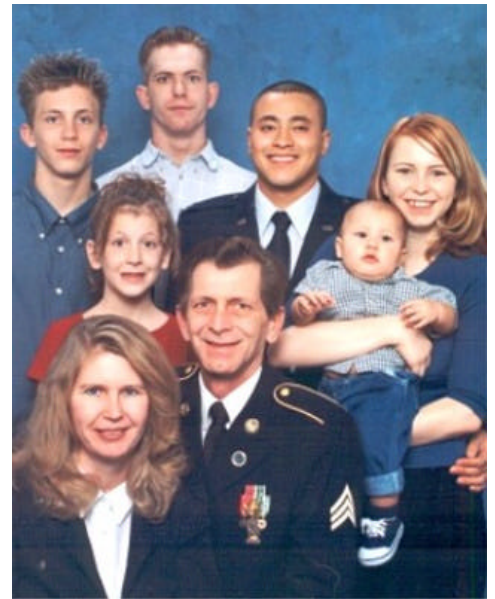


About The Author:

DOUG STERNER

“Mr. Doug Sterner, in the truest sense of the word, is a genuine “All American.” As a patriot he is the best of the best. His passion for our country, our citizens and our children runs deep in his veins. He feels in his soul the great indebtedness we have to our country for the freedoms we enjoy. Doug speaks with great enthusiasm and a tremendous fervor, leaving you with your heart racing, standing taller and possibly drawing a tear from your eye, feeling proud to be an American.

*Peter C. Lemon, Recipient
Congressional Medal of Honor*

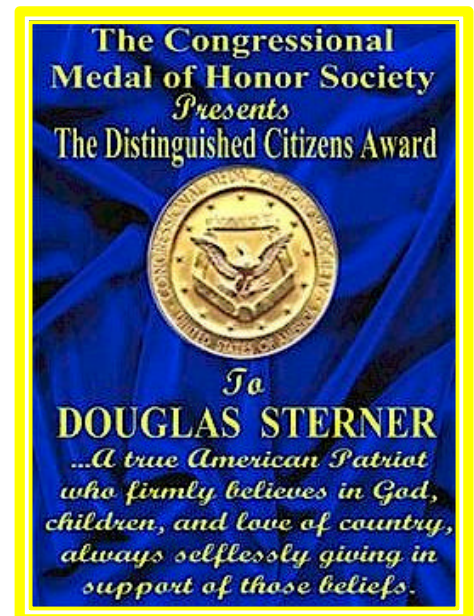


Doug Sterner is a popular author, speaker, Webmaster and historian who has dedicated his life to preserving the stories of some of our Nation's greatest heroes. He has single-handedly authored more than 15,000 web pages in his popular site at www.HomeOfHeroes.com. A dedicated public servant in his hometown of Pueblo, Colorado; he initiated and organized several programs to introduce Medal of Honor recipients to the community, including a series of school assemblies that brought history and inspiration to more than 32,000 youth in one day of activities. He and his wife Pam's continuing programs resulted in the community bidding for and hosting the Medal of Honor convention in Pueblo in September 2000. Other activities have resulted in local schools promoting and passing legislation in two states authorizing distinctive Medal of Honor license plates.

Doug is a decorated, two-tour veteran of service in Vietnam where he served as a squad leader in the US Army. Following discharge from active duty, he spent 6 years as a member of the Montana National Guard. In 1998 the Congressional Medal of Honor Society recognized the continuing efforts of the Sterner Family when it presented Doug with its prestigious and unique Distinguished Citizens Award. In 1999 Governor Bill Owens appointed Doug to the Colorado State Board of Veterans Affairs. In 2001 he was elected Chairman of the Colorado State Board of Veterans Affairs.

“It's hard to say whether Doug Sterner has done more for his country or for his fellow man. He loves them both and works hard to instill that love in the next generation.”

Adrian Cronauer
“Good Morning Vietnam”



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HomeOfHeroes.com Electronic Books

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 <p>Day of Infamy A Tribute to the Victims and Heroes of Pearl Harbor</p>	 <p>Go For Broke A Tribute To the Nisei Warriors Of World War II</p>	 <p>The Brotherhood of Soldiers At War</p>
A chronology of the events at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, with highlights of the stories of 15 men who received Medals of Honor.	The story of the Japanese-Americans who defended freedom during World War II, detailing the actions of the 100 th Infantry and 442 nd RCT.	Twelve stories of brothers, either biological or fraternal, who pulled together when the "chips were down" to protect and serve each other.
 <p>A Splendid Little War A Chronology of Heroism In the Spanish-American War</p>	 <p>Shinmiyangyo The Other Korean War</p>	 <p>Bonnes NouvellesAbove and Beyond the Call of Duty</p>
A chronology of the stories of heroism and the events of the Spanish-American War..	A 50-page history of the <i>Other Korean War</i> – the American invasion of Korea in 1861 called Shinmiyangyo..	A 50-page tribute to the recipients of the Medal of Honor, all written by eight graders at a school in Louisiana.

Additional Electronic Books Coming Soon:

- Men of Valor – Men of Faith
- Wings of Valor (A Three Volume Set)
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Somalia

Gary Gordon

Gary Gordon was born on August 30, 1960. He was a master sergeant. He received the Medal of Honor in 1994 for his bravery in Somalia. He was dropped from his helicopter with a fellow soldier to help a downed and wounded pilot. No one made him go; he volunteered. He risked his life to go and save a fellow soldier. That is why he is deemed a hero. When he was on the ground, he gave some ammunition to the hurt helicopter pilot. That was what saved the man's life. Not a soul knows what was going through his mind, but he gave his life for another person. He went above and beyond the call of duty. That is true bravery. He was a sniper team leader from the state of Maine. So as an excellent marksman, he was able to hold off the attacking Somalians for a period of time before he himself was killed. He was awarded the medal after the pilot told the story.



He is my hero because he risked his life for another person. That takes a lot of guts to do what Gary Gordon did. That is why he is a true American hero.

Randy Shughart

I picked Randy Shughart because he chose to go down to the overcrowded streets in Somalia to save one downed and wounded pilot. He could have said that he didn't want to, and nobody would have thought any less of him. People like Shughart realize in time of war, courage and heroism are needed. Randy Shughart and his partner, Gary Gordon, thought up the plan to get help to the downed pilot. It was not an order.



By his choice to do this, Shughart was willing to give up his life for his country. In time of war, when you look to your right, there is someone coming at you from your left, and when you look up to your left, there is someone coming at you from your right. Shughart and Gordon worked their way to the pilot. Randy Shughart ran out of ammo, and was killed. His partner also got killed. The pilot was brought to safety eventually, after being captured, and went home (two days after Shughart's and Gordon's bodies). Their defense saved his life. I admire Randy Shughart because he had the courage to do what hardly any other man or woman would do.



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Hilliard Almond Wilbanks

Captain Hilliard Wilbanks served in the U.S. Air Force in the Vietnam War near Dalat. He entered the service in Atlanta, Georgia and was born in Cornelia, Georgia. His actions took place on Friday, February 24, 1967, and he was killed in his actions at the age of thirty-three.

While serving as a forward air controller, flying an unarmed light aircraft above the heads of a group of army rangers, he could see the ranger unit was coming under enemy fire. To protect and take the enemy attention off the army rangers, Captain Wilbanks began making very low passes over the enemy while sticking his own .50 caliber machine gun out of the window of his aircraft and firing profusely. Captain Wilbanks did this many times causing many numerous casualties and taking enemy attention off of the rangers and allowing them to get to safety. On what was to be his last pass, his aircraft was shot down causing his death.



In doing these actions Captain Wilbanks was recognized and received the Medal of Honor. The medal was later presented to his wife. He received the Medal of Honor for worrying only about his fellow soldiers and not himself. I admire this man because he died just to protect and save the lives of his fellow soldiers.

Gerald O. Young

Captain Gerald O. Young distinguished himself while serving as a helicopter rescue commander in Vietnam. He was attempting the night rescue of an Army ground reconnaissance team that was in danger of death or capture. The first helicopter was able to extract three of the stranded team members before it was severely damaged. Captain Young hovered under intense fire until the remaining survivors were aboard. As he was leaving the area, the helicopter was hit by enemy fire and crashed, inverted, and burst into flames. Despite

intense pain from third degree burns, Captain Young aided one of the wounded men and attempted to lead the enemy away from the downed aircraft. For more than seventeen hours he evaded the enemy until a rescue aircraft could be brought into the area.



Captain Gerald O. Young is an American hero because he showed extraordinary courage in the line of fire. He put the safety of others above concern for himself. His actions should inspire us all to be more courageous.

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After a little while, the intense enemy fire pinned down elements of his company. Leading his reserve platoon to the aid of his beleaguered men, Major Vargas inspired his men to renew their relentless advances. They destroyed a number of enemy bunkers. While being wounded by grenade fragments, Jay refused aid as he moved through a hazardous area reorganizing his unit into a strong defensive company at the edge of the village. Company G was attacked many times during the night but still stood very strong. They were reinforced the following morning. The marines launched a renewed assault through Dai Do on the village Dinh To, to which the enemy retaliated with a massive counter attack resulting in hand-to-hand combat.



Maj. Vargas remained in the open, encouraging and rendering assistance to his men when he was hit for the third time in the three-day battle. Noticing his battalion commander had sustained a serious wound; he disregarded his own pain, crossed the fire swept area, and carried his commander to a covered position. Then Maj. Vargas resumed supervising and encouraging his company while simultaneously assisting in organizing the battalion's perimeter defense. His remarkable actions uphold the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the US Naval Service. I admire Major Jay Vargas for putting his life on the line for other people and for his incredible heroism in the Marine Corps.

Charles J. Watters

On the morning of November 19, 1967, Major Charles J. Watters, a Roman Catholic priest from New Jersey, had celebrated mass with the men of the 2nd Battalion before they started up Hill 875 in Dak To, Vietnam. In the months before Dak To, Father Watters had been a comfort for many of the weary men of the 173rd Brigade. When a wounded soldier had frozen in shock in front of the enemy, Father Watters ran forward, picked the man up by his shoulders, and carried him to safety. Six times he went beyond the perimeter, with complete disregard for his safety, to retrieve wounded men, braving heavy enemy fire. Unarmed and completely exposed, he did this without hesitation and ignored attempts to restrain him.



In the late afternoon, with so many men lying wounded in the hot sun, Father Watters continued to perform his duties by assisting the medics in applying field bandages to open wounds, tending to the needs of the men by obtaining and serving food and water, and by giving spiritual and mental comfort in administering the last rites. Father Watters was giving aid to the wounded when he himself was mortally wounded.



Father Watters' selfless devotion to his comrades was in keeping with the highest traditions of the U. S. Army. He courageously sacrificed his own life to put the needs of others before him. Because Father Watters unselfishly saw to the needs of his comrades on Hill 875, both physically and mentally, he is one of the most outstanding and deserving persons to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor.

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His standard of conduct as a Prisoner of War speaks of his strength of character as he acted on principle never knowing his actions would be rewarded. I think this makes him a true American Hero because of his obvious devotion to duty, love of country, and complete disregard of self. Would that many young people would follow his example and do the right thing even if it goes seemingly unnoticed.

This tribute was written by Julia Fontenot, a teacher at Sacred Heart Elementary and coordinator of this eighth grade project

James Bond Stockdale

James B. Stockdale was a naval captain who was shot down during the Vietnam War. He was brought to the Hoa Lo prisoner-of-war camp. He was the senior officer in the camp and did a good job leading the other prisoners. During his prison stay he was singled out for interrogation and attendant torture after he was detected in a covert communications attempt. When the Vietnamese tried to use Stockdale for propaganda objectives, he cut his head with a razor and hit himself with a leg of a chair. As a result, they put him back in his cell without an interrogation.

In doing what he did, he endured physical pain to set an example to the other inmates. In an attempt to send messages to other men in the prison, Stockdale was caught. The Vietnamese told him he would be tortured the next day, and the only escape was death. In an effort to escape the affliction, Stockdale took a light bulb and broke it in his hands. He cut his wrists causing himself to faint. He was surprised as he woke up to be in the company of the leader of the prison. The leader told Stockdale that he had won, and there would be better living conditions.



I believe this man, Captain Jim Stockdale, is a true American hero because of his willingness to lay his life on the line to set an example and save his fellow prisoners. His courage to endure physical and mental anguish showed his loyalty to his country and his camaraderie with his friends. This man should be a true role model for kids because of his great love for our country.



Jay R. Vargas

Jay R. Vargas was a major in the United States Marine Corps, Company G, 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Amphibious Brigade during the Vietnam War. While Major Jay Vargas was in action against enemy forces from April 30 to May 2, 1968, he was awarded the greatest medal given in the US Military, the Medal of Honor. On May 1, 1968, though suffering from wounds he had incurred while relocating his unit under heavy enemy fire the preceding day, Maj. Vargas combined Company G with two other companies and he led his men in an attack on the village of Dai Do. Being an expert leader, he moved his marines across 700 meters of open rice fields while under intense enemy mortar, rocket, and artillery fire and obtained a foothold in two rows on the enemy territory.



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Clarence Eugene Sasser

Clarence Eugene Sasser served as a medical aid man in the United States Army during the Vietnam War. His company was making an air assault when it was suddenly taken under heavy small arms, machine gun, and rocket fire from fierce enemy positions on three sides of the landing zone. In just a few minutes, more than 30 casualties were sustained. Without hesitation, Sp4c. Sasser ran across an open rice paddy through a hail of fire to assist the many wounded. Despite many painful wounds and loss of blood, he refused any medical treatment. He continued to give urgently needed treatment to the injured and persisted in searching for others. Although his legs were immobilized from two additional wounds, he dragged himself through the mud to bring hundreds of soldiers to safety. There he attended their wounds for five hours until they were evacuated.



I admire Sp4c. Sasser for his extraordinary courage and heroism. He completely put aside his own pain to help others in need. I believe he is a terrific role model for others. Although he was not a famous actor or well-known basketball player, he is definitely a true American hero.

Lance Peter Sijan

Captain Lance Peter Sijan died of pneumonia, wounds, and malnutrition in Hanoi's Hoa Lo Prison on January 22, 1968. Two months earlier he had ejected from his disabled aircraft and successfully evaded capture in the jungles of North Vietnam for six weeks. During this time he was seriously wounded and suffering from shock and weight loss as he attempted to live off the land. Once captured by the North Vietnamese, he overpowered one of his guards and crawled into the jungle again only to be retaken in a matter of hours. Then kept in solitary confinement and interrogated at length by means of severe torture, Captain Sijan managed not to reveal any information to his captors. Finally, due to his state of delirium, he was placed into the care of fellow prisoners to whom he never complained of his physical condition and often spoke to of future escape attempts.



The Medal of Honor was presented posthumously by President Gerald Ford to his parents. Lance Sijan is the only graduate of the Air Force Academy to receive our nation's highest military honor. I particularly admire this recipient because he epitomizes the kind of Air Force officer that our nation is training at the Academy. I learned of Captain Sijan a few years ago when my son and daughter began attending the Academy and they spoke so admiringly of him.

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to save the lives of Marines so they could go home to see their families' faces one more day. He died so young, he didn't have a life. He gave his life for every single person that lives today. We should respect what this man did. Most people have no idea that all these wars even happened much less about the Medal of Honor. I am saying it did happen, and I know the true heroes in life. His actions are truly "above and beyond the call of duty". I think everyone should know that he is just one of many people who saved us in an extraordinary way and deserves more than just a medal, he deserves everybody's respect.



In honor of this man, I will show my true respect. This is not a famous man. He is not greatly remembered or talked about in the media, yet this is my tribute to him hoping that it might inspire someone to get these heroes recognized in our mixed up society today.

Alfred Rascon

Alfred Rascon was born in Chihuahua, Mexico, to immigrants who came to the U. S. to provide a better life for their family. He was not even an U.S. citizen when he joined the Army, but he enlisted to support the country he came to love and consider his homeland. On March 16, 1966, his platoon was fighting in the Vietnamese jungle when they came under attack. Rascon ran past bullets to rescue an injured comrade. He was shot in the hip and suffered many wounds when a grenade exploded in his face. Despite the wounds, he helped comrades to safety, brought ammunition to a gunner, and then covered two wounded soldiers with his body, taking grenade blasts and saving both of their lives. Only days after his brave actions, Rascon was recommended for the Medal of Honor, but the paperwork was lost. It was not until the comrades that he saved petitioned the Pentagon that his medal would be confirmed. Thirty-four years later, on February 9, 2000, Alfred Rascon of Laurel, Maryland received the Congressional Medal of Honor.



I believe Alfred Rascon deserved the Medal of Honor because he showed great loyalty to a country he was not a citizen of, and because he unselfishly thought of others before taking caution for his own life.

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Gary W. Martini

Gary Martini was a Private First Class, U.S. Marine Corps, Company F. On April 21, 1967 at Binh Son, Vietnam, Martini's company came across a firmly entrenched enemy force and immediately deployed to engage them. The enemy had hand grenades, intense small arms, automatic weapons and mortal fire. Martini's marines had 14 killed and 18 wounded while the rest of the platoon was pinned down behind a low paddy dike. Martini immediately crawled over the dike to an open area where he was exposed to hostile fire and threw hand grenades, killing several of the enemy.



Crawling back through the hostile fire, he joined his platoon, which had moved to the safety of a trench line. From this safe position he could see several of his wounded comrades helpless in the paddy. Even though Martini knew that one man had been killed trying to help the wounded, he raced through the open area and dragged a comrade back to a friendly place. In spite of a serious wound he got during the first drag, he tried again braving the unrelenting fury of the enemy fire to aid another companion that was wounded and only about 20 meters in front of the enemy trench line. As Martini reached the fallen marine, he received a mortal wound, but disregarding his own condition, he began to drag the marine toward his platoon's position. The men watching from his unit tried to leave security to help him, but in his concern for their safety, he called to them to remain under cover, and through a last super effort, moved his injured comrade to where he could be pulled to safety before he fell from his own wounds.



Now I understand why we say the pledge everyday. It is to honor these people who forget about themselves to save lives of men that are fighting for us. Someone doesn't come and tell you to join the Marines, you do it on your own. That is my reason for picking this man as my special recipient.

William T. Perkins

My most inspiring person is William T. Perkins. He courageously fought in Vietnam as a combat photographer. On October 12, 1967 he was with three other Marines who were in heavy fighting areas at a helicopter landing zone, which also served as the Command Post of company C. One of the enemies' grenades landed next to the four Marines. With the knowledge that something had to be done soon, Perkins yelled, "incoming grenade!" and right before it exploded, not thinking of the option that he would die, and trying to save the other Marine's lives, he threw himself upon the grenade, absorbing the impact of the blast. He died.



I chose this courageous man because this kind of sacrifice should be the idea for which America stands. He had so much pride in his country that he willingly threw himself on a grenade

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John L. Levitow

Sergeant John L. Levitow was an Air force man flying a night mission on an AC-47 aircraft during the Vietnam War. He and his comrades were launching flares for the ground troops in battle. While they were launching the flares, the plane was hit by a bomb causing a flare to be thrown back into the plane. Sergeant Levitow had forty fragment wounds in the back of his legs however; he began helping his comrades despite his own injuries. Sergeant Levitow started toward the burning flare, but he could not grasp it, so he threw his body on the deadly flare. Struggling to the back of the plane to throw the flare out, Sergeant Levitow had to overcome severe pain and anguish. When the flare cleared the plane, it separated and ignited.



Without thinking of any personal danger, he saved himself and his comrades. In doing so I think he deserved the Medal of Honor very much for his bravery. I admire Sergeant Levitow greatly because of his ability to do such an extraordinary deed and save lives.

Gary Lee Littrell

Gary Lee Littrell was born October 26, 1944 in Henderson, Kentucky. He entered the service at Los Angeles, California, when he joined the Army. He quickly moved up in rank and became a Sergeant First Class on Advisory Team 21, I Corps Advisory Group and was soon stationed in Kontum Province, Republic of Vietnam.

April 8, 1970 it began. It was only one of many battles of the Vietnam War. Sergeant Littrell was finally ordered to withdraw his unit, when numerous ambushes were encountered. Sfc. Littrell repeatedly prevented widespread disorder by directing air strikes to within fifty meters of their position. Through his indomitable courage



and complete disregard for his safety, he averted excessive loss of life and injury to the members of the battalion. The sustained extraordinary courage and selflessness displayed by Sfc. Littrell over an extended period of time were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service, and reflect great credit on him and the U.S. Army.



I think Gary Lee Littrell deserved the Congressional Medal of Honor because he went out of his way to save the lives of his friends and teammates. He put his life on the line for his country and thought of others before himself.

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Charles C. Hagemeister

Specialist Fifth Class Charles C. Hagemeister was in the Vietnam War. He received the Medal of Honor on May 14, 1968. Specialist Hagemeister saved the life of his two comrades while conducting combat operations against enemy forces. He ran through deadly fire to provide medical attention and words of encouragement to the fallen comrades. At the end of this combat mission, Hagemeister killed a sniper and three other men who tried to encircle the group.



Specialist Hagemeister does not consider himself a hero, but I do. His actions have made the United States of America a proud place in which to live. It was his actions that have helped to make us free. His conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action, at the risk of his life, above and beyond the call of duty, has made me proud to say he is truly an American hero.

Jack H. Jacobs

Captain Jacobs was serving as Assistant Battalion Advisor, 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division, Republic of Vietnam. He earned his Medal of Honor on March 9, 1962, during operations in Kien Phong Province. This was during the Vietnam War.

On that day his unit came under strong attack. He asked for air attacks against the enemy. He was hit by mortar fragments. Though bleeding profusely from his wounds, he took over complete control of the unit and reorganized it for its defense and attack. He also made many trips through the rice paddies evacuating the wounded men. In his evacuations he saved one U.S. Advisor and thirteen allied soldiers.



I feel he is a true American Hero because he never thought of himself. He was always there for his fellow soldiers. He led the men like a true hero. He risked his life for his country and that makes him a true American Hero.

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Rodney Maxwell Davis

Sgt. Rodney Maxwell Davis received the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as the right guide of the 2nd platoon, Company B, in action against enemy forces in Vietnam. Elements of the 2nd platoon were pinned down by a numerically superior force of attacking North Vietnamese Army Regulars. Only a few members of the platoon were located in a trench line where Sgt. Davis was distracting enemy fire away from his men.

Disregarding the enemy hand grenades and high volume of small arms and mortar fire, he moved from man to man keeping their spirits high, throwing grenades at the enemy. Then an enemy's grenade landed in the proximity of his men. Realizing the gravity of the situation he threw himself upon the grenade to save his men, absorbing the full force of the explosion and protecting his men. Through total extraordinary initiative and inspiring valor in the face of almost certain death, Sgt. Davis saved his comrades from injury and possible loss of life, enabling his platoon to hold its vital position, and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the U.S. Naval Service. He bravely gave his life for his country.



Out of all the citations I have read, this is the most fascinating because I can't believe someone would throw their body on a grenade to save their friends. This person was very courageous, to sacrifice himself for God and country.

George E. Day

On August 1967, George E. Day was forced to eject from his aircraft over North Vietnam when it was hit by ground fire. His right arm was broken in three places and left knee was badly sprained. He was immediately captured and taken to a prison camp, where he was interrogated and severely tortured. When the guards were not looking he broke-out and escaped into the jungle. He headed south toward South Vietnam.

Despite injuries inflicted by fragments of a bomb from nearby, he continued south surviving only on a few berries and uncooked frogs. Due to delirium from the bomb's loud noise, he lost his sense of direction and aimlessly wandered for several days. He was ambushed and recaptured by the Viet Cong, sustaining gunshot wounds to his left hand and thigh. He was tortured more and could not even perform the simplest task for himself. He was still tortured and did not tell any of the Air Force's secrets.



I think that he did the unbelievable by sustaining all of that torture that he received, and to survive in the jungle on frogs and berries is amazing. Mr. Day is a true hero in my eyes. It is just so incredible that he was just a regular person that did the outstanding feat and lived to tell the story. That is why we honor him for his conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life "above and beyond the call of duty."

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aircraft did cartwheels, which made it impossible for him to escape and he was killed performing his duties to the United States Air Force.



I chose this Medal of Honor recipient because of the bravery that he had and because he risked his own life for the life of his companion. He is also a native of the state of Louisiana and I am proud to say that I am too. This man inspired me with his conspicuous bravery above and beyond the call of duty.

Ronald L. Coker

Private First Class Ronald L. Coker was in the US Marine Corps, Company M, and 3rd Marine Division. He was born on August 9, 1947, in Alliance, Nebraska. The action that earned him the Medal of Honor took place in Quang Tri Province in the Republic of Vietnam on March 24, 1969. PFC Coker was serving as the point man for the 2nd Platoon.

While leading his patrol he encountered five enemy soldiers along the jungle trail. When the squad got closer to a cave along that trail, it came under intense hostile fire, wounding one marine and forcing the others to take cover immediately. PFC Coker disregarded what was happening and crawled across the fire swept terrain to his wounded companion. Although wounded himself, he continued to crawl across the hazardous area and threw a hand grenade into the enemy positions. By staying down under the enemy fire, was able to reach the wounded marine. As he began to drag his injured comrade toward safety, an enemy grenade landed on the wounded marine. Coker grabbed the grenade with both hands, it exploded as he threw it, injuring him severely. PFC Coker's heroic deed inspired his fellow marines into such aggressive action that the enemy fire was suppressed and he was able to get the wounded marine to safety. He was given first aid as well and soon removed to safety and a hospital.



I admire Private First Class Ronald Coker because he was a very brave man and a devoted soldier who put the safety of another before himself. He had become known as one who cared for his comrades, and in a most dramatic way, he had shown that he would not abandon them. I believe that he was a most deserving recipient of the Medal of Honor.

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Sgt. Anderson never stopped fighting in order to save himself; he continued to act responsible for the other men in his unit. He was totally unselfish and a good leader. He thought more about helping the others than just about saving himself.

Oscar P. Austin

Oscar P. Austin was born on January 15, 1948 in Nacogdoches, Texas. He entered the service at Phoenix, Arizona. He was a Private First Class in the United States Marine Corps. He was serving as an assistant machine gunner with Company E. In the early morning, Pfc. Austin's observation post was attacked by a large North Vietnamese force. He saw an unconscious companion, hazardingly close to firing. Pfc. Austin implicitly left his safe position and dashed across the battlefield to help the marine to a safe position. As he got closer, he saw an enemy grenade land nearby. He immediately jumped between the injured marine and the deadly object. As a result, he consumed the effects of its explosion. He ignored his grievous injuries and turned to assist the wounded man. As he was doing so, he saw a North Vietnamese soldier aiming his weapon toward his unconscious companion.



Pfc. Austin audaciously threw himself between the injured man and the enemy soldier with full knowledge of what would happen. By his fearless and dauntless actions, he was mortally wounded. He was only 21 years old at the time of his death. For these courageous actions, he received the Medal of Honor.

I think that he is a great American hero because he gallantly gave his life for his country and the safety of his fellow men. I admire him because he went above and beyond the call of duty. He did not have to do what he did, but chose to do what he knew was right.

Steven Logan Bennett

I have chosen Capt. Bennett because of his conspicuous bravery during the Vietnam War. He was the pilot of a light aircraft flying an artillery adjustment mission along a heavily defended route structure. Capt. Bennett asked for air support but he was advised that there was not to be given. After many passes the enemy started to retreat, but Capt. Bennett was still attacking them. After five such passes Capt. Bennett's aircraft was struck by an enemy bullet, which severely damaged the left engine and the left main landing gear.

As the fire spread, he realized that recovery at an airfield was impossible. He instructed his observer to prepare for ejection, but was informed by the observer that the parachute had been shredded. Capt. Bennett gave his good parachute to the observer and he successfully made it out of the aircraft and was rescued. Capt. Bennett tried the unthinkable when he elected to ditch the aircraft into the Gulf of Tonkin. The



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pulled the grenade to his chest and curled around it as it went off. Even though some of his fellow Marines received minor wounds, Pfc. Anderson's body absorbed the major force of the explosion. He gallantly and without hesitation gave his life for his country.

For Pfc. Anderson's heroism, extraordinary valor, his actions above and beyond the call of duty, and the ultimate sacrifice of his life, he was awarded the Marine Corps Congressional Medal of Honor. In my opinion, he was very worthy of receiving this medal because he gave his life for his friends and his country. I would be honored to have him as my friend.

Richard Anderson

Lance Corporal Richard A. Anderson was serving as an assistant team leader with Company E on August 24, 1969, in the Vietnam War in connection with combat operations against an armed enemy. While conducting a patrol in the early morning hours, Lance Corporal Anderson's reconnaissance team came under a heavy volume of automatic weapons and machine gun fire, from an outnumbering superior and well concealed enemy force. Although shot in both legs and knocked down to the ground during the initial phase of the fierce fight, Lance Corporal Anderson assumed a prone position and continued to



deliver intense suppressive fire in an attempt to drive back the enemy. Moments later, he was wounded a second time by an enemy that had approached within eight feet from him. He continued to fire at the enemy even while he was being treated. Observing a grenade land between him and another marine, Anderson unhesitatingly rolled over it absorbing the full impact.



I think that Lance Corporal Richard Anderson is a true American hero because he gave up his life to save another person's life in combat for our country. This is truly an unselfish act and he should be recognized by future generations.

Webster Anderson

I chose Staff Sergeant "Webster Anderson as the most inspiring recipient of the Medal of Honor because he was a very brave man. He set aside his own injuries and suffering in order to save others. On October 15, 1967, a North Vietnamese Army unit attacked him and his men. He positioned himself behind a howitzer. Even after a grenade wounded both his legs, he continued to fight. He also encouraged the other men to continue fighting. When an enemy grenade landed in the gun pit, Sergeant Anderson picked it up and attempted to throw it away in order to save his men. The grenade exploded, again wounding Sgt. Anderson. He refused medical evacuation even though by now he was severely wounded. Barely conscious, he was able to maintain the defensive position and defeat the enemy. Eventually, he lost both legs and part of one arm to the injuries he sustained, but he did survive.



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Vietnam War

William E. Adams

Major William E. Adams made himself a nation wide hero on May 25, 1971. His great skill as a pilot, his bravery, and his great selflessness all helped him achieve the most honorable title there is --a hero. To do this, Major Adams, while serving as a helicopter pilot in Kontum Province in the Republic of Vietnam, volunteered to fly a lightly armed helicopter in an attempt to rescue three wounded soldiers in a base that was under heavy fire. Even though he knew the extreme danger in which he was putting himself, he courageously flew down to get them through heavy machine gun fire. He very skillfully landed his helicopter on the base, and waited for the soldiers to be loaded on board. As his helicopter was leaving, it was seriously damaged.



Despite the fact that the helicopter was greatly damaged, using his great skill, he was still able to regain control of the aircraft. While attempting to make an emergency landing, the helicopter, unfortunately, exploded, overturned, and plummeted towards the earth.

Even though Major Adams did not make it back alive with the three rescued soldiers, I think that he is still definitely worthy of receiving the Congressional Medal of Honor. Because of his bravery and selflessness, Major William E. Adams set an example for all people to follow. He is a true hero and an inspiration for all generations.

James Anderson, Jr.

Private First Class James Anderson entered the United States Armed Forces at Los Angeles, California. He applied to the United States Marine Corps, 2nd Platoon, Company F, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines, 3rd Marine Division. During a tour of duty in Vietnam, Pfc. Anderson's Company F was advancing forward into the dense jungle northwest of Cam Lo, Vietnam in an effort to extract a heavily besieged reconnaissance patrol. Private Anderson's platoon was in the lead and had advanced only about 200 meters when they were brought under extremely intense enemy small-arms and automatic weapons fire. The platoon realized too late that they had advanced to within 20 meters of the enemy position. The firefight continued for some time and several members of Pfc. Anderson's platoon had been wounded.



Without warning, an enemy grenade landed amongst the marines and came to rest alongside Pfc. Anderson's head. Without hesitation and with complete disregard for his personal safety, Pfc. Anderson

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Mitchell Red Cloud, Jr.

Mitchell Red Cloud was born July 2, 1924, in Hatfield, Wisconsin. On November 5, 1950, he was serving in the U.S. Army, Company E, 19th Infantry Regiment in Chonghyon, Korea. Corporal Red Cloud was positioned on the point of a ridge immediately in front of his company's command post. As Chinese Communist forces approached, he was the first to detect their presence and give the alarm as the enemy charged from the brush less than 100 feet from him. Red Cloud immediately delivered devastating automatic rifle fire into the enemy. His quick action briefly stopped the assault thus gaining time for his company to regroup. Severely wounded by enemy fire, he maintained his firing position. Continuing with utter fearlessness, he pulled himself to his feet, wrapped his arm around a tree, and continued his deadly fire until he was fatally wounded. Red Cloud's heroic act stopped the enemy from overrunning his company's position and gained time for his company to reorganize and evacuate the wounded. Cpl. Red Cloud's dauntless courage and gallant self-sacrifice reflects the highest credit upon himself and upholds the esteemed traditions of the U.S. Army.



Corporal Mitchell Red Cloud did not live to receive his Congressional Medal of Honor. It was presented posthumously to his family. His courageous acts undoubtedly saved many lives allowing his fellow soldiers to continue to fight for our country.

I think that Mitchell Red Cloud is a real hero. He did not think of his safety when he risked his life to protect his company. Learning about the Congressional Medal of Honor recipients has changed the way I think about our veterans. Many of them risked everything for our country. They are really heroes.

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Hiroshi H. Miyamura

Hiroshi H. Miyamura served in the United States Army in the Korean War. On the night of April the twenty-fourth, Company H was occupying a defensive position when the enemy keenly attacked, threatening to break and overrun the defensive position. Miyamura, without hesitating, jumped from his defensive position and killed approximately ten of the enemy soldiers with his bayonet. After killing the enemy soldiers, Miyamura quickly returned to his defensive position. Miyamura administered first aid to the wounded and directed them to their evacuation.



Another assault came his way. But this time he manned his machine gun and was rapidly firing until he was out of ammunition. Miyamura ordered the squad to withdraw while he stayed back and submitted bullets into his machine gun. Miyamura then bayoneted his way through infiltrated enemy soldiers until he reached a second gun emplacement and assisted in its operation by pulling the trigger. When the climax of the attack was coming, Miyamura told his men to stay back while he would kill over fifty men with his machine gun. But in the process of this achievement of killing over fifty soldiers, Miyamura was severely wounded. Even though Miyamura was badly wounded, he continued to fend off the enemy soldiers until his position was overrun.



Miyamura's spirited heroism and devotion to duty reflect extreme glory on himself and sustain the memorable traditions of military service. I admire Hiroshi H. Miyamura because he risked his life by telling his squad to stay back while he would protect them and kill enemy soldiers one by one.

Herbert K. Pililaau

Herbert K. Pililaau is a Medal of Honor Recipient. He was born in Hawaii and served in the United States Army in the Korean War. He is ranked as a Private First Class.

It was on September 1951 at Pia-ri, Korea when his actions so valiantly earned him the Medal of Honor. The enemy had been sending wave after wave of fanatical troops against his platoon which held a key terrain feature on "Heartbreak Ridge." Valiantly defending its position, the unit defended each attack until ammunition became practically exhausted and it was ordered to withdraw to a new position. Volunteering to remain behind to cover the withdrawal, Private First Class Pililaau fired his automatic weapon into the



ranks of the assailants, threw all his grenades and, with ammunition exhausted, closed with hand-to-hand combat, courageously fighting with his trench knife and bare fists. He was finally overcome and was mortally wounded. When the position was subsequently retaken, more than 40 enemy dead were counted in the area he had so valiantly defended. His heroic devotion to duty, indomitable fighting spirit, and gallant self-sacrifice earned him the Medal of Honor. On March 3, 1983, the President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, awarded, in the name of the Congress the Medal of Honor posthumously to: PRIVATE FIRST CLASS HERBERT K. PILILAAU, United States Army.

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Korean War

Charles G. Abrell

Charles G. Abrell was born August 12, 1931, in Terre Haute, Indiana. At the age of 20 he joined the U.S. Marine Corps and later became a Corporal. On June 10, 1951, he went to battle in the Korean War with his army. Corporal Abrell spontaneously rushed forward, through the invading enemy squad, and he proceeded to carry out a bold, single-handed attack against the enemy bunker. Earlier he was wounded by a hand grenade. He sustained two additional wounds as he stormed the bunker. He pulled the pin from a grenade and held it in his hand while he jumped into the bunker. Fatally wounded in the explosion, the entire enemy gun crew was killed. His courage and heroic energy to serve his country ended his life.



I chose Charles G. Abrell for my recipient, because I thought about what he did and I don't think I could be brave enough to kill myself like he did. I chose Charles G. Abrell for his bravery and strength to go above and beyond his call of duty.

Fernando Garcia

Fernando Garcia was a First Class Private who served as a U.S. Marine in the Korean War. He was awarded the medal for his unlimited bravery and selfless act. Garcia was gallantly defending a combat outpost more than one mile ahead of the mainline of resistance. His outpost was under a ferocious night attack. Executing this attack was an enemy force employing grenades, mortars, and artillery. Already suffering from strenuous wounds, Garcia moved through the hellish enemy fire to a supply point in order to secure more hand grenades. When suddenly a grenade landed nearby, jeopardizing his own life, as well as the life of another marine, Garcia was quick to act. He unhesitatingly chose to sacrifice himself and instantaneously threw his body upon the fatal missile, absorbing the full impact of the explosion.



I am inspired by any man who gave his life for his country and friends knowing that he would not come out alive. I feel that all people should totally admire and revere anyone who fought for not only their own freedom, but also the freedom of everyone that would come after them. Pfc. Fernando Luis Garcia is the perfect example of a true American hero. The colors of red, white, and blue flowed through his veins and will flow through the minds of people everywhere that truly come to understand his miraculous and unselfish act as a United States soldier and Medal of Honor recipient.

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Using extreme determination and great skill, Lieutenant Colonel Urban went "above and beyond the call of duty". I admire this man because of his bold determination and valor. This World War II veteran served his country in the utmost way.

Jonathan M. Wainwright

Mr. Jonathan M. Wainwright served as a general in the US Army. He entered the service at Skancateles, Onondaga Country, New York.

General Wainwright spent three years and three months in Japanese custody after his defense and surrender at Bataan and Corregidor. While he was held as a prisoner, General Wainwright received very harsh treatment from the Japanese. He was hardly fed during this time and became very emaciated. On August 31, 1945 he was freed.



General Wainwright frequented the firing line of his troops where his presence provided the example that helped make the efforts of these brave men possible. He was responsible for the stand on Corregidor, in the Philippine Islands at the beginning of the war. This commanded the admiration of the nation's allies. This final stand showed the high morale of American arms in a time of overwhelming odds.

General Wainwright flew to Yokohama on September 2, 1945, the day of the surrender of Japan aboard the Missouri. He was called forward by General MacArthur, and was given the first pen with which they had signed for the defeated Japanese. General Wainwright was presented with the Medal of Honor on September 10, 1945, by President Harry S. Truman at the White House.



To me General Jonathan Wainwright was a very special man and deserved to receive the Medal of Honor for all of his hard work and struggles, while he was a prisoner. He distinguished himself as a very determined leader.

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Herbert Joseph Thomas

Herbert Joseph Thomas was born on February 8, 1918, in Columbus, Ohio. He became a sergeant in the U.S. Marines during World War II. In 1943, he and his men were assigned to fight against the Japanese forces in the Soloman Islands.

While fighting for the Koromokina River, most of his crew was wounded by enemy fire. They never once gave up. Sergeant Thomas led his squad through the dense jungle, while shooting enemy soldiers. Once they reached the center of the Japanese position, they began destroying the machine-gun crews. When they thought the worst was over, another machine-gun crew was discovered. Approaching this one was to be more difficult than the pervious ones. Sgt. Thomas threw a grenade toward the gun emplacement, but dense jungle growth caused it to fall back among the squad members. Sergeant Thomas deliberately threw himself on the grenade and smothered the explosion with his body. He saved his fellow comrades. Since they were greatly inspired by his action, the men unhesitatingly charged the enemy and destroyed everything in sight.



Sgt. Herbert Joseph Thomas courageously gave his life for our country. We are proud and should honor all that fought for our freedom and gave their lives in its defense.



Matt Urban

Matt Urban was the leader of his company. While they were attacking at Renouf, France, Lieutenant Colonel Urban's company was attacked by two enemy tanks and small arms fire. The enemy tanks were raking his company's position. Realizing the danger his company was in, Lieutenant Colonel Urban armed himself with a bazooka and destroyed both tanks. Unfortunately, Lieutenant Colonel Urban was hit in the chest by a tank gun.

The next day, while seizing an enemy village, he was wounded again in the leg. One hour later he was wounded again and was forced to evacuate. While in the hospital, Lieutenant Colonel Urban learned of his company's need for battle-tested leaders. Leaving the hospital and hitchhiking back to the battlefield, Lieutenant Colonel Urban found his company and started leading them again. He found an immobile tank and mounted the gun on it. He was again wounded in the chest, this time by mortar shell fragments. Nine days later, while establishing a crossing point on the Meuse River, he was wounded again for a fourth time. Five hours later he was wounded again in the neck and could not talk anymore. By using hand signals to give his commands to his commanding officer, he still led his men. After the situation was under control, he was evacuated and sent to the hospital.



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William Arthur Shomo

William Arthur Shomo is my favorite Medal of Honor winner. He is not my favorite because he was the strongest or best-looking. He is my favorite because I think he had the most courage. He was the leading pilot of a two-fighter pilot flight. When Shomo and his wingman were flying, they approached a bomber plane being protected by twelve fighter planes. Even though the odds were 13 to 2, Shomo immediately ordered an attack on the planes. Shomo scored fatal hits on seven of the planes including the bomber plane. During this action his wingman had also shot down three fighter planes.



For Maj. Shomo's gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life "above and beyond the call of duty," he was awarded the Medal of Honor.

Charles L. Thomas

For incredible heroism on December 14, 1944, near Climbach, France, First Lieutenant Charles L. Thomas received the Medal of Honor. He served during World War II.

While riding in the lead vehicle of a task force organized to attack and capture the village of Climbach, France, then first Lieutenant Thomas' armored scout car was exposed to profound enemy artillery. Although wounded by the earlier burst of deadly fire, Lieutenant Thomas signaled the remainder of the column to stop, and despite the severity of his wounds, helped the crew of the wrecked car in exiting. Upon leaving the protection, which the vehicle provided, Lt. Thomas was again subjected to a hail of enemy fire, which inflicted many gunshot wounds in his chest, legs, and left arm. Despite the extreme pain caused by the wounds, he commanded and directed the dispersion and emplacement of two anti-tank guns, which in a few moments were sharply, and effectively returning the enemy fire. Realizing that he could no longer control the platoon, he signaled to the platoon commander to join him. He then thoroughly oriented him on the enemy gun dispositions and the situation.



Only after he was positive that his junior officer was in full control of the situation did he allow himself to be evacuated.

His outstanding heroism was an inspiration to his men and shows the highest tradition of the armed forces. For his courageous and inspiring actions he was granted the privilege of receiving the Medal of Honor.

Lieutenant Thomas willingly placed himself in harm's way to serve his country. He did this knowing that no one would have thought any less of him if he did not. For that I admire him.

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Douglas Munro

Douglas Munro was born on October 11, 1919, Vancouver, British Columbia. He is the only Coast Guardsman to ever be awarded the Medal of Honor. Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was the President of the United States, presented the medal to his mother. Douglas is buried at Laurel Hills Memorial Park in Cle Elum, Washington.

Munro was a petty officer in charge of a group of twenty-four Higgins boats, engaged in the evacuation of a battalion of marines, trapped by enemy Japanese forces at Point Cruz, Guadalcanal, on September 27, 1942. After making plans for the evacuation of nearly 500 marines, Munro, at the risk of his life, led five small landing crafts near the shore. As he closed in on the



beach, he signaled the others to land, and then in order to draw the enemy's fire and protect the loaded boats, he placed his craft with two guns as a shield between the beaches and the Japanese. When the task of evacuation was nearly completed, Munro was killed instantly by fire. His crew were wounded and guided the last Higgins boats to safety. Munro and his men saved the lives of those who would have perished.

Douglas Munro is a hero because he didn't think of his own life; he thought of others. After he was killed, Munro's heroic act was not completed. He instilled courage in his crew members to finish what they had started. Douglas Munro gave his life for his country and others.



Audie Leon Murphy

Audie Leon Murphy was born on July 20, 1924. He was the son of a poor Texas sharecropper and rose to national fame as the most decorated U.S. combat soldier of WWII. Audie enlisted at age 18. Among his 33 awards and decorations was the coveted Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest military award for bravery that can be given to any individual in the United States of America, for "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty." He also received every decoration for valor that his country had to offer, some of them more than once, including five decorations by France and Belgium. On September 1945, Audie was released from the Army as an active member and reassigned to inactive status. After



the war he went to Hollywood and starred in dozens of motion pictures and several television shows.

Audie Leon Murphy died in a plane crash in 1971 at the age of 46. On June 7th, Audie Murphy was buried with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery. His gravesite, near the Amphitheater, is the second most visited gravesite year around. President Kennedy's grave is the most visited.

Audie Murphy remains a unique figure in modern America because of his significant presence in both our military history and our popular culture.



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Staff Sergeant Erwin received his Medal of Honor the day after his heroic actions because the doctors thought that he was not going to live much longer. However, he did not die as he underwent many extensive surgeries. After recovering, he devoted his life to helping handicapped people. Staff Sergeant Henry Erwin is an inspiration to me because when the bomb exploded and caused him temporary blindness and third degree burns over most of his body, he did not give up. He put his life on the line to save his crew members.

David M. Gonzales

On April 25, 1945, David Gonzales was a Private First Class in the U.S. Army, Company A, 127th Infantry, 32nd Infantry Division, serving in the Philippine Islands. When the enemy had pinned his company down, his services were needed when a 550 pound bomb smashed into the company's perimeter, burying five men with its explosion. He then took an entrenching tool and dug out the men while enemy sniper and machine-gun bullets struck all about his body.



For these tremendous actions of saving the men above and beyond the call of duty, David Gonzales received the Medal of Honor. Private Gonzales inspired me because I know that if that were me out there, I would not have had the courage to do what this man did. The danger around him must have been terrifying. He forgot himself and thought only of the trapped men, when he stood up in order to dig faster. Anyone with that amount of courage that would risk their life for the life of someone else, should be awarded something as great as the Medal of Honor.

Isadore Jachman

Isadore Jachman, a Jewish Medal of Honor recipient, served in World War II as a Staff Sergeant in Company B. On the morning of January 4, 1945, his company was surrounded by enemy snipers. Two hostile tanks attacked the unit inflicting heavy casualties. Although his comrades were falling all around him, Staff Sgt. Jachman refused to surrender and strived onward through the bloody battlefield. Seeing the desperate predicament of his comrades, Sergeant Jachman realized something had to be done or they would all be killed. Spying a wounded comrade on the ground, he left his place of cover with total disregard for his own safety, dashed across open ground through a hail of fire, and brought him to safety. Then taking the bazooka



from his wounded comrade, he advanced upon the tanks, which concentrated their firearms on him. Firing the weapon alone, he damaged one tank forcing both of them to retire. Sergeant Jachman's heroic action, in which he suffered fatal wounds, disrupted the entire enemy attack proving one person can make a difference. Due to his wounds he died shortly after receiving the Medal of Honor.

Although his actions cost him his life, they saved his Company from being defeated and losing their lives. His constant valor earned him the Medal of Honor. I consider him a true hero because he gave up his life so that others might live. He did not have to risk his life but he did, and I greatly admire him for the courage he had.

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I admire Colonel Demas Craw because he volunteered for a very dangerous mission, which he believed vital to the cause of the war at that place and time. Even when others questioned the success of the mission, he maintained that it could be done knowing that it was very important that it be done. He gave his life trying to carry out that mission. Concerns for his own life were secondary to the accomplishment of his duty. I do not believe that many people achieve that degree of excellence in their lives. Colonel Craw was a true hero.

Michael Joseph Daly

Captain Michael Joseph Daly served as a company commander in Nuremberg, Germany. His day of heroism was on April 18, 1945, when he led his company through the wreckage of Nuremberg. As guns were being fired at his unit, Capt. Daly ordered the men to take cover. Alone, he went on his mission. Dodging the bullets, he spotted an enemy patrol armed with rocket launchers. He opened fire on the Germans. Capt. Daly was the target of the machine pistol, but calmly continued to keep shooting. Captain Daly killed six enemy infantry- men. When a machine gun opened fire on him, he killed the gunner. From an unusual position Captain Michael Daly directed an American machine gun emplacement. He engaged himself in four singled-headed fire



fight. Taking all risk himself and protecting his men, he killed fifteen Germans, and wiped out an entire enemy patrol. Captain Michael Daly's action was an inspiration to all the men. He received the medal on August 23, 1945. President Harry S. Truman gave it to him.

I consider this man a hero, because he was willing to give up his life in order to save his men. He also put his life in the hands of God when he went alone to kill the enemy soldiers. Some people might think of him as a bad person for killing the Germans, but not me, this is the nature of war. I am sure that he did not think of being rewarded with the medal for his action. I am sure that he did it out of his heart. So in my eyes he is a true American Hero.

Henry Eugene Erwin

Henry Eugene Erwin was a Staff Sergeant in World War II. He was a member of the United States Air Corps, Twenty-ninth Bombardment Group, Twentieth Air Force. Staff Sergeant Erwin was the operator of a B-29 airplane. He was leading a group formation to attack Koriyama, Japan, and he had the additional duty of dropping phosphoresce smoke bombs down a pipe out of the plane signal to the assembling group. As they encountered aircraft fire and enemy fighter opposition, one of Staff Sergeant Erwin's signaling bombs proved to be faulty. The bomb exploded and shot back into the interior of the aircraft causing him temporary blindness. Realizing that all would be lost if nothing was done, Staff Sergeant Erwin, without regard for his own personal safety, picked the bomb up with his bare hands and threw it out of the pilot's window. In fact he was completely engulfed in flames and he fell to the floor. Since the temperature of the glowing bomb was very high, his hands were badly burned.



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John Duncan Bulkeley

John Bulkeley was a Lieutenant Commander in the United States Navy. He was born on August 19, 1911, in New York, New York. He was the Commander of Motor ' Torpedo Boat Squadron 3, spending most of his time in the Philippine waters fighting in World War II.

In the predawn hours in January, 1942 right after the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, two of his Us Navy patrol boats crept into Subic Bay off one of the Philippine Islands. Inside the bay, Lt. Bulkeley's small boats slid through the night. Suddenly, the men aboard the boats spied the light of a Japanese ship about five hundred yards ahead. It was an enemy vessel! Lieutenant John Bulkeley, the boats' skipper, ordered them to ease their boats closer to the Japanese ship. Just when they were about to strike, the Japanese flashed a light on them and ordered them to identify themselves. Lieutenant John Bulkeley answered them back with "two torpedoes." A huge explosion sent fireballs rolling into the sky. The ship was badly damaged. This was the first American blow to the Japanese after their bombing of Pearl Harbor. The United States had not been completely crippled by their attack. Our fighting, daring spirit was quick to strike a return blow. Lt. Bulkeley had been the man to do it.



His feat encouraged Americans as they dug in on all levels to fight a grim two-front war. This act of striking a Japanese ship in its own backyard symbolized America's determined spirit in WWII. For his daring courage to take a group of small boats into enemy waters in the dark days following Pearl Harbor, to strike a blow for freedom, makes me greatly admire Lt. John Bulkeley. He most deservingly should be a recipient of the Medal of Honor.



Demas Thurlow Crow

Born in 1900, Colonel Demas Crow earned his Medal of Honor in the US Army Air Corps during World War II in November 1942. As the Allies began to invade Africa at this early point in the war, Colonel Crow volunteered to accompany the leading wave of assault boats to the shores of French Morocco, planning to pass through the enemy lines to locate the French commander with a view of suspending hostilities. His request to lead this dangerous mission was at first refused as being too dangerous but eventually, at his insistence that he was qualified to undertake and accomplish this perilous mission, permission from the high command was given. There was heavy fire at the main landing point and being unable to disembark there, Colonel Crow along with one other officer and a soldier, succeeded in landing on the beach at Mehdiya Plage under constant low-level strafing from three enemy aircrafts. Riding in a truck toward the French headquarters, the progress of the trio was hindered by fire from our own naval guns. Nearing Port Lyautey, Colonel Crow was instantly killed by a sustained burst of machine-gun fire at point-blank range from a concealed position near the road.



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World War II

Van T. Barfoot

Van T. Barfoot was a Technical Sergeant, during World War II. Lieutenant General Alexander M. Patch, III, presented him the Congressional Medal of Honor on September 28, 1944, in Epinal, France. He was born in Edinburgh, Mississippi. Barfoot received his Medal for going above and beyond the call of duty for the well being of his country and his fellow Americans.

On May 23, 1944, near Carano, Italy, with his platoon heavily engaged in an assault against forces well entrenched on commanding ground, Sgt. Barfoot moved off alone towards the enemy left flank. He crawled to the proximity of one machine-gun nest and made a direct hit upon it with a hand grenade, killing two and wounding three Germans. Barfoot continued along the German defense line to another machine-gun emplacement, and with his Tommy gun, killed two and captured three soldiers. Members of another machinegun crew abandoned their gun and surrendered to Sgt. Barfoot. Leaving the prisoners for his support squad to pick up, he proceeded to capture more enemy positions in the immediate area, capturing more prisoners to bring his total count to seventeen.

Later that day, after he had reorganized his men over the newly acquired ground, the enemy released a powerful counterattack directly at Barfoot's platoon. Securing a bazooka, he took up an exposed position directly in front of three advancing Mark IV tanks. At seventy-five yards away, his first shot destroyed the first tank's track while the other two changed course and headed towards the left flank. As the defeated crew came out of the tank, Sgt. Barfoot killed three of them with his Tommy gun. He then continued forward into enemy ground and destroyed an abandoned German field piece with a demolition charge. When he returned to his platoon, he helped two badly wounded men to safety.



I believe that Sgt. Barfoot is a true American hero because he risked his life many times to learn about the enemy's movements in the area to protect his men and the American position. He displayed extreme heroism and valor that earned him the Medal of Honor and a place in his soldiers' hearts.



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William "Billy" Mitchell



I chose this person because he showed a great deal of courage. Billy Mitchell served in Cuba and the Philippines, and in 1901 was attached to the Signal Corps. He then was sent to the general staff. Then he was sent to the aviation section of the Signal Corps in 1915. The United States entered WWI, and Mitchell learned how to fly an airplane. He became Air Commander. General Mitchell was ready for war. He took the biggest challenge of all. He flew over enemy lines. He also took another risk at war. General Mitchell led a bombing force in an air strike. He tried to bomb the Germans' homeland but it got cut short, and in March, 1919, he went back to his home to become chief of Air Service.

Billy Mitchell then resigned from the army and retired. He continued to promote air power and to tell people of the danger of other nations, mainly Japan. He then hypothesized a possible attack by Japanese who would let bombs down on Pearl Harbor. He died in January, 1926, and in early December, 1941, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. So, I guess he was right.



Mitchell had hypothesized a lot of things about air power but was ignored by the high military command before he died. In 1946, a Special Medal of Honor was given to Mitchell's son by General Carl Spaatz, Chief of Staff. Billy Mitchell deserved the Medal of Honor because he correctly predicted the importance of air power in incoming wars. I think he deserved the Medal because he was a smart man and he tried to warn people but they did not listen to him. At least he tried. That is why he deserves the Special Medal.

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Peace Time Awards

Charles A. Lindbergh

A twenty-five year old man named Charles A. Lindbergh was a careful and adventurous man. He learned to fly, then found work as a barn stormer and daredevil. He conceived his Atlantic flight while flying the mails between St. Louis and Chicago. Airmail was a dangerous job but after a few years, Lindbergh said it was fairly easy. He insisted that the cockpit be located behind the oversized fuel tanks. It meant that if he crashed, he wouldn't crash between the engine and the fuel tanks.

His physical courage was coupled with a native sense for mechanical things and an awesome determination for thorough preparation once he decided upon a project. He was the first man in world history to fly over the Atlantic Ocean non-stop and land in Paris. His plane was almost just gasoline tanks. Sometimes the windows would ice up, so he had to stick his head out of the plane to see. With no radar, full tanks of fuel and just him in the plane, made it over the Atlantic Ocean. He is called, "The Lone Eagle", because he accomplished that feat by himself, but still he did it for his country.



I picked Charles A. Lindbergh because he wasn't in the Air Force and was not in anything but flying. His dream was to fly so he did what he loved and still got the Medal Of Honor. It was a Special Medal Of Honor for the unique quality of his achievement. Lindbergh had the courage to do what he did knowing that he might not make it, but he still did it. He later joined the army long enough to gain some experience in its relatively powerful planes. His life was always fixed around planes and that showed how much he loved to play with and fly with planes. His feat of courage inspired generations of Americans to have the courage to dream and work for goals. Charles A. Lindbergh was a great man and I think he was a person who deserved the Medal Of Honor.



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Alvin York



Alvin York was born on December 13, 1887, in Pall Mall, Tennessee. His family lived in the backwoods. Alvin York spent much of his youth drinking moonshine, gambling, and causing all kinds of trouble. In 1917 Alvin York was ordered to report for duty for World War I. He was sent to Camp Gordon, Georgia for training. He refused at first to enter the army but later decided God wanted him to defend his country. Sergeant York and fifteen other men were ordered to attack a German machine-gun nest.

The sergeant in command was killed along with six other men. Alvin York took command. Using an automatic pistol, York shot the last man in the group of attackers. He then shot the next to last, and so on. (Later, he explained that this was how he shot wild turkeys at home, so the ones in front didn't know, the ones behind were being killed.) Finally, the German lieutenant in command had enough after twenty of his men had been shot by York. He surrendered all the rest of the men. York had thus single-handedly captured 132 men. Alvin York and his men marched into town with his prisoners. He became an instant hero. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross by the Americans. Later, he was awarded the Medal of Honor. Alvin York was considered the greatest soldier to wear a uniform in the Great War.



I admire Sergeant Alvin York because he was a very brave soldier. Even though he was unsure about going to fight in the war. He did what God wanted him to do. He accepted the fact that God wanted him to be a soldier. He proved to be the greatest soldier ever because he never gave up; he fought for his country until the end.

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William Sawelson

William Sawelson was born in Newark, New Jersey. He wanted to serve his country in World War I, so he entered the service at Harrison, New Jersey. He is one of the sixteen Jewish recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor. This medal is only awarded to those people who have gone above and beyond the call of duty during combat. Very few soldiers have received this honor in respect to the large number of people who have been involved in battle throughout history. The honor is to be acknowledged as a hero and to live eternally in history as a courageous warrior.

At Grand-Pre, France, on October 26, 1918, William heard a wounded man in a shell hole calling from some distance away. A fierce battle was raging all around the men, but William could hear that the man was calling for water in a weak voice. William could have just ignored him because he was certainly in enough danger himself. But, Sergeant Sawelson left his shelter and humbly crawled through heavy machine-gun fire to where the man lay. William had never met or ever seen this man before, but that did not enter into his thoughts. He was the kind of man to help anyone in need. William gave the man all the water he had in his canteen, leaving not a drop for himself. He then went back to his own shell hole to obtain more water and was returning to the wounded soldier when a shot was fired. William Sawelson was killed instantly by a machine-gun bullet.

William Sawelson is a true hero. He went above and beyond his call of duty by giving his life for a man he had never met or even seen in his life. William Sawelson will be remembered and admired for his brave actions for the rest of history.



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Eddie Rickenbacker

Eddie Rickenbacker was charming, talented and larger-than-life. He captured the imagination of the American public and cast a warm glow on auto racing in general and the Indianapolis Motor Speedway in particular. Rickenbacker's first experience in racing was during the Vanderbilt Cup race at the turn of the century. The company he had worked for, Frayer, had built cars to compete in the 1906 running of the events, which was a kind of American wake-up call that paid \$10,000 to win. When World War I started in 1917, Rickenbacker was 27 years old. First he had lied about his age by adding years to get a car-racing job, he now had to lie again by subtracting years from his age in order to be accepted into flight training. After his training period, he was sent to France where he was assigned as a driver for a high-ranking officer.



Rickenbacker used to love to drive cars, but now that he was in the war he wanted to be a fighter pilot. When he had been given the title "Ace of Aces", he only had seven confirmed kills to his credit. No one had ever brought down eight light enemy planes. Rickenbacker finished the war with 26 victories and 134 air battles.

I really admire Eddie Rickenbacker because of his bravery, courage and determination. By his determination I mean that he lied about his age in order to be accepted in the service and also to get the job he wanted. His bravery and courage enabled him to be the great fighter pilot that he was.



When Eddie Rickenbacker returned home, he was a national hero. He still had a desire to build cars, with the name Rickenbacker on it. Although the roads to manufacturing success were somewhat more rocky than he had thought, he went ahead and bought the Indianapolis Motor Speedway on November 1, 1927. Rickenbacker was very popular, he was a hero, and had he run for the office of president, he could have won. Just think, a racecar driver in the White House!

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World War I

Deming Bronson

Deming Bronson was a First Lieutenant in the U.S. Army in WWI. He entered the service in Seattle, Washington. He was born on July 8, 1894. On the morning of September 26, during the 364th infantry's advance, 1st Lt. Bronson was struck by an enemy hand grenade, receiving deep cuts on his face and the back of his head. He participated in the action which resulted in the capture of an enemy dugout from which many prisoners were taken. This was difficult and under hazardous conditions, because it was necessary to advance without the advantage of cover and from an exposed position, trying to get the enemy to surrender. On that afternoon he was painfully wounded in the left arm by a rifle bullet, and after receiving first aid treatment, he was directed to the rear. Ignoring these instructions, First Lt. Bronson remained on duty with his company throughout the night, suffering from severe pain and shock. The morning of September 27, his regiment resumed its attack, the object being the village of Eclisfontaine. Company H, to which 1st Lt. Bronson was assigned, was left in support of the attacking line, Company E being in the line. He gallantly joined that company in spite of his wounds and engaged with it, in the spite of the capture of the village. After the capture, he remained with Company E and participated with it in the capture of an enemy machine gun, he himself killing the enemy gunner. Shortly after this encounter, the company was compelled to retire due to the heavy enemy artillery barrage. During this retirement 1st Lt. Bronson, who was the last man to leave the advanced position, was again wounded in both arms by an enemy high explosive shell. He was then assisted to cover by another officer who applied first aid. Although bleeding profusely and faint from the loss of blood, 1st Lt. Bronson remained with the survivors of the company throughout the second night, refusing to go back for treatment.



His gallantry and spirit of sacrifice were a great inspiration to the members of the entire command. I admire him because he served in the war even though he was wounded. He was brave and very tough even though he was wounded, he remained with the troops and helped them fight. All the people admired him for what he did for them.

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Haitian Campaign

Samuel Gross

Before WWII a campaign of marines was sent to the island of Haiti in the Caribbean to take control of the French Bastion Fort. Samuel Gross was one of the marines accompanying the campaign. In company with members of the 5th, 13th, 23rd companies, and the marine and sailor detachment from the Riviere, Haiti, on the 17th of November 1915. Following a concentrated drive, several different detachments of marines gradually closed in on the old French bastion fort in an effort to block off all avenues of retreat for the Caco bandits. Approaching a breach in the wall which was the only entrance to the fort, Gross was the second man to pass through the breach in the face of constant fire from the Caco's and, there- after, for a 10 minute period, engaged the enemy in hand to hand conflict until the bastion was captured and Caco resistance neutralized. He is a true American hero because he helped to capture a fort and risked his life for his country doing it.



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Indian Campaigns

William Frederick Cody

One of the most colorful figures of the Old West became "the best known spokesman for the New West. He was born William Frederick Cody in 1846. At 22, he was rechristened "Buffalo Bill". He had been a trapper, a bullwhacker, a Colorado "Fifty-Niner", Pony Express rider (1860), wagon master, stagecoach driver, Civil War soldier, and even hotel manager. He earned his nickname for his skill while supplying Kansas Pacific Railroad workers with buffalo meat. He was about to embark on a career as one of the most illustrious prairie scouts of the Indian Wars.

From 1868 through 1872 the United States Army continuously employed him in the hazardous and uncertain scouting profession. He won the Congressional Medal of Honor in 1872 and was ever after the favorite scout of the Fifth Cavalry. The men of the Fifth considered Buffalo Bill to be "good luck." He kept them from ambush, he guided them to victory, and his own fame reflected glory on the regiment. Cody considered himself lucky too. He was lucky to have been wounded in action just once, and then it was "only a scalp wound."

In 1872 he appeared on stage for the first time, playing himself in "Scouts of the Prairie." Thereafter he continued to act in the winter and scout for the Fifth in the summer. The Wild West show was inaugurated in Omaha in 1883 with real cowboys and real Indians portraying the "real West." The show spent ten of its thirty years in Europe. In 1887 Buffalo Bill was a feature attraction at Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. At the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893, only Egypt's gyrations rivaled the Wild West as the talk of Chicago. By the turn of the century, Buffalo Bill was probably the most famous and most recognizable man in the world.



I admire William Cody because as a young child I used to watch an old western television program. The star of the program was a young man portraying the life of "Buffalo Bill", when he was a Pony Express rider. I always looked up to him because he could ride and was a tough guy. Now realizing he was once a real person who I now not only admire because he could rope and ride, but because he was rewarded our nation's highest military honor.

George Washington Walton

George Washington Walton is an Honored recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor. He went "above and beyond the call of duty." He was born on March 27, 1844, at Upper Oxford Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania. He served as a private for the U.S. Army, during the Civil War. August 29, 1864, was a day that would change young Walton's life forever. On this day, during battle, at Fort Hell in Petersburg, Virginia, Walton went outside the trenches under heavy fire at short-range. He rescued a comrade who had been wounded and thrown out of the trenches by an exploding shell. On August 6, 1902, Walton received one of the greatest and most honored medals the military gives, the Medal of Honor. Walton died on February 8, 1920, at Oxford, Pennsylvania. He is buried at Oxford Cemetery (MH) Oxford, Pennsylvania.



I picked this man to explain his citation to you, hoping that all people will remember these brave men who went, "Above and Beyond the Call of Duty," for their country. To me, this man is very important, because he risked his life for his friend who was in danger. To me, this man is a true hero.

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Charles Reeder

Private Charles Reeder was born on November 20, 1843, in Harrison, West Virginia. He served in the United States Army as a Corporal, during the Civil War. Charles earned the Medal of Honor by carrying his nation's flag across the battle field. Carrying the flag on the battle field was considered a great honor in the Civil War. The sight of the flag allowed the troops to keep their formations and follow orders. The flag bearer carried no gun, but was a very important part of the battle as all the other soldiers depended upon him for guidance on the smoke-filled fighting ground. Risking his life under fire and being fired upon, Charles Reeder continued on. As the rest of his platoon drew back in fear, Pvt. Charles pressed forward. The enemy who were firing at him quickly stopped, and watched in awe, as Southern Confederate Charles kept going even though he was under intense fire, and unknown to him, the rest of the Union Army behind him had stopped attacking. Pvt. Charles was captured, but released after the war. After the battle was over, the soldiers who were firing against him wrote letters to Congress, suggesting that Pvt. Charles receive the Medal of Honor. What a compliment that the enemy admired your courage. So exactly two years and one day later he received the military's highest award: The Medal of Honor.



I admire Pvt. Charles Reeder because of all that he did for us. He showed us what real courage is, to believe so much in what your country is fighting for. He inspires me to have courage for what I believe in, and to do what I want no matter what anyone thinks of it.

Mary Edwards Walker

Mary Edwards Walker was a volunteer doctor in the U.S. Army during the time of the Civil War. As you might know, women doctors were not very common back then. She was not welcomed at all by the male doctors. But Walker didn't care. She went to work anyway. During battles exposing herself to danger just like the regular men doctors, she cared for the casualties. Later she was awarded the position of Acting Assistant Surgeon in the U.S. Army. Not long after, in 1865, she was awarded the Medal of Honor, but in 1916 it was revoked mainly because she was a woman. Ms. Walker was not happy about this decision. Nobody was going to take her medal away. She wore it proudly every day.



In the mid 1970's, the government was asked to review Walker's case. They did, and cited her with "acts of distinguished gallantry, self-sacrifice, patriotism, and great loyalty to her country." Though she did not live to see it, on June 1, 1977, Mary Edwards Walker's Medal of Honor was restored. I chose Ms. Walker because I look up to her as a role model because she is the only woman to ever receive the Medal of Honor and despite how anyone else felt about her having that medal, she felt she deserved it and wore it anyway everyday until her death.



Thomas J. Higgins

I picked Sergeant Thomas J. Higgins because he holds a special place in my heart. He was in the United States Army during the Civil War. He received his Medal of Honor in a nonviolent way. He carried his country's flag on the field of battle as his unit was charging the enemy lines. It was considered a great honor in the Civil War to be flag bearer. The flag was a rallying point for the men as the battle swirled around them. He marched on unarmed and terrified. Miraculously, the pelting bullets did not hit him, even though his comrades were falling fast all around him. As he finally reached the enemy lines, cheers rose and he was congratulated and hugged by the enemy, the very people he was fighting against. Although he was captured, his bravery saved his life. Very few people ever to receive the Medal of Honor have done so without violence.



Jacob Parrott

The obvious reason I am interested in Jacob Parrott is because our family names are the same, but more importantly, because he was the first Congressional Medal of Honor recipient.

Jacob Parrott, an eighteen year-old private, was part of Company K. 33d Ohio Infantry. He served his country as a Union Army soldier during the Civil War. Parrott was first to volunteer to be one of the twenty-two men, by direction of Brigadier General Mitchell and James Andrews, to lead a raid nearly 200 miles south into enemy territory. They were to capture a railroad train at Big Shanty, Georgia, in an attempt to destroy the bridges and tracks between Chattanooga and Atlanta.



Andrews and his raiders struck, stealing the train, then later abandoning it, only to be captured and imprisoned. For five months, Parrott was held prisoner and in March of 1863, he was released. Later that month, Congress ordered new medals to be prepared to honor soldiers and sailors for valor. This Medal of Honor, the first ever given, was presented to Jacob Parrott. He was the first man to be awarded his nation's highest military honor.

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Joshua Chamberlain

The Civil War, which lasted for four years, took more American lives than any other war in American history. It started on April 12, 1861, when Southern artillery shelled Fort Sumter in the Charleston, South Carolina, harbor. The Battle of Gettysburg was one of the greatest battles of this war lasting from July 1 to July 3, 1863. The Confederate army swung up the Shenandoah Valley into Pennsylvania as Lee tried to invade the North for the second time. On the second day of this hard-fought battle, Colonel Joshua Chamberlain earned his Medal of Honor displaying daring heroism and tenacity in holding his position on Little Round Top against repeated assaults by General Longstreet's corps.



Knowing that he had to hold that hill at all costs, which was the end of the North's line, Chamberlain had his men dig in to repulse wave after wave of rebel attacks. Exhausted and out of ammunition with repeated frantic appeals to the higher command for more bullets, Chamberlain was forced to use a little known military maneuver he had once read in a book to continue to hold his position and protect the rest of the Union forces. He had his men fix bayonets and charge down the hill in a swinging gate line stunning the rebels and causing masses of them to surrender. With empty rifles, Chamberlain's men captured hundreds of confederate soldiers ending that day's attack by the South on the Federal position. Chamberlain had been a college professor at Bowdoin College in Maine and being dedicated to the cause of saving the Union, he had resigned his position and volunteered to serve.



I admire Colonel Joshua Chamberlain because he is an example of the North's commitment to holding the Union together. He could have not been in the army but chose to do so'. The professional generals of the North were amazed at his command of military science and of his holding that vital position under such stressful conditions.

Thomas Ward Custer

Thomas Ward Custer was a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army. Custer was a double recipient of the Medal of Honor. Only nineteen men have been double Medal of Honor recipients. His first action was in Willicomack, Virginia, where he captured an enemy flag on April 3, 1865. Capturing enemy flags or defending your own unit's flag was a big deal in the Civil War. His second award was earned for his courageous act of leaping his horse over the enemy's works and capturing two enemy strands of color, having his horse shot from under him and receiving a severe wound. I find Thomas Ward Custer a true American hero because he managed to do an action that was "Above and Beyond" the call of duty twice -- receiving two Medals of Honor.



Thomas Custer was General George Armstrong Custer's younger brother. Admiring his older brother, Thomas Custer followed him out west after the Civil War and died at the Battle of Little Bighorn, more commonly called, "Custer's Last Stand." It is strange that in remembering the older brother who is immortalized for his failure, we forget the younger brother who was a rare hero.



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Civil War

William Carney

William Carney was the first African American recipient of the Medal of Honor. This twenty-three year old showed much bravery and dedication to his country. Carney was born in 1840 in Norfolk, Virginia. On February 17, he enlisted in the 54th Massachusetts Infantry. He was ready to become part of the Civil War and fight for his rights. Soon after he was sent to Camp Meigs, where he became a sergeant. He was assigned to Company C. On July 8, the officers and men of the 54th waited nervously on the shore of Morris Island for the signal to begin the assault. At 7:45 P.M. the signal was given. When the marching men were about two hundred yards from the fort, the rebels opened fire. They were raked by deadly small arms and cannon fire. Scores of men were instantly killed or wounded. Shaw raised his sword to charge. William Carney was among the first group to bear the fort. He ran through a hail of screaming bullets and exploding shells with Sergeant John Wills at his side, who was carrying the regiment's national colors. Wills was hit by a cannon and thrown into the air. Carney quickly grabbed the flag. Ducking and dodging, he ran up the earthwork slope. He was struck in the leg, but Carney was able to plant the flag atop the parapet. He fell to his knees, but he managed to keep holding the flag high while men fell around him. Finally, the men had to fall back. Carney carried the flag down the slope, while he was shot twice on his way down. He finally reached a field hospital with the help of a fellow soldier. Everyone cheered him on. Carney survived the battle. Discharged because of his wounds, he was a hero. For these heroic actions, William Carney received the Medal of Honor. He died on December 9, 1908.



I think William Carney is a great American hero. He had no super talent, nor did he excel in any certain sport. He was an ordinary person who risked his life for his country. Without thinking of the danger he was putting himself into, he fought for his country until the end. Would the president go this far for our country? Not just anyone would. This courageous man defiantly expressed the love he had for his country by his actions. He is a perfect example for all young Americans.

Until the time of the Civil War, there was no such thing as the Medal of Honor. (*Though most people call the medal the Congressional Medal of Honor, its proper name is simply the Medal of Honor.*) In December of 1861, the Congress of the United States decided some special award was needed for those who displayed special bravery. The first Medals of Honor were awarded in 1863 to recognize a band of Union Army raiders who struck a blow at the heart of the Confederacy. The most recent recipients were two soldiers who were killed in action in Somalia in 1993. A total of 3,362 medals have been presented. Most of those - 2,362 - have been awarded to Army men. Nineteen men are so-called double recipients. That means they were awarded two medals for different actions under fire.

Those who have been awarded medals have been as diverse as America itself. They were rich and poor; African American, Asian American, Native American, Hispanic American, and white American; young and old; from big cities and country villages. Some were the sons of families that had been in America for generations. Others were immigrants who came to America to find a better life. Even though women have traditionally been kept out of combat, one woman, Dr. Mary Edwards Walker, was awarded the medal for her service during the Civil War. Members of all branches of service--Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Coast Guard - have been honored.

Some of these Medal of Honor recipients became famous. Their names were at least for a time, as famous as the medal itself and the wars they fought in. Other recipients returned home after their battles ended and sank into relative obscurity.

More than 550 of those who were awarded medals were killed in combat. The bravery that made them medal recipients also cost them their lives.

Sadly, while no sane person desires war, the nature of humankind means that wars will continue to ravage the earth. Someday that may change, and the Medal of Honor will be a relic of the past. For now, the best that we can hope for is that brave men and women like these medal recipients will continue fighting for freedom and democracy. Their stories can stand as shining examples of the courage that free people need when threatened with a loss of their freedom.

Congressional Medal Of Honor



Jefferson DeBlanc shares his Medal of Honor with some of our students



America has often found it necessary to wage war. Throughout its history, American men and women have fought and died for their country on battlefields around the world. Thousands of these men and women were unsung heroes and heroines in battles from Concord, Massachusetts, to Mogadishu, Somalia. A handful of these have been awarded the Medal of Honor for bravery in combat above and beyond the call of duty.

Medal Of Honor Research Project

This school year the Eighth Graders of Sacred Heart Elementary took on a major project involving the Internet and traditional research sources. Each student spent five months researching and reading the stories of many of the approximately 3,402 Medal of Honor recipients and then put together a booklet highlighting the ten that they found most interesting or inspiring. Among choices for inclusion in their booklet certain criteria had to be met. Each set of ten recipients had to have at least one serviceman from the Army, the Navy, the Marine Corps, and the Air Force. Moreover, the list had to include an



African American recipient, a Hispanic recipient, an Oriental recipient, a non-Christian or non-combatant recipient, and the one woman or some other special recipient. One particular Medal of Honor recipient was named each student's "Most Inspiring". Then the list had to span across at least five wars or military campaigns. Originally composed well-documented essays were presented on each MOH recipient as well as an essay that is a personal expression of what constitutes true courage or valor. Artwork depicting the individual act of bravery accompanied each story as well as a picture of the recipient taken off the Internet.



The booklet represents a major commitment of each student to research, writing, time management skills, and knowledge about this area in American History. Years from now each booklet will be a treasured memento of their work in the eighth grade. At the conclusion of this project each student should have grown academically as well as in appreciation of those men who went "Above and Beyond the Call of Duty." Our Nation's youth should admire and honor these American Heroes. As it has been said, "Poor is the Nation that has no heroes, but beggared is that Nation that has and forgets them."

We at Sacred Heart Elementary would like to thank the Evangeline Parish Public Library for loaning us some research materials for use in our classroom for the duration of the Medal of Honor Project. Having these books available everyday helped the sixty students share the limited sources as fairly as possible as well as extending the time for their use. Many students stayed after school until 4:00 PM to work on their projects. As an historian and teacher, I would like to add that this research project was in the planning stage for a long time and the end result has gone far beyond my best hopes. I believe that even more than just guiding my students along the educational paths that this effort provided, their souls have been touched and they truly have come to an understanding of the heroism and sacrifice of all of these Medal of Honor recipients. Meeting Mr. Jeff DeBlanc was an experience I believe they will always remember. I feel that in having my students work very hard on this research project, I have fulfilled every teacher's dream and "I have touched the future."

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Our Adopted Hero

Jefferson DeBlanc
Project Outline (For Teachers)

Above And Beyond

Eight Grade Students Share Their Stories of True American Heroes



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**The Faculty and Students of Sacred Heart Elementary School
Ville Platte, Louisiana
and
Bonnes Nouvelles**

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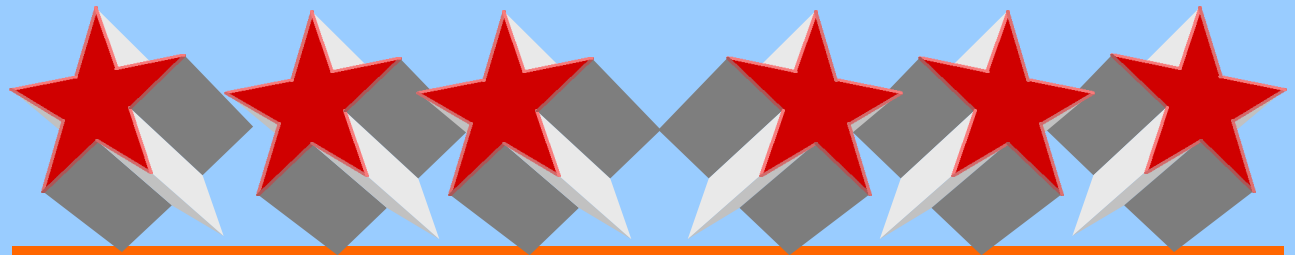
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Bonnes Nouvelles

Good news about people, places and things in Evangeline Parish

BONNES NOUVELLES, VILLE PLATE, LA

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