



# Remember. Share. Honor.



To our readers

The stories on these pages are about the service and sacrifices of local veterans of the Vietnam Era. They were sent to us by the veterans themselves or by their loved ones, friends, neighbors and comrades in arms. The Blade is proud to share them with you, and to show our appreciation for their sacrifices and our recognition of their service to our country; and to once again say, "WELCOME HOME!"

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**Charles Boyer**  
PFC Marine Corps  
1967-1968

From Toledo Ohio, served with E CO, 2ND BN, 7TH MARINES, 1ST MARDIV, III MAF as a mortarman. Killed in action May 9, 1968 in the Quang Nam Province, South Vietnam. Located at Panel 57E, Line 14 on the Vietnam Wall. Thank you for the ultimate sacrifice – we are forever grateful for your service to your country. Semper Fi!



**Douglass Thompson**  
Spec 4 US ARMY  
1968-1970

From Huron Ohio, he served with 6/32 Artillery Battalion in Vietnam. Spec 4 Thompson was a gunner and Radioman. Thank you so much for service, Dad! I love you, your daughter Jill.



**Gary McConnell**  
SP4 E-4 US Army 1969-1971

Gary McConnell served with the 207th Military Police Company 5th Army, Fort Riley, Kansas. His awards include the Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Sharpshooter Badge M1 Rifle and Marksman Badge M-16.

Thanks for your service, Dad.  
I love you.  
*Submitted by Joel McConnell.*



**PFC Michael Short**  
United States Marine Corps  
1968-1970

Thank you so much for your service to your country. You are not forgotten and missed very much. Rest In Peace. Semper Fi

PFC Short is pictured at right with friend Jim Bucher.



**Corporal Robert F. Stemen**  
United States Marine Corps  
1966-1970

Robert was born in Toledo and raised in Oregon, Ohio, where he graduated from Clay High School. While in service, he met up with his cousin, who was in the Army, during R&R in Thailand. He and his wife, Dolores, married after the war. He was a great father and a great husband. Robert died in 2000, from lung cancer most likely caused by Agent Orange. He is gone, but never forgotten. Semper Fi!



**Major John J. Gardiner**  
United States Army 1962-1976

Served as a helicopter pilot during the Vietnam War. Major Gardiner immigrated to the United States from Ireland in 1952 and a short time later was drafted into the Army during the Korean War. His awards include the Vietnam Service and Campaign Medals and Aviator Wings. After his service to his country he continued to serve as the Commander of the ROTC program at Springfield High School where he led the cadets to multiple victories in drill championships. He directly impacted the lives of many students who went on to lead careers in the military. Major Gardiner is missed by so many. Thank you, sir, for all of your hard work and dedication to your country and to your students. Rest in Peace. 1938-2003.



**E-3 PFC Terry Bourdeau**  
United States Army 1968-1971

Served with 2nd Battalion 18th Infantry Regiment 1st Infantry Division – The Big Red One! Primary MOS 11B10 INFANTRY. Awards include the Good Conduct Medal, Army Commendation Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign and Service Medals, Sharp Shooter Badge M-14, and the Combat Infantry Badge. Thank you so much for your service. We are forever grateful!



**Robert L. Taube**  
CPL USMCR 1965-1971  
(Pictured at left with shaving cream)

Served with 1st Battalion 24th Marines. Picture taken at 29 Palms (Stumps). Bob is doing what Marines do best, utilizing what you have – even if it's nothing – to get the job done. The tradition continues to this day: your helmet was designed to protect your head, but can be used as a sink, a tub, a cooking pot, and a pillow. Ammo crates also make good seats, as can be seen in the picture. Thanks for your service, Bob! Semper Fi.



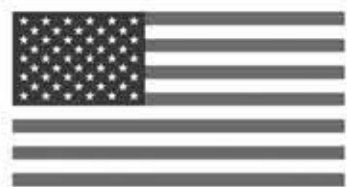
**E-4 Donald G. Burgin**  
United States Air Force  
K-9 SAC Unit 1966-1967

The K-9 he served with was named "Sugar," who like all the base patrol and walking patrol K-9's, were left behind with the Regular Vietnam Army, when the U.S. closed this base in 1972. Many died at the hands of hungry villagers. Don patrolled an Air base that housed the "101st Screaming Eagles," Rock Korean Marines, and the Australians. The base was targeted by the Viet Cong, especially the K-9 units, one week prior to his deployment in and one week after his deployment out. During his patrol year, a black panther and water buffalos invaded the camp on several occasions. Don saw a python on one night patrol, something frightening to see hanging from a tree in the dark.

Prior to Vietnam, Don was based at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, as a SAC and K-9 patrol. After Vietnam, and Air Force honorable discharge, he entered the 6th, 12th, Combat Engineer Army Reserves.



# Remember. Share. Honor. ★★



Served with the American Division, 23rd Infantry Division, at Firebase Siberia, Chu Lai Province and awarded two Purple Heart Medals. From the battlefields of 'Nam to the mean streets of Toledo as a retired Toledo Police Officer. Your bravery is appreciated. Thank you from your brothers, Paul Rankin and Brian Rankin.

**Dennis Rankin**  
US Army 1970



**Gary Francis Shaw**  
PFC - E3 - Army - Regular  
173rd Airborne Brigade

Length of service: 1 year  
His tour began on Nov 11, 1967, and he was killed within the year – perhaps on the very day he arrived – in South Vietnam by hostile fire. His body was never recovered.

He is listed on Panel 29E - Line 76 of the Vietnam Memorial Wall.

Awards include Distinguished Service Cross Medal, Silver Star Medal, Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service and Campaign Medals, and Jump Wings.

Rest in Peace PFC Shaw, you are not Forgotten.

Love, your Brothers and Sisters at VFW Post #2898



**OS2 E-5 Michael Black**  
United States Navy 1970-1979

Michael Black is pictured aboard the USS Harold E. Holt, in the Gulf of Tonkin, standing in front of the missile defense system. He participated in the Mayaguez Incident – the last official battle of the Vietnam War. His awards include two Good Conduct Medals, Vietnam Service and Campaign Medals, National Defense Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, two Armed Forces Expeditionary Medals, Combat Action Ribbon, Navy Unit Commendation, and Meritorious Unit Citation. Rest in Peace, Uncle Mike, we miss and love you. Sept. 1, 1951 to Dec. 1, 2009.



**Staff Sgt. Paul A. Puls**  
United States Air Force  
1964-1968

After receiving my draft notice, I chose to enlist in the Air Force. I was planning on getting married in the summer but plans changed. After completing Tech School and receiving my Security Clearance and being married for 10 days, I left for a remote site in Japan for 13 months. I was a munitions specialist preparing munitions and explosives for aircraft flying to Vietnam. After returning to Florida for 10 months, I received orders for Thailand for a year. I was still working in the munitions field with explosives. My wife was unable to accompany me because of the field I was in, so after being married for four years, we were together 11 months before I was discharged. I was honored to be a member of the Vietnam Honor Flight to Washington D.C. in October 2012. What a fantastic trip!



**Teddy L. Mathes**  
Army E-4 - 1st. Infantry - 2 years

Entered the army shortly after high school. Went to Ft. Campbell, Kentucky for zero week where I met a boy from Melrose, Ohio by the name of Tom Merriman. We went to Ft. Dix, New Jersey, along with a best friend and classmate, Charley Case. We spent 17 weeks in training and all went together, landing in Viet Nam on July 7, 1969. Tom and I were assigned to the first Infantry Division, the Big Red 1. I was shot through the arm on November 8 and spent time in the hospital and rehab until a couple of days before Christmas, where I missed Bob Hope by two days. I received a Purple Heart, Bronze Star and Army Commendation medal. Tom was KIA on Mother's Day, 1970. Charley made it home safe and we are still best of friends.



**Specialist 4 Gary Newnham**  
United States Army, 1971-1973

Since my lottery number was 28, I was drafted into the United States Army after receiving my BA from Bowling Green in 1971. Upon learning that I was being sent for basic training at Fort Polk in the swamps of Louisiana, I figured that I was being prepared for service in Vietnam. Attached is a picture of me with my M16 during basic training. Instead of Vietnam, I was stationed in what was then West Germany for 17 months, where I served as the officer records clerk and handled mail collection and distribution for my unit. On leave, I was able to visit different parts of Europe with another draftee from Pennsylvania, who had an undergraduate degree from Robert Morris University. After my honorable discharge in 1973, I utilized my veteran benefits to obtain a master's degree from Ohio University and a law degree from the University of Toledo.



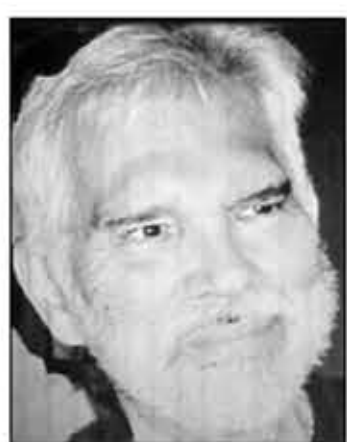
**Master Sgt. Jerry Lynn Hinson**  
United States Army 1967-1980's

Served 20-plus years in the Army. Awards include the Army Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster, Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign, Service and Gallantry Cross Medals, the Combat Infantry Badge, Jump Wings and Air Assault Wings, and Recruiting Badge. Thank you so much MSGT Hinson for your service during the Vietnam War. You had a huge impact on many as an instructor at Springfield High School ROTC Program. You were an inspiration and role model for many of us who went on to serve after graduation. You are missed dearly. Rest in Peace 1940-2008.



**SGT Major Thomas Myers**  
United States Army 1958-1988

Served for 30 years in the Army. Awards include the Army Commendation Medal, the Vietnam Campaign and Service Medals, The National Defense Service Medal and many more. Thank you for your 30 years of Service to your country and the continuing service as an ROTC instructor at Springfield High School until your passing. You are missed dearly.



**Larry E. Roehl**  
US Army 1968-1970

Larry served with the 82nd Airborne Division in Vietnam. I first met him at VFW Post 2898. He always looked super cool showing up on his motorcycle, wearing an earring and always bought everyone in the post a drink. One day, I overheard him talking about Sylvania High School and I said, "Hey, you know my mom, Georgia Black?" He said, "Georgia Black from King Road? Yeah, I have known her my whole life; we grew up together." I said, "That's my mom," and our friendship was forged! Every time after that he greeted me with a handshake and a smile. I didn't know Larry long, but every day I did was a privilege. I miss you Larry and thank you for your service! Rest in Peace 1949-2011. Submitted by Joel McConnell.



**Michael L. Meuth**  
Major, US Army  
Medical Service Corps

I honor my husband of 47 years, Michael L. Meuth. He retired as a Major from the US Army Medical Service Corps in 1977.

The 20 medals he proudly wore on his uniform confirmed his commitment to his country, his branch and his fellow soldiers. As he received the Army Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster, it was noted that "he distinguished himself by meritorious achievement while serving as medical attendant at the 2nd Medical Dispensary (General), Soc Trang, Republic of Vietnam, 13-14 May 1965. Captain Meuth assisted in the medical treatment of 52 Vietnamese and four American wounded personnel... His energetic application of his extensive knowledge materially contributed to the successful treatment of the mass casualties..."

We met and were married at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in 1966 where I was a social worker. Our children, Mike and Sara, were born at Walter Reed. Submitted by Kay Meuth.



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**Timothy Seimet**  
US Army, Green Beret

This is my Uncle Tim, left, my great-grandmother, and my dad, Derald, taken during leave in Bono, Ohio. My uncle was a Beret during the Vietnam War. Coming from a family of military people – my grandfather was in WWII and their three other siblings joined other branches of the military as well – they knew that joining the fight overseas was the right thing to do. My uncle lost his fight with cancer in 1985 but his legacy lives on. His youngest son, Justin, now flies helicopters for the US Army and is currently stationed at Ft. Drum, NY.  
*Submitted by Veronica Seimet.*



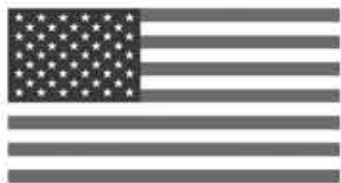
**SN E-3 Paul Briggs**  
1967-1971

Served in Vietnam aboard the USS Haul. Thank you so much for your service, Paul. Your friends and family at VFW Post 2898.



**SGT E-5 Bill Bourdeau**  
United States Army 1966-69

Served in Vietnam with the 41st Signal Battalion as a lineman. Thank you so much, Bill, for your service! From your friends and family at VFW Post 2898.



**Dennis Clark**  
Spec 5 E-5 US Army  
1968-1971

Served in Vietnam with Headquarters Troop Command, Cameron Bay, as a supply man. Thanks for your service, Dennis. Your friends and family at VFW Post 2898.



**Paul Veres**  
EM2 E-5 US Navy 1968-1972

Served in Vietnam aboard the USS Sperry (AS-12). Thank you, Paul, for your service. Your friends and family at VFW Post 2898.



**RD 3 E-4 Tom Franklin**  
United States Navy 1964-68

Served in Vietnam aboard the USS Oriskany (CVA-34) as a Radio Operator. Thanks for your service, Tom. From your friends and family at VFW Post 2898.



**Raul Hinojosa**  
E-6 SSGT US Army 1969-1971

Served in Vietnam with 1st BN 502nd Infantry, 101st Airborne. Thanks, Raul, for your service. Your friends and family at VFW Post 2898.



**E5 Sgt John Prysiazny**  
United States Marine Corps  
1966-68

Served in Vietnam with 1st Amphibious Tractor BN – a tractor rat. Stay away from the apricots. For AAV crewman, apricots have been bad luck since WWII and the island hopping campaign. History tells us that a Platoon of AAVs was delivering supplies loaded with apricots when they were hit and sunk by a Japanese zero. Since then, any apricots around an AAV have been bad luck. YAT-YAS! Thanks for your service, John!

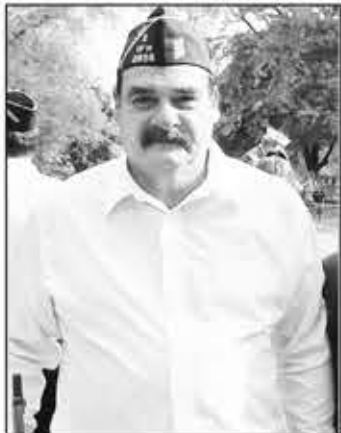


**Joseph W. Urbas Jr.**  
Captain, United States  
Army, 1969 – 1976

Joe was a graduate of Bowling Green State University. He served as a Lieutenant in Vietnam with the U.S. Army Rangers, and in the Special Forces as a front-line platoon leader and weapons instructor. He operated many months behind enemy lines working with indigenous personnel combating the Viet Cong. He earned the Bronze star and many other awards for his service. Joe gained the confidence of his men and the admiration of his superiors for his dedication to duty. Joe later served as an instructor at the US Army Jungle Operations training Center at Fort Sherman, Panama. Joe was a well read man who loved philosophy, poetry, and duck hunting. He was a lifelong member of the NRA. Unfortunately, Joe made the ultimate sacrifice and gave his life for his country as a result of exposure to "Agent Orange" and yet, his name will not be on any wall in Washington DC.  
*Submitted by Colman G. McCord*



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Served in Vietnam with the 101st Airborne Division as a Radioman. Thank you so much for your service, Mark! Your friends and family at VFW Post 2898.

**SP4 E-4 Mark Benner**  
United States Army 1970-72



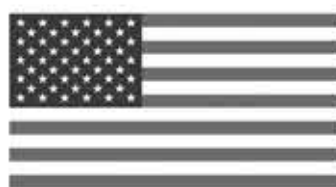
Served in Vietnam with Co-C 3rd Battalion 2nd Marines as an Infantryman. Thanks for your service, Hank. Your friends and family at VFW Post 2898.

**Hank Wetzel**  
LCPL E-3 USMC 1968-1972



Served in Vietnam with 169th Engineers 20th Brigade. Thanks, Ron, for your service. Your friends and family at VFW Post 2898.

**Ron Cox**  
US Army 1969-1971



Thank you for bringing The Wall back to Toledo, Ohio. It means so much for all of us Vietnam Vets. Thanks to all that had a helping hand on This Wall. Semper Fi. Submitted by Raul (Recon) Hernandez, Jr. VNV/MC Toledo, Ohio

**Sgt. E5 Alaberto Avalos**  
United States Marine Corps



Served two tours in Vietnam, '66 and '67, as a truck driver. Thanks, Dave, for your service. Your friends and family at VFW Post 2898.

**Dave Vogt**  
Spec 5 E-5 US Army  
1966-1970



Served in Vietnam with C Co. 36th Signal Battalion. Thank you, Larry, for your service. Your friends and family at VFW Post 2898.

**Sgt E-5 Larry Ingle**  
United States Army 1966-69



This photo is of my father at Tan Son Nhut Air Base in The Republic of South Vietnam. This was the main base for moving goods such as material, food, and soldiers. He was part of the 8th Aerial Port Squadron where he worked with many planes such as C123s, C124s, C130s, and C141s. It should be noted that C141s were the only planes that flew from the United States and the others were all "in country" planes that supplied the troops. He primarily worked on Charley Row and Rebel ramp keeping the troops supplied. His last mission on the base was working on the international side, watching the troops head home on Pan Am airlines. He always comments on how the troops kissed the ground before boarding the plane to safely head home!  
*Submitted by Thomas J. Farmer.*

**Maurice G. Farmer**  
Air Force Airman 1st Class 7  
Sept 1963 - 5 Sept 1967



I was stationed at Khe Sanh, South Vietnam with Alpha Co., 1st Btn, 26th Marine Regiment from May 1967 to April 1968. I'm pictured with the company sign to show the folks back home. During the Tet Offensive, everything above ground level was blown away. It seems we lived in a bullseye for the North Vietnamese gunners – at night we would listen to the shells bursting around us and at daylight we would come out to count our casualties. I never did find out what happened to that sign, I guess it was just one of the casualties.

**Paul G. Lojkovic**  
1st Lt. USMC  
1966 to 1969



I attended Wittenburg University and I knew I would be drafted when I graduated. I signed up for the Marines for four years. I served in Vietnam from 1963 to 1966. I went to Ohio State University after service, received my Masters Degree in Business with honors! I lived with my mother 19 years and when she became elderly kept her from going into the nursing home. I now enjoy hearing from my five sisters living all over in the USA, especially the one in Hawaii where I last was before coming home back in 1966!

**Bruce Bearss**  
US Marine Corps 1962 - 1966



Served in Vietnam with the 101st Airborne Division 501 Signal BN. Thank you so much for your service, Bill. Your friends and family at VFW Post 2898.

**SP4 E-4 Bill Benner**  
United States Army 1966-68



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**Michael D. Malkuian**  
Sergeant E-5,  
US Marine Corps

Michael D. Malkuian enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps when he was 17. He served six years, three years in the Vietnam War. He wanted to fight for his country, he said. He was born Dec. 25, 1946 and passed away April 13, 2013. He leaves a wife, two daughters, and two grandchildren; two brothers and two sisters, all of Toledo. Baby Brother, you made your family very proud of you. We know you are with the Lord, Mom, Dad and our three sisters. You will live in our hearts for always. Love, your family, the Malkuians, Cregos and Bauknechts. God be with our service men and women.  
*Submitted by Helen Crego.*



**Paul Hensley**  
SGT E5 US Army,  
101st Airborne 1966-1969

Paul M. Hensley was drafted in 1966 and was stationed at Fort Benning, Georgia, before being deployed to Vietnam. He was a heavy equipment operator and was injured once by shrapnel during maneuvers. He was friends with a Vietnamese scout by the name of Hung WynPham and corresponded with him after the war until they lost touch. Paul developed non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in 1980 related to exposure to Agent Orange. He died in 1980, six months after diagnosis. He never knew it had been recognized as the cause of his illness. He left behind a wife, three sons, four brothers, two sisters, mother, father and extended family and close friends.



**John Conway**  
U.S. Army, 1967-68  
Pictured first row, far right

I served in Vietnam in the 1st Infantry, 2nd BN 16th Infantry. I graduated high school in 1965, and shortly after was drafted. I was stationed in Dien, Vietnam. We went on patrols almost every day, and night ambushes every third night. We were often fired upon; many of my friends were wounded, some were killed. On one patrol I was the point man. I looked down and saw the poisonous "five stepper snake." If it bit you, you would drop dead after taking just five steps. I turned in the other direction and ran as fast as I could, and was followed by the whole troop. They asked, "Did you see Viet Cong?" "No," I answered, "Worse, I saw the five stepper snake." Since 1990 I have participated in the yearly reunions of the men I served with. We share our stories, both good and bad. Before the reunions I never talked about my experiences in Vietnam.



**Benjamin Sliker**  
Staff Sergeant, US Army

Ben Sliker served in Vietnam in 1973 and 1974 as an assistant Battalion Operations Sergeant and a Battalion Commander. One of his duties in Vietnam was a helicopter machine gunner. One of the medals he earned was the Vietnam Campaign Medal with the Bronze Star. After returning to the states, he was a drill sergeant at Fort Benning, Georgia. Ben died in December 1993 at the VA Hospital in Ann Arbor, a victim of Agent Orange cancer.

*Submitted by Irene Keefer*



**Gary Cullum**  
Specialist 4th Class,  
US Army Infantry

A student at the University of Toledo, I was drafted on my twenty-first birthday, March 4, 1968. I completed basic training at Fort Knox and Vietnamese Language School at Fort Bliss. As part of the 101st Airborne, I was stationed primarily in the Ashau Valley-Laos border and the Ho Chi Minh Trail. As the radio/telephone operator, I usually knew what was going on. We had about 85 guys tromping through the jungle. Soon, we were headed to Hamburger Hill, where I would see atrocities like most would not believe. The closer we got to the top of the hill, the more were wounded or killed. We had 60 wounded and 10 killed in a week. I was one of the lucky ones. I was able to come home and start a family. I have been married to my wife, Mary Anne, for 41 years, and we have four wonderful children.



**Jerry Dryer**  
PFC E-2 USMC  
1966-1970

Served in Vietnam with the 3rd Combined Action Group III Marine Amphibious Force as a radioman. Thank you so much for your service, Jerry! From your friends and family at VFW Post 2898.



**George Purnia**  
US Army

Served with the 173rd Airborne 503rd Infantry Regiment in Vietnam. Participated in the 1968 TET Offensive. Awards include the Vietnam Service with 5 battle stars, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Gallantry Cross, National Defense Service Medal, Air Medal, Combat Infantry Badge, and Jump Wings. Thanks for your service, Cuz! You have always been a hero to me!  
*Submitted by Joel McConnell*



**John "Jack" Pietras**  
Specialist 4th Class,  
US Army

Served from June 1962 to December 1965. He did basic training at Fort Knox, KY and medical training at the United States Army Medical Training Center at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, TX. After this medical training, he was stationed in Germany and was a medic and driver for the Regimental Surgeon of the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment. The duty of the 3rd Cav was to patrol the borders between East and West Germany and also Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic) and West Germany. He attained the rank of Specialist Fourth Class before being discharged.  
*Submitted by Sue, Lisa, Sarah and Elliott Pietras.*



**E5 Sgt Richard Kleparick**  
United States Marine Corps  
1965-69

Served in Vietnam with 2nd BN 11 Marines 1st Marine Division in Chu Li 66-67 with Artillery and then Recruiting Duty in Alabama. Served with the Famous Sergeant Major "Iron Mike" Mervosh. Thanks, Rick, for your service. Your friends and family at VFW Post 2898.



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**James W. Meredith**  
GySgt., U.S.M.C.,  
Retired

I enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1963 and was in Vietnam in 1964 to 1965. I got out in 1969 but reenlisted in 1979 and retired in 2004 with an accumulated service of 31 years, two months and fifteen days.

Several months ago, I was picking up a prescription at my pharmacy and found out that my script was more than what I usually pay. I started to refuse the script when a guy behind me said he would pay for it. I told him it wasn't necessary but he put down his credit card and said "Gunny, Marines take care of Marines." He said he got out of the Corps in 1991 after Desert Storm. I tried to get his name and info to pay him back but he said no.

To the former Marine in the Columbia Gas jacket, I say, "Thank you."



**Ron Sprouse**  
Staff Sergeant, US Army

My grandfather, Ron Sprouse, served in the United States Army for three years. He was a Sergeant in the 196th Light Infantry Brigade, and then the Americal Division. He fought in the Vietnam War from 1969 to 1970. On August 23, 1969, he was serving as a squad leader with Company B, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry, and he received a Bronze Star with Valor for his bravery. He was able to detect an ambush from the North Vietnamese army and was instrumental in minimizing casualties among his comrades. He was then promoted to Staff Sergeant. Before leaving the Army, he received a second Bronze Star. I am very proud of my Grandpa's service to our country and risking his life for others. He fought with courage and bravery and I will always look up to him as he is my hero and role model.

*Submitted by Connor Spradlin, age 12.*



**William F. Crandell**  
First Lieutenant,  
US Army Infantry 1965-1967

When I called the Pentagon to volunteer for Vietnam, they thought I was joking, but I was a starry-eyed infantry officer. As a green second lieutenant, I had more military experience than any of my men, but together we built a fighting unit. I got the one medal I didn't want, the Purple Heart. None of my men were killed.

Once it was clear to me — at home during Tet, 1968 — that we were losing the war because our leaders didn't understand it, I became determined to bring my brothers and sisters safely home. Over half the Americans killed in Vietnam were still alive then.

I became a national leader of Vietnam Veterans Against the War as its Midwest coordinator. I spoke, I marched, I organized.

After we ended the war, we had to fight the VA. I represented veterans to Congress, and ran investigations for the House Veterans Committee.



**Eugene M Czerniawski**  
SP4 Army Special Forces

From UT to West Point to the Republic of Vietnam, everyone is familiar with their orders. Well, in my case, upon arrival in the Republic of Vietnam, the Army had misplaced my 201 file. Upon exiting the aircraft, when I was approached about my 201 file and could not produce one, I was told, "You are not here!" My immediate reaction was, "If I am not here, what is that god awful smell?"

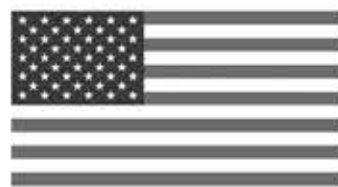
All you Vietnamers should know exactly what smell I reference here. To all my brothers in arms, a long overdue WELCOME HOME!



**Glenn Sliker**  
Sgt, US Marine Corps

Glenn enlisted in the Marine Corps and served in Vietnam in 1969 and 1970. About a week after being in Vietnam, the machine gunner in front of Glenn was hit and killed. Glenn picked up the M60 and became the machine gunner and carried it for the 12 months he was in Vietnam, Laos and the north part of 'Nam. He was involved in many search and destroy missions and earned the highest honor for heroism in the Marine Corps for Meritorious Service in Vietnam, the Cross of Gallantry.

*Submitted by Irene Keefer*



**Michael Carl Brunner**  
PFC, US Marine Corps

Michael was born April 12, 1949, and was a graduate of Waite High School. He gave his life August 10, 1968, in Vietnam.

He was my boyhood friend and baseball teammate at Oakdale Church. Thank you for all the memories and for your sacrifice.

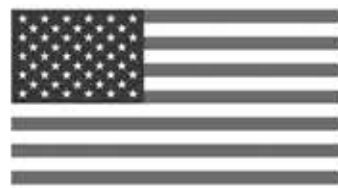
*Submitted by Rufus "Sonny" Wallace*



**Derald Seimet**  
US Navy, Naval Reserve,  
Army Reserve

My dad served in the Navy from 1968 to 1970. He did two tours in Nam. He devoted many years after serving in both the Naval and the Army reserve. I'm so very proud of his devotion to this country and the strength and discipline he has instilled into his children and grandchildren because of it.

*Submitted by Veronica Seimet.*



**Donald L. Everhardt**  
Lance Corporal, USMC,  
1966-1970

Lance Corporal Donald L. Everhardt performed with courage and devotion to duty while under heavy mortar and small arms fire. On February 2, 1968, west of Cam Lo after being ambushed, he drove his M-54 Cargo Truck under fire a quarter mile to turn it around and return to the ambush site, still under fire. He assisted in loading the dead and wounded aboard the truck, then, under fire, drove the truck to Cam Lo. This prompt action saved the lives of the critically wounded personnel by getting them to a medical evacuation site promptly. As a result of his heroic efforts, Donald Everhardt was the recipient of the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with the Bronze Star. Thank you for being a true American hero.

*Submitted by Debra Everhardt.*



**Leon Jenkins**  
1st Sgt., US Army,  
1948 to 1968

Leon Jenkins, 84, is in excellent health thanks to his daughter, Thelma Hudson, who attributes his longevity to healthy meals, daily exercise, and a weekly dose of Bible study.

Mr. Jenkins enlisted in the Army at age 19 in 1948, where he trained for and was sent to the Korean War and served until it ended in June 1953, earning the Silver Star for gallantry in action. He remained in the Army and was in Vietnam only five months when he was shot in the head and pronounced dead, an obvious mistake.

We salute you twice, Master Sergeant (Korea), and 1st Sergeant Leon Jenkins!  
*Submitted by his home health aide, Cora.*



**Specialist 4th Class Gary Weirich**  
United States Army 1966-69

Our dad, Gary Weirich, took his training in Fort Riley, Kansas with the 1st Battalion 11th Artillery 9th Infantry Div. On January 1, 1967, his unit arrived in Vietnam, stationed at base camp Bearcat. He was a Radio Operator in Vietnam at a forward outpost support relay for the fire direction center during Operation Junction City. The outpost was by Tay Ninh near the base of the Black Virgin Mountains. He said, "One morning, I woke up to an unexploded mortar round within two feet of where I was sleeping. That was the day I lost my fear of being there. I had been awake for two days straight and consequently had slept through a mortar attack."

In June, he transferred to the 120 transportation-48th group, TC Hill. He drove Lead Convoy Jeep for the Red Catcher Express, TDY with 199th Light Infantry until December.

*Submitted by Michelle McFarland*



# Remember. Share. Honor.



To our readers

The stories on these pages are about the service and sacrifices of local veterans of the Vietnam Era. They were sent to us by the veterans themselves or by their loved ones, friends, neighbors and comrades in arms. The Blade is proud to share them with you, and to show our appreciation for their sacrifices and our recognition of their service to our country; and to once again say, "WELCOME HOME!"

The American Veterans Traveling Tribute Wall is a replica of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington DC. It will be open to the public for viewing 24 hours a day, from noon, Thursday, June 6 through 4 p.m., Sunday, June 9 at International Park. Please come to pay your respects. A schedule of the five days of events can be found at [www.toledoveteransevent.com](http://www.toledoveteransevent.com) or by calling 419-460-5288.



Pages published each day  
June 5th thru June 8th  
in  
**THE BLADE**



**Gregory McClure**  
PFC, US Army

It's been almost 44 years now, and you have been forever missed. The void you have left in all of our hearts runs very deep.

Greg, you were a son to Rosalie; husband to Faye; father, brother, and uncle to many. You and Faye are grandparents to several beautiful grandchildren. We wish you two could have lived to cherish them together.

We love & miss you so much!  
*Your kids,  
Keith, Kevin, and Kelly*



**Willie Grace**  
Sergeant (E-5), Army  
First Infantry Division,  
1965-1968

I arrived in Vietnam from West Berlin, Germany, as part of a large troop movement. In Vietnam I was assigned to the First Infantry division as a grunt. During my tour of duty I operated with the second of the Eighteenth Infantry (van guards). My base camp was Di An. I also became a Ranger with the First Infantry Division LRRPs. My area's operation was Thunder Road (Highway 13) Iron triangle, Rubber Plantation and Cambodia border. I was wounded during a ground attack at the Lai Khe base camp, and again when I fell into a Pungi pit. I received the following medals: Purple Heart, Congressional Air Medal, Combat Infantry Badge, and various other medals. I am deeply proud to serve my country with such brave and courageous men, especially the dust-off pilots and medics. The attached picture was taken during a break in action at the Saigon Water plant.



**Michael F. Burcewicz**  
Sgt., US Air Force,  
1966-1970

Worked with the 838th Combat Support Group and Aerial Survey Team - Monrovia, Liberia, Africa; also served in Brasilia, Brazil; Tuy Hoa Airbase, Republic of Vietnam; and Pham Phen, Republic of Vietnam.

"Mike always made friends no matter where he was stationed," says Linda Burcewicz, his wife.

Michael Burcewicz died December 25, 2011.



**Vince Tavitian**  
E5 Combat Medic,  
US Army, 1967-1968

*Pictured at center with beard*

We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;  
For he today that shed his blood with me  
Shall be my brother.

*Shakespeare, Henry V*

As a member of A Company, 1st Battalion, 327th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Separate, 101st Airborne, all the guys called me Doc. I served as a combat medic in Vietnam. I salute all my brothers in arms, including those who made the supreme sacrifice.



**Jess W. Cogle**  
Sp E-5, US Army,  
1965-1967

What is a veteran? A veteran - whether active duty, discharged, reserve, or retired - is someone who, at one point in his life, wrote a blank check made payable to "The United States of America," for an amount of "up to, and including his life."

Thank you, Dad, for all you have given me and your entire country. WELCOME HOME.

*Love, Rick & Raquel*

# Remember. Share. Honor.

June 5-9, 2013



## Schedule of Events

### SATURDAY, JUNE 8

9 a.m. Motorcycle Ride/Salute: Beginning at Toledo Harley Davidson, 7960 W. Central Ave. Staging begins at 6 a.m., kickstands up at 8 a.m.

9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Veteran Resource Area at Forrester's on the River

Noon to 2 p.m. Entertainment - International Park Gazebo

5 to 7:30 p.m. Vietnam Era Veterans Spaghetti Dinner at Forrester's on the River. Please show your DD214 form for a FREE dinner.

### SUNDAY, JUNE 9

7 a.m. Sunrise Remembrance Service at International Park

8 to 10 a.m. Pancake Breakfast at Forrester's on the River

Noon to 2 p.m. Entertainment - International Park Gazebo

4 p.m. Closing Ceremony at the Traveling Wall

For more information, visit [www.toledoveteransevent.com](http://www.toledoveteransevent.com) or call (419) 460-5288.

**THE BLADE**



**Louis Davis**  
Pvt 1st Class  
U.S. Air Force

My father was my hero; he played an important role in my life and in the lives of his fellow comrades. He always made sure that the airplanes were always fueled up and ready to go at a moment's notice. He studied at the Tuskegee Airman College to learn to be a pilot and he became one with flying colors! My father always talked highly of the time he spent in the service ready to serve his country. He also studied movie projections. He was wounded, from what he told me, in his forehead and he had a steel plate implanted. Afterward, he was honorably discharged with a Medal of Honor. I loved my father, my hero; he fought for his country.

*Submitted by Cheryl McLane*



**Specialist 5 Bruce C. Dunzweiler**  
United States Army 1969-1971

Those who return: Every time our country sends its people into conflict, only the dead are laid to rest. The survivors are the newly wounded who leave their youth and innocence behind, to return with a piece of Hell for the rest of their lives.

I served as a 45M20 aircraft armament subsystems mechanic for Cobra helicopters. At the time, those were the meanest things that the Army could throw at the enemy. I also served as a flight crewman hues.

I appreciate all the help the Vet Center has given me and other veterans.



# Remember. Share. Honor.



**Cass Gittins III**  
US Army,  
22 April 1969 to 3 March 1971

I enlisted to avoid the draft so I could finish college.

I entered OCS at Ft. Benning, GA. After I was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant, Infantry, I went to Paratrooper School, got my "wings," and went on "Jump Status."

In September 1969, I received orders to Vietnam and reported to A Co., 1st Bn., 5th Cavalry, 1st Air Cav, Quan Loi, RVN, in October 1969. We patrolled constantly in III Corps, generally walking trails where the enemy was. My platoon was never "fired on first" and we avoided being ambushed.

I was wounded while on patrol on 20 February 1970 near Loc Ninh and was medevac'd to Saigon for surgery and then to Camp Zama, Japan, for a second surgery. Based upon my service in RVN, I was awarded the CIB, Purple Heart, three Bronze Stars (two with valor), Army Commendation Medal with valor and the Air Medal.



**Karl W. Keefer**  
Sergeant, US Army

Karl Keefer was a tank commander in Viet Nam during 1968 and 1969. He was part of the Big Red One, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry. One of the two bronze stars with V that he earned came during a confrontation with the enemy in the Michelin Rubber Plantation, which became known as the Atlas Wedge. The other Bronze Star was earned while uncovering enemy tunnels filled with supplies, weapons and enemy fighters.

*Submitted by Irene Keefer.*



**Fred T. McClure**  
PFC, US Army

We honor Fred "Freddy" McClure who served his country during the 1960s. We love you and miss you most at the holidays, especially your deep baritone voice.

*Love,  
Rocki, Barbara and Yulonda*



**Rick William Bezeau**  
PFC Marine 2/4  
KIA May 12, 1968 - Mother's Day

Mother's day has never been the same without you. You are always in our hearts, forever our hero.

We miss you big brother.



**Roger Schroeder**  
Sergeant, US Army

It was 1970 and I was stationed in Vietnam in a light infantry unit. We patrolled around LZ Debbie near the city of Duc Pho. Our company had been helicoptered into a new area, it was a valley of over grown rice paddies, and designated a free fire zone. Shortly after landing, we broke off into a platoon size patrol group. Later that day, our point man spotted what appeared to be a group of people headed in our direction. We doubled and tripled checked our positions, and radioed our division headquarters. We had no friendly forces in the area, and we were authorized the use of deadly force. We were in an ambush formation. As our targets moved closer, things began to look different. In the final minutes we realized the people were children probably 8 to 10 years old. Cool heads prevailed and everyone lived to see the day.



**Patrick M. Malkowski**  
US Air Force,  
1968-1972

Stationed in Ubon, Thailand. Worked as the mechanics crew chief who serviced OV10 aircrafts. OV10's were used for counter-insurgency combat.

As a little boy, I remember looking through my dad's photos and admiring all the different places he had been.

*Submitted by Brian Malkowski*



**Randy Norton**      **John Henry**  
Sgt. E-5, US Army      Sgt. E-5, US Army

Randy Norton and John Henry have been friends since Shoreland Elementary School. Both joined the U.S. Army, Randy in August 1966 and John in April 1967. Both ended up going to South Vietnam.

Their mothers talked and found out they must be located close to each other. Randy's mom wrote to him and tried to tell where John was located.

In March, 1968, Randy got a Jeep and drove to John's location, asking if there was a John Henry from Toledo. The officer told John there was someone from the "world" looking for him. It was a great reunion with hugs and tears, two lonely teens so far from home.

In February 2013, Randy was lying in bed at the University of Michigan Hospital ICU with a major illness. In comes his boyhood friend John Henry. What a great reunion, with hugs and tears again.

This friendship has lasted more than 60 years. They both live in the Shoreland neighborhood and raised their families here.

Our families thank them for their service.

*Submitted by Mary Norton*



## Honoring Our Military

Let's honor our military,  
The men and women who serve,  
Whose dedication to our great country  
Does not falter, halt or swerve.

Let's respect them for their courage;  
They're ready to do what's right  
To keep America safe,  
So we can sleep better at night.

Let's support and defend our military members  
Whose hardships are brutal and cruel,  
Whose discipline we can't imagine,  
Who follow each order and rule.

Here's to those who choose to be the guardians of freedom  
And their helpers good and true;  
They're protecting American values;  
They're fighting for me and you.

*~ Joanna Fuchs*

