



2nd Battalion 1st Infantry Chapter, Americal Division Veterans Association (ADVA)

WEBSITE: www.2-1-196th.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/2-1-196th



Volume 8

“A Soldier Once And Always”

April 2018

Commanders Corner: Well, Spring of 2018 is upon us, and I hope it is a good year for all of us. I was at a VA appointment at McGuire VA Center in Richmond VA in early March. As I was coming out of the blood clinic I saw a man with an Americal BB hat on. I went over to him and asked when he was there, he said 70-71, and then I asked what unit, he indicated 196th LIB. I said I was too, in 2-1 Infantry. At that point he exclaimed, I was too, Delta Company! Small world. If he hadn't of worn something with Americal on him, I wouldn't have even have stopped to talk to him. His name was Gary Nace. I sent him an email and invited him to join 2-1 Infantry Association but haven't gotten a message back from him. Sometimes it pays to wear some indication of your veteran service and especially a unit like a Division or Brigade patch, or crest that you served in. You may be surprised at who you meet.



At this, as I've been remiss in mentioning new members to the association, I'd like to catch up. I'd like to welcome the following new members to our association. I hope I haven't left anyone off.

NEW MEAMBERS:

Louis C. LaParl Jr., C/2-1 from 5-6-1970 to 5-6-1971.

R. Scott Smith, E and B 2/1 1970-1971

James P. Hansen, A 2/1. March 1969 to March 1970

Tim R. Hill, C 2/1 1969

David M. Kiel D 2/1 10-69 to 10-70

Donald W. Allen D 2/1, 1967-1968

Roy Walker Jr., D 2/1, 8-70 to 8-71

NEW LIFETIME MEMBERS:

Michael (Mike) D. Cundiff, C 2/1 71-72

Paul F. Hauke, Jr., A 2/1 1969-1970

Herman Nagora Jr. A 2/1 1967-1968

Jimmy E. Creech E 2/1 1970

Eduardo Martinez-Torres, C 2/1 1970

Last month I also volunteered to assist at a Junior ROTC drill competition for the Eastern Region of The American Legion Department of Virginia. I was impressed with the three high schools that fielded teams for the competition. What I am getting at is not solely about JROTC, but what we as veterans should be doing to help develop the next generation of leaders. We all served at the time of the “draft” and before the volunteer Army started. Consequently, few American youth are aware of military service; this itself bodes ill well of the Nations future. Who will serve the Nation now? Who will be our future political leaders? Will it be pansies who are inexperienced politicians who have never served in our Armed Forces, or will it be someone who picked up the gauntlet of service because they were inspired by some old Vet who had a little impact on their lives? I'd ask each and everyone of you to think about this and to get involved in some activity that would impact on our youth. Each veteran organization has programs that does this. I personally chose to get involved with my local

American Legion Post in Colonial Heights VA, because it is far more active than the local VFW or other organizations. Many of the programs focus on Children and Youth and do have an impact, whether it is Boys and Girls State, scholarships, oratorical contests, or JROTC, they do influence our youth. So, get involved and make a difference. Remember our collective extended family, those Americans serving in our Armed Forces all over the world.

Got a comment, idea or complaint, contact me at Com-mander.2.1.jgw@gmail.com.

John

Keep safe and may the bond of battle never be broken!



ADVA 2018 National Reunion: The 2018 National Reunion dates have been set and Registration forms are available in the latest issue of the Americal Journal. The location is Oklahoma City, OK and the dates are September 26-30, 2018. Headquarters hotel is the Oklahoma City Wyndham Gardens Airport Hotel. Reunion guests can stay at a price of \$79.00 per night plus a 14% tax. Reservations can be made by calling 405-685-4000. Remember to tell the reservation clerk that you are attending the 2018 ADVA Reunion. Tours have been scheduled for Thursday and Friday including a visit to Fort Sill, OK where the latest ADVA monument is located, lunch is being provided at a Ft Sill mess hall and a visit to the Artillery Museum. Look for more details in the 1st Quarter ADVA Journal.



Attempting to lighten the soldier's load by diminishing the weight of any given weapon, will always result in shorter range and less firepower.

Americal Division Drinkware (mugs, shot glasses, etc) & Gifts: The Americal Division Store. Christmas gifts and calendars, Father's Day, Birthday, Hats, caps, clothing, Clothing, photos, and other gear with the patch and name are available. Click on the following or type this address in your browser bar. (<http://www.cafepress.com/americal>) to view the items. The store offering these items for sale is a division of JJ-Enterprises. JJ-Enterprises is not associated with the U.S. Government in any form. Nor is it associated with any group of former or existing members of U.S. Army units.

JJ-Enterprises,
1610 S. 31st. Suite 102-120,
Temple, Texas 76504

Federal Court rules Bladensburg Cross unconstitutional: The American Legion to appeal to the Supreme Court: A federal appeals court is standing by a ruling that calls for the removal or destruction of a large cross-shaped monument on public land that has towered over a busy Maryland intersection for nearly 100 years. In a closely divided vote, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit refused to reconsider an earlier decision that found government funding for the 40-foot-tall memorial in Prince George's County an unconstitutional endorsement of religion. The 8-to-6 vote drew passionate dissents from several judges and could end up before the Supreme Court, which has not provided clear guidance about displays of religion on government land. Supporters of the Peace Cross, who say it is a secular tribute to local men killed in World War I, vowed to appeal.



First Quarter Financial Report: Past Commander Chuck Holdaway has sent in the financial report for the first three months of 2018. Only the highlighted items are reported you can find the details by going to our Chapter website.

Balance as of Jan. 1, 2018		\$4,210
	Income	Expenses
Life Members @ (\$50)13	650	
Yearly Member @ (\$5)	75	
Website 1 year		100
Balance as of March 31, 2018		\$4,835

Changes Coming to the TRICARE Retiree Dental Program: Do you have TRICARE Retiree Dental Program (TRDP) coverage? If so, you need to know that the TRDP will end on December 31, 2018. But, don't worry. Anyone who was in TRDP this year, or who would have been eligible for the TRDP plan, will be able to choose a dental plan from among 10 dental carriers in the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP). You can begin reviewing program options now at www.opm.gov/fedvip. You'll be able to enroll in FEDVIP during the 2018 Federal Benefits Open Season, which runs from November 12 to December 10, 2018; coverage will begin on January 1, 2019.

In 1941, more than three million cars were manufactured in the United States. Only 139 more were made during the entire World War.

Welcome Home, Col. Edgar F. Davis: The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced March 27 that Air Force Col. Edgar F. Davis, 32, of Goldsboro, NC, accounted for on Dec. 19, 2017, will be buried April 6 in his hometown. On Sept. 17, 1968, Davis was a navigator aboard a RF-4C Phantom fighter-bomber aircraft, assigned to the 11th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, 432nd Tactical Reconnaissance Wing. Davis and his pilot were on a night photo-reconnaissance mission over the Lao People's Democratic Republic when they were shot down by anti-aircraft artillery fire. The pilot ejected out of the aircraft and was rescued, however, no contact could be established with Davis. Because of this, he was declared missing in action. Search-and-rescue efforts were suspended after failing to locate Davis or the aircraft wreckage. Davis was later declared deceased. Between August 2001 and February 2015, joint U.S./L.P.D.R. teams investigated a crash site six times that correlated with Davis's loss. Excavations recovered personal effects, but analysis could not confirm whether Davis was in the aircraft at the time of the crash. A subsequent team excavated an ejection seat location associated with the crash.



Starting 4/1/18 Medicare to Replace ID Cards: Medicare will start replacing all current Medicare cards for beneficiaries to convert to alphanumeric ID numbers. Currently, the ID number is your social security number. Just a heads up that there is a scam going around involving the new Medicare Cards coming out in April. Pass it along. It might come in handy to know Medicare will never call you on the phone. The new cards will be sent out from April 2018 to April 2019. Medicare has also warned on scams. They do not charge for cards or want your personal information over the phone. Medicare card will come to you in the mail. You don't need to request it or do anything. It will show up.

MY Encounter With Chris Noel: Even if you were a grunt out in the field for 12 months, you must have come across or remember in-county a blond starlet named Chris Noel. The Armed Forces Radio broadcast out "A Date with Chris" show. One month early in my tour the STARS & STRIPES printed her picture, which I immediately cut out and taped to the inside top of my hooch poncho liner. Although I had never met her personally, she was there every evening and morning to help me make it through the day. This a gal who had Hollywood by the horns, working with Steve McQueen and Elvis Presley. She gave it all up to come to Vietnam and support the American G.I. The rest is history...Like many of us ...she carried the war with her for years. Her first husband, a Green Beret, killed himself. ...and yes, admittedly the war gave her own PTSD, which she constructively turned around to open Veteran Homeless Shelters in Florida. Fast forward (or back) to June 1986 when Sgt Frenchie Kostecko and I met for the first time since the war in the Chicago Vietnam Vet Welcome Home Parade. Easily over 25,000 troops were cheered through town by over 250,000 patriotic citizens... and what a great catharsis for all! I personally kissed every good looking girl on the sidelines, while Frenchie handled the camera. We both have the albums to prove it. Then out of nowhere appears Chris Noel in a convertible, cheering her vets on. I got close enough for a photo-op, but didn't capture a kiss. Still love that girl since my poncho liner days!



LT Jerry

Jesse Mendoza Writes About Recruiting New Members: Hi Guys, Hope everyone is well and doing ok. Rich, the response to you email is that they can contact me by email or phone if they want to join the Chapter. If they contact John, Chuck, or Rich refer them to me. In the past I have gotten email applications but no dues money. When I send them an application to fill out and return to me with their dues I got no response. Hope this works. If there is anyone out there who wants to join our Chapter, send me his name and address, I will take care of the rest. Jesse

Shulkin Out: Trump Fires VA Secretary After Weeks of Controversy: President Donald Trump fired Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin ending weeks of speculation about the embattled administrator's future. Shulkin's position in the administration had been in jeopardy since the release of a damning inspector general report that criticized him for wasteful and unethical actions during a 10-day official department trip. In the wake of that report, In recent days, he backed away from promises to purge his department of those enemies and largely avoided the press. The move leaves the Department of Veterans Affairs — which has a budget of nearly \$200 billion and boasts about 360,000 employees — in a state of leadership disarray for the second time in less than four years. Trump's new VA Secretary nominee, Rear Adm. Ronny Jackson, has served as the White House physician since 2006. He is an Iraq War veteran who has served in the Navy for 23 years. He has filled in various military medical roles, but does not have any official experience in the VA medical system. In a statement following Shulkin's firing, officials from VoteVets — a frequent critic of Trump — voiced concerns that Jackson “has never managed an agency like the VA,” saying that “now is not the time for people who need training wheels.”

Pensions for Veterans with Limited Income: The US Department of Veterans Affairs offers a needs-based tax-free pension for eligible wartime Veterans with limited or no income. Veterans must meet minimum service and other eligibility requirements in order to qualify:

1. Age 65 or older, OR
2. Totally and permanently disabled, OR
3. A patient in a nursing home receiving skilled nursing care, OR
4. Receiving Social Security Disability Insurance, OR
5. Receiving Supplemental Security Income

Request for Flags Flown Over the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier: Individuals may request a flag to be flown over the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. Requests must be submitted in writing to the address below and include the following:

- 1.) The sender's name, address, telephone number, and email address (if available)
- 2.) One U.S. Flag (footage sizes 3X5, 4X6, 5X8, or 6X10 - are accepted)
- 3.) A self-addressed return package with pre-paid postage for returning the flag to the sender

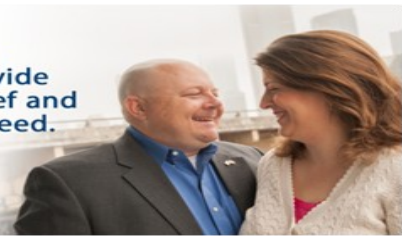
The name of the person or organization for which the flag will be flown. If the individual is/ was military, please provide the service member's rank and service component.

Please allow 3 weeks from the date the flag is received to be flown and returned. Your returned flag will be accompanied by a certificate with the name of the person or organization for which the flag was flown verifying the date the flag was flown at Arlington. Written requests should be sent to:

Arlington National Cemetery C/O: Commemorative Flag Flying Request
Arlington, VA 22211-5003

VA caregiver benefits provide financial relief and tools to succeed.

Learn More



VA understands that caregiving can be a tough job. That's why VA's Caregiver Support Program offers training, resources and tools to help you take on this important role. Through VA's Caregiver Support Program, caregivers have access to a local Caregiver Support Coordinator. This licensed professional is devoted to providing useful information and connecting caregivers in the community. The program also provides peer support mentoring, a support phone line and a website with a wealth of resources on family caregiving. The Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers, a program specifically for eligible Post 9/11 Veterans and their caregivers offers additional supports and services, including access to health insurance and financial assistance. The primary family caregiver must meet certain criteria, but is not required to be the Veteran's spouse. Jenna's role has changed over the years, but VA's program has given her the resources she and her family need. “If it weren't for the VA, there are times I honestly don't know what we would do,” she says. Visit Explore.VA.gov to learn more about VA benefits and how to apply, or click on the button below to learn more about the Caregiver Support

Future Unmanned Aircraft to do the ‘Dull’ and ‘Dangerous’ work: The one-star leading the Army's modernization efforts for Future Vertical Lift says the service envisions using its future unmanned aircraft systems for the “dull” and the “dangerous” work. The Army doesn't just see its UAS teaming with manned aircraft like it does now with AH-64 attack helicopters and Shadow UAS, but envisions more advanced teaming than the current concept of manned-unmanned teaming — or MUM-T — allows, Brig. Gen. Wally Rugen, told a small group of reporters in a March 20 interview. Rugen is the leader of the newly formed FVL Cross-Functional Team (CFT), that addresses the third top priority out of six modernization priorities the Army will take on under its new Futures Command. The command is set up to tackle the materiel requirements to modernize the force. “That advanced teaming concept is just a deeper interoperability between the air and the ground, UAS that can do the dangerous work, that can do the dirty work,” Rugen said, “also do the dull work.” He added that UAS already do a lot of that dull work such as “persistent stare.” The unmanned systems would be there to conduct the dangerous breeches and help provide greater standoff for manned aircraft, but bringing weapons like Hellfire or its future replacement the Joint Air-to-Ground Missile (JAGM) closer in to the fight. The Gray Eagle is already armed with Hellfire missiles but the Army has been hesitant to arm other drones and does not have a requirement to do so. The Army, according to Rugen, thinks it will need a fleet of “purpose-built UAS,” which means they will be created from conception with specific capabilities like electronic attack or other non-lethal effects or are designed specifically to function as a swarm whether it's to provide decoys or spoof the enemy. Also the ability to launch a UAS from a manned aircraft or another UAS platform is another thing the service is looking seriously at, he said. “So you have some of these smaller form factors that present really great capabilities, but they don't have the legs to get to the tactical edge,” but a UAS launched from a manned platform extends its reach, Rugen said.

Dedication Ceremony Set for Monument Honoring Vietnam Helicopter Pilots, Crews: Those who wish to honor the helicopter pilots and crew members killed in Vietnam can do so on April 18 at Arlington National Cemetery. After four years, these service members will have their own monument at the Virginia cemetery. The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association spearheaded the effort, working with Arlington National Cemetery and Congress to get the monument approved. At first, the cemetery was hesitant because of the ever-shrinking space for grave sites, but supporters of the monument wrote to Congress and gained attention. Eventually, a compromise was made, and the cemetery approved the monument. The Vietnam Helicopter Pilot and Crewmember Monument will be placed in Section 35 along Memorial Drive, not far from the Tomb of the Unknowns. It honors the nearly 5,000 helicopter pilots and crew members who were killed during the Vietnam War. Those who wish to honor the helicopter pilots and crew members killed in Vietnam can do so on April 18 at Arlington National Cemetery. After four years, these service members will have their own monument at the Virginia cemetery. The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association spearheaded the effort, working with Arlington National Cemetery and Congress to get the monument approved. At first, the cemetery was hesitant because of the ever-shrinking space for grave sites, but supporters of the monument wrote to Congress and gained attention. Eventually, a compromise was made, and the cemetery approved the monument. The Vietnam Helicopter Pilot and Crewmember Monument will be placed in Section 35 along Memorial Drive, not far from the Tomb of the Unknowns. It honors the nearly 5,000 helicopter pilots and crew members who were killed during the Vietnam War. The war was known as the "helicopter war" because the United States relied heavily on the aircraft to transport troops and provide close-air support. The dedication on April 18 at 4 p.m. Eastern time is open to anyone who wants to attend and will feature Vietnam veterans along with Gold Star families.

Coast Guard Unloads \$500M of Cocaine Seized Since Early February 2018: U.S. Coast Guard crews worked to offload roughly \$500 million-worth of cocaine recently seized during more than a dozen operations in the Eastern Pacific, authorities said. The bulk of the cocaine represents what was seized by five Coast Guard cutters during 17 separate seizures between early February and early March off the coasts of Central and South America, Coast Guard officials said. All drugs seized by the five vessels were being offloaded by the crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Bertholf at San Diego's B Street Pier. "This offload by the Bertholf represents the great work being conducted in the Eastern Pacific combating the transnational organized crime groups behind the drug trade, which spread instability, fear and harm to people, communities and entire nations," said Rear Adm. Todd Sokalzuk, commander of the 11th Coast Guard District, which covers the coast of California and the offshore waters from Mexico to Chile. "Thanks in part to the hard work and dedication of the brave crewmen and women of the Bertholf, and other ships on patrol, we're seizing record amounts of cocaine for the third year in a row," Sokalzuk said. Authorities estimate the roughly 18 tons of cocaine is worth about half a billion dollars to drug traffickers.

Discipline began its decline with the demise of the swagger stick and centralized promotion boards.

Vietnam War Memorial Being Crafted in Farmington:

For many veterans of the Vietnam War, paying homage to their fallen comrades means a long trip to the nation's capital and a visit to the Vietnam War Memorial, where the names of those lost in the conflict are forever etched into stone. With the help of a Farmington business, however, Midwest veterans will soon be able to pay their respects a little closer to home. Missouri's National Veterans Memorial, a proposed full-size replica of the memorial in Washington, D.C. is planned for erection in Perryville, Missouri, under the direction of a board of directors and made possible by generous donations by a Vietnam War veteran. "What we're doing is we're building an exact replica, in every detail, of the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington, D.C.," said board President Mike Lundy. "We've worked very closely with people at the memorial in D.C." Vietnam War Veteran Jim Eddleman was the man who made the project truly possible by donating a staggering \$2.5 million plus property toward the completion of the memorial. "He started out giving \$1 million, then when he saw the project grow, he put another \$1.5 million in," Lundy said. "Then, when we were looking for ground— they'd cut a new road through his farmland, which is a third-generation farm. He said, 'Why don't I just give this piece to you and you can put it there?'" Eddleman said for him, the memorial is a way for him to give back to his fellow soldiers who never came home from the conflict in Southeast Asia. Upon completion, the memorial campus will consist not only of the wall, but a welcome center and adequate facilities for groups to hold reunions and gatherings. "We're going to have a lot more to offer than what Washington, D.C. has," Eddleman said. "We're going to have a welcome center, a museum, and we've got other things in the long-term plans as well. We've got 40-plus acres to work with, so we've got a lot of property. We're planning on having a cemetery for veterans, and we're going to have a building for reunions for different branches of service. We're trying to do everything right." We had a dream, we had a vision and we had the money," Lundy said. "We just needed someone to help us get it done. Lundy said after the project is completed, it will provide a place to pay respects to fallen Vietnam veterans in a radically different setting than the original wall in the capital. He said nearly 6 million people a year visit the wall in urban Washington, D.C., whereas the Perryville wall will be situated in a quiet, peaceful environment. "At our wall, if the Vietnam veterans have a group and want to come down and spend the day, we're going to shut it down to the public," he said. "What we're trying to do is not just a local memorial, but a national memorial." "It's going to be a completely different atmosphere than the one in D.C. because you're going to be out in the peace and silence of nature," Hale said. It is estimated that the etching of the names into the stone panels will be completed in June, with the completion of the memorial to follow.

What a difference 47 years can make..: For those not on Face book, Stoney's wife Mona shared his recent Santa picture of him in his 2017 Santa Suit. I'm sharing one of his Vietnam pictures (2nd from right) Robert Stonerook - you never looked so good! Says Jerry Hughes Robert's platoon Leader..



Reporting the Death of a Retired Soldier: Contact the Department of the Army Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Operations Center anytime by calling (800) 626-3317. You will be immediately referred to a local Casualty Assistance Center, who will report the death to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service to stop retired pay and initiate the survivor benefits process. If you reside overseas and the toll free number is not available, call your Retirement Services Officer listed on page 15 for assistance. When reporting the death, please provide as much of the information below as you have:

- Full name
- Next of kin information
- Social security number and/or service number
- Circumstances surrounding the death
- Retirement date
- Copy of the death certificate
- Retired rank
- Copy of the Statement of Service (Last DD Form 214)

SBP Premium Deductions from CRSC: If you receive Combat-Related Special Compensation (CRSC) and have the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP), you will see a change in your net pay and statements starting in April of 2018. Beginning with the SBP premiums due in April of 2018, DFAS will start deducting SBP premiums from CRSC when retired pay is not sufficient to cover the full amount of the premiums. This new deduction is due to a change in the law which requires DFAS to deduct SBP premiums from CRSC. This change affects retirees who receive CRSC and currently pay SBP premiums via direct remittance. Retirees who currently have SBP premiums deducted from their Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) pay will not be affected. This change will benefit retirees and their survivors by preventing a debt when a retiree forgets to pay the SBP premiums directly. When SBP premiums are not paid during a retiree's lifetime, it creates a debt which must be repaid from the SBP annuity a survivor receives. DFAS will begin deducting SBP premiums from the April CRSC entitlement (paid on May 1) for SBP premiums due in the month of April for all retirees with CRSC who are currently sending in their premium payments (through direct remittance). Retirees can also request to voluntarily have their SBP premiums deducted from CRSC prior to the April SBP premium. More detailed information about the required deduction of SBP premiums from CRSC (that will begin with the April 2018 CRSC entitlement paid on May 1) will be posted on our website and included in the Retiree newsletters in the coming months. If you want to have your SBP premium deducted from your CRSC before the April SBP premium, please call the DFAS Customer Care Center at 1-800-321-1080 and tell them you want to start having your SBP premium deducted from your CRSC pay. You will need to provide your full name, social security number, and a phone number where you can be reached during the day. You may also send a signed and dated letter to DFAS that has all of this information (including a phone number where you can be reached during the day). Please note that the SBP premium deduction will be part of the garnishments total on your CRSC statement. Also, until April, you will continue to receive an SBP premium bill, which will show the CRSC SBP premium deduction as a "prior payment received" once the deduction is processed.

What are three words a woman never wants to hear when she's making love? "Honey, I'm home!"

Correction of Military Records: If you believe you are the victim of an error or injustice which affects your military record, you may apply for a Correction of Military Records by completing and submitting a DD Form 149, Application for Correction of Military Record. Examples of correction include: upgraded discharge, promotions, retired pay, household goods, pay date change, bonus, and MGIB programs. DFAS pays military members when the Board for Corrections of Naval Records (BCNR) rule in their favor. If you received a decision from the BCNR and you do not agree with it, write the Board and explain your reasoning. Reference the appropriate address on page 2 of the DD Form 149. If you would like to check the status of your request contact the BCNR directly at (703) 604-6884 or 6885 (Navy/Marine Corps). If you believe DFAS paid you incorrectly for your Correction of Record, provide documentation with a handwritten signature explaining why you are protesting the amount to:

DFAS-IN

Dept. 330, Attn: COR/Claims
8899 East 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46249-3300
DFAS Inquiry Line: (317) 212-616
(Hours: 8:30 a.m to 3:30 p.m, EST)

Senate Reaches Budget Deal with Huge Defense Boost: Senate leaders have reached a two-year deal that would set defense spending at \$700 billion for 2018 and \$716 billion for 2019. Those top-lines, part of a deal announced by Senate leaders Wednesday afternoon, hews to those authorized by National Defense Authorization Act for 2018 and President Donald Trump's expected 2019 defense budget. Not all of the details were announced immediately, as bipartisan talks continued, but sources close to them said spending limits for defense and non-defense combined would be raised by \$300 billion over two years. It was not immediately clear exactly how the deal will address budget caps and how much of the defense funding will be sought as cap-exempt Overseas Contingency Operations funding. The caps, excluding OCO or Department of Energy funding, limit the Defense Department's base budget to \$549 billion for fiscal 2018 and \$562 billion for fiscal 2019. The emerging deal still may face opposition from House fiscal conservatives over proposed increases to the non-defense side of the budget and from House Democrats who sought a vote on protections for young immigrants. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said in a Senate floor speech the agreement would, "unwind the sequestration cuts that have hamstrung the military and jeopardized our national security." Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said the emerging deal could be a clean break from the budget dysfunction that has gripped Washington for years. "After months of fiscal brinkmanship, this budget deal is the first real sprout of bipartisanship. and it should break the long cycle of spending crises that have snarled this congress and hampered our middle class," Schumer said. The deal was hailed by defense advocates emerging from a meeting with McConnell on Wednesday afternoon. "I'd rather we didn't have to do as much on non-defense, but this is an absolute necessity, that we've got these numbers," said the Senate Armed Services Committee's No. 2 Republican, Sen. Jim Inhofe, of Oklahoma.

The Siege of Stalingrad resulted in more Russian deaths (military and civilian) Than the United States and Britain sustained (combined) in all of World War II.

JAMES C. McCLOUGHAN Co C 3/21 196 LIB

The Medal of Honor That Surprised Everyone

So you grow up in Bangor, Michigan, you're a four-sport varsity athlete in high school and play football, baseball and wrestling at Olivet College. Wanting to be a coach, you take courses in kinesiology, physiology, anatomy, first aid, and other related subjects. Then 3 months into your first full time high school teacher-coach job in 1968 Uncle Sammy calls with your draft notice. Then at FT Knox basic training, your background in sports medicine drives your superiors to say "*hey – you don't want to be a grunt, you want to be a medic.*"

Flash forward – and all of a sudden it was early 1969. Though the war raged at one of its peaks – 550,000 deployed, more than 11,600 of whom would be killed that year – you still felt good about your assignment as an Army medic. "I thought it would be positive," he said, "to be trying to save lives in such a negative situation." He discovered just how negative the situation could be on his first day in country. "We hit an ambush, lost two men, several injured, and I shot my first enemy soldier, he said. "That was my initiation into being a combat medic."

The in mid-May, during an air assault into an area near Tam Ky (we all know where that is), helicopters ferrying Charlie Company 3/21 came under small arms and machine gun fire as they were about to land. Two were shot down, others per SOP in a hot LZ, hovered about 8 – 10 feet off the ground while the men jumped off.

Why was the MOH a surprise you ask?

The long and the short was initially his platoon leader Randy Clark put McCloughan in for a Silver Star, but it was kicked back to a Bronze Star by brigade higher higher. The scuttlebutt talk was, "You know, typically for a grunt sort of guy, enlisted guys, it's pretty unusual to give them a Silver Star." McCloughan went home with the Bronze and began his forty year teaching and coaching career...sharing his story only with his father and an uncle.

His uncle came to him one day after James' retirement and said he knew someone in a Michigan congressman's office and was going to ask for help getting his nephew properly recognized for his actions at Tam Ky.

The platoon leader, Randy Clark was found, who said he's be happy to give it another try, but he had a different strategy in mind. "This time I'll put you in for a Distinguished Service Cross, figuring they'd knock it down to a Silver Star."

Would you believe what followed was seven years of bureaucratic awards process paperwork. One day while sitting with his wife in a Denver IHOP, he received a phone call, which made he and his wife cry. This time higher higher had got it right, as his case came across the desk of (then-Secretary of Defense) Ashton Carter, who said the DSC is not high enough. We will recommend him for the Medal of Honor. McCloughan also apparently has great faith. He said there's another reason it took nearly fifty years to get a medal others thought he deserved: "God has a plan." President and Commander-in-Chief Donald Trump awarded his MOH on 31 July 2017.

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress March 3, 1863, has awarded in the name of Congress the Medal of Honor to PRIVATE FIRST CLASS JAMES C. McCLOUGHAN * UNITED STATES ARMY

Private First Class McCloughan distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty from May 13th through 15th, 1969, while serving as a combat medic with Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry, 196th Light Infantry Brigade, Americal Division. The company air assaulted into an area near Tam Ky and Nui Yon Hill. On May 13th, with complete disregard for his life, he ran 100 meters in an open field through heavy fire to rescue a comrade too injured to move and carried him to safety. That same day, 2nd Platoon was ordered to search the area near Nui Yon Hill when the platoon was ambushed by a large North Vietnamese Army force and sustained heavy casualties. With complete disregard for his life and personal safety, Private First Class McCloughan led two Americans into the safety of a trench while being wounded by shrapnel from a rocket-propelled grenade. He ignored a direct order to stay back, and braved an enemy assault while moving into the "kill zone" on four more occasions to extract wounded comrades. He treated the injured, prepared the evacuation, and though bleeding heavily from shrapnel wounds on his head and entire body, refused evacuation to safety in order to remain at the battle site with his fellow soldiers who were heavily outnumbered by the North Vietnamese Army forces. On May 14th, the platoon was again ordered to move out towards Nui Yon Hill. Private First Class McCloughan was wounded a second time by small arms fire and shrapnel from a rocket-propelled grenade while rendering aid to two soldiers in an open rice paddy. In the final phases of the attack, two companies from 2nd North Vietnamese Army Division and an element of 700 soldiers from a Viet Cong regiment descended upon Charlie Company's position on three sides. Private First Class McCloughan, again with complete disregard for his life, went into the crossfire numerous times throughout the battle to extract the wounded soldiers, while also fighting the enemy. His relentless and courageous actions inspired and motivated his comrades to fight for their survival. When supplies ran low, Private First Class McCloughan volunteered to hold a blinking strobe light in an open area as a marker for a nighttime resupply drop. He remained steadfast while bullets landed all around him and rocket-propelled grenades flew over his prone, exposed body. During the morning darkness of May 15th, Private First Class McCloughan knocked out a rocket-propelled grenade position with a grenade, fought and eliminated enemy soldiers, treated numerous casualties, kept two critically-wounded soldiers alive through the night, and organized the dead and wounded for evacuation at daylight. His timely and courageous actions were instrumental in saving the lives of his fellow soldiers. Private First Class McCloughan's personal heroism, professional competence, and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, the Americal Division, and the United States Army.