. Liebler’s oldest son, Cory, had been killed in an automobile accident, and he wanted to honor the memory of his son by doing something for young people—hard-core, at risk young people—living in the inner city.

With Linder’s blessing and support, Liebler cajoled a $100,000 grant from Ford Motor Company, matched it with $100,000 of his own money, and the Youth Automotive Training Center was transformed from concept to reality. It officially opened in October 1996, just four months after New Community acquired an old garage from Bell Atlantic. Twenty-five students signed on for the twelve-month program, lured by the guarantee of well-paying jobs at the completion of their training.

“That first class taught me more than I taught them,” says Liebler. “I learned I have to teach from their perspective. I learned that to these kids I was a rich white guy who had to prove myself to win their trust. And,” he says, “you have to prove yourself to these kids every day.”

Success!

Impressed by the initial successes of the program—18 of that first class of 25 graduated—Ford contributed $1 million in additional funds and vehicles, and the Youth Automotive Training Center was designated a certified Ford training site. To date, more than 65 have successfully completed the full program, and another 50 have graduated from an evening program that focuses on upgrading their skills.

“With Ford Motor Company’s commitment, we have a state-of-the-art training facility,” Liebler says. “There is no other school on the face of this planet that is better equipped than this one.”

Disadvantaged young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 who enroll in the training courses are taught using a vehicle maintenance and light repair curriculum developed by Ford and delivered by

Ford-trained instructors. They are also taught skills that are second-nature to most of the rest of us.

"Three-quarters of the kids who start our program didn't even have an alarm clock. We'd teach them to show up a half-hour early instead of five minutes late. We'd teach them how to interview. We'd work as much on their life skills as their technical training. Because to be successful," Liebler says, "you can't have one without the other."

What makes this program unique is its vision: "A lot of job training programs train people for bottom-level jobs," Liebler says. "We train people for careers, not jobs. I've got technicians in my dealership that I'm paying $80,000 a year." Hardly bottom-level.

A Consuming Passion

What also is unique is Liebler's commitment. "This is my baby now, " he says. "All I want is for kids to be successful. We give them the chance they never had. We give them a second chance. My joy is a graduate coming back and telling other kids how wonderful our program is, how it's transformed her life."

So now Rich Liebler spends more time at the training center than at his dealership, mentoring, cajoling, working with "his" young people.

"You know, when you develop a program like this, you just get sucked into it. My whole life now is consumed here. Sure, I worked hard, and enjoyed establishing and growing my business. But this center, and the kids it helps," he says, "are my passion and my pride."

He tells this story: "One young woman, she'd done time in prison, she hung out with gangs, she stuck with us. She graduated. I got her a job at a dealership. Early on, I had to sell the idea of social responsibility to some of the other dealers. Then I had to sell my graduates. And this young woman, she's now the rental manager running a fleet of forty cars, "One day, she comes back here and she gives the most inspiring talk to the students. She tells them that she didn't believe anything I'd said during the program. 'But he got me a job. And how many white guys would come down here and do this?'

"And she'd never even said 'Thank you' to me before."

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Joe Rich: From Reporting About, to Helping, People in Need

In the winter of 1960, a young man was faced with a dilemma: he was in his second semester in college, taking courses in broadcasting and electronics, on the way to realizing a boyhood dream of a career on the airwaves.

But his father's eyesight was deteriorating, and as a result his dad's pharmacy was losing customers. And Joe Rich didn't want to be a burden on his family.

He joined the Army.

Assigned after basic training to the communications section of Headquarters Company in the 3rd Infantry Division, he spent much of the next three years in Germany, based in Schweinfurt , the onetime "ball-bearing capital" of Germany that had been heavily bombed by the Allies in the Second World War. With the Cold War in full heat, his unit was in the field, on maneuvers, 70 percent of the time, on "constant alert, " he recalls, in a "show of strength" to the Communists over the border.

It was in the 3rd Infantry, working with soldiers from across the country, that Joe came to appreciate the value of teamwork. "I learned that other people count," he reflects from his office in Watertown , New York. "I learned that an individual is only as strong as the group, and that everyone has to be persistent, and work in concert, to get the job done."

The Army taught him a lesson that set the tone for the rest of his professional life.

Back on Track

His military service completed, Joe used the G.I. Bill to help defray the costs of college. He attended the State University of New York at Rochester, earning his bachelor's degree with a major in history. He went on to train at the New York School of Broadcasting and Electronics in New York City.

"My first job was back in my hometown – Watertown – at WOTT radio, for 65 bucks a week. I started out as a part-time newsman. Then I worked at it full-time. I even ran the first call-in talk show in the North Country " of New York State . Before long, Joe was the news director.

He moved on to WWNY radio and TV, the CBS affiliate in the region. Beginning as the weekend news anchor, he soon became a familiar face on the nightly newscasts. He was one of the top newsmen in the area, interviewing such luminaries as Bobby Kennedy, whom he came to know as a friend, Jimmy Carter, and the boxing champion Rocky Marciano. And he is forever thankful to the late John B. Johnson, editor and publisher of the Watertown *Daily Times*, "who set the tone of journalistic professionalism and hard work for me and many others who crossed his path." Along with his parents, John Johnson was his role model.

One of the stories he reported – one that had a lasting, and career-altering, effect on him – happened in 1974. "A young boy, he was 12 or 13, was shot in a hunting accident. His spine was shattered. It was a real tragedy." Through his broadcasts, "we got the community to contribute enough money to build an addition to the boy's family's home."

His efforts touched a nerve.

“Before long, I started getting calls from other families, lots of them. Most were parents of developmentally disabled children and adults. Services then weren’t what they are now, and these people needed help.”

Joe Rich got an idea. He founded the Foundation for the Handicapped and “we started doing big-name concerts to raise money to help these families.” The big names included the Beach Boys, Loretta Lynn, Count Basie, Barbara Mandrell, Kenny Rogers, Tony Bennett, Robert Goulet, Reba McIntyre, Willie Nelson. The first concert featured the late Harry Chapin. Joe put up his own money to fund the myriad expenses a concert incurs. “The joke was,” he says, “that if we didn’t succeed, you’d see my house floating down the Black River.”

But the concert did succeed. And the concert series has now become a fixture in Watertown for more than a quarter of a century.

‘Guardian Angel’

Pretty soon, helping the disabled became a calling for Joe Rich, whom Thomas A. Maul, Commissioner of the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities dubbed the “guardian angel of the North Country.” “We developed a grassroots organization that we incorporated as the Disabled Persons Action Organization,” he says, which provides support services to more than 500 individuals with developmental disabilities and their families in northern New York State. Those his organization assists have disabilities which have had a profound impact on their lives – afflictions such as spina bifida, some forms of muscular dystrophy, autism, epilepsy with severe neurological impairment. Joe continues to serve as its executive director.

Joe later went on to become one of the founders – he’s now the outgoing president – of the 1 World Foundation, which is dedicated to improving the lives of people with developmental disabilities across borders through the free exchange of expertise by doctors, administrators, and clinicians as well as by the donation of badly needed medical supplies. 1 World recently facilitated the donation of $15 million worth of medical equipment – including hospital beds, wheelchairs, patients lifts, and walkers – and the establishment of a system of services for disabled children and adults in the Turks and Caicos Islands, one of the fastest growing countries in the Caribbean. Joe, who owns some property there, first started assisting local kids in 1993.

“I guess you could say I’m on a crusade to help people with disabilities,” Joe says. And this crusader has been duly recognized for his efforts and his zeal: In 1994 he was the recipient of the New York State Rural Affairs Achievement Award and in 1998 he was honored with the Rotary International Paul Harris Award, both for his work with individuals with disabilities. He has served on several state councils and commissions, where he gained a reputation as an effective advocate for increasing awareness of the unique needs of individuals with disabilities, particularly those who live in rural areas.

Two years ago, Joe had heart valve replacement surgery. This slowed him down, but only a bit. Now 59, with retirement on the horizon, he knows that even when he leaves his posts with 1 World and the Disabled Persons Action Organization, he’ll stay involved one way or another.

Because there is a need and he lives by the lesson instilled in him during his time in the Army: by working together, with persistence and with vision, we can get the job done.

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Monte Wilson: Fueled by Anger and Resolve, VVA Service Rep Fights for Fellow Veterans

If Monte Wilson had been a professional athlete, sportswriters would report with a sense of wonder how tough he must be to play through almost constant, drumming pain.

But Monte Wilson is no athlete, unless you consider scooting around on a Harley a sporting affair. And the pain he lives with every day saps his strength and sometimes his spirit. Yet he still gives his best in fighting for his fellow veterans as a service representative for Vietnam Veterans of America. At this, his chosen field, he has long been, to the chagrin of some in the benefits bureaucracy, one of the best in the business.

"Being a severely wounded Vietnam combat veteran who has devoted his life to veterans' advocacy gives Monte a unique perspective in fighting for proper health care and compensation, particularly for disabled veterans," said Len Selfon, director of the Veterans Benefits Program for VVA. "He has dealt with the VA as both patient and service representative. He understands the frustrations of his clients personally and professionally and translates that understanding into positive action every time. I have worked in the veterans arena for a dozen years and I still learn something new from him on almost a daily basis."

Long Time Passing

The son of a district scout executive for the Boy Scouts of America, Monte Wilson grew up in Nevada and California in places like Las Vegas and Reno and Fresno. His mother worked in banks. He was the middle of three kids, a wild child who had "no clue" as to what he'd like to do with his life. With fighting raging halfway across the globe, he volunteered to be drafted. Trained as an artilleryman, a 13A10, he arrived in Vietnam in September 1968.

Monte and the other cherries flew into Danang. They were walking across the compound to the 517th Transit Company for assignment to the field when sniper fire and a barrage of incoming rockets and mortars greeted them. Just about everyone jumped into bunkers. Not Monte. "I was raised to look before I acted, and I saw this one guy standing against the wall of a building maybe a couple dozen meters away, smoking a cigarette, apparently unbothered by the incoming. This guy obviously knows more than the rest of us," Monte remembers thinking. He also had a weapon, a Marlin .444 large-bore rifle. Rather than jump into a crowded bunker filled with newbies and muddy water, Monte dashed over and stood next to him. It was the beginning of a friendship that has endured to this day.A couple of days later, Monte Wilson was assigned to the 1/83 Artillery to serve on a gun crew. His unit provided fire support for the 1st Battalion, 3rd Infantry of the 101st Airborne Division, which was operating in I Corps along the DMZ. Denny, his newfound friend, ran a four-man team that, accompanied by a rifle squad, would chopper out to the bush, set up on the high ground, usually on the side of a mountain, and observe enemy activity along the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

Then they would call in fire missions before being extracted by chopper, back to Camp Eagle or FireBase Bastogne, before the NVA could pinpoint their location. Denny, impressed by Monte's resourcefulness that first day in country, asked for Monte to join his team when he needed him.

Neat Stuff

"We weren't LLRP's (Long Range Recon Patrols), we were just guys who got drafted," Monte said, guys who were "scared to death just about every time we went out." Not that terror was the dominant emotion. "We did get to see a lot of neat stuff over there. We were walking down this road one time when we came to an old rock wall. The lieutenant wanted to go over it, make sure that no VC were about. Well, turns out it was the grounds of a big old Buddhist temple, abandoned and overgrown with weeds. It was littered with statues of dragons and warriors with masks on, almost like a giant sculpture garden.

"One of the guys climbed back up the wall and looked down. 'It looks like a chessboard,' he yelled to us." Chess was a game that Monte had long been familiar with, having been taught to play as a youngster by his father.

Two days out in the boonies with relative freedom of movement were better than having to "hump ammo for 175mm Howitzers or lay in the mud shooting cannon," he said. And in the dozen or so forays out, this squad never got into a firefight once, he said. "Our job was to observe and call in artillery, not to engage the enemy."

One time, though, they observed a large force heading their way, a truck convoy moving down the Trail. They skedaddled out of there, anticipating the potential for a mismatched confrontation. They called in a fire mission that plastered the entire area. A chopper came to extract them. They headed to Camp Eagle to be debriefed, then back to Bastogne for a meal and a hot shower.

This one time, though, they should have stayed out in the boonies.

It was May 12, 1969. About 0200, NVA regulars attacked Bastogne in force. Sappers sliced through the perimeter wire as the base came under a relentless barrage of rockets and mortars. Monte was at the side of a bunker. As a sapper came around the corner, he opened up. So did the sapper. Monte was hit initially in the leg. He stitched the sapper from groin to neck, blowing him into the bunker. The charge exploded, lifting Monte into the air and blowing him several dozen meters from where he had been standing. Lucky for him the sandbags had taken the brunt of the shrapnel from the exploding bunker. His buddy, Denny, called down a Huey to dust him off: by then Monte had taken 17 separate wounds and was bleeding profusely. Waiting for a medevac chopper was not an option.

Denny's quick thinking, and the chopper pilot's intrepidity saved Monte Wilson's life.

Sister Morphine

The next several days were spent in a morphine cloud, as he was transported from one medical facility to another, from Phu Bai to Danang to Japan, then to Fort Ord in California. Hospitals would be his home for the next 18 months. In one brief period of consciousness in Danang, some of the walking wounded who had survived Bastogne told him: the firebase had been overrun. The entire mortar platoon had been waxed. Scores of the 120 or so men who manned the base were KIA or WIA. Monte was lucky to be alive.

While he was lucky, he also was angry. He came to hold a healthy disrespect for much of military medicine, and the VA healthcare bureaucracy.

Encased in a full-body cast, he complained of things crawling across his body. "It's all in your head," he was told. Until one day a sympathetic nurse broke open part of the cast and was amazed to discover maggots on the wounds. Monte filed a complaint with the IG, and one of his doctors, a lieutenant colonel, was cited for negligence.

As his condition improved, he'd take forays around the wards in his wheelchair. He saw orderlies spraying one unit with fire hoses to keep the patients in the psych unit in line. Then there was the incident with a young trooper whose foot was crushed in an accident in basic training.

"He was real young, maybe 16 or 17 years old," Monte said. "He had lied to get into the Army, he wanted to be a soldier so much. He went into surgery. They amputated the wrong foot. The wrong foot! When he came back to the ward, and when we found out what had happened, we all went ballistic." Monte, though, channeled his anger, something he would come to do many times over the course of his career. He read legal books to determine how best to help a young man whose life had been shattered. He wrote the first of what would be several thousand claims.

After being medically retired from the military in July 1970, Monte Wilson became a service rep, initially for the Military Order of the Purple Heart, which he had joined, then later for the Governor of the State of Nevada. There he transformed a one-man operation that handled three claims in a busy month to a 17-person volunteer operation that processed almost 1,700 claims a year.

He eventually accepted a six-month contract with the National Veterans Legal Services program, where his focus area was the insidious Agent Orange. And when Len Selfon asked him to work his magic for VVA, he found it hard to say no. "I just felt I owed VVA," Monte said, "and Len told me he really needed my help to turn VVA's benefits program around and transform it into a really efficient operation."

During the course of his career, Monte Wilson has taken on numerous "unwinnable" claims and won them. He got retroactive compensation for an "atomic vet" who traced his illness to the bombing of Hiroshima. Outraged that the VA awarded a 10% disability rating for "anxiety neurosis" to "one guy who came back with just about every medal imaginable, a guy who was really suffering from PTSD," Monte made the case that upped the rating to 100% — and won retroactive compensation. He won cases for Gulf War I vets, not against the VA but against the Army or the Navy.

"I don't do this work for the money," Monte explained one recent evening from his home in Silver Spring, Maryland. "I could make more as a social worker, and you know social workers don't make a hell of a lot to begin with. I do it because," he pauses, "if I don't, who will? And I know what to do to win justice for guys who've been screwed by the system."

How much longer Monte will endure in this role is uncertain: The Hepatitis C virus which has afflicted him for the past nine years has increasingly debilitated him. He likely contracted this blood-borne pathogen during one of the dozen surgeries he underwent. His life is now marred by the constant pain of a diseased liver, exacerbated by the grievous wounds he suffered at Bastogne.

"I'm not the same person I was when I went there," he said. "Physically, I became a different person. I was forced into a different lifestyle, forced by having witnessed firsthand how too many of those charged with helping veterans in fact did just the opposite. I saw how little they cared for us despite what we had lost."

"I find this insulting. I watched them butcher that young black soldier with the crushed foot. They never even said they were sorry. They tried to buy me off. Instead, they just pissed me off."

After three decades, Monte Wilson is still pissed off - and he's channeling his anger to make the system do what it's charged with doing. Service-disabled veterans don't know how lucky they are to have him as their advocate.

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Duery Felton, Jr.: For the Curator of Artifacts Left at the Wall, A 'Sacred Trust'

Thirty-five years ago, he was one of McNamara's 100,000, part of the big draft call of November 1966. He went from high school to Vietnam with minimal training in between – basic at Ft. Gordon, advanced infantry at Ft. Jackson – to meet the critical need for bodies as the American presence in the war rapidly escalated.

Today, Duery Felton, Jr., who barely survived his time in-country, is a very special veteran: Duery Felton is Curator of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection, the repository of the "artifacts" left by visitors to the national Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.

For Duery, this position with the National Park Service, which he has held for a decade, is more than a job. It is a calling, a sacred trust. "I am honored," he says simply of his role.

Duery Felton was profoundly changed by his time in the service. Just as he was scarred on the outside by grievous wounds suffered during a search-and-destroy operation while he was assigned to the Army's 1st Infantry Division as a platoon radio operator, so is he steeled on the inside by the injustice of what befell too many young men – young and poor, black men and white and Hispanic — drafted during the early years of the war. Young men like Duery Felton.

He had spent ten-and-a-half months in Vietnam, operating near the Cambodian border "and probably in Cambodia as well" when he was hit. One of the last things he recalls before losing consciousness is someone telling him that if he wakes up he would have to cover his throat because of the tracheotomy he underwent that saved his life. Beyond revealing this single fact, he is reluctant to talk much about the firefight on a bridge in which his life almost ended. He does acknowledge that he has spent some 30 years in and out of hospitals undergoing rehabilitative surgeries; he does intimate that every day since Vietnam he has been in pain.

For years after he was discharged from the Army, the Washington, D.C. native held a variety of jobs, at the World Bank, at the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Then he found himself in the right place at the right time. A member of Vietnam Veterans of America, he read in the *VVA Veteran* about the situation resulting from the unanticipated avalanche of artifacts left by visitors to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. In 1984, two years after the groundbreaking of the memorial, the National Park Service/National Capital Region was given stewardship of the the memorial. At this time, Regional Curator Pam West determined that these mementos would become a museum collection under the care of the National Park Service and everything, except for unaltered American flags and living plant matter, would be saved and catalogued.

This is where Duery fits in.

One day, visiting the collection, he noticed that several objects had been mislabeled. The curatorial staff, it seems, had no frame of reference to understand some of the items that had been left, like some souvenir pieces from Thailand brought back by a GI from R&R. He pointed this out. Shortly

thereafter, he was hired. And his job, his calling, has seen him evolve into a highly respected member of the veterans' community, a man who brings passion and resolve and commitment to his "government job."

A 'Sacred Trust'

Upwards of 65,000 artifacts currently comprise the collection. They are featured in books, on documentaries, on news shows like "Nightline," which gave the collection its initial national exposure back in 1986.

In the collection are letters and postcards and poems penned by buddies and lovers, parents and siblings and children.

"Occasion cards": *"This would have been Wiley's 50th birthday*;" Photographs. Pictures of children inscribed*, "This should have been our child."* Books. Old LPs and eight-tracks. A CD entitled, *"Here's that Sunshine Day."* C-ration cans. Diplomas (left by the children of KIAs).

Many express the raw emotions of loss of a loved one, a good friend, a comrade in arms; of lives cut short by a bullet or a bomb in a war so many are still grappling to come to terms with. Some messages are written of the moment by visitors overcome with emotion.

Others have been carefully prepared back in Lima, Ohio, or Metter, Georgia, or Skillman, New Jersey, brought to the memorial during a visit, and left almost as an offering.

Are there any particular artifacts that have special meaning to Duery Felton?

There is a black beret with the 101st Airborne Recon insignia, he says, left by a surviving member of a recon team. "Why did he wait 20 years to leave it?" Duery wonders. "What was he going through all those years? Was he suffering from survivor's guilt? Did leaving the beret help him heal in any way?"

Duery was processing artifacts one day when he came across a manila envelope. "Duery, you will understand" was all it said on the outside. Inside was the combat diary of a veteran.

Then there was a neckerchief in a Ziploc bag, with a photo of a black Marine and a white Marine. The black Marine left the photo to honor the memory of his buddy, who had been killed in action. "When I opened the bag, it had that smell of Vietnam," says Duery, whose own memories are as painful as the wounds that continue to plague him.

Fifteen hundred mementos left at the memorial during the first nine years, are part of an ongoing exhibit at the Smithsonian. Opened in 1992 to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the memorial, it was slated to run six months. But the overwhelming response has given the exhibit, one of the most popular at the museum, an open-ended stay.

Duery, along with fellow members of his VVA chapter, has spent Thanksgiving day and Christmas morning in recent years delivering packages of goodies to hospitalized veterans. "These guys still are in the hospital dealing with that experience," he says. "For them, the war never really goes away."

Nor does it for Duery Felton.

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Tyrone T. Dancy: Serving His Fellow Veterans with Passion and Commitment

"I feel there's an obligation here," says Tyrone T. Dancy, veterans' employment program supervisor with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor. For almost a quarter of a century, he has been helping fellow veterans get the assistance they need – assistance they've earned – to steer them to productive lives. His motto could be "Service with a smile;" his goal is to "really help those who seek and need help." And his satisfaction comes from those he's assisted. "Because when you're helpful and treat them with respect," he says, "they really appreciate it."

Tyrone brings commitment and passion to his job. Because for him it's more than a job: Tyrone Dancy is another veteran whose life began after he almost lost it, in a firefight in Vietnam. He understands the sacrifice of service.

Born and raised in Philadelphia, he hails from a family that "knows firsthand the pledge of allegiance to America," as he's written. His grandfather, John Strayhorn, was wounded while serving in World War I. His uncle, James Strayhorn, served in the Korean War and nearly lost his legs. His father, Leon Dancy, also suffered injury during the Korean War.

Then it was Tyrone's turn.

Short Operation

Drafted in January 1969, he found himself in Vietnam by June. Assigned to the 199th Light Infantry Brigade operating out of Long Binh, his first search-and-destroy mission was his last.

The third day of the operation, he wrote in his book, *War Aftermath Depose*, was "another long, torturous hot, humid day of deadly hide and seek. I was constantly looking where I was placing my feet. I looked into the trees to the right and left of me. I looked behind me. I was hyper-alert and exhausted. I was emotionally drained, concerning myself about land mines and booby traps. During a rest period, I looked up in the sky, and prayed, 'Oh, Lord, dear God, please take me out of here.'"

When small-arms fire erupted, "the guy who took my place on flank was shot in the left eye, leaving a hole in the back of his head the size of a golf ball. Bullets went through my rucksack; one hit the thigh of the soldier behind me. He cried out in pain. There was yelling, screaming, hollering, explosions, and the sound of automatic weapons fire going on all around me."

Tyrone was seriously wounded by enemy fire while attempting to help his medic bring wounded

comrades to relative safety. “I was hit literally from head to foot,” he recalls. “I nearly bled to death.”

But he didn’t. Medevacked to a hospital in Saigon and then back to the States, he endured a long period of recuperation. Two years after he was inducted, he left the service, with a Bronze Star with ‘V’ device, a Purple Heart, and a 50% service-connected disability rating.

Getting Focused

Like many Vietnam veterans, unresolved feelings about the war that almost took his life lingered on his psyche. For a long time he had a dream: *“I’m in the jungle, helpless, injured. I’m thinking they’re coming to get me; they’re coming to get me. And I wonder: Will they finish me off? Or will they take me prisoner?”*

As he became convinced of the futility of the war effort – if people only knew what was really going on, they would stop the war, he believed – so, too, emerged a consciousness to help his fellow veterans.

But first he needed an education.

A product of Philadelphia’s public school system, it was a miracle, Tyrone says, that he even learned to read. Yet the one book he did read, Pearl Buck’s *The Good Earth*, inspired him. And after he was injured and hospitalized, reading became his salvation. “Otherwise I would have lost my mind,” he says.

Armed with a determination to improve himself, and aided by the GI Bill, he went to college, first to Pierce Junior College in Center City, Philadelphia, then on to LaSalle University, where he earned his bachelor’s degree, having majored in sociology and minored in psychology. “And the world opened up for me,” he smiles.

While attending school, he worked as a clerk for the VA. Less than enthralled with how many VA employees treated those whom they had an obligation to serve, he quit. In 1977 he began his career with the PennsylvaniaDepartment of Labor as a disabled veteran’s outreach program specialist. And he found himself.

“To hear a fellow veteran tell me, ‘I come to you and I get all this assistance in 30 minutes after being given the run-around everywhere else I’ve been,’ tells me I’m doing the right thing,” he reflects.

And he is.

Receiving Recognition

Tyrone’s efforts on behalf of his fellow veterans have been applauded. In 1990, he was presented with the Dean K. Phillips Award by the National Veterans Training Institute at the University of Denver for his professional leadership and contributions in caring enough to “make a difference.” Two years later he was accorded the highest honor the International Association of Personnel in Employment Security bestows, the Award of Merit.

Two years after that award he was acknowledged by State Senator Allyson Schwartz for his

leadership on issues of concern to veterans, citing his work as host of the Veterans' Hour radio show aired the first Saturday of each month on a local radio station, WDAS-AM.

In 1999, Tyrone was presented with twin accolades from his Department of Labor: the Pride Award, for his initiative and willingness to serve his clients and the veterans community at large on and off the job, and for the innovative methods he'd initiated to enable veterans to improve their self-esteem and become productive members of their community; and the Keystone Award, for his commitment to elevate the profile of the veterans job center by providing quality services. Hitting the trifecta in '99, Tyrone was given the Legion of Honor Award by the Chapel of Four Chaplains, in recognition of his selfless service without regard to race, religion, or creed.

In addition to his daily efforts on behalf of veterans, Tyrone's creative impulses found an outlet in writing – in addition to his book, *War Aftermath Depose*, his poetry has achieved critical praise – and in producing – "Letters from the Attic," a play about the contributions of black American war veterans.

When Tyrone T. Dancy went into the Army, he was young and strong and scarless. When he left two years later, his body was a mess of scars, and his hearing was permanently damaged. He was angry. But he refused to succumb. During the long and agonizing months of his hospitalization, "there was this one guy who was in worse shape than I was: he'd lost an eye and a leg. So I buried a lot of my anger and recalculated my own attitude."

Tyrone Dancy channeled whatever lingering bitterness that was sullying his soul into a constructive and productive career – one that has aided thousands of veterans in his home town and beyond.

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Lt. Gen. Martin Steele (USMC, Ret'd): Instilling Tradition, from the Corps to the Intrepid

In August 1966, he was a 19-year-old corporal, a college dropout who had enlisted in the Marines. Following a tour as a machine gunner as the nasty little conflict in Vietnam was escalating into a war, he had just returned to stateside service. Assigned to Quantico, where he would be Commanding General more than a quarter of a century later, Marty Steele met Karl Taylor.

"He was my inspiration," says Steele, who attained the rank of lieutenant general in the Corps and who is now President and CEO of the Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum in New York City.

"I was just a corporal, and Karl Taylor, a son of Baltimore, Maryland – he was about the biggest individual I'd ever seen – was a staff sergeant. When he spoke, this man who had been born with a cleft palate, everybody listened, despite his lisp. He was mesmerizing. He had such presence." SSgt. Taylor took the young enlisted man, the student-athlete from Fayetteville, Arkansas, under his expansive wing and pushed him to become an officer.

"Back then, I really had no interest in becoming an officer. A sergeant, maybe, but an officer? Yet this guy, for whatever reason, reached out and badgered me. I guess he saw something in me, and he stayed on my case. And when I received my commission – at age 20, I was the youngest officer in the Corps – he gave me my first salute. And I gave him a silver dollar, as tradition in the Corps dictates."

On the night of 8 December 1968, during a ferocious firefight, SSgt. Karl G. Taylor gave his life, not for tradition but for the men with whom he served. And everywhere he goes, Marty Steele carries a copy of his mentor's Medal of Honor citation:

Informed that the commander of the lead platoon had been mortally wounded when his unit was pinned down by a heavy volume of enemy fire, Staff Sergeant Taylor along with another Marine, crawled forward to the beleaguered unit through a hail of hostile fire, shouted encouragement and instructions to the men, and deployed them to covered positions. . .

Karl Taylor, says Marty Steele, a tear glistening in his eye, "is the last conscious thought I have every night, and my first conscious thought every morning."

With his companion, he then repeatedly maneuvered across an open area to rescue those Marines who were too seriously wounded to move by themselves. Upon learning that there were still other seriously wounded men lying in another open area, in proximity to an enemy machine gun position, Staff Sergeant Taylor, accompanied by four comrades, led his men forward across the fire-swept terrain in an attempt to rescue the Marines. When his group was halted by devastating fire, he directed his companions to return to the company command post, whereupon he took his grenade launcher and, in full view of the enemy, charged across the open rice paddy toward the machine gun position, firing his weapon as he ran...

"To me, Karl Taylor epitomized what it's all about, how in combat you intuitively understand you're not there for God or country or the flag, but for your comrades, and that you'll give your life for them if necessary."

Although wounded several times, he succeeded in reaching the machine gun bunker and silencing the fire from that sector, moments before he was mortally wounded. . . .

What Karl Taylor did that night, as the citation reads, is in the highest traditions of the Corps. Now, part of Marty Steele's purpose in life is to honor the Karl Taylors of this world, and to illuminate, especially for the young, the nature of service and sacrifice.

Second Career

In July 1999, after almost 35 years in uniform, Marty Steele retired from the Corps. At the suggestion of fellow General Matt Caulfield, he accepted the position of president and CEO of the Intrepid Museum. The 20-year-old museum is still searching for ways to find its audience, and to become a mainstay among museums in New York, a must-visit for visitors and locals alike.

His position afforded him an opportunity to honor those who served, to give breadth and scope to the reinvigorated saying, "Freedom is not free," and to probe the nature of sacrifice – particularly of those who have selflessly made the supreme sacrifice. Because, Marty Steele believes, "those who have served in war understand the need for peace, and understand as well that the world is a violent place filled with religious and political and ethnic hatreds."

At the same time, he is a realist who is challenged by the need to raise the funds to keep his museum afloat, to pay for the capital improvements on infrastructure on the aging aircraft carrier that has been berthed at Pier 86 along the Hudson River, and open to the public as a museum since 1982. He also sees as integral to his mission the need to focus staff to improve the quality of the exhibits as a way of helping to educate and inspire those who visit the museum, particularly young people.

For Marty Steele, who serves on the Board of Advisors at Veterans Advantage, the mission is really about leadership and character development, on evocating value-based behavior – behavior based on respect for oneself and one's fellow human beings. On Mondays, when the Intrepid is closed to the public, it is open to students who visit and spend time with mentors. These men and women, who understand that there is little glory in war, serve on a pro bono basis and talk about leadership and character, values and ethics. In a pilot program, many of the young people who attended called it the most significant day of their life.

Which pleases Marty Steele.

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Clebe McClary: Overcoming the Odds to Inspire Others

Patrick Cleburne, "Clebe" McClary, III was raised on a plantation in South Carolina. He grew up hunting, fishing, and excelling in sports.

Clebe had it all. He won scholarships, set state records for athletic achievements, taught Sunday School in his home of Florence, South Carolina. He married the prettiest cheer-leader in his high school.

Then, at the height of the fighting in Vietnam, he joined the Marine Corps.

After officer's training school, Lt.Clebe McClary was sent to war. And just after midnight on March 3rd, 1968, his life was shattered.

On Hill 146, deep in "Indian country," Clebe and his men were caught in a firefight. In the initial enemy attack, a satchel charge severed his left arm. Despite his wound, he continued to fight. Seeing a grenade hurtling toward him, he threw up his right hand to protect his face. When the grenade exploded, his left eye was torn from it's socket, both eardrums burst and his right hand was mutilated.

Though disoriented and while exposed to enemy fire, McClary inspired his Marines by running between fighting positions to redirect their fire. He was struck by another grenade explosion that mutilated his legs. Bleeding profusely, he retrieved the radio to call artillery and air strikes.

As he was losing consciousness, McClary recalls thinking, "I never wanted to live so much in all my life." Knowing he was near death, his thoughts were of his men and his wife. "If I could just live long enough to see my Marines get off this mountain alive," he says, "If I could just see my wife one more time."

His Marines held on forcing the enemy troops to pull back. Before the enemy could mount another assault, a chopper arrived to carry Clebe and his men to safety. For his actions, McClary was awarded the Silver Star, the Bronze Star and three Purple Hearts.

A New Life

While over two-thirds of the wives of traumatically injured veterans leave their husbands, McClary's wife, Deanna, stood by him. Upon seeing him for the first time after his return from Vietnam, Deanna said, "To me, he was beautiful, because he was Clebe, and he was home, and he was mine." Sneaking in before visiting hours and hiding to stay late to be with him virtually around the clock, she cared for him, assisted in changing his dressings, and played a major role in his therapy.

Clebe spent the next two and one-half years in hospitals and rehabilitation. He underwent thirty-

four operations and countless hours of therapy to rebuild his shattered body.

He persevered. And he more than recovered.

Clebe McClary has since dedicated himself to sharing his story and his faith -- “serving in the Lord’s Army,” as he says -- to inspire others. He presents his philosophy on leadership, commitment, and discipline in a motivational program he calls PATCH: Positive Attitude That Characterizes Hope. He has spoken to corporate giants, professional athletes, students, soldiers and church groups. He has written a book, *Living Proof,* and he is the subject of a documentary film, *Portrait of An American Hero*.

“Once you’ve listened to Clebe speak’, says Atlanta Falcons head coach Dan Reeves, your life will never be the same.” Echoes Tommy LaSorda, former manager of the Los Angeles Dodgers, “ He is an inspiration to every American in every walk of life.”

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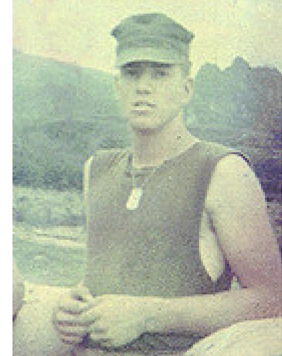
Ed McSorley: Explaining the Meaning of Service and Sacrifice To the Next Generation



"As a child of the 50s and 60s, military service was an obligation and a right of passage," Ed McSorley told some 250 students attending a post-Memorial Day workshop recently at New Canaan (Connecticut) High School. To the young men and women living privileged lives to whom the youthful middle-aged veteran bared his soul, service in the military was something beyond the realm of their experience. For most, college was next on their horizon, to be followed by good jobs and successful careers.

But on that day they gathered to learn something from the well-dressed Institutional equity salesman about those who died in service to the nation.

"With the ending of the draft in 1970," Ed McSorley told them, "many of my generation, and younger, never served in the military. Of the 280 employees at my New York office" - Ed earns a comfortable living working at J. P. Morgan in New York City - "only five of us are veterans." And only Ed and one other saw service in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War. His experience illustrates what the author Myra McPherson once wrote, "Vietnam was a war that asked everything of a few and nothing of most of America."

Ed McSorley, a son of Ossining, New York, was one of the few.

One Good . . . Boy

Ed enlisted in the Marine Corps when he was all of 17, much to the consternation of his mother, who had to sign for him. The service, though, offered him a way to pay for college. A year later he was a veteran, "retired" from the military because of the extensive wounds he had received in combat. His military experience was, he told the students, "profound."

"My Marine training was tough," he said. "We were well prepared both physically and mentally" for combat, and at Parris Island, the Corps was up front about casualties. "We were told we should expect a 40% casualty rate," he said. They were off by 60%: of the 13 men Ed became close with - "We called ourselves the 'Filthy Few' because we were usually coated in mud" — only five survived. All were wounded.

Ed was sent to Vietnam in 1968, the bloodiest year of the war. While most Americans who followed the events of that year remember the Tet Offensive that began on January 30, few recall that the Viet Cong and their cohorts in the North Vietnamese Army began a second bloody offensive three months later. Ed's unit - he served with 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines, 3rd Marine Division - "caught the brunt of that campaign," he said. On April 30, while Lance Corporal McSorley and his mates were on "easy duty," sweeping for mines the road between the Rockpile and Camp Carroll in Quang Tri province, just south of the Demilitarized Zone, the NVA attacked.

In the ensuing firefight, Ed was seriously wounded by mortar and small-arms fire. Unable to move to find cover, he was an inviting target when one of his buddies, Bob Leahy - "my Guardian Angel,

a man I still pray to every day" - rushed out, braving the intense enemy fire. Although hit in the leg, Leahy was able to carry his friend to safety.

Five weeks later, Bob Leahy was killed in action.

Last Rites - and Eight Units of Blood

Ed, meanwhile, his body peppered with shrapnel and bullet holes, didn't think he was going to make it. Neither did some of the corpsmen in the field. He was bleeding profusely and losing a lot of blood. Intense enemy ground fire prevented the medevac helicopters from landing.

Ed was given last rites in the field.

Then, all of a sudden, several choppers braved the enemy fire and managed to land. One of them set down near where Ed was lying. His buddies literally threw him onto the chopper, which took off into heavy fire. Within minutes, he was at Delta Med in Dong Ha, where he was infused with eight units of blood. He had come close - very close - to having bled to death.

Lying naked on a gurney, in intense pain, he looked down at his body "and saw all the holes. But I also looked at the guys next to me. One had lost his legs; the other was gutshot." While Ed may not have been lucky, he was alive. One hundred, thirty-nine NVA were killed during that fight, with heavy casualties suffered as well by the Marines.

Getting His Life Back

His odyssey of recovery took him to Japan, and then to Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, D.C., and finally to the naval hospital at St. Albans, Queens, New York. He recalls one sobering moment: Arriving at Andrews Air Force on a Sunday morning after leaving Walter Reed on a stretcher in a bus with 15 or 20 other badly wounded soldiers, they were greeted by antiwar demonstrators hoisting placards and throwing objects. Ed was appalled.

A few months later, in October 1968, Ed McSorley was honorably discharged from the Corps. He was given a 70% disability rating by the VA. He was 18 years old.

Ed went to school, to Bryant College in Smithfield, Rhode Island, where he kept "a low profile. I didn't want anyone to know I'd been in the service. And except for the scars, which I kept hidden, no one looking at me would have imagined I'd been to Vietnam. I didn't even shave till I was 20."

His Marine training, though, stuck with him. He adopted a can-do attitude. If you want something, you've got to work hard to achieve it. He became organized and focused. He graduated with honors, then went on to earn his MBA from Fordham University in New York City. He got married. He took his first job on Wall Street with a firm that is now Prudential Securities. He fathered three children. He has lived the life he chose, and made it into a success, a contradiction of the Vietnam vet-as-victim stereotype.

For years he never spoke of Vietnam, except to a few of those with whom he served and stayed in touch. "And no one in my family ever asked about my experiences," he said.

Even after he was appointed to the New York Vietnam Veterans Memorial Commission by Mayor Edward I. Koch in 1984, Ed kept his memories to himself. Then, two years ago, he agreed to

speak to young people in New Canaan, where he and his family have resided since 1990. He has also addressed other students in Wilton, Connecticut.

Why did he "come out" as a veteran? Because, he says, "You never forget. Every time I drink a glass of cold water I'm grateful." Speaking to the students, Ed shared a quote he'd read somewhere: "'If we wish peace in the years ahead, we must love and honor those who have paid the ultimate price to keep us free.'

"I know it is hard for most civilians to comprehend the price paid by those who have died," Ed said. "But it fills veterans with the responsibility to make sure that they are not forgotten."

Amen.

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Vince McGowan: The Moving Force Behind the Revival Of New York City's Community of Veterans

The general sat, stone-faced, as the sergeant pointed to the briefing map and gave his standard 15-minute spiel about the successes of the Combined Action Program in the village of Binh Nghia.

General Creighton Abrams had choppered in that morning to Fort Page, the outpost manned by a squad of Marines and Vietnamese militia in the village of 5,000 farmers, a few kilometers from the now infamous hamlet of My Lai. He sat, impassive, chomping on a cigar, not even cracking a smile at one of Sgt. Vincent McGowan's jokes.

After eight minutes, Abrams was gone. And McGowan, leader of the 12-man squad, thought he had blown it, that the man who would one day succeed General William Westmoreland as commander of U. S. forces in Vietnam didn't comprehend that in one small area of operations, a committed and confident band of Marines was winning the war, using small-unit tactics and establishing credibility with the villagers to best the Viet Cong at their own game.

Back in 1966, when Vince McGowan met General Abrams for the first and only time, when the American military presence in Vietnam was still young, many thought that the war was still winnable. The Marines at Fort Page, named after the first of their number to be killed in action, patrolled every night. They worked in concert with Vietnamese Popular Forces. They won most of the firefights in which they engaged. But mostly, they won hearts and minds.

"We were a showcase unit," McGowan recently said from his office in Battery Park City, a stone's throw from the smoulding ruin of the Twin Towers, where he is assistant director and director of operations for the Battery Park City Parks Conservancy responsible for maintaining 96 acres, two marinas, 17 buildings, two schools, and a ferry terminal.

"We helped this village reach a degree of democratic rule. We helped write the book on how CAP units should operate. And the techniques we used were eventually incorporated into Marine Corps tactics."

Despite all its might, the American military did not have many such successes in Vietnam.

Parallel Construction

Vince McGowan grew up in a five-story tenement on the West Side of Manhattan, at a time when Hell's Kitchen was one of New York's rough-and-tumble neighborhoods, a stomping ground for a slew of rival gangs. A onetime Golden Gloves boxer who had some success in the ring, McGowan joined the Marines in 1964, just before his eighteenth birthday.

In the Corps, the brash high-school dropout found himself. He achieved top honors in just about anything he took on, including the Dress Blue award out of Paris Island, where he went to boot

camp. Ignoring the maxim, he volunteered - for sea school, jump school, amphibious warfare school. After a year in the Mediterranean theatre of operations participating in mock warfare exercises, Corporal McGowan went to Vietnam.

On his third day in-country, his reaction squad was called to relieve the beleaguered Special Forces camp at Ba To, which was about to be overrun. He was in the second chopper heading in to a very hot LZ. The lead bird was blown out of the sky. For McGowan, this was "a real shocker," a true baptism of fire. They did manage to secure the perimeter, averting defeat.

After working with the Montagnards, the indigenous mountain tribes of the Central Highlands, many of whom became loyal allies of the Americans, he took on the role of squad leader at Fort Page, which had been overrun by a battalion of North Vietnamese Army regulars. For McGowan, who was fascinated by the strange and exotic culture he found in Vietnam, this was an opportunity "to engage people in a mission that really was important." Growing up where he did, in a place where "a few guys on the block can control everything," he saw parallels in villages like Binh Nghia, where a "few guys" - the Viet Cong - could dominate a "silent majority" without a groundswell of popular support.

He also saw parallels in Ireland, the home of his forebears. There, the Black and Tans conscripted men from the families along the coast of Galway near Donegal, from which his parents had emigrated.

Vince McGowan used his Marine training and the knowledge he had gleaned from the streets of his city to win some battles in the long, unquiet war.

Under McGowan, working with and getting to know the villagers and gaining their trust was as important to achieving success as was perfecting small-unit tactics - patrolling every night, seeking to engage the enemy and fighting them on their own terms. During his time in Binh Nghia, McGowan and his men engaged in plenty of firefights.

"One day, some of the village leaders gathered in a small town we called 'Nuoc Mam,'" he recalls. "The VC attacked. The Army unit with responsibility for that town did not know what to do. An Army colonel ordered us to do nothing. But these were our people there. So two of us - the rest of the guys were out on patrol - packed up our gear and ran the three miles to the town. I must've been carrying 25 grenades, 1,500 rounds of ammunition, three LAWs.

"We attacked the VC, who weren't expecting any real resistance. We were relentless. They used civilians as shields, but we had to press on. No quarter was given or taken. We routed them."

With Binh Nghia pacified, the decision was made on high to let the militia take over. McGowan and his men went on to establish another CAP unit on the My Lai peninsula. But for McGowan, 15 months in Vietnam was enough. "I had started to like it there too much," he reflects. He went back to The World.

Years of Disillusion

McGowan spent a year working with the RAND Corporation, using his village smarts to devise a civics program to be incorporated into the pacification effort in Vietnam. In short order, though, he became disenchanted by events in the States that mocked the men fighting under the banner of

Old Glory. “The American people didn’t support us,” he says simply. And with any possibility of victory slipping away, those who had fought the war bore the brunt of the blame.

When he returned home in 1968, which was to be the bloodiest year of the war, “you were a bum.” Disgusted, McGowan left the country, spending years down in Guatemala and southern Mexico. “I had little tolerance for the disrespect we were accorded,” he says. “I would have wound up in jail if I didn’t leave.”

New York was his home, however, and he returned in 1973. For ten years he owned bars and nightclubs. Lessons he’d cultivated in Vietnam - learn to trust your instincts and you’ll know what to do and when to do it - served him well. Yet there was a hole in his heart. “Our service was never validated,” he says. “We had guys who never wavered, who sacrificed their all, and who never were appreciated for what they did. And that’s still a problem to me.”

McGowan cites an excerpt of a poem by Tom Oathout inscribed on the New York Vietnam Veterans Memorial in lower Manhattan: *Mother I am cursed - I’m a soldier when soldiers aren’t in fashion.* He was determined to alter the perception by veterans of themselves, and of veterans by the rest of America.

Vince McGowan became an activist. He embraced the nascent veterans movement because, he says, “We couldn’t ignore what had happened. We had to come to terms with this or it would eat its way through us in the most unanticipated ways.”

He became one of the original members of Manhattan Chapter 126 of Vietnam Veterans of America, whose board he chaired. He worked his way up to first vice commander of the American Legion post in New York City, and ran their parades for three years.

This role, however, was an exercise in frustration. And when the Legion decided to forego its longtime sponsorship of the Veterans Day Parade, McGowan dusted off the 1912 charter of the United War Veterans Council, originally formed to honor the last of the city’s Civil War veterans. He got a revitalized Council recognized by the State of New York, and went to work.

The Council has revived the once moribund parades on Veterans Day and on Memorial Day. This year’s Veterans Day parade featured 10,000 marchers in 70 individual units, with six bands and five floats. “We’ve reestablished these parades as part of the New York scene,” he says, not without satisfaction.

His powers of persuasion were instrumental in raising the money - including almost $2 million in funding from the city - to reconstruct Vietnam Veterans Plaza and the New York City Vietnam Veterans Memorial, first dedicated in 1985.

And on November 9th, Vince McGowan seamlessly MC’ed the ceremony rededicating the plaza, a ceremony in which one general, two Medal of Honor recipients, and the head of the VA were among a crowd of 2,000 who were buoyed by the events of the day - and the very real improvements to a place of contemplation and reflection.

Some of them even knew enough to appreciate the yeoman efforts of Vince McGowan, the street-smart sergeant who couldn’t elicit a grunt of approval from General Abrams three decades before.

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Jim Kallstrom: Ex-FBI Big Leaves the Sidelines To Join the Fight Against Terrorism

In the wake of the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon, Jim Kallstrom was furious. He lost 20 good friends, including John P. O'Neill, the World Trade Center's director of security.

"There was a nagging part of my body and heart that wanted to do something," he told the New York Times. And when New York Governor George Pataki, with a little bit of arm-twisting, asked the retired 28-year veteran of the FBI to head the newly created Office of Public Safety, Jim Kallstrom didn't hesitate: he re-upped. And MBNA, the credit-card giant in Wilmington, Delaware, where he became a senior vice president, kept him on salary, loaning him to New York as a public service gesture.

For Jim Kallstrom, who had retired in 1997 as assistant director of the FBI's high-profile New York bureau, taking on this new responsibility as New York State's anti-terrorism "czar" put him back on the front lines. It is a situation in which he has thrived many times before.

Mud and Blood

James K. Kallstrom was born in 1943 in Millbury, Massachusetts, the son of a big-band trumpet player/car sales clerk and a nurse. He worked his way through the University of Massachusetts. After graduating in 1966, he joined the Marine Corps. As a platoon commander in Vietnam, Captain Kallstrom saw some of the hardest fighting of the war in I Corps near the DMZ.

"It was just hell," he said in an interview with the New York Times. But even worse than being shelled by the NVA and "living like a rat in a hole" was the reception he and other returning veterans received when they got back to The World.

"You're trash, you're scum, it tests your emotions," he said. "It makes you a different person. A more serious person."

A management major in college, Kallstrom had intended to pursue a career in business. A chance encounter with an FBI agent over a beer in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, helped alter his goals. He interviewed for a job as a special agent. In 1970, he was appointed one.

Targeting the Mafiosi

For 24 of the ensuing 28 years, Kallstrom was assigned to the bureau's showcase office in New York City. His targets involved combating espionage, terrorism, organized crime, white-collar crime, illegal drugs. As he moved up the ladder of responsibility, he honed his public persona. He become a well-known face in the news when he headed the investigation of the demise of TWA Flight 800, which exploded in mid-air after taking off from Kennedy International Airport in 1996, claiming the lives of 230 people from seven countries.

"Considering the international climate," told several hundred management students at the Isenberg School of Management at his alma mater, UMASS, "the plane's disappearance from radar at

18,000 feet, and reports of a huge fireball in the sky, we thought there was certainly a chance of terrorism."

His theory was never born out.

His work - the combined efforts of his 2,250-person FBI bailiwick, including 1,250 agents - also put away mobsters. Many mobsters.

When he came to New York, "the city was the organized crime capital of the world. The Mob controlled the construction industries and garbage collection. The Mob picked up garbage on time. But they burned it and dumped all sorts of pollutants into our rivers and streams."

"They also controlled the produce markets. A few pennies went to them every time you bought a head of lettuce. It took us over a decade to maximize the RICO statute (which gave law-enforcement authorities expanded wire-tapping and other search-and-seizure powers to combat organized crime). But by the 1980s, we had indicted all the heads of New York's crime families. Today they're a street gang compared to what they used to be."

A Different Challenge

Now that he's back in the danger zone, Jim Kallstrom will have to use all of his organizational and management skills to coordinate and focus the myriad security apparatuses of dozens of state agencies.

"We have entered a new era in law enforcement," he told 300 state and local law enforcement officials in October, shortly after his appointment. "The key to success in this new war is to energize the talent in the men and women that are already serving us statewide, and to open up the lines of communication among federal, state, and local government, to ensure that a uniformed officer in Syracuse is as aware of what he needs to be looking for as he goes about his business on the job as an FBI agent based in Buffalo would be."

In many ways, Jim Kallstrom is back on the DMZ. His new job will tax all of his management, investigative, and public relations abilities. But his background, his expertise - he is regarded as one of the top experts on electronic surveillance, encryption, and high-tech investigative techniques - and his rhetorical skills serves him well, just as he will serve the citizens of New York.

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Paul Newman: Matinee Idol with a Social Conscience

For those who came of age in the 1960s, it is almost a revelation that Paul Newman is 77 now, in the twilight of an exemplary career.

Although his hair is white as snow, his blue eyes – along with Sinatra's the most famous in Hollywood history – are as piercing as ever. And this icon of stage and screen is still performing, still in demand, charming as ever.

He is known perhaps as much for his philanthropy and social activism as he is for his roles in "Hud," "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid," "The Sting," "The Verdict," and "The Color of Money."

Paul Leonard Newman was born in Shaker Heights, Ohio, on January 26, 1925, the son of a sporting goods storeowner. He enlisted in the Navy after graduating from high school. Called up in 1943, he was rejected for pilot training because of color blindness. He fulfilled his three-year tour of duty aboard torpedo bombers in the South Pacific as a radioman third class. He saw no serious combat.

After his discharge from the Navy, he attended at Kenyon College on an athletic scholarship. When an injury ended his aspirations for a career in sports, he turned to drama, joining a summer stock company.

After the death of his father, he took over the sporting-goods store. He grew restless, however, sold his interest in the store to his brother, and enrolled at the Yale School of Drama. "I wasn't driven to acting by any inner compulsion," he told a reporter. "I was running away from the sporting goods business."

During a class break, he headed to New York, where he won a role in the CBS television drama, "The Aldrich Family." He was also accepted to study at the famed New York Actors' Studio. His intense good looks combined with his obvious talent won him several other television roles. In 1953, his first appearance on Broadway, as Alan Seymour in William Inge's "Picnic," garnered him a measure of acclaim, and opened up the gates of Hollywood.

Signed to a contract with Warner Brothers, he made his film debut the following year in a costume epic called "The Silver Chalice." Personally embarrassed by the movie, Newman took out a full-page ad in one of the trade papers to apologize for his performance, which he considered awful.

Box Office Draw

After returning to Broadway to star in "The Desperate Hours," his career got a major boost in his next celluloid role, "Somebody Up There Likes Me" (1956), which drew critical raves for his portrayal of the boxer Rocky Graziano. His developing screen persona of a smoldering, volatile ne'er-do-well in such works as "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" (1958), "The Long Hot Summer" (1958), and "Sweet Bird of Youth" (1962) riveted audiences and marked him as not only an A picture

actor but a matinee idol as well.

Avoiding typecasting, he also starred as the aspiring pool champion in “The Hustler” (1961), the sexually predatory “Hud” (1963), and the prisoner in “Cool Hand Luke” (1967). His title role in “Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid” (1969), in which he co-starred with Robert Redford, crowned his achievement as one of the top box office draws of the decade.

Among his other notable films are “The Sting” (1973), in which he also played opposite Redford; “The Drowning Pool” (1975), an offbeat whodunit; “Slap Shot” (1977), one of the few movies ever made about ice hockey; and “The Verdict” (1982), in which he played an alcoholic lawyer attempting to make a comeback.

On-screen success opened other doors and made him a force in Hollywood (although he chose to live not on the West Coast but in Westport, Connecticut). With fellow artists Barbra Streisand, Sidney Poitier, and Steve McQueen, among others, he was one of the founders, in 1969, of First Artists, a film production company. He has also made his mark on the other side of the camera: He directed his second wife, Joanne Woodward, in the 1968 film “Rachel, Rachel,” which was nominated for an Academy Award as Best Picture – and which garnered him the Best Director award from the New York Film Critics Circle. He was given an honorary Oscar for Career Achievement in 1985 before finally winning the gold for his performance as aging pool shark “Fast Eddie” Felson in Martin Scorsese’s 1986 film, “The Color of Money.”

Aging did not set his career back. As he neared his 70th birthday, he continued to win raves – and his ninth nomination as Best Actor – in Robert Benton’s “Nobody’s Fool” (1994). This year, he portrayed an Irish mafia boss in the Sam Mendes’ “Road to Perdition” with Tom Hanks.

Social Activism

But Paul Newman has been more than a terrific actor, an inspiring director, an all-around success on the silver screen. He has established a reputation for his social conscience, devoting himself to a variety of good works. He established the anti-drug Scott Newman Foundation to honor one of his six children, Scott, who died of an accidental drug overdose in 1978, He and second wife Joanne Woodward, one of the most enduring and stable of celebrity marriages, built The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp for children with cancer and other life-threatening blood disorders.

The camp is one of the beneficiaries of the profits from “Newman’s Own,” a supremely successful line of food products – salad dressing, spaghetti sauce, lemonade, salsa, popcorn – which since it was started in 1982 has earned more than $125 million, all of which he has donated to charity. (He once quipped that he was a bit embarrassed that his salad dressing was grossing more than his movies.)

In 1994, Newman’s philanthropic activities were acknowledged by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which presented him with the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award.

While his position in Hollywood lore is all but assured, it is his real-life role as a champion of the downtrodden and the unfortunate that may very well be his most enduring legacy.

About ‘Newman’s Own’

It was 1982 when Paul Newman and his longtime friend, author A. E. Hotchner, decided to begin an unconventional company with a charitable mission. Newman and Hotchner had earlier started the tradition of filling wine bottles with homemade dressing as Christmas gifts for friends. “More! We want more!” their friends clamored. Newman and Hotchner decided that if the dressing was good enough for their pals, it was good enough for the public. So they initiated a unique business venture - Newman’s Own - with the unique mission of donating 100% of the profits to those in need.

Newman’s Own began with $40,000 and was tested by pals in Newman’s kitchen. Products were critiqued around his ping-pong table and then sold directly to grocery stores. According to the food industry experts at the time, this operation should have lost $1 million in the first year. But after 12 months of business, what started as a joke ended up giving close to $1 million to charity.

Newman attributes the extraordinary success of his company to two policies. First, he insists on top quality, all-natural products with no added preservatives. Second, he gives all after-tax profits to charities both in the United States and abroad. Newman’s Own is about eating good food and doing good at the same time.

The first Newman’s Own product was the now famous Oil & Vinegar Dressing. In the 20 years since its launch, the brand has expanded product offerings to include a collection of salad dressings, pasta sauces, salsas, popcorn, lemonade, and steak sauce. In 1993 the business expanded to include Newman’s daughter, Nell, when she created a line of organic food products called Newman’s Own Organics. This inventive and timely division of Newman’s Own uses only certified organically grown ingredients. Products range from pretzels and chocolate chip cookies to tortilla chips, chocolate bars, Fig Newmans™, chocolate peanut butter cups, and Pop’s Corn.

One of thousands of charities that has received donations from Newman’s Own holds a special place in the heart of the company. The Hole-In-The-Wall Gang Camp was founded in 1986 when Hotchner and Newman dedicated funds from Newman’s Own to create a special place for children with cancer. This camp welcomes 1,000 kids, free of charge, from across the United States and abroad every summer. It is here that children with cancer or serious blood diseases find camaraderie, joy, and a renewed sense of childhood.

Newman’s Own products are available in all major retail chains in the United States, Canada, Australia, Iceland, England, Germany, Israel, and Japan. Newman’s Own donates 100% of all after-tax profits to charities in the communities that buy its products.

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Bob DeAngelo: Returning to His Roots, Former Flyer Helps Focus Kids on a Good Start

When he was a lad of five, Robert DeAngelo would walk across the railroad tracks from the crowded three-family apartment house his family shared with his grandparents and an uncle to spend some time at his home away from home: the Greenwich Boys Club.

The club, which became the Boys & Girls Club in 1986, was a vital cog in the development of young Bob's character. His experiences there - learning to swim and fish, to canoe and hit targets with a bow and arrow - were a "big, big influence on me. They gave me self-confidence. I learned to get along with others, to have respect for others," he says.

It is almost four decades later, and for the past three-plus years Bob DeAngelo has been the executive director of the Greenwich Boys & Girls Club. He has revitalized the place to better give to a new generation what he feels he was so lucky to have been exposed to when he was growing up: a nurturing environment that steers young people in the right direction, which not only gives them a place to play after school, but also meets their educational, emotional, and cultural needs. A place that builds their self-esteem.

Bob is excited about the changes he has instituted and the improvements he's spearheaded in the time he has been at the helm. He has been able to add a number of features to the club - a multipurpose room for yoga, karate, dance, and karaoke; a rock-climbing wall; a computer "library" to help "minimize the digital divide" - to give kids more options, more things that help instill a yes-you-can attitude. The club has quickly become Bob DeAngelo's second family, and the center of his life.

Although his job has become his calling, running a club for kids was not his life's ambition. After he received his bachelor's degree in chemistry from Bucknell University, he enlisted in the Navy in 1978. After his release from active duty, he got a job with Texas Instruments. While based in the Washington, DC area, he managed to earn a master's degree in international business from George Mason University; he then spent years traversing Europe and the Middle East selling his company's aerospace products.
And then, feeling it was time for a change - "I never saw myself doing only one thing in my life," he says, "and I really just wanted to do something totally different" - Bob came home.

Lessons Learned...

The first time he felt this way, he joined the Navy. His four-year stint, Bob says, "was a fun, adventurous, exciting time. I got to see a lot of the world. I got to meet many good people. And I got to see camaraderie and teamwork in action, and dedication and loyalty taken to a whole new level."

As a Naval flight officer stationed aboard the *USS Independence*, the closest he came to combat was going on station during the Iranian crisis. He remembers feeling a rush of anticipation when Ronald Reagan succeeded Jimmy Carter, but the hostages held by the fundamentalist Moslems led by the Ayatollah Khomeini were returned with nary a shot being fired.

His Navy service reinforced and expanded his father's credo: "All you really need in life are good friends, your family, and your health."

"For me," Bob says, "the true measure of success is how many friends you have. It is also the lives you influence and the good you do." While money is an enabler, Bob reflects, "it is not the motivator. Because in the military, success has nothing to do with the money you make. Character and loyalty are what's really important."

His time in the service also taught him to "think under pressure and to make the best of a degraded situation. You learn to improvise. Because not everything is 100 percent all of the time, and the true test is how you act when you're faced with adversity."

...And Learned Well

It is these lessons he helps instill in the 350 young people who come through the doors of the venerable Boys & Girls Club every day. These kids, Bob says, "live is a world that's much more complicated than it was when I was growing up. A lot of the pressures they face are more acute. They are over-stimulated by television and the Internet. Many of them are shuffled from one play place to another," while their parents scramble to make a buck.

Forty percent of his charges come from single-parent homes; the "core kid," he says, "is eight years old and has parents who are divorced." While some live in disadvantaged circumstances, all can benefit, he believes, from the personal attention accorded them by the club staff, and from the variety of activities to which they are exposed - all for an annual $5 membership fee.

"We teach them how to respect themselves, and how to accept accountability for their actions. Because without self-respect," Bob believes, the path of their life will be rocky. And to help a kid get off to a good start on his or her path of life enables Bob DeAngelo to live up to the values instilled in him by his parents and reinforced by his naval experience. By helping others, you reap immeasurable rewards.

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John C. Whitehead: John C. Whitehead's Assignment: Redeveloping Lower Manhattan

In the wake of the terrorist attack that felled the World Trade Center and several adjacent buildings, leaving a 16-acre hole in downtown Manhattan, New York Governor George Pataki zeroed in on John C. Whitehead, a former Deputy Secretary of State and onetime chairman of the investment firm Goldman Sachs, to run the Lower Manhattan Redevelopment Corporation.

It is this agency that will ultimately determine the elements - office buildings, mixed-use towers, parks, a memorial - that will rise from the ashes of this unprecedented disaster.

Quite a challenge for a man who's pushing 80, but perhaps not nearly as daunting as his experiences on D-Day: During his service in the Navy in the Second World War, Mr. Whitehead participated in the invasion of Normandy, "but at least I wasn't in charge of it," he told the New York Times. He served aboard the *USS Thomas Jefferson*, an amphibious transport. During the landing, he recalled, "we dropped the ramp on the beach and of the 24 soldiers who came off the ship first, probably half were killed in the first hundred yards or so."

He also participated in the invasions of southern France, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa.

Before the war, Mr. Whitehead, who was born in 1922 in Evanston, Illinois, and grew up in New Jersey, where his family moved when he was two, graduated from Montclair High School in 1939 and went on to Haverford College, from which he graduated in 1943 with a bachelor's degree in economics. He was president of the Student Council and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

After the war, he attended the Harvard Business School, receiving his M.B.A. degree with distinction in 1947. He later received honorary LL.D. degrees from Haverford College and Pace University.

He joined Goldman, Sachs & Co. in 1947 as a junior statistician and worked there for 38 years. He became a partner in 1956 and senior partner and co-chairman in 1976. During that period, Goldman Sachs developed into one of the world's foremost banking and brokerage firms. In November, 1984, he retired as co-chairman and as a general partner.

In April 1985, Mr. Whitehead was asked to become Deputy Secretary of State, number two to Secretary George Schultz, in the administration of President Ronald Reagan. He was sworn into office in July 1985, and served until January 1989. When Mr. Schultz was away from Washington, he was Acting Secretary of State.

Over the years, Mr. Whitehead has served on the Board of Directors of numerous companies, including American District Telegraph Company, Crompton Company, Crompton and Knowles Corporation, Dillard Department Stores, Household International, Loctite Corporation, and the Pillsbury Company. As a leader in his industry, he served as a director and chairman of the Securities Industry Association and as a director of the New York Stock Exchange.

Long active in a variety of educational, civic, and charitable organizations, he is a member of the Board of Overseers of Harvard College and former chairman of the Board of Managers of Haverford College. He is a trustee of the Carnegie Corporation of New York and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and the Tri-Lateral Commission.

He is a former president of the International Rescue Committee, in which capacity he traveled widely around the world for the cause of political refugees. He also served as a director of the New York City Partnership, the American Productivity Center, Junior Achievement, and Outward Bound.

Since returning from Washington to New York in January 1989, he has become associated as chairman or trustee with several additional non-profit organizations, including the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Asia Society, the Greater New York Councils/Boy Scouts of America, the Lincoln Center Theater, and the United Nations Association of the United States.

His principal business activity had been AEA Investors, Inc., a special situation investment company of which he was chairman.

And then Governor Pataki came to call or, if you will, do a bit of friendly arm-twisting.

"This is probably the most difficult, complicated problem I've faced in my lifetime," he told the Times. "We want to see the whole bottom of Manhattan developed as a unified community."

This will be far easier said than done, but if anyone is up to the task, it is former Navy man, John Whitehead.

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Father Phil Salois: Priest with a Silver Star Ministers To Those Who Have Seen the Blood

He is a son of Woonsocket, Rhode Island. He graduated from high school in 1966, went to college in California.

After a year, he dropped out. He was working for an insurance company in Los Angeles when he was drafted.

He was trained as an infantryman; his MOS was 11Bravo. With the war in Southeast Asia raging, Phil Salois didn't have any illusions as to where 11 Bravos were being sent.

In September 1969, six months after entering the service, he was shipped to Vietnam. He was assigned to the 199th Light Infantry Brigade – "we were separate and light," he smiles – operating in the southwest of Saigon.

In his first months there, he saw his "fair share" of combat. His unit spent a lot of time trudging along the dikes of rice paddies, looking for an elusive enemy who chose when and where to encounter his American adversaries. Along the dikes there was little cover. We were feeling, Phil Salois says, "very insecure."

For the most part, this time in-country was uneventful. One day, another grunt at the front end of a long column stepped on a booby trap, a "bouncing Betty." He was obliterated. The guy behind him lost both legs.

So went the ebb and flow of the quiet war in III Corps.

Then the 199th was sent to Xuan Loc in War Zone D in III Corps, where the embrace of the triple canopy jungle offered false security, a polar opposite to the wide-open rice paddies. That the jungle was not a friend was never more evident than on 1 March 1970.

Into the Mystic

"We were on a search-and-destroy mission, looking for the 133rd NVA Battalion," says Father Phil, as he is known far and wide. "On February 28, we found an elaborate bunker complex near Xuan Loc, about 65 miles northeast of Saigon."

With daylight growing short, the two platoons of the 199th pulled back a couple of kilometers into a night defensive perimeter. Despite their fears of an attack by the enemy, they spent a quiet night. Too quiet. The next day, the CO "ordered us to go down the same trail back to the bunker complex," Father Phil says. "He was brand new; this was his first time in the field. And we walked right into a U-shaped ambush."

The front element of the platoon was cut off. "As we formed a defensive line and returned fire, we lost contact with them."

For Phil Salois, “time stood still.”

A volunteer was needed to go after the men in the front element. Phil volunteered. As he set out, he made a promise to God: “God, if you get me out of this place safe and sound without a scratch, I will do anything you want.”

Armed with an M-79 grenade launcher, he and a buddy took off. In the chaos and confusion of the next few moments, they took cover behind a large boulder, sprayed their right flank with small-arms fire – this was a diversionary tactic – then sprinted to where their comrades were pinned down.

As they and four of the men made a run back toward the relative safety of their line, Phil’s buddy was shot in the head. It was Phil who went back, under fire, to retrieve the body. He went out a third time for the other two guys, one of whom, a lieutenant, had been killed.

The night that followed “was the scariest night of my life,” Father Phil says. “We thought they’d come back and finish us off. Instead, they vanished into the jungle.”

Of 27 men in his platoon, seven escaped unscathed. Two had been killed, 12 wounded. Phil Salois was one of the uninjured. For his actions, he was awarded the Silver Star. His dead buddy was honored with the Distinguished Service Cross. The newbie captain was taken out of the field, where he never should have been anyway: he had been trained in logistics, not combat command.

Bond of Brothers

“I don’t remember much of what happened after that,” Phil Salois says. “I must have numbed out. I have very little recall.” The 199th exited Vietnam the day before he did. After 19 months in the military, Phil was given an early out. Along with his memories of combat are recollections of camaraderie.

“I don’t think I ever felt as close to another human being as I did with my buddies over there,” he says. “You learn to rely on others for your life. And you form a bond that’s closer than blood brothers.”

This bond didn’t break as men left the military and returned to their homes. Most married and had children. They pursued education, went to work, and became productive members of society. Despite the media-fueled stereotype of the lost-soul veteran victimized by his time in the combat zone, most were able to put their war experiences in a place that didn’t dominate their days.

They became credits, not burdens, to their communities.

As a newly minted veteran, Father Phil first went back to work for the insurance company he’d been at when he got drafted. In 1972, he felt the call to the priesthood. It wasn’t until two years into his studies that he remembered the promise he had made to God on the first of March, 1970. It was a “nice fall day in Camarillo, California,” he says, “and I heard a voice. ‘ Do you remember that promise you made to me four years ago?’ I did.”

But he left the seminary, then returned in 1977 to finish his studies. He is now a member of the Missionaries of Our Lady of La Salette who found his niche in the priesthood. “I came from a

very faith-filled family," he says. "I brought my faith with me to Vietnam. There it got deeper. I knew if any entity could get me out okay, it would be by the grace of God."

When he returned to New England, to Attleboro, Massachusetts, he felt the need to join a veterans group, to be with people of a "common background." But men and women gravitated to him for counseling, and before he knew it, "I was not their buddy; I'd become their priest," he says.

Since 1989 he has been a resident cleric at the Boston VA Healthcare System; he is now chief of chaplain services there. He is the spiritual advisor for Vietnam Veterans of America. He is president of the National Conference of Viet Nam Veteran Ministers. He has used his experiences to help those who served come to terms with their lives and their faith, often through interdenominational weekend retreats for troubled veterans and their spouses.

"I deal with veterans every day who blame God for the destruction they witnessed, who want God to take the rap for what happened," he says. "As they retire, a lot of guys have a lot of time on their hands. Their jobs gave them their identity, and with nothing to fall back on, they tend to dwell on the past. We work with them to bring them to a more mature understanding of God, to embrace a renewed sense of God."

Father Phil works to instill what he calls a "re-founding" in veterans. Each vet, he believes, "has a story unique unto himself. Often his experiences are very painful. We work with him to 're-found,' or reconnect with his past by putting his story into a new context that can serve a useful purpose and bring meaning back into his life."

Father Phil has found his calling. And veterans in need of spiritual solace have found a champion.

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Andy Baumgartner: Ex-Marine Teaches Kindergarten; Becomes 'National Teacher of the Year'

There was a time not too long ago when a male kindergarten teacher would more often than not draw more than a few snickers. After all, teaching in the lower grades was very much the province of women.

Not any more. Certainly not when one particular man, a former Marine who has taught kindergarten for a quarter of a century, has been recognized for his commitment, his concern, and his teaching philosophy: Andy Baumgartner, who served in the Corps at the end of the Vietnam War, is the first Georgian - and only the second kindergarten teacher - to have been named "National Teacher of the Year" in the half-century this award has been given.

No one is snickering now.

'Nothing Very Glamorous'

Andy Baumgartner, 49, joined the Marine Reserve in 1972. After boot camp, he decided to "go regular," and served a total of 21 months at Parris Island and Camp Lejeune.

While his time in service was "nothing very glamorous," he says without rue, "my time in the Marines was the first time in my life that I was totally dependent on myself. I learned that I could press myself to meet goals. I learned that by pushing myself, I could do more than I ever thought I could do."

The sense of self, and self-confidence, Andy emerged with when his hitch was up was palpable.

Although he never fully pursued his childhood dream of a career under the lights on Broadway, this minister's son chose to take a perhaps more fulfilling route: working with children.

After receiving his bachelors of science degree in speech and language pathology from the University of Georgia in 1976 - he also earned a masters in early childhood education from North Georgia College two years later - Andy began a career as a kindergarten teacher. For the past 20 years he has been at the A. Brian Merry Elementary School in Augusta, where he also makes his home.

His efforts were acknowledged in a big way in 1999, when he was selected as Georgia's "Teacher of the Year." He then went through a rigorous competition from which he was chosen by representatives of 15 leading professional education organizations as the first Georgian to be "National Teacher of the Year."

And for that year, Andy Baumgartner became education's ambassador of good will. He traveled across the country, and to Japan, to hail the virtues and make a compelling case for the needs of public education. He sat elbow-to-elbow with national policymakers, who listened to his message: that public education "needs to pay better to attract the best and the brightest - or at least the

better and the brighter - into the profession." That to function well, schools need more community and parental involvement. That administrators should administrate - take care of finances and the physical plant - and let teachers teach.

While his year was paid for without recompense save for his school salary - he had to take a sabbatical - he did receive honoraria along with a Milken Family educator award, which was worth $25,000.

That year, he says simply, "was a phenomenal experience, a grand opportunity to see my profession from every angle."

Structure and Discipline

One of the reasons for his selection is his philosophy of education: "You've got to make kids feel that school is a wonderful place where they can feel whole and accepted, where they can learn and meet with success and encouragement - and where they can have fun in the process."

For Andy, "It's very exciting to work with kids not yet sullied, who are still wide-eyed and open. And it's very gratifying to see the progress they've made at the end of a year." To make progress, he believes, "children need to play and to enjoy what they're doing. I use a lot of music and a lot of movement in my class - you ever see a five- or a six-year-old sitting still? - to make learning fun."

All is not fun and games, however. "You have to teach children that there are things that are acceptable and things that are not, and for these there are consequences. You have to have structure in your life, you have to have discipline, both of which I learned in the Marines."

Baumgartner, who himself suffers from an attention deficit, has had to learn to overcome this disorder and not let it interfere with his teaching. "Out of our greatest struggles," he says, "come our greatest victories."

He is hoping that his 24-year-old son, the second of his three children, will learn the same. "This is my boy who had a great deal of difficulty in school, from kindergarten on," Andy says. "He did a lot of battling till he turned 18. And he battled some more trying to find himself.

"Then he met a nice girl and he suddenly began to mature. And one day he came home and said to me, 'Dad, I have to do something important with my life. I joined the Marines.'

"Sure, his mother and I are worried and concerned - he's awaiting orders that may send him to Bosnia or to Colombia - but we're also proud and glad he's found a way to find himself and to find success."

Kind of like his father has.

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Bob McFarland: 'Powerman' Brings IT Skills, Integrity To VA As Chief Information Officer

When Bob McFarland retired from the Dell Computer Corporation in April, 2003, he and his wife were looking to slide into a life of ease. Bob was especially looking forward to doing some fly-fishing and snow skiing in Utah. "I think that that is just about the best job a man can have," he said.

A telephone call, however, intervened. Bonnie Carroll, then White House liaison for the Department of Veterans Affairs, asked if Bob might be interested in applying for the post of Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology. He was. Being a businessman first – he'd spent 33 years in the private sector – and a technologist second, he never thought he'd be offered the job. Much to his surprise, and delight, he was.

(That Bonnie Carroll reached out to Bob McFarland was no accident. Both had been profiled as "HeroVets" by Veterans Advantage. And Scott Higgins, founder and CEO of Veterans Advantage, had sung Bob's praises to Bonnie, as Bob had served on Veterans Advantage's Board of Advisors.)

With his wife's assent, Bob decided to postpone his retirement and take on a relentlessly high-powered job for a single reason: "It gave me a chance to repay a debt I've owed for more than 40 years," he said. "The only agencies of government I'd even consider working for were the VA and the Department of Defense. Because in February 1963, the Army took an 18-year-old, restless, footloose kid and taught him the basics of living a respectable, responsible life."

'The Most Positive Influence'

As a young man growing up in east Texas and northeast Louisiana, Bob McFarland found himself drifting into manhood without direction. He spent more time "chasing skirts," he said, than focusing on his studies. He didn't have much respect for authority, or an excess of discipline. He didn't take school seriously.

Then he was drafted.

What Bob McFarland learned over the next two years transformed him from a boy to a man. He was given direction. He was force-fed discipline. For the first time in his life, he had to responsibilities to fulfill. The Army became "the most positive influence in my life," he said during a telephone interview.

Sent to Fort Belvoir, Virginia, for training as a "powerman," he gained a measure of expertise at setting up and keeping field generators running. At a time when the United States was quietly building up its forces in Southeast Asia, the skills at which he had become proficient were considered critical. At the conclusion of his schooling, he was whisked off to Vietnam. Literally. He was permitted one phone call to say so long to his family.

After a stint in Saigon with the 362nd Signal Company, 39th Signal Battalion, he was sent down to the Mekong Delta, attached to the 114th Aviation Company, Delta Provisional Aviation Battalion, based in Vinh Long. There, Bob McFarland "did my power thing and occasionally crewed on a Huey helicopter." He lived in a tent in primitive conditions. In a job not without hazards, he did a year's tour and came home without a scratch.

A few months before the first American combat troops arrived in Vietnam, Bob McFarland left the Army, his term of active duty completed. The lessons he had learned, however, have shaped the rest of his life.

A Solid Foundation

"The service taught me, number one, the importance of discipline, and number two, the value of teamwork," he said. "It also taught me honesty - that you have to be straight with people."

His military service, however, did not come with particularly lucrative GI Bill benefits. The $102 he received monthly for going to school was so meager he had to work if he didn't want to drop out. After beginning his studies at Northeast Louisiana State College, he persevered, completing his undergraduate studies at LeTourneau University in Longview, Texas. He earned a bachelor's degree in business management.

As he entered the business world, like most veterans, he put his wartime experiences behind him. Some 15 years later, though, when the national Vietnam Veterans Memorial was unveiled in Washington, D.C., he took pride in his status as a Vietnam Veteran. When money was being raised to fund the construction of a Vietnam Veterans memorial in Texas, he gave, he said with modesty, and got his bank to stuff donation envelopes with the monthly bank statements sent out to all account holders.

Meanwhile, he was raising a family and working his way up the stepladder of success, advancing through senior executive positions with several domestic and international high-technology enterprises. At the pinnacle of his business career, he was vice president and general manager of the Government Sector at Austin-based Dell computers.

McFarland had joined Dell in 1996 as vice president and general manager of the company's Federal Business Segment. Under his stewardship, Dell became the premier supplier of computer systems to the federal government and initiated a major thrust into the Department of Defense market.

In the wake of the terrorist attack on 9/11, Bob and his team were able to marshal and channel all the resources at their disposal to aid the Pentagon and the City of New York. They contacted key people in Washington and New York as the grim and grisly task of digging out of the rubble had just begun, McFarland asked simply: 'What do you need?' They told him: notebooks.

At his behest, and with the full backing of Michael Dell and the top brass at Dell, production was ratcheted up, with emergency orders pushed to the head of the assembly line and government needs prioritized. Fulfilling their needs became the focus of Bob McFarland's life. Because all flights were grounded for four days, he and his team rented a fleet of 18-wheelers, each with two drivers, and within 24 hours began to ferry the vitally needed computer supplies, round the clock, to DoD and New York City.

Within two days, the company had shipped 10,000 systems, including parts, servers, and desktops as well as laptops to replace the Dell equipment destroyed in the attacks. And some four dozen Dell employees from around the country drove to Washington and New York to get the computers operating in other government office buildings and warehouses.

Later, in the calm after the storm, the Army recognized Dell's contributions. Major General George A. Higgins, then Deputy Commanding General of the Army's III Corps and of Fort Hood, Texas, presented a plaque to Michael Dell.

"Dell's persistent focus on its customers helped the Army and other Department of Defense offices restore full operational capability quickly in the aftermath of this unprecedented attack on our nation's military headquarters," Higgins said. "And for this the soldiers and leadership in the United States Army convey their deep gratitude and respect."

While Michael Dell was pleased, Bob McFarland was more than gratified.

Challenging Bureaucracy

Bob's nomination as Chief Information Officer was officially announced by VA Secretary Tony Principi – who also was profiled as a "HeroVet" by Veterans Advantage – last October 14th. The Senate held his confirmation hearing a scant two weeks later, and he was sworn in on January 30th. (A formal swearing-in was held on March 22nd.) No stranger to 12- and 14-hour days, he has taken on the challenge of his new post with determination and vigor.

"We're looking to centralize some of our infrastructure functions to achieve better performance while conserving cost," he explained. The goal of improved IT functions and other economies of operation, he noted, is to reduce duplication of effort to make more dollars available in a leaner, more "veteran-centric" VA. (With more than 230,000 employees, the VA is the second largest department in the federal government.)

"You can say what you want about government," he said, "but here, everybody cares about the end result: Did we do the right thing by the veterans we serve?" To help serve them better, he acknowledged the challenge of getting the "intermediate bureaucracy" to buy into innovations. But, he added, "if you push the right buttons, you'll get the right results."

Of course, change does not happen overnight. His goal, Bob said, is to achieve real change – to develop and implement plans that go beyond any single administration. "Whether I'm here for the next ten months or the next four years," he said, "I want to put in place systems that will endure, systems that whoever comes behind me with agree with my approach."

Then he can go off fly-fishing and snow skiing knowing that his debt of gratitude has been paid in full.

Note: Bob McFarland is a former board member of Veterans Advantage.

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Michael Plummer: Reaching Across the Miles To 'Adopt-a-Platoon'

Bosnia. Korea. Kosovo. Afghanistan.

The hot spots where Americans have been deployed to douse post — Cold War fires may be exotic, but they also are far from home. Very far. For the soldiers and sailors, airmen and Marines who find themselves on the front lines in locales halfway across the globe, being away from their loved ones and removed from the routines of the lives they left behind are voids that are difficult to fill.

Keeping in touch with family and friends, any veteran who has been overseas knows, is critical to maintaining morale. Letters and packages — and in the age of the ubiquitous Windows, e-mails — are a lifeline to troops. A letter recounting even the most trivial of occurrences can bring relief and comfort.

Although he was writing about Vietnam, where he served as a Marine platoon commander in 1969, William Broyles Jr. observed a universal truth in his foreword to *Dear America: Letters Home from Vietnam:* "With the possible exception of his rifle, nothing was more important to an American in Vietnam than his mail."

"I remember once, after an operation deep in the mountains, my platoon returned exhausted and numb, that unfocused stare in our eyes," Broyles wrote, " I sat down on the ground, my fatigues soaked and filthy, and began responding to a letter asking for suggestions on who should get what Christmas presents. But instead of resenting such an incongruous task, I welcomed it. The more mundane the details, the more absorbed in them I could become...At times [my parents] would apologize for boring me with such ' little things,' but it was the little things that kept all of us planted on the ground. We were caught up in war, a very big thing, and only the little things made sense."

Understanding this with an intimacy born of 31 years in the Army, Mike Plummer, a 1960 graduate of West Point who served two tours in Vietnam, decided to help make a difference.

What Can We Do?

During his military career, Colonel Plummer got to see a lot of the world. He came to realize " what a marvelous, marvelous country we have, and how lucky and blessed we are to be Americans."

When the 10th Mountain Division, which had been reactivated and based at Fort Drum out of Watertown, New York, was deployed to South Florida in 1992 in the wake of Hurricane Andrew, community leaders approached the recently retired colonel with a two-pronged question: What can we do to show support for these young men and women? What can we do to take care of their families while they are gone?

Mike Plummer told them: Anything you do should be focused at the platoon level. That is the "point of the bayonet" where things get done by the youngest men and women in the service.

"I thought that if the community could somehow show their appreciation and pride to these soldiers, they would feel better about what they were doing and be less concerned about being away from their family and friends," Mike explained during a telephone interview from his home/ office in Watertown.

An idea was conceived, then fertilized, then hatched: For any future deployments from Fort Drum, let's get companies and schools, civic associations and fraternal organizations, to 'adopt' a platoon. How does the program work? Mike explained:

The Association of the U. S. Army — he is a member of its North Country, New York chapter — will link up potential sponsors with platoons scheduled for deployment overseas.

The sponsoring organization will be provided with personal information about the members of 'their' platoon, which can range from 10 to 40 or so men and women, depending on function.

With this information in hand, the sponsor can have its members send out birthday cards, video-tapes, books, magazines, as well as personal letters and care packages. Handi-wipes, Mike said, are always a particularly big hit.

In cases of an unscheduled deployment, once a post office is set up, AUSA will then link a sponsor with a platoon. (This process took four months with Operation Enduring Freedom, the effort in Afghanistan.)

While a platoon is overseas, the sponsor might host a holiday party for the families of the troops. One sponsor, the Upstate Federal Credit Union, even put photographs of the troops up on one of the walls at it headquarters as inspiration for its employees. When a platoon returns to its home base — in this case, Fort Drum — members will visit the school or church or other sponsor, which more often than not will throw a welcome back party.

In the ten years since Adopt-a-Platoon was formally founded, every unit from Fort Drum that has been sent elsewhere has had a sponsor. That computes to 30,000 soldiers - approximately 1,000 platoons — who have been thanked by the North Country community, Mike said with obvious pride.

Going National

When troops from Drum get to their next duty station, they bring the idea of Adopt-a-Platoon with them. And Mike Plummer's AUSA chapter freely dispenses the knowledge and know-how it has gleaned over the past decade to help spread the program.

"We've linked up other AUSA chapters across the country," Mike said. " We've involved the VFW and the YMCA through their auxiliaries. We just received a $5,000 grant from Paul Newman's foundation to help us assist other communities that want to adopt a platoon.

"Our hope is that these little 'centers of excellence' will sprout not only at Army bases, but at Navy, Air Force, and Marine facilities nationwide." The only units they've not had much success

with — yet, Mike said — has been Reserve components.

Mike is committed to extending and expanding this franchise.

“What we’re telling young soldiers is: We care. We appreciate your service.” Mike said. The troops, in turn, are appreciative. One soldier in Bosnia sent a letter to his sponsor:

“I know the mission is important, but after awhile it is easy to feel what you are doing isn’t appreciated,” he wrote. “Your packages of magazines, videos, and goodies make the difference for all of us in the platoon. We know someone back home cares. You were a stranger, now you are a part of our family. What we do now has more meaning because it is important to you and America. God bless America and all the people like you that make it America.”

And God bless Mike Plummer.

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Dr. Frank Scarpa: From a Surgical Classroom in a War Zone To Pro Bono Med Work for AmeriCares

Once a firefight or mortar attack or other violent confrontation with people out to kill you is over, many of us forget the prayers and promises we'd made in a moment of uncertainty, panic, or fear. Bravado often seeps back into our demeanor: We made it. We're alive!

For Frank Scarpa, bravado is a foreign emotion. Frank, who spent the better part of 1970 as a surgeon in Vietnam, never forgets to be thankful. "I need to remember how fortunate I am to be here," he said. He knows that too many of his fellow medical workers – doctors and medics, medevac pilots and crew – didn't make it back to The World.

He also knows that he did what he could to help keep people alive – despite his misgivings about the American mission in Southeast Asia. "I went there as a doctor. My job was to take care of people even with my ambivalence about the whole thing," he said during a telephone interview. "No one who has not been in a war can understand the insanity of it."

A Reluctant Soldier

Captain Frank Scarpa was handing out cigars to celebrate the birth of his first son at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, in 1969 when he was handed an envelope. In it were orders that would send him to the world's hotspot: Vietnam.

Arriving in-country, "frightened and green," on the first day of February 1970, he was assigned as a general surgeon to the 17th Field Hospital in An Khe. Over the next six months he would treat Americans and Vietnamese, military and civilian, who got in the way of a bullet, a punji stick, or a bouncing betty.

Fear soon gave way to confidence, despite the sapper attacks and other hazards of the combat zone. (Oddly enough and perhaps a bit irrationally, he recalls, in the OR he never felt vulnerable, even during these attacks.)

One day at An Khe, a wounded grunt and Doc Scarpa were engaged in conversation. "I don't know how you do what you do," the young infantryman said. "And I don't know how you do what you do," the surgeon replied.

Helicopter Heroes

Later, as brigade surgeon with the 196th Light Infantry Brigade operating out of Hawk Hill north

of Chu Lai, his education continued. He saw firsthand the traumatic amputations caused by the destructive power of mines, which were more prevalent in the flat land along the coast than in the mountains of the Central Highlands.

He came to appreciate the difference made by the use of medevac helicopters to whisk the wounded from the field to the well-equipped and -staffed evacuation hospitals, saving countless lives that otherwise would have been lost. The pilots and crews of these dustoffs became his heroes.

His days alternated between boredom and organized chaos. Adapting quickly to life in the war zone, he developed an abiding affection and loyalty to those with whom he served. Accompanying a patient with a life-threatening head wound to a hospital ship, he insisted that the chopper wait and take him back almost immediately. He could have taken a brief respite from the war, but "I just had to be with my people," he said.

He also learned lessons and practiced emergency medicine he'd never contemplated at medical school or in the hospital at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, where he did his internship.

Going Home

With less than two months remaining before his tour of duty was due to end, he received a message through the American Red Cross: His father was gravely ill, he was informed, and was undergoing a major surgical procedure. And "you're going home tomorrow."

Because of the graduated withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam, he never had to finish his year in Vietnam. For years afterwards, though, he would dream of being sent back to do another 28 days. Completing his tour at the United States Military Academy at West Point, he left the service to resume life as a resident at Vanderbilt Hospital in Nashville, Tennessee, and later as a practicing surgeon in Greenwich, Connecticut.

If past is prologue, Frank Scarpa's experiences in Vietnam set the stage for his involvement with New Canaan-based AmeriCares, a nonprofit disaster relief and humanitarian aid organization which provides immediate response to emergency medical needs — and supports long-term healthcare programs – irrespective of race, creed or political persuasion, in 137 countries across the globe.

During the war, Frank had developed a special affection for the Vietnamese people. He would bristle when he would hear the uninformed or the bigoted denigrate the Vietnamese – or people of any culture – because they "don't regard the sanctity of life the same way we do."

Armed with the belief that all human life is precious, for the past decade he has taken his skills as a surgeon to places wracked by war (Croatia) or natural disaster (Turkey).

He has spent a week in each of the past two years in Haiti, the poorest country in the Western hemisphere, performing surgery in remote backwaters. Which helps fulfill the reason he went into medicine in the first place: to help and to heal.

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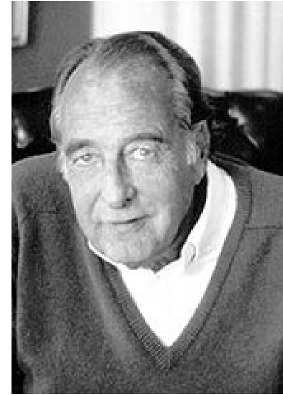
Bob Macauley: A Bum Check Rescues Hundreds of Kids – And Begins an Adventure in Philanthropy



Bob Macauley's first venture into life-saving seemed audacious at the time, but has since proved to be typical. It was April 1975 and after a seemingly endless war, troops of the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army were converging on Saigon, capital of the Republic of Vietnam. Americans and well-placed Vietnamese and their families were being evacuated by air and by sea.

One of the last flights out, an aging U.S. Air Force jet, was carrying a precious load: 243 Vietnamese orphans on their way to adoptive homes in America. Minutes after takeoff, the plane crashed outside Tan Son Nhut Airport, a searing tragedy that riveted the attention of the world. A third of the children were burned to death; many of the rest were severely burned and injured. Soon after, the Pentagon announced that it wouldn't have the resources to evacuate the surviving passengers for another 10 days.

Bob Macauley read about this in the morning paper and immediately went into action. He called Pan Am that afternoon and wrote a $251,000 check to charter a Boeing 747 rescue plane. That he didn't have the money was problematical, but he wrote the check anyway. By the time the check bounced, the children were safely in the United States. The baby-lift landed in San Francisco within 48 hours of Bob's first call. He had to re-mortgage his house, but, as he says, it was a fair price to pay.

"The bank got the house, but Bob got the kids," Bob's wife Leila recalls. From that experience, Bob learned firsthand the importance of quick thinking — and fast action. He also learned that boldness and philanthropy could be combined to save lives. That insight, and the knowledge he later gained through a bit of divine intervention, became the founding principles of AmeriCares.

AmeriCares is a non-profit disaster relief and humanitarian aid organization based in New Canaan, Connecticut. It provides immediate response to emergency medical needs, and supports long-term healthcare programs, in 137 countries around the world, irrespective of race, creed or political persuasion. Since its inception in 1982, AmeriCares has delivered almost $3 billion worth of life-saving supplies to those in need. It also has provided the assistance of medical personnel, like HeroVet Frank Scarpa.

Special Summons

Having heard of Macauley's efforts in Vietnam, as well as many other philanthropic ventures in which he was involved, Pope John Paul II summoned Bob to Rome. His Holiness asked Bob if he could help the people of Poland. They agreed upon a goal of $50,000 worth of medical supplies for the people of the Pope's native land. That goal was quickly exceeded when AmeriCares airlifted more than $3.2 million worth of aid to that country.

Macauley's sense of solidarity with those less fortunate took root when he was a child. His father, Milton, was a paper broker in Greenwich, Connecticut; his mother, Ella, was a housewife heavily involved in an overseas foster-parents program. Bob and his two sisters were instructed to send their old clothes and part of their allowances to foster children in Poland and Latvia. "My mother was a crusader," Macauley says. "I was always socially conscious."

He did not, however, always act that way. At 17, Macauley dropped out of Andover, joined the Air Force, and entered what Leila refers to as his "self-interest phase." He moved to Miami after flying cargo planes in World War II, and made a living playing the piano. He finally returned to school, graduating from Yale where he earned a bachelor of arts degree in international relations.

It was after Yale that Bob began his career as a salesman for a New York paper company, starting at $35 a week. Even then he had big visions for the future. In his second year, he asked to forgo his salary and work entirely on commission. He earned $189,000 that year. His boss, whose salary was $50,000, fired him.

In 1973, the veteran entrepreneur decided to build his own paperboard mill in Amherst, Virginia. "Virginia Fibre was my philanthropy," explains Macauley. "I wanted to make an economic and social impact in a depressed area." The company flourished, and by the time AmeriCares was established, Macauley was in a position to pledge 10% of the privately held company's pretax income to charity work.

Since its inception, AmeriCares has not only altered the lives of countless people around the world, but it has helped change the face of corporate philanthropy. This was Bob Macauley's dream, and nearly two decades later, it continues to be realized. Like most people, Bob is distressed by stories of human suffering, but he translates this distress directly into action, driven by his zeal to help those suffering from adversity, both natural and man-made.

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Paul W. Bucha: He Wears the Medal to Honor Those Whose Heroism Went Unrecognized

He was an Army brat, a competitive swimmer, a graduate of both West Point and Stanford, an infantry captain. He arrived in Vietnam in November 1967 commanding D Company — the "Clerks and Jerks," they were called — the last company formed when the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division adopted a four-rifle company configuration.

D Company was not the pick of the litter, Paul Bucha said during an interview from his home in Ridgefield, Connecticut. "We got the speechwriters and the guys on the pistol teams and guys who'd done time in the stockade. We had one E-1 with nine years in the Army."

"We were a few smart guys and a lot of bad-asses.."

"But we trained together and we came together," Buddy Bucha said. "We had a great first sergeant, a Creek Indian. We were tremendously disciplined and confident." For five months, the grunts of D Company humped the boonies, going deep into Indian country in search of an elusive and crafty enemy. For five months, not one man in D Company was killed in action.

That all changed in March 1968 near Phuoc Vinh in Binh Duong Province.

Inserted by helicopter into a suspected enemy stronghold on a reconnaissance-in-force mission, D Company destroyed NVA fortifications and base areas, meeting with and eliminating scattered resistance. On 18 March, that resistance turned fierce.

. . . [T]he lead elements of the company became engaged by the heavy automatic weapon, heavy machinegun, rocket propelled grenade, Claymore mine and small-arms fire of an estimated battalion-size force . . . Seeing that his men were pinned down by heavy machinegun fire from a concealed bunker located some 40 meters to the front of the positions, Capt. Bucha crawled through the hail of fire to single-handedly destroy the bunker with grenades [. . . receiving] a painful shrapnel wound . . .

[Observing] that his unit could not hold its positions and repel the human wave assaults launched by the determined enemy, Capt. Bucha ordered the withdrawal of the unit elements . . . When one friendly element retrieving casualties was ambushed and cut off from the perimeter, Capt. Bucha ordered them to feign death . . . [He] moved throughout the position, distributing ammunition, providing encouragement and insuring the integrity of the defense . . . Using flashlights in complete view of enemy snipers, he directed the medical evacuation of three air-ambulance loads of seriously wounded personnel and the helicopter supply of his company . . . During the period of intensive combat, Capt. Bucha, by his extraordinary heroism, inspirational example, outstanding leadership and professional competence, led

his company in the decimation of a superior enemy force . . . .

The Defining Moment

For Buddy Bucha, the defining moment of that battle occurred not during the action, but in its aftermath.

"When calm finally came, we confronted what we had survived," he said. "When I saw them bring in on stretchers those who were killed, I came to realize the cost for fighting for an ill-defined objective. When I saw those bodies on the stretchers, that's when the cockiness got shattered. I asked myself, I still ask myself, "Could I have done something more correct that would have saved those lives?"

"From that moment on, my life has been different. When the colonel got on the horn and told us to move out, I told him no. Send in the choppers; we're going home. Which a captain is never supposed to say to a colonel."

One of the grunts who died in that engagement was Dennis Moore. When the first unit, a LRRP squad, got pinned down, four guys were hit right away, Buddy Bucha explained. "Doc told me he had to go up front to them. Over the next several minutes, caught in the chaos of combat, he performed four tracheostomies. He was only 25, 30 feet from an NVA machinegun position. He took a bullet in the head, and he died."

"For this supreme act of compassion, which speaks volumes about what young kids who became men in Vietnam could do, and were willing to do, we later put him in for the Medal of Honor. He received the Distinguished Service Cross."

As did Buddy Bucha, many months later, while he was stationed at Ft. Knox, Kentucky. "I didn't think I deserved even that honor," he said with characteristic humbleness. "I was obligated to bring these kids home, and I didn't. I didn't think medals were in order."

Assigned to teach at his alma mater, he received a call from a sergeant, who informed him that he would be receiving the Medal of Honor from President Nixon.

"I don't deserve it," Bucha protested.

"Sir, if you'll forgive me, but who the hell do you think you are?" the sergeant replied. "This was put in for you by your own men. You wear the medal for them."

This was acceptable to Buddy Bucha; it has become his mantra.

"I wear this for my guys," he says in his public appearances. "I wear the medal on behalf of all those who we served with, particularly for those who died without the recognition." How many soldiers were killed while committing acts of heroism, he wonders, selfless acts that may have cost them their lives, acts for which no one survived to bear witness?

Telling the Truth

When he resigned his commission in 1972, Paul Bucha, who serves on the Board of Advisors of Veterans Advantage, embarked on an entrepreneurial career that has seen its peaks and its

valleys. He became an active member of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society, first as a fund-raiser, then as its president. Blessed with the articulate rhythms of an accomplished public speaker, he has used his gift "to tell our story to all those who will listen." And they listen in rapt attention, students and civic leaders, scholars and soldiers. They embrace the truth, he believes, because "people desperately want to hear the truth."

Part of Buddy Bucha's truth: Don't focus on ribbons. For a combat leader, a clean chest, with no medals for valor, is often a testament to leadership: he brought his guys home.

Another piece of the truth: Look into the eyes to see what's in the heart of a person, and what's in his soul. And another: Don't ever forget the selfless acts of heroism in the field by countless soldiers in Vietnam.

He is often asked, What did you do to *win* the medal? To which he replies: You don't win this medal, you *receive* it. And I received it, he jokes, because I was in the wrong place at the wrong time and ran in the wrong direction.

Bucha is offended by the oversights that have greeted the service of too many veterans. He offers this perspective:

The attacks on America on September 11th were acts of war. In the wake of these attacks, the outpouring of generosity and compassion to the victims was stunning. But he is "dumbfounded" that for many families, awards well in excess of one million dollars are not enough. Veterans, after all, got so little; and the families of those killed in action got so little as well."

"I think it's important that the families of everyone killed in battle should be compensated," he believes. "I think we need to make a commitment to boost the benefits for the families of soldiers who die while in the service of our nation. In light of the attacks on America September 11th, we must do better for those we send to fight terrorists."

One of the ways to do better is to make life insurance an automatic benefit for all men and women in uniform. The United States is wealthy enough, Bucha believes, to insure everyone in the military for $250,000 or more.

His speeches, and his efforts to get his men the awards and the compensation they are due, are Paul Bucha's way of paying back those with whom he served. Because "we can still make it right by not forgetting and by still giving honor."

And by doing so, Paul Bucha also seeks forgiveness for having lost ten men in March 1968.

Note: Paul Bucha is a board member of Veterans Advantage.

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Bob Peragallo: Survivor of 'Lost Patrol' Finds Clarity, Healing with 'Vets With A Mission'

Growing up in Sacramento, California, Bob Peragallo always knew he wanted to be a soldier. When he was 17, he began to fulfill that ambition. He was oblivious to the adage, be careful what you wish for, for you may actually get it.

His eighteenth birthday, in 1965, found him on a ship bound for Vietnam, a boy about to endure a 13-month baptism by fire on a tortuous path to becoming a man. His tour in Vietnam with the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines – the "Walking Dead" – became the crucible that has given definition and purpose to the rest of his life.

For Bob Peragallo, the defining time of his tour – and of his life – came on 12 May 1966, when his patrol was engaged by the R20 Doc Lap Viet Cong Battalion in the village of Hoa Tay. On a search-and-destroy mission, the patrol from Bravo Company walked into an ambush that began a battle that endured for three days, claiming early the lives of 12 of the original 14-man patrol, along with several other Marines who were part of the reaction force.

Corporal Bob Peragallo was one of the two from what became known as the "Lost Patrol" who made it out alive.

"From that point on," he said during a telephone conversation from his home in Vancouver, British Columbia, "I knew I was a survivor. Until then, I never thought I'd make it."

Before 12 May, though, the young corporal had come to realize that "sometimes in life you realize you can't get out of what you have to do. You can't bail. You have to do what you have to do." Which then meant: use your training and your instincts to keep alive, and keep your buddies alive.

Survivor's Guilt

The years after Vietnam were not easy for Bob. He was afflicted by survivor's guilt, which never quite went away, and was exacerbated by his next assignments.

"When I first got home, I was stationed at Treasure Island and an outpatient at the Oakland Naval Hospital. They put me on a burial detail. It fried my brain," he said. "It was more than I could bear, handing neatly folded flags to so many mothers whose sons had been killed. I was half-snookered most of the time. I needed a change."

The Corps accommodated him, assigning him to pick up deserters. Which was like jumping from the frying pan into the fire. His unrequited anger boiled over more times than he's comfortable admitting to.

All the while, and for years afterward, he was having apocalyptic dreams about Vietnam. The

dreams, the images, eventually faded, but the emotion always remained: the sweat, the gut-churning fear, a cloud of death permeated by the fear and adrenaline.

One time not too many years ago, he was asked by a reporter, When was the last time you were in Vietnam? “Last night,” he replied.

Turning Point

In June 1972 he met a young lady. Linda Matthews became Bob’s bride five months later. And changed his life.

They moved to northern Idaho, seeking solace and a modicum of peace. They had three daughters. He became an ordained minister. Intrigued by a street mission program in Vancouver, they moved there September 1988. Intending to stay for a few years, they’ve been there ever since.

It was in Vancouver that Bob found an outlet for personal healing.

In 1988, Bob and Bob Kimball, who had served as a mortarman with the 1st Cavalry Division, founded Vets With A Mission. The goal of this group of Vietnam veterans and non-veterans is altruistic: to bring healing, reconciliation, and renewal to the people of Vietnam, people with whom veterans have shared so much suffering. At the same time, while helping others, those who are doing the helping find healing as well.

Vets With A Mission has engaged in a variety of projects. Over the past 13 years, they have built 28 rural health stations in some of the poorest, most medically underserved areas of Vietnam. They have organized medical training programs that bring American physicians and surgeons to work with and train local doctors to help improve their level of education and skills. They have provided medical, dental, and orthopedic equipment and pharmaceutical supplies – 36 cargo containers’ worth – to support medical projects in Dong Ngai and Quang Nam provinces as well as in Ho Chi Minh City and Danang and the “Peace Village” rehabilitation center in Song Be.

While VWAM’s building or funding projects currently are centered, for the most part, in what had been the I Corps area of South Vietnam, their initial project was in Phu Ngoc, about an hour southeast of Saigon. The group gave more than $40,000 towards the construction and operation of a major medical training facility, and funded the first two satellite health stations linked to the main health station. In 1993, Bob said, Hanoi officially designated the health station in Phu Ngoc as the model rural health care center for the entire country.

The group has been welcomed by the people and by the government. “They know we’re there to help them,” Bob said, “and we do. After we built a clinic in the Que Son valley, infant mortality, which had been at about 33 percent, dropped to 3 percent.”

Current projects feature a major AIDS and HIV awareness program undertaken by the government, which for too long had denied any problem with AIDS, and the Health Education and Information Center in Danang, which helps villagers with sanitation issues.

A Clear Mission

“When we were first over in Vietnam, our mission was never clear, never defined,” said Bob, who

has been back to Vietnam 28 times in the past 14 years. “I went because I wanted to help the Vietnamese people; in my immature mind at the time, we were there to liberate the people.”

“Now, our mission is clear, and defined: to heal and to reconcile. I’ve been able to go back and create new memories, good memories,” he said. “For me, it’s been a real healing experience.”

As another adage goes, It is better to give than to receive. For Bob Peragallo, giving is receiving.

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Jim Manley: Once a Marine, Always a Marine, Who Gives for the Children of Fellow Marines

When he reflects on his life, Jim Manley is proud – of his family; of his prowess at football; of his service to Corps and country. His family is a constant. His abilities on the gridiron, when he starred for both St. John's High School in Pittston, Pennsylvania, and the University of Pennsylvania, is a fond memory. His service to the Corps, like family, is a lifelong proposition.

Jim spent 30 years in the Reserves, and three on active duty, before retiring as a colonel in 1985.

He is hardly an 'ex-Marine'; rather, he is an active alumnus who gives back to the organization that helped shape his values by involving himself in the work of the Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation. This entity – this cause – helps ease the financial burden of higher education for the sons and daughters of current and former members of the Corps.

Jim Manley knows of burdens. He grew up poor in Pittston, in the heart of anthracite coal mining in northeastern Pennsylvania. His father was a miner; he was killed when Jim was 10. In a time when working in the mines was the most viable option for many of the sons of the coal country, only Jim's grit and his consummate skills with the pigskin earned him options that most of his contemporaries did not have.

He was given a full scholarship to play football at the University of Pennsylvania, starring as a blocking back in the old single wing offense and playing some baseball as well. In 1952, during the height of the fighting in Korea, he joined the Marine PLC Program, which trained platoon leaders. His father had served as an infantryman during the War to End All Wars. An uncle, who also fought in The Great War, was a Marine. Jim was determined to follow in their footsteps.

After he graduated three years later, he began a three-year tour of active duty. Assigned to the 8th Marines, he was deployed to Lebanon during one of that beleaguered country's many crises, this one in 1958. A broken arm in a football game conceived to boost morale ended his "season" in the Middle East – and did little for the state of his morale.

Taking a Stand

Twenty-five years later, he was appalled when the Marines were again sent to Lebanon – and 283 died in an attack on the building that served both as barracks and headquarters for that expeditionary force.

"In your life there comes a moment when you have to take a stand," he reflected in a telephone conversation from his office in Cranbury, New Jersey, where he is principal of a firm that serves the investment needs of employee benefit plans. "The Marine general in charge then should have taken that stand. He didn't."

Jim Manley did – with the Scholarship Foundation. Because you shouldn't forget or forsake those individuals or institutions that have done you well. He tells this story:

At an event at the Union League, the guest of honor was General Anthony Zinni, most recently President Bush's envoy to the Mideast. In his speech, the general recounted having been asked by one of his daughters what he would die for.

"My faith," he told her. "And my family. My friends. And freedom. And for the flag."

The room erupted with applause.

For Jim Manley, commitment and an abiding loyalty to the Corps are his legacy, and his pleasure. The Scholarship Foundation became the vehicle for Jim's altruism. He has been an active player in raising millions of dollars – and awarding millions of dollars – to the daughters and sons of Marines who need financial aid for their college education. The grants they receive, which average $5-$7,000, go a long way toward paying the bills and meeting the fees which are part and parcel of the college experience.

After working for much of his professional life at some of the largest brokerage houses and financial institutions on Wall Street, including Lehman Brothers, AG Becker, and Morgan Stanley, Jim opened his own marketing and consulting concern three years ago. Jim Manley Associates specializes in serving the investment needs of unions in general and of teacher retirement systems in particular.

The ethos that governs his business endeavors is basic: Work hard for your clients, so that they are able to keep their pension promises and meet their obligations to their membership.

It is an ethos, of loyalty to an organization and commitment to a cause, that was shaped, at least in part, by years of selfless service in uniform.

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Jack Farley: He Teaches Other Disabled Veterans to Ski — And Young People About War's Lessons

On 6/6/66, John J. Farley III learned what he looked like in khaki and olive drab. He was not displeased with what peered back at him in the mirror.

He had been working toward his master's degree in business administration at Columbia University when his draft board on Long Island tried to induct him. "They were good about it, though," Jack Farley said. "They let me finish school and I 'volunteered.' It was what was known as an 'encouraged enlistment.'"

Two years later, 1Lt. Farley found himself halfway around the globe, owned by the 1/8 Artillery, 25th Infantry Division, and assigned as a forward observer—call sign "Killer 54" – to Company D, 2/27 (The Wolfhounds). Over the next nine months, few days or nights would be without the potential for hazard. An idyllic calm could be shattered in an instant.

At an outpost along the Saigon River one day, Farley was shooting the breeze with several Wolfhound grunts. "The six guys left on a small Boston Whaler to go out on patrol," he recalled during a telephone conversation from his chambers in Washington, D.C. "Before they got 200 yards, a rocket-propelled grenade hit their gas tank. Less than ten minutes after we'd been talking and laughing, we were pulling their totally charred bodies out of the water."

That may have been the most gruesome day Jack Farley experienced. Until January 10, 1969, that is.

Farley was the battery exec at Fire Support Base Pershing when "Charlie hit us with 82mm mortar fire. One round exploded next to base piece 'within gimme range of me,'" he said. Shrapnel peppered his body. "I remember flying through the air. My glasses flew off and I reached out for them and grabbed 'em before I landed. I crawled five feet to the parapet. A medic peeked his head over and asked me if I was okay. I remember clear as day thinking, 'What would John Wayne say?'"

"'Doc,' I told him, 'go look after the other men.'"

This time, however, John Wayne would have been wrong because Farley was the only one who'd been hit. Egregiously so. As he wrote to his father a few days later, it "took five pints to get [a] pulse."

Learning to Walk

Jack Farley returned from Vietnam with four Bronze Star awards, three with "V" device, the Army Commendation Medal, a pair of Purple Hearts, and a shattered body. He would spend 14 months at Walter Reed Army Medical Center recovering from his wounds and learning to walk all over again: his right leg had been amputated above the knee.

No, he wouldn't be playing any more lacrosse, the sport he had come to love and at which he had excelled. He had been All-Scholastic in high school, and captain of the freshman and varsity lacrosse teams at the College of the Holy Cross, from which he received his undergraduate degree in economics. At one point, as the realization began to sink in that the parameters of what he could do had narrowed and that he would never run again, he became very upset. Almost instantly, however, he recalls a little voice telling him, "Farley, you never could run anyway!"

Recovery had begun.

Still, he knew he was lucky to be alive. The physical wounds he could handle. The collective national attitude, however, rankled.

"Nobody cared," he said. "Nobody wanted to hear what it was about." Soldiers like Farley had fought and bled and the country, convulsed over the rectitude of America's pursuit of the war in Southeast Asia, did not embrace returning veterans. Which hurt many, perhaps, as deeply as their wounds.

Lying in his bed at Walter Reed, having been told that he was now 100 percent disabled, Jack Farley knew he had to come to terms with the altered state of his physical self if he was to lead a productive life.

Cum Laude

Determined not to look back, Jack reasoned that he would have more control over the course of his life if he were to master a profession. After retiring from the Army as a captain in 1970, he got married and went to the School of Law at Hofstra University. He was the founding editor-in-chief of the Hofstra Law Review, graduated first in his class, and earned his Juris Doctorate, *cum laude*, three years later.

He went on to a 17-year career as a litigator with the Department of Justice, rising to become the director of the Torts Branch in 1980. When the new United States Court of Veterans Appeals (since renamed the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims) was created in 1989, he was nominated by President George H. W. Bush and confirmed by the Senate as one of its first judges.

He has been there ever since, as the accolades acknowledging an honorable life continued piling up. He received the Distinguished Alumni Medal from his alma mater, Hofstra, in 1986. A decade later, he was accorded the Dean's Award for Distinguished Hofstra Law School Alumni. In 1997 he was elected to the Board of Directors of the Amputee Coalition of America. In 1999, he was inducted into the Massapequa High School Hall of Fame.

Sharing the Lessons Learned

What he had seen and done as a soldier in Vietnam, as an instrument of national policy, would not stay dormant, neatly filed in a side drawer of memory. So Jack Farley, who lives in Bowie, Maryland, with his wife and the youngest of their four children, would venture forth to elementary and high schools and talk to young people about the meaning of war and the fact that, as the Duke of Wellington said, "The next dreadful thing to a battle lost is a battle won."

With the blessing of ski buddy Hal Moore, Farley borrows from the brilliant introduction to the book General Moore wrote with Joe Galloway, *We Were Soldiers Once . . . And Young,* and tells them that while individual acts of bravery and courage are daily events, war is an "awful, bloody, destructive business." It is miserable. It is horrible. It all too often shows us the inhumanity we humans are capable of. Of his war, he has no use for the "body count," that artificial means used to gauge if not to inflate an

illusory success on the battlefield.

At times, however, war is necessary. Yet the reason to fight must be "vital to the society because of the tremendous and terrible price those who fight and those who die must pay," he says. He reviews the citizen-soldier tradition in this country, "how we drop our plows and blacksmith hammer and go off to war. Succeeding – beating the enemy – can be a high even as it tests our limits. But while the vast majority of those who fight return home to pick up the plow and work in the fields again, some are never able to: the war has changed them."

Farley points out that one of the commemorating events of the 20th anniversary of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on Veterans Day 2002 was the reading of the 58,000-plus names of those who were lost to the war. "That is how it should be," he says, "because the names of the dead are the real force, the real lesson of 'The Wall' for future decision-makers."

He also notes that those who decide that others should fight do not themselves engage in battle. Given the huge cost of war in terms of lives, limbs, and psyches, he urges students not to forget the human toll of battle should they become the decision-makers and have to decide whether a war is necessary and wise.

Elite Fraternity

As one who has suffered the loss of a limb, Jack Farley is a member of an elite fraternity. Overcoming his disability, he has become an avid golfer and skier. And he assists other disabled veterans by teaching them to ski, serving for the past twelve years as a volunteer instructor at the VA/DAV Winter Sports Clinic.

While in Utah on a case in 1982, he was "invited" by a friend, Judge Dan Maus, to learn one-legged skiing. After five years of sweat and lessons at Winter Park and Steamboat Springs, he said, "It finally clicked. I got very good and very fast."

Skiing soon became a family affair.

A dozen years ago, while on a family vacation in Snowmass, Colorado, he noticed "all these disabled guys skiing." Used to being "the only gimp on the hill," Farley had "stumbled" onto the third annual Winter Sports Clinic for disabled veterans conducted jointly by the VA and DAV. He was invited to join the clinic, was awarded his gold medal as a participant, and, when he received a letter a few months later asking if he would like to join the clinic cadre of 180 volunteer adaptive ski instructors, he found it hard to say no.

"I've taught vets from World War II through Desert Storm, Somalia, and Bosnia," he said. When confronted with the reality of a traumatic disability, "some vets react better than others. Most people accommodate their disability; some, though, are weighed down by it."

"Today we can adapt equipment so that the only limit you face is gravity. Whether sitting in a monoski or standing on one ski and using outriggers, you can be as fast and as free as anybody else on the slopes," he said. One veteran in particular, a naval ensign who lost both legs below the knee in an accident in August 1999, "was skiing with us the following March and, when he returned the following year, he was an expert. Watching him ski, you'd never know he was disabled. And he isn't!"

For Jack Farley, to be an enabler of such a life-enhancing experience "is just an unbelievable thrill. It's the highlight of my year."

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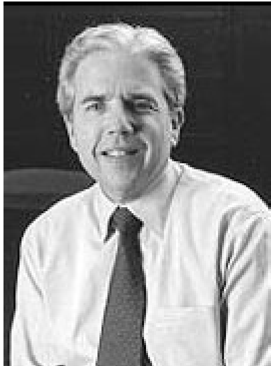
Robert Glassman: A Banker Dedicated to Social Justice



Robert Glassman is a banker, and this is the mission statement of the bank he serves as co-chairman: *With a sense of inclusion and diversity that extends from the boardroom to the mailroom, Wainwright Bank & Trust Company resolves to be a leading socially responsible bank . . . equally committed to all its stakeholders – employees, customers, communities and shareholders.*

Here is a financial institution, a lending institution, a savings institution, that is, as Glassman notes on its Web site, www.wainwrightbank.com, "increasingly seen as part of the vanguard of the social investment movement . . . The bank has attempted to use both its cultural and financial capital to further a vision of a just, tolerant and sustainable society."

A socially conscious bank? One that gives more than lip service to serving the communities whose money sustains it? Yep. And since its founding in 1991 by Glassman and John Plukas, it has acquired a devoted customer base while breaking new ground for what a bank can – and many would argue, ought to – do.

What it does has been significant. The Wainwright Bank has financed more than $140 million in affordable housing and other community development projects, including homeless shelters, food banks, AIDS services, and women's health projects, in greater Boston. This is an enviable record that most of its competitors are hard-pressed to match.

Its efforts have garnered well-deserved recognition.

"Wainwright's social lending practices shine as a beacon of hope to the less fortunate among us, to innovators seeking to solve complex social problems, and to people who have refused to abandon their commitment to the neighborhoods of the city," writes shareholder Harvey Fleishman in a not atypical comment.

The U. S. Treasury has cited the Wainwright with a Bank Enterprise Award worth $275,000 – for four years' running. In 1998, the bank received the national Annual Business Ethics Award for its "commitment to social justice inside and out."

Inspiring TV

The roots of Bob Glassman's commitment to what he calls "the driving value system of a publicly traded bank" harkens back to the early days of television. As a boy, he recalls having watched the Army/McCarthy hearings on the black-and-white set in his home in Jersey City, New Jersey.

"There, I saw the same voices of intolerance displayed that were later arrayed against the civil rights movement, the anti-war movement, the women's movement, the gay rights movement, and the civil liberties of people with AIDS. For me, the rights of these groups are all connected threads that weave the fabric of a just society."

For Glassman, doing well in school was the key to opening the doors of success. In this, he didn't get off to a particularly auspicious start. At the end of his first semester at Jersey City Junior College, he notes, "I received both my marks and a notice that the college would not open next year as they had gone

bankrupt."

Enrolling at Rutgers University, from which he would receive two undergraduate degrees, also meant enrolling in the school's then-mandatory ROTC program. "Soon enough, like many young men in that situation, I found myself upon graduation looking to a future that included a place few of us knew much about back then: Vietnam."

"Glassman went to Vietnam in 1966 and served as a platoon leader. With death and destruction constant companions to the young men and women over there, Glassman looked to a future when his service obligation would be fulfilled.

"I'm not sure I was quite serious when I wrote to the Princeton Educational Testing Service about taking the Business Aptitude Test. Back then, they had a policy that if you were more than 200 miles from a testing site they'd send someone out to administer the test. Half tongue-in-cheek, I told them if they were careful and took a convoy out Route 13, they might find me at a place called Lai Khe."

"We compromised and finally, I traveled into Saigon one day and took the test."

A Unifying Theme

After his tour of duty in Vietnam, and his obligation to the service had ended, Glassman entered the Business School at Harvard University, from which he received his M.B.A. He then embarked on a career that is "successful" by any measure."

Bob Glassman is "particularly gratified that my banking activities, philanthropic pursuits, and personal beliefs have all been able to converge around a single theme: social justice.

"This work, alongside the culture of diversity we've developed at the bank, is the most important legacy I contemplate I will leave my children."

It is not his only legacy. Glassman has contributed to his community by serving on the Board of Directors of several organizations, including The Boston Foundation and the UMass Foundation at Boston. He is a member of the mayor's AIDS Housing Task Force. He established, in 1993, the Robert A. Glassman Scholarship at Harvard Business School to provide financial assistance to a graduate of an inner-city high school.

Perhaps his proudest association is with the William Joiner Center for the Study of War and Social Consequences at the University of Massachusetts in Boston, of which he is a co-founder and on whose Board of Directors he serves.

The Joiner Center promotes reconciliation, bringing together American and Vietnamese writers and poets who once fought against each other and who now find a commonality of purpose and focus in their writing. Joiner, writes author Larry Heinemann, is in many ways responsible for a "cultural rapprochement" between two peoples. "The institutional courage demonstrated by UMass Boston to have developed these relationships 10 years ahead of normalization while facing many obstacles, is an enormous achievement. . . ."

"Harvard may have given me my trade," Glassman said in June 2000 at a dinner honoring recipients of honorary degrees, of whom he was one. "But my 16-year association with Joiner and UMass Boston has given me an education. It has given me the thread that has connected so much together . . . 30 years and 12,000 miles from that first night where the journey all began."

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Claudia Kennedy: After Breaking the Army's Glass Ceiling, This General Aids Vulnerable Children

These days, the sound you hear overhead in the Army and at the Pentagon isn't an airplane breaking the sound barrier, it's the sound of a glass ceiling being shattered. And the Army and the Pentagon are better because of it.
— Claudia Kennedy

She was born in Frankfurt, Germany, the daughter of an Army officer, and grew up an Army brat. She graduated from Southwestern University at Memphis, in Tennessee, earning a bachelor of arts degree in philosophy. Believing that "to be an equal citizen, you need to bear equal responsibility, and when your country's at war, you do what you can to help," she joined the Army in June 1969. She was commissioned a second lieutenant through the Women's Army Corps.

Thirty-one years later, Lieutenant General Claudia Kennedy retired from the Army, the first and only woman to have achieved three-star rank. At the time of her retirement, Kennedy, who was born in 1947, was deputy chief of staff for intelligence, capping a succession of staff and command posts she held in the course of a stellar career.

Her "big ambition," she confided to a reporter, was to be a battalion commander. This she accomplished in spades, having commanded military intelligence and recruiting battalions and an intelligence brigade. Her performance earned her numerous awards and decorations, including the Legion of Merit with three Oak Leaf Clusters; the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Meritorious Service Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, and the Army Commendation Medal, also with three Oak Leaf Clusters.

"The Army asks 'Be all that you can be,'" she said at her retirement ceremony in June 2000. "Today I can honestly tell you that I have been all that I could be. I have risen farther than I ever dared to hope."

It was not an easy rise.

On the Team

With the war in Vietnam raging, with student protests rocking college campuses across the country, the military was not the most popular career of choice for most young people, and particularly not for women. At that time as well, the jobs open to women in the military were limited and, ultimately, limiting.

In those days, General Kennedy said earlier this year at the Virginia Press Women's annual spring conference in Midlothian, women worked only in medical, administrative, or logistics. "Today, the only jobs women are excluded from performing are infantry, armor, and artillery." And between the time her career began and when it ended, the number of women in the Army increased dramatically, from less than one percent to more than 19 percent.

"In those days, women were an anomaly and easily ignored," she said. "Today, women are part of the team and essential to mission success."

General Kennedy gained page one attention not for her accomplishments but when, in 1999, she charged a fellow general with having made improper sexual advances against her will while in her office in 1996. She was moved to speak out, she said, because the general, Larry Smith, had been named deputy inspector general of the Army, a position which involves oversight responsibility for investigations of sexual harassment allegations and the evaluation of programs designed to eliminate such harassment in the Army. After an investigation, General Smith received an administrative memorandum of reprimand, and took early retirement, never having assumed duties as the deputy inspector general.

Role Model

General Kennedy's professional achievements have been acknowledged with an array of accolades. She received the "Living Legacy Patriot Award" from the Women's International Center in 1998. She has been honored by the Business and Professional Women of the United States, the Girl Scout Council of Hawaii, Women Executives in State Government, the National Women's Law Center, and the National Center for Women and Policy. She was on the Ladies Home Journal's list of "100 Most Important Women" and on Vanity Fair's "Most Influential." She has received honorary degrees from Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee, and Gannon University in Erie, Pennsylvania.

Since her retirement from the Army, General Kennedy has written a memoir, *Generally Speaking*, and is planning a series of novels that will feature a female general as the lead character.

The general, who has never married, is also involved in programs that help at-risk children. She chairs the Board of Directors of First Star, a non-profit organization whose goal is to create new initiatives and strengthen existing laws and policies aimed at improving health, safety, and family life for America's most vulnerable children by providing better care and outcomes in child protective services, in family courts, and in foster care systems across the United States. In this area, she also serves as an advisor to Every Child Matters, an organization that focuses on achieving a "family-friendly Congress," and Education Through Leadership.

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John Townsley: Always Looking for Innovative Ways To Heal the Psychological Wounds of War

In one of the dreams John Townsley had about his war, the singer Lou Rawls, whom he had first heard in high school on one of the black radio stations in Little Rock, was the heavy, the leader of the enemy. "I'd spend all night killing people trying to rescue my friends," Townsley said. "What was really interesting, though, was that each night this dream picked up where it left off the night before."

This particular dream endured over ten days. Townsley's tour in Vietnam, the inspiration for his firefights in slumberland, lasted 23 months.

Townsley, the son of an Air Force officer, had two years of college when he flunked a semester. He lost his student deferment, and his draft board pounced. Faced with conscription, he chose to enlist instead. Trained in avionics, his first assignment when he was sent to Vietnam in May, 1968 was in supply for Headquarters Company, 82nd Airborne. He became the brigade scrounger, he said, not without a measure of pride, during a telephone interview from his office in Raleigh, North Carolina.

After eight months in country, Townsley transferred to the 205th Assault Support Helicopter Company. Over the next year, he logged 1,400 hours of flight time, working variously as a door gunner, crew chief, and flight engineer.

He experienced "so many hard days. One day I'd been flying with people I didn't usually fly with. We landed in a field - there was fighting still going on - to take away the dead. They just loaded us with ponchos full of body parts. The door gunner was puking. The crew chief was getting sick. I had to lay down on the floor, blood oozing everywhere, to call the load off."

"That was the day I knew I was cold," he said. "Because it didn't bother me. When we got back to base, after the ponchos were removed, I just washed out the chopper with a pressure hose."

Despite the rigors of his work and knowing he couldn't make it in the stateside Army, Townsley extended his tour of duty in Vietnam to take advantage of the early out program. He returned to The World in April 1970 "a pretty vicious character who carried a gun everywhere." He went to school at what is now the University of Central Arkansas. Majored in sociology and philosophy. Earned his undergraduate degree. Earned an advanced degree in counseling psychology.

'The Perfect Place'

In July 1980, realizing that his onetime ambition of becoming a doctor would be undermined by "too many science courses," he expressed a measure of interest when a friend told him about a work-study position at the Vet Center in Little Rock.

"This is the perfect place for you," his friend said.

Townsley visited the Vet Center a few days later.

"You have a resume?" his friend asked.

"No."

"Well, write me one out and you're hired."

Townsley demurred. "I don't know if I want the job."

"How about working 20 hours a week?" the friend said. "Just give me your schedule the week before."

Townsley accepted. And found a home.

When the team leader job opened at the Vet Center in Jacksonville, Florida, Townsley applied. He was hired. After three years, he moved to the Vet Center in Tampa. After four years there, needing a change of pace, he got out of the program. Moving back to Little Rock, he worked as a family therapist and as a consultant in psychological and chemical dependency.

In 1995, when a new Vet Center opened in Raleigh - it's the second to last of the 206 centers in the system - John Townsley applied for the team leader position. He was hired. And that year, under his stewardship, the Raleigh Vet Center was acknowledged by the VA as a "Center of Excellence," one of the ten best Vet Centers in the country.

"He's one of the unsung heroes who has never lost his zeal to help his fellow veterans," said Ed Henry, who took Townsley back to Vietnam a couple of years back to explore the possibility of bringing some of the Vet Center's clients back to the scenes of the fighting that forever changed their lives.

Although Townsley is quick to credit the "great people" with whom he works - five are paid staff; another 25 are part-time volunteers - others note that it is his leadership, and his willingness to expand the parameters of treatment, that have made a distinct difference.

John Townsley thinks out of the box. One day he met a social worker who had a private practice. "Do you do any pro bono work?" Townsley asked him. And got him to volunteer his services two days a week.

"I've been willing to ask people in the community, and they've responded," he explained. "I'm willing to push the limits of creativity." Which is one of the key reasons why the Raleigh Vet Center, which last fiscal year logged some 7,500 visits with 350 people, has been making a significant difference in the lives of its clients. Townsley's center has a spirituality group, a writing group, a group comprised almost entirely of "medical people who are still second-guessing themselves 35 years later."

Clients go on camping trips, on canoeing excursions in the Everglades, in pig pickin' on Townsley's seven acres out in the country.

And at the American Dance Festival in Raleigh three years ago, three clients performed to raucous applause. Last year, 20 danced in their own productions, "Veils of Violence," at the performing arts center in downtown Raleigh.

Townsley, who describes himself as an "old hippie," known for never wearing a three-piece suit, knows how to play the game. Every month he is sure to meet with the director of the VA Medical Center in Durham to update him on "what we're doing, so that nothing we're doing here will come as a surprise." Because the work John Townsley and his colleagues do in Raleigh - and what other teams do at 205 other venues, "keeps a lot of vets out of the hospital and a lot of vets out of the news."

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Chuck Meadows: Ex-Marine Builds Bridges, Heals Lives By Clearing Unexploded Relics of War

He is unremarkable in appearance. He could be a college professor or an accountant, a small-businessman, maybe. To borrow a cliché, though: Never, ever judge a book by its cover. Chuck Meadows is a career Marine, seared by combat, who now makes peace with those against whom he waged war.

Chuck Meadows is the executive director of PeaceTrees Vietnam, the first organization granted approval to remove land mines and unexploded ordnance in Vietnam. His professional focus is to locate, and clear, the tons of bombs and rockets and mortars still littering Quang Tri, Vietnam, the northernmost province in what had been I Corps, where some of the fiercest fighting of the "American War" took place, where people still fall victim to high explosives that failed to detonate during the long years of conflict.

"Since 1964," Chuck Meadows told an audience recently at the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans Memorial, where he was a panelist during a program focusing on the Vietnamese experience in America, "I have thought about Vietnam every day of my life." His mission now is one of peace: to help reverse the legacy of war. With PeaceTrees, a handful of Americans work with the Vietnamese not only to clear the land but to teach the people about the dangers that lurk just below its surface.

In Quang Tri province alone, Chuck explained, more ordnance was expended than all the bombs dropped on all of Europe during all of World War II. While the fighting may have ended in 1975, Vietnamese are being killed and maimed just about every week by this detritus of war. In some cases, a farmer is working in his rice paddy when his water buffalo steps on a bomb long buried in the muck and mire. Or some kids find this odd-looking piece of metal and start to play with it, oblivious to its often deadly consequences. Or some clueless "entrepreneur" seeking scrap metal begins cutting up what he believes to be a harmless relic of war and gets blown to smithereens.

As a Marine, Chuck Meadows' first commandment was: Always take care of your troops. Now, it's: Take care of the people. Which is, he said, simply "a redirecting of compassion."

Early Bird

Chuck Meadows, who hails from Beaverton, Oregon, was commissioned in 1961, having completed Marine ROTC at Oregon State University. His first tour in Vietnam was brief: as a rifle company commander, Lieutenant Meadows arrived in Chu Lai in May 1965 in the second wave of Marines, part of the initial buildup of American troops. His job then was simple: take the beachhead and provide security for the construction of an airfield at Chu Lai. In July, he was sent back to the States.

Eighteen months later, Captain Meadows took a company through training before deployment to Okinawa. In November 1967, he was sent back to Vietnam. He was assigned to Golf Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, part of the 1st Marine Division, based initially at An Hoa west of Danang and then at Phu Bai. On 30 January 1968, he was in charge of a special reaction company at Phu Bai when Communist units attacked cities and military bases across South Vietnam in what would come to be known as the Tet Offensive.

“We were sent a couple of klicks in front of our lines to monitor enemy movement,” he said. “We could hear the mortars being fired into the camp.” Oddly enough, it was safer outside the perimeter than in the camp, he said.

The next day, his company received orders: Go to Hue city to escort the commanding general of the 1st ARVN Division to safety. One company that had been sent out earlier had run into trouble, so Golf Company “grounded our packs and trucked into Hue.” Just over the bridge in the city, they got shot out of their trucks.

The Marines fought their way to the MACV compound, policing up the dead and wounded of Alpha 1/1 along the way. The situation, they found, was as murky as paddy water; it was “unclear” just exactly what was going on. Chuck Meadows was told to get his men over to the Citadel, the center of the ancient imperial city of Hue.

As the first elements of Golf Company reached the crest of the bridge over the Perfume River, they came under intense small-arms, rocket, machinegun, and mortar fire. It was there that he witnessed one of the signal acts of courage under fire.

“A squad leader, Corporal Lester Tully, and his people maneuvered down the side of the bridge, which was no easy feat, to take out the machine-gun bunker with hand grenades,” he said. For his act of bravery at considerable risk to himself, Lester Tully was awarded the Silver Star.

As Golf Company pushed on, it didn’t take Chuck Meadows to realize that “we didn’t have the strength, the size, or the support to go much further.” Late that afternoon they managed to make it back to the MACV compound. Of the 160 men who started the day, 45 had become casualties. Their losses weren’t as bad as those suffered by Alpha Company, though, which had lost all its officers and half its troops.

For Chuck Meadows, the 31st of January was by far the most difficult day he had experienced in combat. “We had to confront the unknown, with very limited intelligence as to what was going on,” he reflected. “We really earned our pay.”

While the Tet Offensive was a costly defeat for the Communists, one that succeeded in eliminating much of the infrastructure of the local Viet Cong, it was a watershed in determining American policy in Vietnam. After years of having been told that the “light at the end of the tunnel” was growing ever brighter, many Americans could not understand how an almost-defeated enemy could mount such an attack.

None of this, though, was Chuck Meadows’ concern. He had a job to do and he and his men did it. Over the next week and a half, along with two other rifle companies from the 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, Golf Company fought to clear the south side of Hue city of its invaders. The last elements of the NVA weren’t eliminated until some 40 days after they first entered the Citadel.

In March, the Marines were relieved by units of the Army. In April, Chuck Meadows, who was then 28 years old, headed back to The World. He was proud to have had"the opportunity to lead young Marines in doing work we were well-trained to do"; he was very "secure and comfortable" in the leadership he was able to provide, and in the ethos of the Corps that made taking care of one another one of the highest priorities for a Marine.

Retracing Footsteps

Looking back from the perspective of a third of a century, Chuck is struck by the "seeming inability of America's leaders and decision-makers, both political and military, to define our true national objectives and to make decisions based on those objectives. Because they weren't clear from the start, they were subject to reinterpretation and change.

"We never got to finish," he believes, "the job we were sent to do."

PeaceTrees, though, has given him an objective: "to heal the land and to build friendships while eliminating a continuing source of death and devastation. And to try to give young people the chance to live in their tomorrows and not in our yesterdays." For Chuck, this new mission helps "bring closure with a sense of doing something honorable." It has also enabled him to "connect" with other veterans who have similar sentiments.

The Vietnamese, who are genuinely grateful for efforts like PeaceTrees to heal and to rebuild, "have taught me a lot," Chuck said. "They have moved on. What happened, happened. While they cannot escape the fact of the war, they don't dwell on it."

On one of his first trips back to Vietnam as executive director of PeaceTrees, Chuck Meadows returned to Hue, and spent an afternoon retracing the path he and his Marines had taken some 30 years before. What had taken days in the chaos of battle now took less than an afternoon. As he walked in a now vibrant city, he wondered about what might have been, and reflected on the immense proportions of the task at hand: he cites figures estimating that less than 20 percent of the hundreds of thousands of tons of unexploded ordnance have been cleared. So much to do, with never enough "assets" to accomplish all he would like.

But, he said, "we do what we can to help when we can, and that's the best any individual can do."

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Paul McHale: Leads at the Front Line as the DoD's Chief of Homeland Security

It's been said that there's no such thing as an "ex-marine," and Paul McHale continues to prove that point, as the Department of Defense's chief homeland security leader.

After the September 11 terrorist attacks, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld asked Congress to create an assistant secretary position at the department for managing homeland defense. President Bush nominated McHale for the post in January 2003, and the Senate quickly confirmed the widely respected Pennsylvania Democrat and former congressman.

McHale, 53, oversees all military operations related to protecting the United States' territory, population, and critical infrastructure against attack. He oversees Northern Command (NORTHCOM), the newly created command-and-control structure for military operations in the continental United States. From his office in the rebuilt section of the Pentagon that was destroyed in the 9/11 attack, McHale oversees all military support to civil authorities for homeland security. He also is a key player in defining the emerging relationship between the Defense and Homeland Security departments.

McHale's service to his country dates back over 30 years. Following graduation from Lehigh University (with Highest Honors in 1972), Secretary McHale volunteered for duty with the U.S. Marine Corps and was commissioned a second lieutenant. He spent two years on active duty, including an overseas deployment as a rifle platoon leader in Okinawa and the Philippines.

Upon his release from Active Duty, McHale graduated from Georgetown Law School and entered private practice. But public service continued to beckon, as Secretary McHale began his civilian public service career with his election to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in 1982. He served five consecutive terms.

The call of the Corps led him to resign his house seat in 1991 following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, volunteering for active duty as an infantry officer with the Marine Corps during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

In January of 1993, Secretary McHale returned to DC and was elected to represent the 15th Congressional district of Pennsylvania in the United States House of Representatives, where he served for three terms. He was an active member of the House Armed Services Committee, which has oversight responsibility for all U.S. military operations and training.

In 1996, then Congressman McHale co-founded the National Guard and Reserve Components Caucus which advocates the interests of reservists and guardsmen world-wide. His leadership earned him several distinct honors, including the Marine Corps Reserve Officers Association 1997 Frank M. Tejeda Leadership Award, the 1998 Reserve Officers Association Minuteman of the Year Award, and the Department of Defense Distinguished Public Service Medal.

And, of course, he is currently a Colonel in the Marine Corps Reserve.

HeroVet and marine, Assistant Secretary McHale, having given service in our military, continues to distinguish himself through his ongoing leadership and contribution to our society. Semper Fi!

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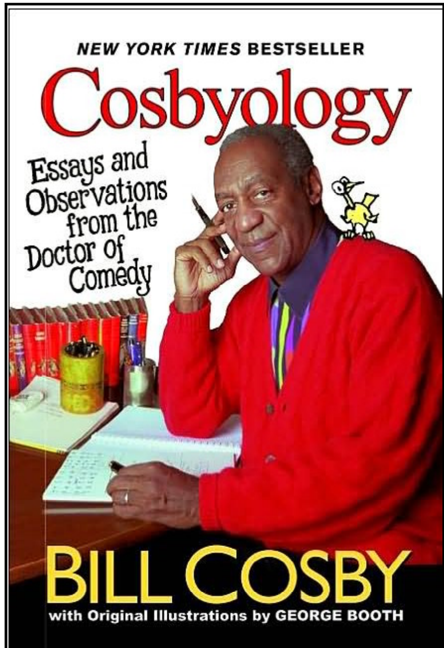
Bill Cosby: For an Endearing Performer, An Abiding Belief in Education



Bill Cosby. You just hear his name and, if you haven't been a total recluse these past 40 years, you can't help but smile. The man is funny. And he's a *mensch*. He is one of the most endearing, and enduring, performers of the second half of the 20th century. For four decades, his live appearances have sold out nightclubs, concert halls, and arenas across the country. He's had an extraordinary career on the small screen; he is the all-time best-selling comedian on record albums; his books have sold millions of copies. And his support of numerous charities, particularly in the field of education, have, as one writer put it, "endowed hundreds if not thousands of young Americans with the gift of hope and learning."

Had he not been blessed with drive and ambition and a natural sense of humor, and had he not taken advantage of opportunities afforded him during a four-year stint as a corpsman in the Navy, William Henry Cosby, Jr., — *Cos* —might have been a nobody. Instead, the boy who raised his younger brothers in a housing project in Philadelphia after his father, a mess steward in the Navy, abandoned the family, the teenager who dropped out of high school after repeating the tenth grade, the young man who earned money shining shoes and doing odd jobs, has become one of the highest-paid, and most beloved, humorists in America.

Although it was in school that Bill Cosby met the classmates who would one day people his comedy routines as Fat Albert, Old Weird Harold, and Dumb Donald, among others, it was only later, as an adult, that he developed a deep and abiding appreciation for education.

In 1990, Cosby told the *St. Petersburg Times*: "I'd just grown very tired of myself and thought perhaps there was a career for me in the service. If you stayed in for 20 years, you knew at least you'd get a certain amount of money for the rest of your life." He did not appreciate the value of education, he said, until his stint in the Navy. He learned physical therapy, traveled around the world, and earned a high school equivalency diploma through correspondence courses. When he was discharged in 1960 after four years' service, Cos, who was then 23, won a track-and-field scholarship and enrolled at Temple University in Philadelphia. His ambition? To become a physical education teacher.

There, he excelled in the high jump and in football, but dropped out as his comedy career began to blossom. He eventually completed the course work for his BA degree, and went on to earn a MA and a PhD in education.

A Very Funny Fellow

Cosby launched his career while still in the Navy. He debuted as a stand-up comic at The Under-

ground Club in his hometown and by 1962 had landed a summer booking at New York City's Gaslight Café. He was an immediate hit. The next year, he was invited to perform on *The Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson and released his first comedy album, *Bill Cosby Is A Very Funny Fellow, Right*!, which was nominated for a Grammy award. Although he didn't win, he went on to dominate the category for the rest of the decade, winning six consecutive Grammy awards in the late 60s.

In 1965, as the civil rights movement was in full fervor, Cosby made the transition from comedian to actor in the series *I Spy* and changed the face of television. It was a historic moment in casting when a black man (Cosby) co-starred with a white man (Robert Culp) as his equal. For his barrier-breaking role, Cos won three Emmy Awards as Outstanding Lead in a Dramatic Series. And after *I Spy* ran its course, Cosby became a staple on TV.

After *I Spy* came the drama *The Bill Cosby Show* in 1971, and a comedy- variety show called Cos in 1976. There was *Cosby on CBS*, plus specials and daytime children's programs including the critically acclaimed Saturday-morning cartoon series *Fat Albert* and the *Cosby Kids*. But it was with *The Cosby Show*, which ran for eight years (1984-92) that Bill Cosby, in the words of Time magazine, "dominated the medium as no star has since the days of Lucille Ball and Milton Berle." *The Cosby Show*, in which he portrayed obstetrician Dr. Cliff Huxtable, a calm and loving father, head of a close-knit, middle-class African-American family that celebrated their love for each other, illustrated Cosby's philosophy regarding race. Instead of pointing out the differences among people of different races, Cosby said he would "rather talk about the similarities, about what's universal in their experiences." Because, Cosby believes, "people are many things simultaneously. 'Race' is one such thing, but it isn't the only one and it isn't always the primary one."

Coretta Scott King called his show "the most positive portrayal of black family life that has ever been broadcast." *The Cosby Show*, which enjoyed years of number-one ratings and nearly unanimous critical praise, almost single-handedly resurrected the then moribund sitcom genre and helped lift NBC from last place to first in the ratings. Its refreshing portrayal of African-Americans was, noted Newsweek, a diametrically opposite side of the black experience than what had previously been seen on television: "a tightly nuclear, upscale family coping with the same irritations and misunderstandings that afflict their white counterparts."

Along with his TV shows, he performed on a string of hit comedy albums and authored a number of books. He was the moving force as well behind *Fat Albert* and *The Cosby Kids*, an animated series that portrayed kids from a poor neighborhood who dealt with problems that all children face, from bullies to the arrival of a new sibling. Cosby appeared at the beginning and end of each show – which ran for a dozen years – to encourage children to talk about their problems with friends and family.

Even when he was caught in the trauma of a deep family tragedy – his son, Ennis, a dyslexic who had planned a career working with learning-disabled children, was shot to death while changing a tire in an attempted robbery in 1997 – Cosby persevered. "You can turn painful situations around through laughter," he said. "If you can find humor in anything, even poverty, you can survive it."

Inspired, and an Inspiration

Cosby's belief that education is the key to success in life, especially for young blacks, inspired him

to pursue advanced degrees. Armed with the doctorate in education he earned at the University of Massachusetts in 1976 – his thesis focused on how to use the media to help kids learn – he has been a knowledgeable and knowing speaker at graduation ceremonies for years.

As a philanthropist with the resources to literally put his money where his mouth is, he and his wife, Camille, who also earned a doctorate in education, have given aid to hundreds of bright young black students over the years. Those chosen "have to meet strict, scholarship criteria," noted Joel Brokaw, a family spokesman. "It's a philanthropic activity they do very privately. And they're very hands-on about it, monitoring their progress closely," he said, adding that he couldn't estimate how many young people have benefited over the years. Because it is Cosby's deeply held belief that the solutions to the problems of many black Americans are to be found when young people become better educated, and not in blaming all difficulties on race.

The Cosbys have also given big bucks for various causes – cancer research, athletics, civil rights – and to various institutions of higher learning, including $20 million to century-old Spelman College in Atlanta — the largest gift ever made to a black college. Cosby said in an interview that he wanted to reward the women's college, which two of his four daughters attended, where white Christians from New England had defied segregation laws to educate blacks.

Cosby also has given benefit performances for nearby Morehouse College, from which his only son graduated after overcoming dyslexia.

Among his many accolades, Bill Cosby was presented with the Medal of Freedom* by President Bush in 2002.

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Bobby Hollingsworth: A Passionate Advocate for Members Of the Reserve and National Guard

About as far back as he can remember, way back when he was a tow-headed two-year-old on his daddy's farm in rural Louisiana, a passion to be a pilot fired the imagination of Bobby Hollingsworth. When an uncle came home in his Navy whites with wings, fresh from flying an F-6 Hellcat in the South Pacific, Bobby knew, he knew, what he wanted to be.

Years later, as an undergraduate at Louisiana State University, when he was asked what he wanted to major in, his answer was eminently pragmatic: Whatever I've got to do to enhance my knowledge to become a pilot. He majored in electrical engineering.

During his Reserve career, he rose steadily through the upper ranks, becoming Commanding General of the Marine Corps Reserve Support Command; Deputy Commander of the Joint Force, Southwest Asia; and Vice Commander of Marine Forces, Pacific. In 1999, after 38 years of Reserve and active duty, Bob Hollingsworth retired as a Major General.

By then he was a grandfather, on the cusp of a well-deserved retirement. A home built on land he and his wife, Sue, his high school sweetheart, owned in Colorado, beckoned; the idea of having the personal freedom to go bow-hunting and fly-fishing in the great outdoors was alluring. But Bob Hollingsworth was still passionate: about service to his country. He wasn't quite ready to hang up his wings for good.

Motivated by an abiding sense of patriotism deeply rooted in his family and in small-town values, and moved by the ethos of the Corps, which he describes as "an organization that is not only dedicated to excellence as warriors but to the principle that we take care of our own," he heeded the sage advice of his Congressman, John Cooksey. "You need to come to Washington and do something," Cooksey, a former Air Force fighter pilot - and his wife's eye doctor - told Hollingsworth.

He did. And in November 2001, in what he calls a "perfect fit," he was appointed by President Bush as Executive Director of the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve. ESGR, as it is commonly known, is an agency within the office of the assistant secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs. It was established in 1972 by presidential proclamation to promote support, understanding, and cooperation between National Guardsmen and Reservists and their civilian employers. Six years later, it grew to include a community-based volunteer network that now numbers more than 4,100 volunteers in 54 communities located in each state, in the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

And it has provided Bob Hollingsworth with an outlet for his passion.

Making a Difference

“What we’re doing is helping people’s lives,” he said during a telephone interview from his office in Arlington, Virginia. “God - and the President - put me here so I can influence attitudes and support the young men and women who are willing to put their lives on the line so we can live free.” For Bob Hollingsworth, this is not a pious patriotic platitude; it’s something in which he deeply believes.

“Our national defense is completely dependent on volunteers,” he said. “Most people don’t realize that 48% of our armed forces - 1.3 million men and women - are in the Guard and Reserves. They are critical to our nation’s security,” he added, citing a 40% reduction in the active component strength over the past decade.

ESGR works to ensure that each Guardsman and Reservist is aware of their rights and responsibilities under the law, and whom to contact if they have employer-related problems. ESGR also provides an information and mediation service from it national headquarters. This “ombudsman” service provides a team of experts in the field of re-employment rights for members of the Guard and Reserve who have been trained in explaining the nuances of the law, addressing problems or misunderstandings with individual supervisors or employers, and fielding inquiries about specific personnel practices.

On the other end , ESGR reaches out to employers, to inform them of their rights and obligations as citizens, and to gain and reinforce their support of the nation’s Guardsmen and Reservists.

Through a variety of programs, Hollingsworth and company use the gentle art of persuasion to convince employers to do the right thing by their employees who have been called up to active duty. Hundreds of employers, from small businesses to giant corporations, have signed “statements of support” that endorse the principles and goals of ESGR.

Hollingsworth notes that of the thousands of queries that ESGR staff and volunteers field each week, “only 15% are real issue-related conversations, and then more often than not turn out to be a misunderstanding.” Only a relative handful, around 5% of the calls, are referred to the Department of Labor.

While re-employment issues account for the bulk of all queries, “family issues are equally important,” Hollingsworth said. “Guardsmen and Reservists do their duty and are willing to accept some major inconveniences, but get annoyed if they feel that a call-up is not equitable, that members of a particular Reserve unit are being asked to do more than their share.”

Hollingsworth cites several success stories in which a business - and an entire community - come through for a member of the Reserve or the Guard. Like the Ford Motor Company, which defers car payments to Reservists or Guardsmen called to active duty.

There’s the Reserve sergeant, a truck driver for the Serta mattress company, who’s married with three kids and debts piling up, who is forced to take more than a 50% cut in pay when he was mobilized. ESGR contacted its state office in Tennessee, which in turn reached out to the chairman of Serta, who ordered that his company match the differential in pay. There’s the Special Forces sergeant from Utah who lost an eye in Afghanistan. Delta Airlines, his wife’s employer, rallied around the family, helping to make up the pay differential. And there’s the civil engineer

from New Jersey who was greeted upon his return home by a huge electronic sign in the lobby of his corporate headquarters.

In his present post, Hollingsworth is a mover and a shaker, a leader and a cheerleader, an ambassador of good will. He's there to raise the level of conscience and consciousness for the sacrifices made by those who serve. And every day Bob Hollingsworth asks himself: "What did I do today that's made a difference in somebody's life?"

Most days, he can be pleased by the answer. Every day, his dedication makes a difference to our country.

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Lt. Commander Terry Allvord: Honoring Heroes at Home And Abroad

With the first hints of baseball season in the air, U.S. Navy Lieutenant Commander Terry Allvord may be eagerly lacing up his spikes for his 14th season leading the charge for the Navy Baseball Program, but he's proudly got more on his plate: promoting a patriotic foundation honoring search and rescue heroes at home and our troops in the Persian Gulf.

In the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 tragedy, Allvord took leave as a helicopter pilot at the U.S. Naval Academy Preparatory School in Newport, Rhode Island to assist in the efforts at the World Trade Center in New York City. It was there in the rubble among members of the military, firefighters, police officers and other state and government agencies that he received his inspiration for designing a symbol "for the 9-11 generation."

Immediately following President Bush's first speech at Ground Zero, Allvord, along with volunteers went back to work digging out a NYFD hook and ladder truck. During countless hours of digging by hand they were able to recognize an American Flag decal on the back of the rig. In conversations with workers over the following days, many expressed the motivation they received by seeing the American Flag on that truck and in and around the site. And after leaving New York, reflecting on his own experiences, Allvord developed his own meaning behind the efforts of those at Ground Zero: "So Others May Live."

His inspiration formed the basis of a non-profit organization he set up to support search and rescue professionals. He has also designed a set of commemorative pins for sale to honor these Americans to support the program, and honor the very same stars and stripes bannered to the side of the damaged fire truck.

"Extraordinary sacrifices are quietly being made by ordinary Americans in communities all around this great country. The 'So Others May Live' patriotic symbol can serve as a profound reminder of the men and women both overseas and on our own soil protecting our freedom," Allvord said.

"Together, we can work to spread this spirit throughout our communities so that in our everyday lives, we take a moment to recognize the tremendous sacrifice and determination that makes our country great and all Americans proud," he added.

Specifically, the pins were designed to honor 11 different military and law enforcement organizations, as well as the events surrounding 9-11-01. They include U.S. Air Force, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, Firefighters, POW/MIA, U.S. Border Patrol, Homeland Security and Police Officers.

Allvord's dedication to supporting the spirit of search and rescue dates back at least ten years, and has been notably linked with his passion for sports. In 1993, he founded the "National Search and

Rescue Competition." The Competition features the top military and civilian Combat, Inland, Maritime and Urban search and rescue professionals from around the world, including teams from Turkey, Japan and the United States. They compete in the areas of physical fitness, professional knowledge, SAR procedures and equipment.

And most notably on the baseball diamond, he founded the U.S. Navy Baseball Club in 1990, the first organized military baseball program since the Vietnam War. His most recent "tour of duty" in the sport was as the Athletic Director and Head Baseball Coach at the U. S. Naval Academy Preparatory School in Newport, Rhode Island. He's also been credited with coaching more than 13,000 Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard, as well as college and professional players.

These days, especially, the importance of "So Others May Live" is not underestimated. Allvord, who has served several tours of the Persian Gulf region, hopes that his efforts help spread good-will and support for our troops performing in Operation Iraqi Freedom. "In the end, I'm hopeful that all Americans will support the country and those in harm's way."

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Mitchell Paige: Exposing Medal of Honor Imposters Has Been Mitchell Paige's Calling for 50 Years

When Mitchell Paige was six years old, his mother took him to an Armistice Day parade. (Armistice Day, for those too young to be familiar with the term, celebrated the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month when Germany signed an armistice, ending the fighting in The Great War, AKA World War I. It has since evolved into Veterans Day.)

As the squads and platoons of veterans marched past, the railroad worker's son from Camden Hill, a town of 300 southwest of Pittsburgh, was taken with the Marines, how impressive they looked in their neatly pressed trousers with the red stripe running down the side.

"One day, I want to be like those guys," he told his mother. And in 1936, freshly graduated from high school, 18-year-old Mitchell Paige made good on his word and joined the Corps. As his mother bade him farewell, she offered these words of advice: Don't try to figure everything out for yourself, she told her son. Trust in God and He'll show the way.

Which Mitchell Paige has done ever since.

To say that he "saw action" in World War II would be an understatement of profound dimensions. He fought in bloody battles across the South Pacific, culminating in one horrific night in October 1942. The Marines had taken Henderson Field, a parcel of land on Guadalcanal crucial to the continuing American advance. Platoon Sergeant Paige and his men were defending the airfield when an advancing Japanese force broke through the perimeter in front of his position. The Marines were outnumbered 30-to-1.

Throughout the night, as the enemy mounted human-wave attacks, Paige and his platoon, by then down to 32 men, kept firing their machineguns until all except Paige were dead or seriously wounded. Paige, who had been hit by shrapnel and had a bayonet plunged through his hand, relentlessly repelled the Japanese.

To quote from his citation: "Alone, against the deadly hail of Japanese shells, he fought with his gun and when it was destroyed, took over another, moving from gun to gun, never ceasing his withering fire against the advancing hordes until reinforcements finally arrived."

In the morning, 920 dead enemy soldiers littered the airfield. Only Mitchell Paige was left standing.

Mustang

Given a battlefield commission, Paige, by then recuperated from his wounds, was in Australia when he was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions that October night in the Solomon Islands. After being presented with the Medal, he took some pictures, then packed up the Medal in a celebratory cigar box and shipped it home to his mother. He didn't feel like a hero. "To me," he

said during a telephone interview from his home in La Quinta, near Palm Springs, California, "the biggest heroes are those who stayed behind and died. They're the real heroes."

The mustang officer, too, was a hero, one of a relative handful of those cited for extraordinary valor and conspicuous gallantry. He remained in his beloved Corps for 28 years, "retiring," finally, in 1964 as a colonel after both he and his son saw service in another war in Asia in a place called Vietnam.

But Mitchell Paige has never really retired. He found a calling and for 50 years has been indefatigable in its pursuit: finding and exposing frauds who desecrate the Medal of Honor and the men who have earned it - and those who served and lost their lives.

The first one he met was at a parade. "That fella showed up flaunting the Medal," he said, undeterred by the then paltry $250 fine called for by Section 704 of the U.S. Code but shaken when assaulted by Mitchell Paige's abiding sense of outrage.

At gun shows he'd confront dealers selling the Medal who'd laugh in his face when he objected to their lack of ethics.

Go ahead and arrest me, they'd tell him. Which only teed Mitchell Paige off. He vowed: I'm going to track these guys down from coast to coast.

Over the years he estimates he's exposed 500 of them. "I've got a three-ring binder full of those characters," he said.

"They're a disgrace," Paige said, explaining the outrage that fuels his passion.

"They make me mad. I've seen all those thousands of gravestones of Americans who fought and died on foreign shores."

For Mitchell Paige, sacrifice is sacred, and those who pose as what they've never been are an insult to those who really gave of themselves.

He tells about the poseur he discovered "at one of the fashionable country clubs out here. He was newly married. I hooked him up with Andy Rooney [of "60 Minutes"]. Andy interviewed him, and told him when the show would be broadcast. Well, his wife was just so excited. She invited a whole houseful of neighbors in to watch the episode, she was so proud." Pride turned to an embarrassment of tears when her husband was exposed before a national audience. He was eventually booted out of the country club, and his wife left him.

Paige tells about another imposter whose obituary noted that he had received the Medal for his actions in bombing Tokyo as the Second World War neared its end. "That poor widow and his children don't know," Paige remembers thinking. "Somebody had to tell her: Your husband really wasn't the man you thought he was. Because she was in for a rude awakening when she'd inquire about the benefits she was entitled to." When he met with her, she was in tears. "But he was presented with the Medal by General MacArthur," she said. "I have a picture of him with the Medal around his neck."

The photo may have been real: Medal of Honor recipients would let their buddies wear the Medal

in the heady hours of celebration after a presentation. Which was something Mitchell Paige had done in Australia.

Righteous Partners

Eight years ago, he linked up with a young FBI agent named Tom Cottone, who is now the national case agent for investigating alleged instances of fraud in the wearing, manufacturing, and/or sale of the Medal of Honor. Together the old veteran and the young agent are partners: "I find 'em and Tom makes the case against 'em," Paige said.

One of the biggest cases was not against any individual but against the company contracted to fabricate the Medal. In 1996, Special Agent Cottone made the ironclad case that resulted in the conviction of Lordship Industries of Hauppauge, New York, for illegally selling 300 Medals of Honor. And now, backed by stiffened penalties called for in Section 704, Title 18 of the US Code - penalties achieved after years of effort by Mitchell Paige - the FBI has real legal ammunition in its arsenal.

For Mitchell Paige, who is now in his ninth decade, the battle goes on. There are more imposters, more wannabes coming out of the woodwork. But those who desecrate the memory of America's true heroes better watch out, because they have an implacable enemy in an ex-Leatherneck on a 50-year mission. "Sooner or later," Paige said, "we get 'em."

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Ray Kelly: For New York City's Top Cop, A Baptism of Leadership in the Corps

The terrorist attack that collapsed the Twin Towers in Lower Manhattan seared the souls of Americans everywhere. For Ray Kelly, it was a defining moment.

Kelly, who had served as New York City police commissioner a decade earlier, who lived a block away from the World Trade Center, and who was then senior managing director for global corporate security at the investment bank Bear, Stearns and Company, saw the first tower crumble. "It was just hard to believe," he said. "I had been there the first time, right after the first bombing in 1993, and I remember looking around and thinking, this building can never fall. To see it crumble was just devastating."

At that moment, Ray Kelly knew he wanted "to get back into the game." With the election of Michael Bloomberg as New York City's 108th Mayor, he got that chance – and became a footnote in history: Raymond W. Kelly is the first commissioner to serve two separate tours under two different mayors as New York City's top cop.

It is a position he fills with grace, humility, conviction, determination, and an unstinting instinct to do what is right.

Call to the Corps

Being the PC of one of the most active police forces in the nation is not the culmination of any boyhood ambition. It was never Ray Kelly's intention to join the NYPD. What this ramrod-straight fitness enthusiast wanted to be – what he was destined to be – was a Marine.

Ray Kelly is a native New Yorker. One of five siblings, he was raised in Manhattan and Sunnyside, Queens. His three older brothers had been Marines, and "from a very early age, when I was eight or nine years old, I knew I would go into the Corps. I had no choice."

He was attending Manhattan College and working as a stockboy at Macy's in midtown Manhattan when he saw an ad for a police cadet program. He had no relatives in the department, no emotional connection or abiding interest in police work. The cadet program, though, piqued his interest. To join he would have to pass the test to become a police officer. Which he did. And he in fact served as a police officer for five days before he entered the Marine Corps after his graduation.

With the shooting war in Vietnam heating up in 1965, it wasn't long before Lt. Kelly was sent halfway across the globe. Assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines, he saw his share of combat. There were a lot of "difficult days," he said during a recent telephone interview from his office at One Police Plaza. One of the most difficult occurred during what was later named, ironically, Operation New York.

“We trapped a VC battalion on a peninsula,” he recounted. After being choppered in, his Marines formed a defensive perimeter. The night was uneventful. The next day, the Marines moved down a skirmish line, hoping to force the enemy into an untenable position. They encountered no resistance. Suddenly, a whole tree line opened up. Marines fell under withering small-arms fire. In this battle, as in countless other encounters with the VC, Ray Kelly saw the courage of young men who exposed themselves to enemy fire to come to the aid of fellow Marines.

“When bullets are whizzing by, and you know what they can do to the human body, to put someone else’s life before your own personal safety embodies the essence of courage,” he said.

It was in such situations, that Ray Kelly first put into practice the lessons of leadership that had been drummed into him by the Corps: how integrity, initiative, judgment, job knowledge, confidence, and decisiveness all meld together and become second-nature.

“I still use the lessons I learned in the Corps every day,” he said. These lessons have formed the foundation of his career.

‘Velvet Trap’

After his active duty committment was completed, Ray Kelly was faced with decisions about the path his life would take. His first son had been born while he was overseas, and while he wanted to go to law school, he had a family to feed.

He saw going back to the police department as the first step on the path to a career in law.

While he did achieve his degree – he would earn law degrees from both St. John’s and New York Universities as well as a master’s degree in public administration from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University along with a slew of honorary degrees – he never went into practice, because Ray Kelly fell in love with police work.

“It was a velvet trap,” he said. “Responding to calls on a 4-12 tour has all the elements that make it one of the most exciting – and rewarding – jobs” around. Even as PC, he is known to take unannounced runs with officers on patrol.

Police work was his calling. In 31 years with the NYPD, he had 25 commands, culminating with his appointment as police commissioner by Mayor David Dinkins in 1992. (At the same time, he remained a Marine, not only in bearing but in fact: He would serve 30 years before he would retire as a full colonel from the Marine Reserves).

As a senior police official, Ray Kelly has been an innovator. He was one of the department’s chief architects of the Safe City/Safe Streets program, which put an additional 7,000 cops out into the communities. He was the first commissioner to target so-called quality of life crimes, epitomized for many by the infamous “squeegee men” who greeted vehicles entering Manhattan with dirty rags and attitude.

“He laid the groundwork for many of the changes that took place during the Giuliani administration,” Robert Louden of the Criminal Justice Center at John Jay College of Criminal Justice told the *Christian Science Monitor*. “ I don’t think he ever got much positive credit for what he did.”

Take Two

With the election of Rudolph Giuliani to the mayoralty in 1994, Ray Kelly moved on. During the crisis in Haiti in 1994, President Bill Clinton named him Director of the International Police Monitors of the multinational force that went to that beleaguered nation to quell civil unrest and end human rights abuses. The monitors helped to establish Haiti's interim public security force. For his service, Kelly was awarded the Exceptionally Meritorious Service Commendation by the President and the Commander's Medal for Public Service by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

From 1996-98, he served as Under Secretary for Enforcement at the U.S. Treasury Department, charged with supervising that agency's enforcement bureaus, including the Secret Service, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, the Federal Enforcement Training Center, the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, and the Office of Foreign Assets Control. In October 1997 he was elected Vice President of the Americas for INTERPOL, the international police organization.

Kelly chafed a bit in what was essentially an administrative role. He craved...police work. His cravings were assuaged when he was named Commissioner of the U.S. Customs Service, where he directed more than 19,000 employees responsible for enforcing hundreds of laws and international agreements that protect the American public. By all accounts, he did another exemplary job.

With the election of a new president, his long career in public service seemed over. He was offered, and accepted, the prestigious position at Bear, Stearns. This detour from public service was to be short-lived, however: 9/11 happened.

And thanks to Michael Bloomberg, Ray Kelly is back in the game he loves.

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Ned Powell: Reaffirming the Mission – and Expanding The Visibility – of the USO

During wartime, many politicians offer plaudits and platitudes attesting to the courage and sacrifice of the young men and women on the front lines of freedom. Too often, though, too many of this chorus of promoters fade from sight when the shooting ceases and the time comes to assist active-duty military and provide services to returning veterans.

Edward A. Powell, Jr. is not one of these sunshine patriots.

At the helm of the USO since January 2002, this son of the South, a onetime Navy yeoman whose ancestors served in the Revolutionary War and just about every war since, seized the moment when presented with the opportunity to lead the USO. For Ned Powell, it was another way to "give something back" to the country that has given so much to his family. Powell's leadership and the USO's mission dovetail quite nicely.

"The United States has been blessed with civilian control of the military. This is fundamental to our democracy," Ned Powell said from his office in the Washington Navy Yard. "We want to continue to work hard to tell those on active duty that the American public cares about them. We want to convey the incredible power of 'Thank you' to those who serve."

This is what the USO – the United Service Organizations – has been doing for more than 62 years. In times of peace and periods of war, the USO has been on the front lines with the troops, bringing "a touch of home" to America's military personnel.

"Let's not get confused as we did in Vietnam," Powell said. If you've got a problem with U.S. policy, "don't take your opposition out on those who serve. They're a precious resource for all of us." What happened to those who served in the Vietnam Era, which is when Ned Powell fulfilled his two years of active duty, still rankles.

Changing Culture

Ned Powell came to the USO after a two-year stint as Assistant Secretary for Financial Management, and then Deputy Secretary, at the VA. There he was charged with managing 220,000 employees and an annual budget of some $48 billion. It was on his watch that the VA received its first-ever clean audit opinion, of which he remains quite proud. His leadership garnered him well-deserved recognition: he was awarded the department's Exceptional Service Award and was named Distinguished Federal Executive for the year 2000 by the Association of Government Accountants.

His leadership skills, he said, were honed by his work on active duty with the Defense Intelligence Agency. Foiled in his dream to become a pilot by bad eyesight – "I can't tell a tree from a person at 30 yards," he said – he enlisted in the Navy Reserve. Informed that the recruit who finished first in his class could choose his own duty station, Powell was determined that he would be that recruit. He was. He opted for Washington, D.C., a scant 90 miles from his home in Richmond,

Virginia, and was assigned to the DIA.

It wasn't long, however, before he became disenchanted with his work. He bristled at the level of authority under which he had to operate. One day, one of the Intelligence School's senior faculty, Air Force Colonel Bob Lambert, called him into his office. The seasoned colonel told the young yeoman how important his job really was. "And that," said Powell, "made all the difference in the world. That incident taught me a lot about managing people."

"I learned the value of doing a job well – doing the job you have now well." His assignment also sparked a lifelong interest in intelligence work, which was ironically appropriate: His uncle, Lewis Powell – that's former United States Supreme Court Justice Lewis Powell – served as an intelligence operative during the Second World War, his exploits the stuff of fiction, yet unknown to his family.

After using his GI Bill benefits to obtain his MBA from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1978 – he'd received his BA in economics from Washington and Lee University prior to joining the Navy – Ned Powell embarked on an entrepreneurial career. He was 31 years old when he bought his first company, a firm that manufactured wooden products; it was to be the first of several successful business ventures.

Golf Links

Beginning in 1986, Powell taught business ethics and policy at the University of Richmond and consulted with the International Center for Development on issues of the social responsibilities of management. He also trained as a moderator for the Aspen Institute. His ethical mindset embraces public service. While military service, he acknowledges, is not for everyone, public service "is not an option: It's part of what's required of you as a citizen," he believes. "You have a responsibility to do what you can to make your community better. It's a two-way street: rights and responsibilities go together. You can't be unengaged."

Ned Powell was ready to engage again, to seize the opportunity to "reconnect" to public service when a golfing buddy named Bill Clinton asked him, "What are you doing these days?" while they were on the links one day in Washington. Clinton's inquiry sparked Powell, a lifelong Republican, into joining the Clinton Administration in October 1998.

Part of his mission at the VA was to dent if not transform at least part of the culture ingrained in both long-time administrators and short-term appointees. "I refused to attend, or to hold, meetings with more than eight or nine people," Powell said. "Just think of the personnel costs when someone calls a meeting for ten key administrators and they show up with 65 staffers. The system doesn't need 65 note-takers," he said.

He also attempted to alter the mindset from "How much did you spend?" to "Did you achieve the outcome you had expected to achieve?" For Ned Powell, outcome is what's important.

The outcome he hopes the USO will achieve during his tenure there is simple: "We want to work hard to reestablish the USO in the mind of the public as a factor in the success of the U.S. military. And we want those in the military to know that the public supports their sacrifice."

Sometimes it's the small initiatives that have a huge effect. This past February, the wife of the

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Mary Jo Myers, solicited schoolchildren to send Valentine's cards to troops. The cards were delivered by the USO to military hospitals, such as Landstuhl, Germany, and put into baskets. The troops who were recovering from wounds and illnesses could then sort through the cards enjoying the messages of support from home.

"This makes for a very powerful connection," Ned Powell said. "And that's what the USO is all about."

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David Robinson: Leading An All-Star Career, On And Off The Court

Former Navy midshipman David Robinson finished in style, rounding out a prolific basketball career with another National Basketball Association Championship. And even after "retirement" from the sport, he retains All-Star status in his personal and charitable pursuits.

Nicknamed "The Admiral," Robinson was drafted out of the Naval Academy with the first pick in the 1987 draft. He later joined the San Antonio Spurs two years after fulfilling his military service commitment at Kings Bay, Georgia and Port Hueneme, California.

Two years of military service had no effect on his basketball game, as he went on to become the NBA's Rookie of the Year in 1990, two-time Olympic Gold Medalist in basketball, the NBA's individual scoring champ in 1994, and leader of the Spurs' championship team in 1999.

But above all, Robinson's personal pride resides in helping people. He's demonstrated a lifelong commitment to giving back to others: family, teammates and children.

"Your military experience is going to serve you for the rest of your life," Robinson told a gathering of high school ROTC students in 2000. "You don't think when I step out on this basketball court that I don't rely on my military experience?" he bantered. "Every day!"

The Spurs star said he grew up around military people and saw the Naval Academy as a way to get a great education, be with great people and end up with a job with responsibility. As a young boy he looked up to his father, also a Navy veteran. And even in the twilight of his career, he serves under his current coach, Gregg Popovich, a 1970 Air Force Academy graduate.

Over the last four years, Robinson and his wife have contributed over $9 million dollars to The Carver Complex, a college prep school and cultural center built in one of San Antonio's roughest neighborhoods. He has fed the homeless through his "Feed My Sheep" program, he has helped families get diapers and baby food through "The Ruth Project," and fulfilled a promise he made to about 50 elementary school students — he gave them each $2,000 towards higher education.

He's even achieved global recognition, as a 1998 inductee into the World Sports Humanitarian Hall of Fame.

"These aren't sacrifices to me. If I'm clutching onto my money with both hands, how can I be free to hug my wife and kids?" Robinson says.

Even his teammates feel Robinson's passion, and are lamenting his retirement. Looking at prospects for Robinson's final roundup playing basketball at San Antonio's Alamo Dome, fellow Spur teammates are considering the impact Robinson is leaving behind.

“We really don’t realize what we are losing,” said Spurs forward Malik Rose after announcing that he and other Robinson teammates were donating $100,000 to Carver.

“Its comical to think about what we’d have to do to repay a fraction of what you’ve done for us,” Rose added.

“I can’t even imagine walking into a locker room and not seeing him smile next season,” Coach Popovich said when Robinson was near retirement in 2003. “It’s going to be a sad, sad thing at the end of the year.”

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Bonnie Carroll: When a Loved One in Uniform Dies, T*A*P*S Is There to Aid & Comfort

In 1987, a young woman working in the West Wing of the Reagan White House was introduced to a dashing Army colonel. She was a 2nd lieutenant in the Air National Guard. He was a Vietnam combat veteran. They fell deeply in love. Within months they married.

In 1992, they were living in Alaska. He was a brigadier general, commanding officer of the Alaska Army National Guard and Deputy Commissioner of Military and Veterans Affairs for the state. On November 12, he died, killed with seven other soldiers in the crash of an Army C-12 King Air. She was devastated, numbed by the suddenness of his death. It was not until the following May - Memorial Day - that Bonnie Carroll really felt the depth of the loss, the consuming hollowness of the death of her Tom.

"We had five wonderfully happy years together," Bonnie said. "Then he was gone. That August, I got together with some of the other families who lost loved ones that day. We chartered a helicopter and visited the crash site. It was on the side of a mountain, and the remains of the plane were still there. For us, being at the site provided finality, and was very much a healing experience."

While that experience may have helped stanch some of the emotional bleeding, the ache of loss only grew deeper. Bonnie looked around for some group that might offer succor and support.

There was none.

"No group was there for all those who lose a loved one serving in the Armed Forces to reach out to," she said during an interview from her office at the Department of Veterans Affairs in Washington, D.C., for which she serves as liaison to the White House. "Groups like Gold Star Wives and the Society of Military Widows do wonderful things such as lobbying to ensure benefits for military widows. But the closest I could find to an emotional support system for traumatic loss in the military was a group that aided the families of police officers who died in the line of duty."

To Fill a Void

All that winter, Bonnie Carroll thought about that void, thought about creating an organization to fill that void, talked to folks who could empathize with her pain: others who had lost a husband or a wife, brother or sister, son or daughter; officials in the Pentagon and the VA. In October 1994, she launched the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors.

T*A*P*S is a national, non-profit veterans service organization, a 501 (c)(3), whose mission is to be there for families, friends, and fellow service members - anyone who has been affected by the death of a loved one serving in the Armed Forces.

In its nine years, T*A*P*S, which is supported entirely by donations and a battalion of volunteers, has been a lifeline to some 15,000 families, Bonnie estimates. In most cases, these families are now led by young widows - their average age is 24 - with kids under the age of six. The families are referred to T*A*P*S by the casualty officer or commanding officer of the unit of the deceased service member, by the unit's chaplain, by the funeral director or cemetery director. They can visit the group's Web site, www.taps.org. They can read its literature, call its hotline at 800-959-TAPS. When they're ready, they can reach out for help.

And T*A*P*S is there.

"We don't duplicate the work of any other group," Bonnie said. "In fact, we have wonderful, complementary relationships with these other groups. The most important thing we do is offer peer support, which is the absolute foundation of T*A*P*S. We also link families to resources in their locality that understand traumatic loss and death. We've established close working relationships with dozens of government and non-government agencies that provide grief counseling and casework assistance. And we have volunteers available - and professionals on standby - for crisis intervention 24/7." All of these volunteers - T*A*P*S also employs a small staff - were themselves assisted by T*A*P*S when they suffered grievous loss. Their healing continues as they help others.

They all make a special effort with the children, many of whom are too young, at first, to appreciate fully the loss of a mother or a father. "Helping these kids deal with death absolutely has a profound effect on enabling them to understand and then cope with what happened. This year, we had 75 young people at a camp we run around Memorial Day. Our bereavement counselors come from a military background. We also have 'mentors,' a kind of 'big brother/big sister' program, who come from the burial details and honor guards that represent their branch of the military at funerals. These are youngsters themselves, 18 to 20 years old, whom we match up one-on-one with the kids at the camp.

"Most people can't see and touch pain," Bonnie said. "Yet when these kids release balloons with notes tied to them, sending their love and thoughts and memories up to their parents or older brothers or sisters who have died, we're all deeply touched."

Horses to Politics

Bonnie Mersinger Carroll was raised in a rural community in the Hudson Valley of New York. "I was one of those little girls who grew up riding horses but then didn't grow out of it," she said. She earned instructor certification in equine science, became a professional rider/trainer. She trained with members of the 1980 Olympic equestrian team; among the horses she broke was a filly named Genuine Risk, who went on to win the Kentucky Derby.

Bonnie realized, though, that riding "was a rather dangerous and not very lucrative way to make a living." She switched to politics, which was not so much a change in direction as a return to her roots: since she was 12, Bonnie had volunteered on Republican campaigns with her parents, who were very active in politics.

She also joined the Air National Guard, a decision no doubt influenced by her mother, who had been an aviator during the Second World War. Marjorie Mitchell Mersinger had told her daughter

about the camaraderie she had felt in the Women's Army Air Corps and the sense of mission that had fueled her resolve.

"Here I am, 25 years old, and I deeply felt I had a duty to serve my country. I knew that if I didn't enlist now, I might never have the time or the chance to do it. And it's been one of the most meaningful things I've had the privilege to do in my life. I'm so honored to stand beside others who defend the principles on which our country is founded."

"Absolutely the finest people I've met are through my military assignments," she said. "We share a brotherhood, a bond forged of a greater purpose. My fellow airmen motivate and inspire me because they are helping make this world a better, safer, freer place."

Moving to Washington, Bonnie parlayed hard work, good luck, and political connections to land a job as a staff assistant with the President's Economic Policy Council. One day she was asked to draft a response for the President about a horse-related issue. Ronald Reagan was so taken with what she wrote that he had his chief of staff, Howard Baker, call this young woman. Soon, Bonnie was working in the West Wing, the executive assistant to the Cabinet Secretary.

It was there that she was introduced to Tom Carroll. Their love, and his death, changed her life.

"When you're among others who have suffered a loss like yours, there's an unspoken bond that wipes away so many layers that tend to separate us," she said. "These folks are my family. They're young, vibrant, passionate men and women who help each other by helping others. Here in Washington, which can be a very superficial town, the depth of their commitment is just so refreshing and empowering and inspirational."

Bonnie Carroll, too, is refreshing and empowering and inspirational to others. Speaking at The Wall on Memorial Day, Bonnie, who is now a major in the Air Force Reserve assigned to the Chief of Staff for Air and Space Operations in the Pentagon, moved many to tears with her words.

"My husband really was my hero," she said. "And if he were here today, his words to you would be simple. Life is rarely understandable and often unfair. We are all living on borrowed time, time borrowed from God. The material things in life are fleeting - memories and families and friendships are what remain."

In this, Bonnie Carroll is blessed.

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Major General Nels Running: Shepherd of the Commemoration of the Korean War

The first time Nels Running actually boarded an aircraft, the Frenchtown, Montana native was traveling from Missoula to Colorado Springs to enter the Air Force Academy.

Although piloting a sleek jet fighter had never been a boyhood ambition, “I got hooked the first chance I had at the controls,” he said.

This was in 1960.

Fast-forward 3,800 flight hours and 274 combat missions later to the year 2000. Having retired from the Air Force two and a half years previously, Major General Nels Running was selected to coordinate the official commemorations of the 50th anniversary of the Korean War, from its start in 1950 till the armistice three years later that stilled the swords but left the combatants in uneasy limbo. On the cusp of the culmination of his efforts, General Running, while no longer running the show, is pleased at what has been accomplished.

“The war in Korea was not necessarily ‘forgotten,’” he said during a telephone interview from his home in Arlington, Virginia. “It’s more like ‘neglected.’ Because you can’t forget something you never knew. America was busy rebuilding from World War II and this ‘police action’ was more hidden than heralded. There was a mountain of ignorance about what was going on over there.”

“Back then television didn’t have the reach it did even ten years later,” he said, noting that fewer than ten percent of American homes owned one of the early black-and-white TVs. “Most of the Korean War vets I’ve spoken to believed that no one really cared. For the most part they came home individually. There were no parades. Some felt shunned: some VFW posts refused them membership because they had fought in a ‘police action’ and not a ‘real war.

“Most of those who served came home, hung up their uniform in the attic and got on with their lives. For most Americans, the movie and later black humor of the television show M*A*S*H embodied their war.

“It wasn’t until veterans of Vietnam agitated and forced the country to pay attention with the dedication of the national memorial in Washington that Korean vets said, finally: ‘What about us?’”

Smorgasbord of Events

The nation has taken notice. The Korean Veterans war memorial now graces the Mall in Washington, recently opened to remember “The Forgotten War.” Nowadays, commemorations continue to take place across the nation at the local as well as national level, in the United States and in Korea. Most notably, ten thousand Korean War veterans and their families were estimated at the nation’s Capitol participating in ceremonies on a summer weekend in the nation’s capital in 2003.

In Korea at the same time, one of the highlights was the unveiling of a peace monument at the Korean War Memorial in Seoul acknowledging the contributions of the 21 allied nations that sent

troops or medical personnel in support of the United Nations effort in Korea. Later that year, ceremonies at Fort Mason in California marked the repatriation of Korean War prisoners of war.

For Nels Running, the logistical achievement is gratifying. What is important, though, is the 'thank-you' the ceremonies convey to those who have too long felt neglected, even though they knew that their service was just as meaningful, their losses just as devastating, as those experienced by their older brothers in World War II and their younger cousins in Vietnam.

As a combat veteran, General Running is intimate with loss. Near the end of his first combat tour in Southeast Asia, he recounted, he was mission commander, piloting an F-105 on a bombing run targeting a rail yard northeast of Hanoi. As they closed in on their objective, screaming down at the heavily defended facility, a captain flying on his wing - too close on his wing - "took the bee-bees that missed me. He started to burn. We tried to get him headed out toward the sea. He headed instead northwest into the jungle. He blew up right in front of my face."

The scene is grafted in his memory forever, one among many. He can only imagine the scenes of carnage and chaos, of loss and death and suffering that still play in the minds of ground troops.

Because many of his overseas assignments were in Korea, he has a special affinity for its people and for the allied effort that preserved their freedom and laid the foundation for a budding democracy and robust economic power.After his second tour in Vietnam, after flying the F-4E with the Air Force Thunderbirds, after commanding the 26th Tactical Fighter Aggressor Squadron in the Philippines, he was assigned to the 8th Tactical Fighter Wing at Kunsan Air Base in South Korea as director of operations, then vice commander.

In 1985 he returned to Kunsan as commander of the wing. He returned to Korea in 1992, this time as deputy chief of staff with the United Nations Command and U.S. Forces Korea, based in Seoul.

When officials at the Department of Defense were seeking an executive director of the committee charged with commemorating the events of the Korean War, they found Nels Running's background and command abilities particularly compelling. He got the job and plunged into his assignment with dedication and verve.

"This is all tremendously important for the veterans as individuals because they get a sense that what they did and how they suffered was not in vain, that America recognizes and respects their service and their sacrifices," General Running said.

He has a letter from a Marine sergeant he received on the 17th of April 2000, the day he began his tenure with the committee. "I came home, after having spent that terrible winter in 40-degree-below-zero weather, ill-equipped, uniforms unable to shelter me, freezing to death, the hardships we went through," the sergeant wrote.

"I came back and no one cared. And so I went about my business. But I wrote, got your package the other day, and it brought a tear to my eye because I realized that someone cares."

And that, General Running said, "is the core of the mission. To see that each and every one of the 1.8 million veterans or the families of those who are no longer with us recognize that our nation does care, that we do appreciate what they did" at Inchon and Chosin and Seoul.

"I hope," the general added, "that they'll finally get some feeling of closure."

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Pat and Kevin Tillman: Proud to Serve

In contrast to many controversies surrounding professional sports, 2003's homecoming of Army Rangers Pat and Kevin Tillman from Iraq was a low-key event and hardly picked up by media. Yet, as top professional athletes, the Tillmans represent an impressive example of career and personal sacrifice to serve our country.

The Tillmans's story hearkened back to the journey of sports athletes from over 50 years ago: sacrificing time at play for the very serious business of defending the country. These days, their sacrifice cuts deeper, as they forgo millions of dollars in salary, bonuses and endorsements. Like so many predecessors of previous generations, these two professional athletes see the value of such a tradeoff.

Following the 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center, the brothers turned down lucrative contracts to play with the NFL's Arizona Cardinals, and minor league baseball, and instead enlisted in the United States Army elite group of Rangers.

Their sacrifice as well as their service in the war in Iraq was even recognized in the sports world; on ESPN's 2003 ESPY Awards they received the Arthur Ashe Courage Award.

The brothers did not attend the ESPY Awards program to accept the award, nor have they been forthcoming doing interviews surrounding it. Instead, their younger brother Richard accepted the award on their behalf.

"Their program has always been to keep it as quiet as possible," father Patrick Tillman recently told the San Jose Mercury News. "You can't even sneak any information out of me because I don't have it. Sorry, but they don't even tell me anything."

They also maintain a low profile while they served, said Lt. Col. Don Sondo, deputy commander of Infantry Training Brigade. They did not want special treatment for their celebrity status, he said.

In May of 2002, former Cardinals safety Pat Tillman shattered the illusion of the football player as a "warrior" and made it a reality when he announced his intention to join the United States Army with his younger brother, Kevin, putting his NFL career on hold. Kevin also passed up on his baseball career, as an aspiring ballplayer in the Cleveland Indians system.

It was Pat's financial sacrifice, in particular, which caught the bulk of the headlines. He is believed to be the first NFL regular to leave the game voluntarily for military service since World War II, when 600 players served and 19 were killed. The Tillmans are part of the 75th Ranger Regiment, comprising three battalions and 2,200 men. They had been stationed in Fort Lewis, Wash., and believed to have returned there since coming back from Iraq.

"I think he's the quintessential definition of a patriot," Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., a Vietnam War

veteran who serves on the Armed Services Committee, said. "He gave up a lucrative and exciting career to serve his country."

Pat Tillman, married only shortly before announcing his decision to join the Army, was known for his hard-nosed play and toughness as a safety with the Cardinals. He was drafted by the team in the seventh round of the 1998 NFL Draft out of Arizona State. He made the successful transition from collegiate linebacker to NFL safety and in 2000, his second full year at the position, started all 16 games. To help pass free time, he also tested his mettle running a marathon and triathlon.

"The guy has got something to him and that's why I wanted him on the team all these years. When a lot of people doubted if he could play, he never doubted it," said Cardinals Head Coach Dave McGinnis after the 2002 decision.

"This is very serious with Pat. It's very personal and I honor that. I honor the integrity of that. It was not a snap decision he woke up with and made yesterday. This has been an ongoing process and he feels very strongly about it."

By choosing this path, one less-traveled by today's standards, the Tillman's embody the elite fighting force's motto: "Rangers Lead the Way."

Postscript

Pat Tillman's death in an Afghanistan firefight in 2004 only strengthened the standard he forged with his blood, sweat, and tears. The Cardinals retired Tillman's number 40 and named the plaza surrounding the stadium in suburban Glendale "The Pat Tillman Freedom Plaza." Arizona State retired Tillman's number 42 jersey and placed his name on the honor ring at Sun Devil Stadium. The University and the Cardinals have collaborated on a scholarship fund in Tillman's name.

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Rick Rescorla: Remembering A Special 9/11 Hero

Rick Rescorla was highly decorated for his battle-field bravery in Vietnam, even portrayed in a hit movie and new book.

As the head of security of Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, he drilled employees regularly on evacuation from the Twin Towers, always believing it was vulnerable to a 9/11-style attack.

And when his predictions proved true on that fateful day, he's been credited with saving thousands of lives at the expense of his own.

Rick Rescorla began that day as he usually did. He got up at 4:30 A.M., kissed his wife goodbye and took the 6:10 train to Manhattan. A combat veteran who fought in Vietnam's bloody Ia Drang Valley, Rescorla was at his desk in a corner office on the 44th floor of the World Trade Center's South Tower by 7:30 am. When the first hijacked plane slammed into the North Tower, Rescorla grabbed a bullhorn, ignored officials' requests to stay put and led the company's employees out of the building.

With professional class and heroic valor, he marched employees down the stairwell two-by-two. Some reports indicated he sang patriotic songs, just as he had done when boosting troop morale in Vietnam, to keep them calm. "Today is a proud day to be an American," he is said to have told co-workers.

By the time the second hijacked airliner hit the south tower at 9:07 A.M., most of the company's employees were already out, with only a handful unaccounted for. Determined to get every employee out-like he did on the first attack on the World Trade Center in 1993 - Rescorla and two assistants went back to look for them, never to return. He was last seen on the 10th floor of the burning tower.

Rick Rescorla was born on May 27th, 1939 in Hayle, England and came to the United States to enlist in the Army in 1963. He was a key figure in the groundbreaking Vietnam War book "We Were Soldiers Once...and Young," which was turned into a movie starring Mel Gibson that debuted nationwide in April 2002.

Rescorla earned a Silver Star, a Purple Heart and Bronze Stars for Valor and Meritorious Service. He became a U.S. citizen in 1967, earned college and law degrees, got married, had children, divorced, remarried and found midlife success on Wall Street as vice president of security at Morgan Stanley Dean Witter.

Aside from his military experience, Rescorla, who died at sixty-two, had worked for British intelligence, conducting special operations in some dangerous places. He was even reported to have given prescient warnings to Port Authority officials that the Twin Towers were extremely vulnerable to a terrorist attack.

In an interview with the National Review, R. James Woolsey, former director of Central Intelligence, saw Rescorla as the kind of person urgently needed by U.S. intelligence. An iconoclast and strategic thinker who wasn't afraid to buck the system, Rescorla "is an example of somebody who should have probably been at the top of the intelligence community, but wasn't," Woolsey said.

"He's a perfect example of the kind of guy that the Germans say has fingerspitzengefühl - fingertip feel" or intuition, he said. "God, it would have been wonderful if he had been the head of the DO's [the CIA's Directorate of Operations] counterterrorist operations, but at least he saved 3,700 people."

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Richard H. Carmona: Nation's Top Doc

The nation's Top Doc, Vice Admiral Richard H. Carmona, M.D., M.P.H., F.A.C.S., is living proof that the sooner one devotes oneself to a healthy lifestyle, the sooner one can lead a long and productive life of contribution and service. The nation's 17th Surgeon General, is a combat-decorated Vietnam Veteran.

"Today, the nation's health and nation's defense are more closely intertwined than ever. Never before in history has there been this intersection between public health and public preparedness," the Surgeon General said during a speech before a convention of Tricare, the health system of the U.S. Armed Forces. It wasn't the most auspicious of upbringings for this role model of personal growth and responsibility. Born and raised in New York City's famous "barrio" of Spanish Harlem, the now-Surgeon General dropped out of school, as his did siblings and friends.

But one day an older neighbor, Sal, returned to the barrio from the service, and he inspired the young Carmona, who greeted him with awe. "He was in uniform, having been in the service. We struck up a conversation. He encouraged me to go back to school and get an education," remembers Admiral Carmona.

At the time, he was just 17, but had been out of school for years and was living, like most of the other kids he knew, "day-to-day surviving." Sal sent him to a friend who was an Army recruiter.

Two years later, young Rich received his first wound, saw his first buddy die in combat, and delivered his first babies, twins. "In one year, I matured a decade," says Admiral Carmona of his experience in Vietnam, where he entered the health care field as a combat medic in the Green Berets. He was awarded two Purple Hearts.

"Enlisting in the Army was the best thing I ever did. It gave me my first real job. It was the first time I was held accountable and responsible," says the Surgeon General.

But this one-time dropout found redemption in education, first by earning his G.E.D. Admiral Carmona then not only picked up where he left off, but continued to excel academically, receiving advanced degrees, including "top graduate" status from the University of California Medical School. In a recent University of Arizona Alumnus magazine interview, Admiral Carmona recalled how his mother was a strong force that "helped me understand the importance of education, and the opportunities that I had before me if I worked hard to get that education."

Always hungry for expanding his education, Admiral Carmona was almost 50 years of age when he earned a master of public health degree from the University of Arizona, where he was a medical school professor of surgery, public health and family and community medicine, and a surgeon at the Student Health Center. He spent his "spare time," serving with the Tucson Fire Department, as a member of the Pima County Sheriff's Department SWAT team, and as a parent to his four children with Dianne, his spouse of 31 years.

Today, as Surgeon General, while working to address the nation's most critical health problems, he's targeted childhood obesity as Public Enemy Number 1, along with asthma and substance abuse. Setting kids on the right path, much like Sal's example played back in the streets of Spanish Harlem, drives Carmona to make it a major goal in his position as Surgeon General. For him, it's a valuable form of prevention from illnesses that strike millions of Americans later in life.

He calls it "the terror within."

"We know more than ever about the combination of genetic, social, metabolic and environmental factors that play a role in children's weight," Surgeon General Richard Carmona testified at a recent House hearing. "But the fundamental reason that our children are overweight is this - too many children are eating too much and moving too little."

This form of "prevention," setting good habits at young ages, has underscored Admiral Carmona's passion for helping kids. Earlier this month, he appeared jointly with High-School basketball (and soon to be NBA pro) phenomenon Lebron James in launching a youth fitness program in Akron, Ohio. He's also announced his intent to visit a school in all 50 states to talk with students about the importance of making healthy choices.

"Students face a lot of tough choices," Admiral Carmona said. "That's why I'm committed to talking to students across the country about making smart and healthy life decisions. Everyone makes mistakes, but the key is to minimize wrong choices, focus on positive behavior, and move forward in life with goals and direction."

And, his commitment is to "be true to my goals and my values. I will do what I've always done, which is to reach out to the underserved."

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Tony Principi: In the D.C. Cauldron, VA Secretary Balances Needs, Goals with Resources

Each month, most of us have to pay our bills and fulfill our financial obligations with the money we have in our check-books. The way of life is no different for administrators in government. They have to divvy up the resources made available to them by the appropriating authorities, e.g., Congress, to fulfill the mission and meet the statutory needs of their departments.

For Tony Principi, President George W. Bush's first Secretary of Veterans Affairs, managing the financial facets of his job are a combination high-wire act and lion-tamer's derring-do, performed under the spotlight in the center ring with millions of minions, critics, and appropriators watching. Despite the enormous pressures, he gets credit in many quarters for performing with admirable aplomb in the face of political pressures and bureaucratic roadblocks.

In 2003, with the veterans health-care system hemorrhaging from an influx of veterans seeking services, Tony Principi had to make one of the most difficult decisions of his tenure as the nation's Top Vet: to avoid a crisis, he suspended the enrollment into the VA system of "Priority 8" veterans – veterans who are required to make a co-payment for the medical care and prescription drugs they receive. Despite a chorus of criticism, he did what he felt he had to do: the buck stopped at his desk.

Walking the Walk

Tony Principi is well prepared to meet the challenges. For this son of New York City – he was raised on the rough-and-tumble streets of East Harlem and the Bronx – serving one's country is more than an obligation. It's an expectation. His father, an immigrant, served in the Navy in the Pacific theatre during the Second World War. His wife has served as a Navy nurse. Two sons are currently on active duty. "Our uniformed roots run deep," he said in 2003 while still on the job in his office at VA headquarters in Washington, D.C. "We are a post-World War II nationalistic family."

No doubt, he said, his father's legacy inspired his decision to attend the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, from which he graduated in 1967. After serving aboard the destroyer USS Joseph P. Kennedy, Principi was sent halfway around the globe to Vietnam. He was assigned to Task Force 116, operating in the Mekong Delta very close to the Cambodian border.

"I wasn't in-country 72 hours when we had to get our boats up river. Nine Green Beret guys had been wiped out, blown to bits," he said. Charlie was set in ambush, waiting for Tony Principi and his mates. In a brief but violent confrontation, the American forces prevailed.

"That was my indoctrination to Vietnam," Principi said. "Afterwards, I was leaning on a palm

tree. I was tired. The tree fell over. There below me were two VC. I emptied a clip into them. I remember thinking, I'm as green as can be; I'm not ready for this."

Ready or not, Tony Principi was quickly immersed in brown-water warfare. He and his crew spent much of their time placing electronic sensors and other monitoring devices where they would do the most good. "We were having a tough time monitoring movement across the border," he said. "With seismic and magnetic sensors and acoustic buoys, we could interdict some of that movement. We had some success, and quite a few difficult days."

On the successful days, Tony and his crew would get to spend a lot of time in the local villages, building schools, churches, and clinics and conducting Medcaps. To help turn at least some swords into plowshares, he'd get in touch with some of his Annapolis classmates to send over such necessities as clothing, medical supplies, and building supplies.

Then there were the other days, the difficult ones, the days incised in memory forever. One of the most difficult occurred as Tony's last day in country loomed large. As part of President Nixon's "Vietnamization" initiative, he and his crew were working with the ARVN to whom they would soon turn over their boats.

"We got out of the boat up river and I told this young Vietnamese lieutenant, 'Okay, you lead and I'll cover you.' He took off into a rice paddy. He didn't get more than 20 feet from me when he was blown up. He was very badly injured and his point man was killed." Principi escaped unscathed.

Learning Life's Lessons

In this real-life classroom, Tony Principi learned about survival. And about leadership. He learned that with increasing responsibility comes increased accountability. He learned that you have to have discipline to be successful. And you have to stay focused on the mission. These lessons are with him every day.

After he returned from Vietnam and completed law school, he embarked on a career centered around service. Following a five-year stint with the Navy's Judge Advocate General Corps in San Diego, he was sent to Washington as a legislative counsel for the Navy, the first of several executive-level positions in the federal bureaucracy. He went on to a three-year assignment as counsel to the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee and a four-year hitch as Republican chief counsel and staff director of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

After serving as Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the number two post in the VA, from March 1989 to September 1992, he thought he'd reached an apogee of sorts when the first President Bush named him Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs, a position he held until Bush left office in January 1993. Of the dozens of individuals profiled in this space, Tony Principi is the first to have served in the Cabinet of a President of the United States.

After a stint as Republican chief counsel and staff director of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, he entered private industry, working as a senior vice president at Lockheed Martin IMS and as a partner in a San Diego law firm.

He then got the call from the current President Bush, who nominated him as his Secretary of

Veterans Affairs.

Again applying the lessons he'd learned in Vietnam to the cauldron of D.C. political infighting, he tackled some of the seemingly intransigent problems plaguing the VA. His first target was the backlog of disability claims awaiting adjudication.

"The situation was just unconscionable. There was no sense of urgency in the department to make a dent in this backlog. Veterans were being forced to wait years for a decision on their claims. I was appalled. We declared our own war – against backlog. And we've been able to dramatically reduce this backlog. We've created a culture of belief: that a large bureaucracy can respond if held to performance standards."

According to the Secretary, when he began his watch, some 433,000 claims were awaiting a decision. By instilling a sense of mission in the work force charged with reviewing claims, the VA has, under Tony Principi's leadership, increased its resolution of claims by 70 percent, from approximately 40,000 claims a month to more than 70,000 a month.

Principi claims success in reducing another backlog: waiting time for appointments with primary care physicians at VA medical facilities. Where almost a quarter-million veterans were finding they had to wait six, eight, ten months, or more, for an appointment with a primary care physician or specialist, this number has been reduced to just under 60,000.

And he cites improvements both current and planned that will make the VA's IT system more responsive to the needs of those it serves.

There are still problems to be resolved and difficult calls to be made. Perhaps most problematic will be Secretary Principi's judgment on whether or not to accept the recommendations of the commission charged with targeting certain VA facilities to be shuttered in a quest for savings and efficiency.

But Tony Principi, who is quick to praise his "team" for "working hard to fulfill our mission," has succeeded in making a difference – and leaving a mark – as Secretary. And despite their grousing, as proverbial a condition among veterans as complaining about C-rations was among grunts in the boonies, veterans who depend on the VA for health care and home loans, for life insurance and dignified burial, have a lot for which to thank Tony Principi.

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Senate Chaplain Barry Black: Celebrates The Diversity of Our Nation

In this period of National Thanksgiving, we often look to spiritual leaders for advice and guidance for what we have today and will have tomorrow. For U.S. Senate Chaplain Barry Black, helping those from a diversity of faiths and giving us a larger appreciation of freedom's gifts.

In July 2003, Barry Black became the first African-American, the first Seventh-day Adventist, and the first military chaplain to hold the office of Senate chaplain. He's also recognized as delivering scripture and prayers at the Pentagon for the September 11 memorial services in its 2001 aftermath and in 2002.

"I really enjoy ministry in a setting of religious diversity. I don't get excited when everybody is the same—comes from the same religious tradition," he said in an interview with the Adventist Review.

Celebrating the diversity of our nation has been his path. Formerly Chief of Chaplains with the U.S. Navy, Admiral Black was in charge of advising the Secretary of the Navy, Chief of Naval Operations, Commandant of the Marine Corps, and Commandant of the Coast Guard on religion, ethics, and moral issues. He also directed the ministry for chaplains of different faiths, currently about 1,500 chaplains, both active duty and reserves, spanning those branches of armed forces.

In an interview while still in that role, Admiral Black defined his primary concern to support the "spiritual growth" for the U.S. Navy, Marines and Coast Guard. "We have Islamic chaplains, rabbis, and of course Christian chaplains to provide for the spiritual well being of people all over the world."

"That vision is to deliver innovative, life transforming service to the people we are called to serve," he added.

Experience, Admiral Black later said in another interview, which also helps him in the Senate chambers:

"First, the military is a pluralistic setting of religious diversity, and so is the Senate. Second, in my responsibility as chief of chaplains I have an advisory function to some very powerful people. It will be the same in the Senate. Third, the military is frequently faced with tremendous challenges that relate to national security and international stability, and that will also take place in the Senate."

All legislative sessions in the Senate are opened with prayer. In addition, the Senate Chaplain provides ongoing pastoral counseling to senators and their families and staff. They perform a variety of ceremonies, from officiating at weddings to conducting memorial services. Roughly 6,000 individuals are helped by the Senate Chaplain, a position that spans as far back as the birth

of our nation's government, created for the first U.S. Senate in 1789.

"Admiral Black has provided spiritual guidance to thousands of servicemen and women during his 25 years of service," said Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist of Tennessee. "We're honored he has offered to bring his moral leadership and counsel to the United States Senate."

Along with his Adventist education, Black holds a Master of Arts degree in counseling from North Carolina Central University, a Master of Arts in management from Salve Regina University, a Doctorate in ministry from East Baptist Seminary, and a Doctorate in psychology from the United States International University.

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Senator John Warner: Virginia Senator Continues to Demonstrate a Lifelong Dedication to Our Armed Forces

John William Warner, the Senior Senator from Virginia has served nearly 30 years in the United States Senate this month. His service to the country is long and distinguished, marked by a singular dedication to preserving the strength of our armed forces and a devotion to the men and women and their families who comprise our military forces.

Senator Warner was born on February 18, 1927, the son of the late Martha Budd Warner and Dr. John W. Warner, a physician and surgeon.

He is one of few veterans who have served in two branches—first as a 17 year-old Navy man in World War II and later as a Marine in Korea. He attributes much of his extraordinary success in the public sector to his experience in uniform and with the armed forces.

"Had it not been for what the U.S. military has done for me in these 58 years that I have been privileged to be associated with it, I would not be here in the United States Senate. And that is why I labor with others, primarily those on the Armed Services Committee, to do what we can do for today's veterans and, most importantly, for those who are still in uniform and those who will follow in uniform in the generations to come, together with their families," he said in special comments delivered on the Senate floor on Veterans Day 2003.

First elected in 1978, Warner is one of the chamber's most senior and respected senators. As the powerful Chairman of the Armed Services Committee, a committee on which he has served throughout his Senate career, his work reflects his commitment to the nation's military and to securing a higher quality of life for all who serve and their families.

In announcing the $401.3 billion in budget authority for defense programs for the 2004 fiscal year, Warner declared that… "This bill comes at a critical time when hundreds of thousands of soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines, active and reserve component, and countless civilians continue to serve valiantly around the world - from the Persian Gulf region to Afghanistan, Europe, Africa and Korea - to secure peace and freedom. All Americans are proud of what they have accomplished.

This bill sends a strong signal of support to our men and women in uniform, and their families, and demonstrates that we value and honor their service," said Warner. "This bill ensures that they will receive a higher level of pay, benefits and healthcare, as they deserve. Further, we are providing funds so that they will be given the finest equipment to carry out their missions on behalf of freedom," Senator Warner added.

Warner has also worked to ensure that our veterans are properly recognized and acknowledged for their service. He regards the expansion of benefits for disabled military retirees to include "concurrent receipt" of both military retirement pay and veteran disability payments, thereby

improving compensation for combat-related disabilities, as one of the key accomplishments of his legislation.

“I am very pleased that we have been able to expand on that ‘beach head’ by extending the special compensation for combat-related disabilities to all military retirees whose disabling condition was due to combat or combat related operations, and by phasing in full concurrent receipt over ten years for those retirees whose disability is rated at 50 percent or greater,” Senator Warner said.

Standing Tall During Our Nation’s “Finest Hour”

Warner’s commitment and support for the military goes well beyond enacting vital legislation. In a revealing personal experience described to his Senate peers on the second anniversary of 9/11, he reflected on those first hours of terror.

After the plane had crashed into Pentagon, he called Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and asked to join him at the crash site, “to do what little I might be able to do to bring about a reassurance, not only to those on site at the Pentagon, but around the world.” Once there, he joined the Secretary and then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Hugh Shelton, in the command-and-control center deep in the basement of the Pentagon.

Later, he joined Rumsfeld and Shelton at a crowded press conference, providing strength and leadership during a time of maximum uncertainty:

“This is indeed the most tragic hour in America’s history, and yet I think it can be its finest hour, as our President and those with him, most notably our Secretary of Defense, our Chairman, and the men and women of the armed forces all over this world, stand ready not only to defend this nation and our allies against further attack, but to take such actions as are directed in the future in retaliation for this terrorist act — a series of terrorist acts, unprecedented in world history.”

He then prophetically predicted many fronts for the war on terror: “We call upon the entire world to step up and help, because terrorism is a common enemy to all, and we’re in this together. The United States has borne the brunt, but who can be next? Step forward, and let us hold accountable and punish those that have perpetrated this attack,” he said.

A Career Public Servant; The Best of The GI Bill

Warner’s first opportunity for public service began during World War II when in January 1945, at age 17, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He served on active duty until the summer of 1946 and was honorably discharged as Petty Officer 3rd Class, electronic technician’s mate.

He then attended Washington and Lee University, from which his father graduated in 1903. He was awarded a B.S. degree in basic engineering sciences in 1949. Following his graduation, Warner entered the University of Virginia Law School.

At the outbreak of the Korean War, Warner interrupted his law studies and commenced a second tour of active military duty. In October 1950, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps. A year later, as a first lieutenant, he volunteered for duty in Korea and served as a ground officer with the First Marine Air Wing. Following his active service in Korea, he remained in the Marine

Corps Reserve for 10 years and was promoted to the rank of Captain.

Twice the beneficiary of the GI bill, Senator Warner finished his law degree at the University of Virginia upon his return from Korea. In 1953, he was appointed law clerk to the late Chief Judge E. Barrett Prettyman of the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, and three years later was appointed an assistant U.S. attorney, serving for the next four years in the trial and appellate divisions. He entered private law practice in 1960.

When the U.S. Senate confirmed his Presidential appointment to be Under Secretary of the Navy in February 1969, Senator Warner started calling the Pentagon home. During the Vietnam War, he served in the Department of Defense for over five years, completing his service as Secretary of the Navy in 1974.

Frequently regarded as one of Washington's most eligible bachelors, Senator Warner recently wed Jeanne Vander Myde, a longtime acquaintance, whom he first met when he was Secretary of the Navy, and she was the wife of a White House official and Navy Reservist.

They share a passion for politics and a Scottish heritage. The Senator wore a traditional Scottish kilt and his military medals on his chest during the small family ceremony. When congratulated by fellow Senators and press on CNN the day before the ceremony, Warner was admittedly "bashful" in responding, "I'm a lucky man." With his pressure-filled schedule, the Senator's "very composed and centered" new bride is considered by many to be an extraordinary asset for him in his work. And, while always an admirer and political supporter, she now has the opportunity to join him in his lifelong mission to recognize and support our armed forces and military veterans.

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Brigadier General Steve Ritchie: Air Force Ace – America's Last – Keeps with Him War's Losses

What is a "hero"? This overused term confuses celebrity with accomplishment in our media-driven age. Yet America does have heroes – real heroes, living and dead – who placed themselves in harm's way, who risked life and limb to save the lives of others, who earned the mantle of hero because of their exploits in combat.

Retired Brigadier General Steve Ritchie, who three decades ago flew more than 800 combat hours in the F-4 Phantom during 339 missions in the skies over Southeast Asia, is an American hero.

He is the only Air Force flying ace of the air war in Vietnam. He is the only American pilot to down five MiG-21s, the most sophisticated fighters in the North Vietnamese fleet. This singular feat, achieved between the 10th of May and the 28th of August, 1972 during his second tour of duty, made then-Captain Ritchie a member of an exclusive and rapidly shrinking fraternity: pilots who have downed at least five enemy aircraft.

The legendary Eddie Rickenbacker, who shot down 26 German planes during the War to End All War, led 119 American aces during the First World War. That number ballooned to 1,285 during World War II, shrank to 43 during the war in Korea, and dropped to two during the Vietnam War. (Navy flyer Randy Cunningham, now a California congressman, is the other ace.) It is more than likely, given the changing nature of air combat, that Steve Ritchie will be the last fighter-pilot ace.

Belated Ambition

As a kid, R. Stephen Ritchie, who hails from the small city of Reidsville, North Carolina, built model airplanes. His father, who was drafted during the Second World War and served with Patton's Third Army in Europe, learned to fly after the war on the GI Bill. His passion, however, didn't flow down to his son.

Even though he "really wasn't all that interested in flying," Steve entered the Air Force Academy in 1960 at the urging of a buddy on his high school football team. He liked the idea of being part of something new, and he thought everyone there would be "the best of the best." He wasn't far off the mark. Before he graduated four years later, he made his mark as a starting halfback on the Falcon football team; his last game was played in the 1963 Gator Bowl.

Armed with a B.S. in engineering science and a newfound excitement about flying gleaned during pilot indoctrination in a Cessna T-37 "Tweety Bird," Steve entered pilot training at Laredo, Texas. He graduated first in his class. During his initial assignment in flight test operations at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida, he transitioned from the Lockheed F-104 Starfighter to the faster, more mobile F-4 Phantom.

In 1968, Steve went to war, flying with the 366th Tactical Fighter Wing (Gunfighters) out of DaNang Air Base. He flew the first official F-4 Fast-FAC mission in Southeast Asia. After 195 missions, he was assigned to the USAF Fighter Weapons School at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada. He was one of the youngest instructors in the school's history.

Even though "we were losing people every day for no reason," even though "most of us realized we were not there to win," Steve volunteered for a second combat tour in 1972. He was assigned to the famed 555th "Triple Nickle" Fighter Squadron at Udorn Air Base, Thailand. On May 10th, the day that Navy Lieutenant Randy Cunningham downed three North Vietnamese planes to become the war's first pilot ace, Steve Ritchie scored his first kill during what was known as Operation Linebacker. His enthusiasm was dampened, though, by the downing of a Phantom piloted by his Air Force Academy classmate Bob Lodge.

Unbeknownst to Steve and the others on this flight, Major Lodge's backseater, Roger Locher, was able to eject safely. He would be rescued 23 days later in one of the most surprising and dramatic operations of the war.

Steve scored his second kill on Memorial Day. On July 8th, he downed two more MiG-21s with three missiles in less than a minute and a half.

'The Ultimate in Multitasking'

Being a fighter pilot in combat, Steve explained during a telephone conversation from his home in Monument, Colorado, "is the ultimate in multitasking. All of my training, all the discipline I first learned as a cadet, came into play. You need a lot of mental agility to process a tremendous amount of information in an instant – not only about your craft but about enemy aircraft and anti-aircraft artillery.".

"Some of this information needs to be acted on immediately. Some you have to revisit 10 seconds later, or 30 seconds later," he said. "Most can be discarded as the situation changes very rapidly. All the while, as you're dodging enemy aircraft, anti-aircraft fire, and surface-to-air missiles, you need to coordinate and communicate with the rest of your team and all the other flights in the air. And airborne command-and-control aircraft. And AF RC-121's over Laos. And Red Crown, the Navy ship off the coast of North Vietnam."

"Living or dying," Steve Ritchie learned, "depends on winning or losing."

After he scored his fifth victory on August 28th, Steve was pulled from combat. Should he be downed and captured, he was informed, his loss would be a propaganda victory for the North Vietnamese.

War and Remembrance

It was the day his closest friend, Woodie Parker, was lost that was Steve Ritchie's hardest day ever. It was April 24, 1968. "We were on alert. He had been my backseater but because of a scheduling mistake he was flying that night with an aggressive lieutenant colonel." They flew into the ground while taking a closer look for some enemy trucks.

"It was," Steve rued, "a wasted mission."

Thirty years later, when his friend's remains were uncovered and identified, Steve, then a brigadier general in the Air Force Reserve, flew to Hawaii to escort his friend to Washington, D.C. for burial in Arlington National Cemetery.

"I was in first class," Steve said. "They treated me very nicely because they knew my friend was in a casket in cargo. There I was, having steak and champagne, with tears rolling down my face."

'A Very Unusual Career'

During his tenure in the Air Force, the Colorado Air National Guard, and the Air Force Reserve, Steve Ritchie learned the importance of teamwork, the joys of camaraderie, the value of integrity. He learned that he was able to perform "under extremely difficult circumstances." And he learned "to count on someone else when it really counts."

When he left the Air Force in 1974 as a decorated combat veteran – among his decorations are the Air Force Cross, four Silver Stars, 10 Distinguished Flying Crosses, and 25 Air Medals — he ran for Congress in his home state, at the urging of Senator Barry Goldwater. It was not a salutary experience. "I would much rather be flying in combat," he said.

He returned to Colorado to work as a special assistant to Joseph Coors, traveling extensively to speak on the military, private enterprise, and economic education. He went on to serve in the Reagan Administration. He has become a popular speaker at aviation events – for the 50th anniversary celebration of the U.S. Air Force, he flew an F-4E Phantom II at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, performing aerial feats before an international assembly and what was described as the largest single meeting of air and space leaders in history.

He also is a motivational speaker of some renown, offering insights on integrity and leadership to legions of young people across the country. And he still spends time with young fighter pilots – so young that the Phantom is somewhat of an anachronism to them.

In his peripatetic existence, he estimates that he's traveled over five million miles. He's moved 29 times and lived in 17 homes. Now he'll live nowhere else than in Colorado.

Through all the years, the loss of so many friends, colleagues, and classmates during the war in Vietnam weighs on him still. His life is in part a testament to their deaths. He quotes a passage from Army veteran Nelson DeMille's novel "Up Country" to summon his feelings:

"I remembered those hills and the cold rain of February 1968. Most importantly, I remembered the men, who were really boys, grown too old before they'd finished their boyhoods, and who had died too young, before any of their dreams could come true."

"I always felt I had been living on borrowed time since 1968, and each day was a day that the others never had; so to the best of my ability, whenever I thought about it, I'd tried to live the days well and to appreciate the extra time."

Words to live by, from an American hero.

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Tom Corey: Disabled by Enemy Bullet, VVA Leader Salves Loss Battling for Other Veterans

The day he was hit, Tom Corey had a premonition. It was January 31, 1968, the second day of what soon became known as the Tet Offensive. The young 1st Cavalry trooper, a veteran of eight months in the bush, "had a really bad feeling. When we were told to saddle up, something just didn't feel right. The other guys said, 'Oh, don't worry. You've been in firefights before.' " But Spec/4 Corey was still uneasy.

They were just out of Dong Ha in Quang Tri province. They made an air assault into a hot LZ when Corey's platoon came under a barrage of fire. They scrambled for cover behind a rice paddy dike. The *crack crack crack* of small-arms fire suffused the air. Artillery shells whined and exploded, creating instant ponds.

In the din of battle, Corey, a squad leader, a sergeant, needed to know where the other squads were positioned, and the path of assault his people would have to take. He peered over the top of the dike. He saw a flash from the tree line.

The flash was the discharge of the round that caught him in the neck, the round from an AK-47 that severed his jugular vein and main artery, hit his spinal cord, and forever changed his world.

"I remember what felt like someone trying to give me mouth-to-mouth. I said, 'God forgive me.'" That was the last thing Corey remembered "for days and days."

But Tom Corey's war was far from over.

Prelude to Battle

The second oldest of ten kids of a city worker in Detroit, as a teenager Corey was fascinated with cars and racing and girls. He raced along the streets of the Motor City, spent a lot of time at drag strips. He built a race car in high school. Yet he did not like school and saw no college education, and a lot of question marks, in his future.

Then the Army intervened. Fighting was heating up against Communist guerrillas in a place called Vietnam, and the military needed bodies. Like many of his friends, he "didn't even know where Vietnam was. None of us paid any attention to geography or politics."

On December 7, 1966 – Pearl Harbor Day – Thomas H. Corey was drafted. He would soon come to learn that Vietnam was a war as well as a place.

The Army gave his life direction of sorts: To Fort Knox, Kentucky, for basic training. To Fort Polk – "Fort Puke" – Louisiana, for advanced individual (infantry) training. Then, after he got married, halfway around the world to this place called Vietnam to hone his newly acquired skills in combat.

Corey was assigned to the 1st Cavalry (Airmobile) Division. At the Cav's base camp at An Khe in the Central Highlands, he was given his ration of gear, shot a few rounds with his M-16, and was sent out to the field. Except for brief periods at base camp to regroup, he would remain in the field, in the boonies, for his entire, truncated tour of duty.

"First day in the field, guys just back from a firefight told me, 'You do any drugs, we'll kill you. You don't need a screwed up head if you want to survive.' Don't worry about me and drugs, I replied." A few hours later, Corey and three or four other newbies headed out to their first firefight.

"One of the guys who had been there a while told me, 'Stay with me. Just keep your head down and we'll get through this.'" They did. And while the clamor and losses of war were always difficult, "each day it seemed to get a little easier to prepare for battle," Corey said, as he learned the dos and don'ts, the blacks and whites, of fighting an unconventional enemy in a war without a front.

It wasn't long before the reality of this war became apparent to the young troop and his mates. "We'd go into battle, seize a village, then give it up and return three months later to take it again."

When they could, they'd choose their encounters. "We'd walk around at night looking for trouble, and when we found it we dealt with it. But a lot of times," Corey said, "we had to let it go by."

Beyond the nightly ambushes and search-and-destroy forays, Corey's unit, Company C, 1st Brigade, 12th Cavalry, fought in some "pretty major battles that lasted for days." On December 15, 1967, his company was almost overrun. "A couple of us got cut off from the rest of the platoon. After several hours," he said, "we were running out of ammo. I had one grenade left. I thought: 'This is gonna be it. I'm going to go down with my last magazine.'"

Armored Personnel Carriers – tracks – came to the rescue, like the cavalry in the western movies that were a staple of youngsters growing up in the 1950s. Corey and his friend Wayne Ryza got behind one of the APCs just before it was disabled, hit dead on by a rocket. With bullets whizzing everywhere, Corey and Ryza were extricating the wounded when a second round hit. Corey was blown back. Ryza, his best friend, who had been inside the track, was killed. The battle raged on. There was little time for mourning.

Thomas Corey would receive the Bronze Star with V device for his actions in that encounter.

Brave New World

When Tom Corey first opened his eyes, he thought he was in a hospital. Then he was in the clouds somewhere, in a drugged haze of dream and reality, slipping in and out of consciousness. He was flown to Japan, where he spent several days before he was shipped to another hospital on his way back to "The World." It was there that 23-year-old Tom Corey was told he was para-

lyzed, that he'd live his life as a quadriplegic, without the use of his arms or legs.

He was transported to Fitzsimmons Army Medical Center in Colorado, then to the VA's spinal cord injury center in Memphis, the closest specialized facility to his home that wasn't filled with desperately wounded young men. He was en route to Memphis the day Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was shot.

In the last month of that terrible year, the bloodiest year of the war, after a series of operations and physical rehabilitation, Tom Corey decided, "I'm outta here." The hospital was a mess, overcrowded with the human detritus of war, men whose lives were shattered, and "couldn't give me any of the therapy I needed," Corey said.

Although he wasn't as angry then as when he first arrived in Colorado and learned more about the disability he would live with the rest of his life, he was "frustrated and angry as hell to be dependent on someone else to do just about everything for me," he said.

It was this loss of independence that rankled more than anything.

Tom Corey returned to Detroit, to the welcoming embrace of his family. He was fortunate, he said, "to have come from a big family, and to have married the woman" that he did. It was then that he started to become aware of the politics and policies of the war that had robbed him of his mobility.

"At first I didn't question the war, even though I didn't agree with how we were going about fighting it," he said during an interview at the national headquarters of Vietnam Veterans of America in Silver Spring, Maryland. "The war protesters angered me a lot at first: I still had friends over there who were trying to do their job and survive," he said. It was only later that he came to understand and accept that those who served and demonstrated against the war did so because they felt it was necessary that they make a statement about what they saw as the insanity of this war – and to save lives.

In 1972, Corey moved to West Palm Beach, Florida, where he spent a lot of time in hospitals. At the JFK Medical Center, "a doc on the surgical medical team who treated me in Danang remembered me. 'We never thought you would survive,' he said. 'We did the best we could but after that, [the outcome] was not up to us, it was up to God.'"

A New Awareness

It was at the Miami VA hospital that Tom Corey's political education flowered, and he soon became active in fighting another war, this time in the arena of veterans issues.

The new battle he was fighting then – and is fighting now – he felt strongly about. "I wanted to recognize and honor guys I'd served with who had been killed. I wanted to do something to make sure they – and the guys who survived – were not forgotten."

He plunged into the ranks of the newly emergent veteran activists. He became active with Paralyzed Veterans of America in the mid-70s and joined VVA in 1980. A year later, he was the

founding president of VVA Palm Beach County Chapter 25 (which was renamed the Thomas H. Corey chapter at its tenth anniversary celebration). He also is a member of the Military Order of the Purple Heart Association, Disabled American Veterans, the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, the 1st Cavalry Association, the National Association of Uniformed Services.

For Tom Corey, his activism is personal. "We helped paraplegics and other quads, guys who were screwed up. We fought for the establishment of a Vet Center in West Palm Beach. We worked with a lot of Montagnards as well as Vietnamese to gain them their freedom as they fled Communism."

Often he found himself on the front page of his local daily. When his son Brian was born in 1982, reporters were waiting in the lobby of the hospital to interview him on some local veterans issue.

With notoriety and exposure, Corey's privacy decreased. "Vets would call in the middle of the night. 'I need help; I need help.' Some were suicidal. My wife would get me up and I'd go and meet with them. Sometimes I'd just talk with them; sometimes I'd have to convince them to surrender their weapon to keep them from hurting themselves or others."

"We fought for what was right, and for what was important for those who served, for those who didn't return, for those who are still suffering today."

Bridging the Gaps

Tom Corey's activism was recognized by his brother and sister veterans. He was the first recipient of the Vietnam Veterans of America's Commendation Medal, VVA's highest award for service to veterans, their families, and the community. In 1985, he was elected to VVA's National Board of Directors. Two years later, he was elected VVA National Secretary, a post to which he was re-elected four times. In 1997, he was elected VVA National Vice President. In 2001, he was elected National President.

Now in his second term as VVA President, his focus is to "try to make sure those who served – and those who are serving today – are taken care of for what they have given to our country," he said.

He has made 14 trips back to Vietnam to meet with our former enemy, to seek a common ground in searching for the remains of Americans and Vietnamese who perished during the war, to discuss issues of mutual importance, like the effects of the thousands of tons of Agent Orange and other herbicides that America sprayed over much of Vietnam. Just as important, he makes these trips – they are, he said, "killer trips" that are physically punishing – to break down the barriers that prevent mutual understanding.

The trips, he said, "are so important, so necessary if we are to achieve the fullest possible accounting of our missing and learn more about the long-term effects of Agent Orange."

"We've earned respect from the Vietnamese for returning with information we promised, information we've received from American veterans," he said, which will only help in the search for

healing and for closure.

On one of these trips, in 1997, he met an orphaned 10-year-old Vietnamese girl named Trang. Two years later, she came over to visit for a summer and didn't go back: Tom Corey adopted her when she was 16."

His activism is fueled in part by anger. He is outraged by the outright lies told by government agencies, by our leaders during the Vietnam War – and during the current war. "It seems that they don't want to take responsibility for the actions they've committed the country – and young men and women – to take."

His mantra: Although it's unfortunate, don't trust your government. Be skeptical. Yet at the same time, acknowledge the sacrifices of those who have done the nation's bidding, who have given something very precious for our country – their blood and their tears.

For Tom Corey, the battle still rages.

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Lt. Col. Andrew Lourake: Role Model for Other People with Disabilities

In the military, breaking a leg could seem rather insignificant in the grand scheme of things, although still quite painful. And yet on October 31, 1998, Lt. Col. Andrew Lourake broke his after a freak motocross accident, and is now making the world a better place for so many of this nation's bravest returning wounded from Iraq and Afghanistan.

How? By the eloquence of his example.

Soon after his spill, a hospital-borne staph infection seeped into the bone, doing considerable damage. After enduring 18 surgeries and long periods of side-effects from his medications, Lourake, 43, chose to have his leg amputated nearly four years later. And now armed with a microprocessor-assisted prosthetic leg, and jokingly equipped with a handicapped parking sticker in his cockpit, he has returned to duties as a special air missions pilot for the 99th Airlift Squadron at Andrews Air Force Base. He'll be flying the First Lady, the Vice President and other dignitaries around the globe.

"If you're wounded in battle, your military career is no longer over, and I'm proof," Lourake said at a celebration late last month after landing at Andrews Air Force Base.

Medical advancements over the years have changed the perception that serious injury—even amputation—means a forced discharge. Gains in medicine, technology and rehabilitation techniques help ensure a sense of contribution, higher quality of life, and a job in areas which once were closed to a returning Vet.

Lourake and his wife Lisa spend a lot of their time at the Walter Reed Medical center in the D.C. area inspiring others about life after injury while giving them the humility that comes with serving others.

"I am truly a proud American to be able to go and talk to the wounded that have come back. It gives me a lot more than I'm sure it gives them. It means a lot for me as an American, as a DOD employee, a fellow soldier so to speak, to go there and show them that life is not over, that life is very normal as soon as they get out of that pain and away from those drugs," he said.

Joining forces with his wife has helped provide a unique form of combination therapy, guiding soldiers through the family & emotional issues which stretch above and beyond the physical & military comeback. For instance, many young men worry about losing their wives or girlfriends, or whether or not they can find someone to marry someday.

"We talk about the more intimate things that a lot of them want to ask, but don't know who to ask," Lisa told Airman Magazine. "We become friends, and they're able to ask me all [kinds of] questions."

“He’s got the biggest heart anyone ever had,” said Army Staff Sgt. Daniel Metzdorf, who lost a leg in a roadside bombing in Iraq this year. Metzdorf said Lourake’s visits made a huge difference at Walter Reed. “He gave us inspiration and support and made us want to get back to active duty.”

Airman 1st Class Anthony Pizzifred, whose left leg fell victim to a land mine at Baghram Air Base, Afghanistan, shared similar sentiments: “I was determined to stay in the Air Force. When Colonel Lourake came to visit me here [Walter Reed], he gave me the push. This is going to happen.”

Lourake, the first U.S. Service member fitted with this unique form of “C-Leg,” also chooses to focus on the human dimension:

“I feel as though I have been thrust into being a role model for other people with disabilities,” Lourake said. “I am able to show them they can achieve what they want, if they put their mind to it.”

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 Acknowledgements

About Bernard Edelman

Mr. Edelman has worked as a journalist, photographer, and editor. A Vietnam Veteran, he has written and edited several books and articles, including: *Dear America: Letters Home From Vietnam.* He was Associate Producer of the Emmy Award-winning film of the same name, and Co-Producer of the documentary short, “Memorial: Letters from American Soldiers,” which was nominated for an Academy Award. He also served as Director of the Mayor’s Office of Veterans’ Affairs in New York City for Mayor Ed Koch. Today, Bernie is the Assistant Director of Legislative Affairs for Vietnam Veterans of America and serves as an editorial consultant for Veterans Advantage. He is a graduate of Brooklyn College and John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York.

About Roy Asfar

Mr. Asfar is a media and communications veteran of 15+ years, holding senior-level editorial and sales/marketing positions with Reuters, the New York Times and Ziff-Davis Media, among others. His business passions have spanned both offline and online, and even television as a guest technology commentator on CNBC television. And since the Internet’s “early days” in 1994, Roy has launched four Web sites, all of which are still in business. Today, he is the Marketing Director of Veterans Advantage. Roy has a Master’s Degree in literature from New York University, and has raced Ironman triathlons for fun.

About Veterans Advantage

Veterans Advantage was founded in February of 2001 to honor America’s Veterans, active duty military, National Guard and Reserves, and their families. It is the nation’s leading Veterans benefits provider, and the *only* one created to bring a full selection of new benefits from top corporations who wish to reward the men and women who served in America’s Armed Forces. The Veterans Advantage Card Program provides Corporate America with a way to honor Veterans for all they have done to preserve our way of life. Find out more at www.veteransadvantage.com.

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