

The Promise

Most of us, on the day of our birth, automatically became heirs to the greatest of earthly treasures. It is a treasure envied by those who read of it, dream of it, and pray for it. It is a treasure never diminished by the numbers who share it. The guarantee of the opportunity to pursue happiness, and the guarantee of freedom, came to us as easily as drawing our first breath over American soil. In those first moments of life, we were gifted with "The Promise".

The Promise was conceived in the hearts of men burdened with unjust treatment and tyranny. The Promise was a dream they could not abandon. The Promise bore the weight of a solemn oath signed in blood. The promise was a pledge a man made to himself and whatever child or grandchild might share his bloodline. It was a promise that "liberty and justice for all" would not be denied them. A promise that no man, clan, or country would slip under the wire and steal from them this gift.

The Promise, in the course of human history is still young, but does not need age to be strong. It's strength lies in the precision of its description and the goodness of its intent as its story is told in the documents of its creed—The Constitution of the United States. The greatest hope of those men was that The Promise would endure and be everlasting!

The possibility of that hope becoming a reality rests in the hands of all those who lay claim to it, be it through birthright or naturalization. Its strength and its fulfillment can be our reality only if we call to mind and instill in the minds of our young the boundless offerings of The Promise.

Only in a perfect world, where the spirit of man has no capacity for greed, for jealousy, or for hate, will it not be necessary to stand guard on a system of government based on a fair chance for every man and woman. The spirit of man is challenged by imperfections, so we will have to work on behalf of even the most righteous government yet devised by mortals to ensure its original potentiality is understood and does not fail to thrive.

In truth, this country is much like the child it is meant to protect. Perfect at its birth, sound in spirit and strong—with boundless possibilities. I like to imagine that, as each new child comes to us, Miss Liberty bends over, kisses that precious head and tells the babe,

"Welcome little American. We have prepared a wonderful place for you. Many have worked, fought, and died to make it so...all for the love of you and others like you. Those who died for it sit at heaven's gate and smile down on you today...happy for you and proud to know their blood helped secure this gift we offer you."

"Before you lies a land of comfort. You will have access to information and education. You will have opportunities to achieve and realize dreams you have yet to dream. We want you to be safe and secure...healthy and happy. This flag I now wrap gently around your precious body is a symbol of honor.... And a symbol of faith. To you I give it as a symbol of 'The Promise'."

"The Promise I make to you, that this country has been devised and works untiringly to give you a life where you are treated as fairly as any man or woman—where opportunities for all things lie before you and you are FREE to make your own choices. You have met this day the requirements for receiving these gifts."

"YOU ARE AN AMERICAN! I do not have a plan for you. I have, instead, made it possible for you to build and follow YOUR OWN PLAN!"

"That is 'The Promise'."

Then I see Lady Liberty stand up straight, holding the babe swaddled in Old Glory lovingly in her hands—and—with arms stretched across the bay, she gently lays the infant on the shore. She smiles and, before she turns and again lifts her torch of freedom for all to see, she says softly:

"Be confident, I have made you this promise. Now, go forth and show the world what an American is made of!"

We here today are a long way from the day we were gifted with "The Promise." We have lived long enough to know that it means and to understand its value. We here have seen that keeping "The Promise" alive takes constant vigilance, diligent work, and even commands that the system and people working in it are persistently monitored—to keep it from straying from its just and fair design. We realize the problems inherent in keeping such a tremendous promise. We know nearly all good works take time and become complicated when we had hoped it would be simple.

I'm asking you to share. Sing the praises of our great country. Remind others how lucky – truly how blessed they are to be Americans. It is okay to admit we have not perfected implementation of the course of action ensuring "The Promise" will live on. But, it is imperative that we protect and preserve the country to keep the promise alive. We must let no enemy deny "The Promise" to the people of America!

Remind others THAT is the TRUE BEAUTY of the American plan – THE PEOPLE watch—and THE PEOPLE choose—and THE PEOPLE will either secure or fail "The Promise"! We are not caught in a helpless situation.

Most people here in the United States have been so well protected – our grandparents did their jobs so well – many



truly take their freedoms for granted.....or at least they did until September 11th.

"The Promise" has been threatened and suddenly we are painfully aware that this life we love may not be here in the morning just because we expected it would be....as surely as we expected water to come from the tap when we turn the handle and lights to come on when we flip a switch. Thirst and darkness can be dealt us from hateful acts of terror from a dark part of the world at any time. It has come to thousands of Americans already...in this first year of the new millennium.

The President stood atop a pile of rubble in New York and told the world we were on bended knee mourning the great loss of life and grieving with the families of the dead. I want the world to take notice.....as we rest a moment on bended knee and bow our heads in honor of those who died.....we clutch the Stars and Stripes to our hearts with our left hands, rededicated to "The Promise", and we raise our right fist high and defiant to tell the world....

"WE WILL NOT LET THE PROMISE STOP WITH US!"

Sammy L. Davis

Sammy L. Davis, Medal of Honor Recipient



At age 92, John Finn is the oldest living recipient of the Medal of Honor. On December 7, 1941 he was stationed at Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii which was hit five minutes before Pearl Harbor. He is the only surviving Medal recipient from that Day of Infamy. Though he makes his home on the West Coast, on September 11, 2001 he was just 75 miles from New York City, en route to Boston for a reunion with his fellow Medal recipients, when the second major tragedy he would witness in his lifetime occurred. Photo of Mr. Finn © 2001 by Robert *Mick* Bush, CMOHS Photographer



World War II Marine Corps fighter pilot and Medal of Honor recipient Jefferson Deblanc shares his Medal with students at St. Mary's Academy in Ville Platte, LA. The students had just completed a 6 month study of American heroes, and Mr. Deblanc was eager to share his patriotism and inspiration with the youth of his home state. The results of the students written efforts was published locally by *Bonnes Nouvelles*, a local newspaper. **Photo Courtesy of Julia Fontenot**



Shizuya Hayashi, George Sakato, and Alfred Rascon share a moment together during the 2001 Inaugural ceremonies. Mr. Hayashi and Mr. Sakato received their belated awards the previous year as members of the Japanese-American 442nd Regimental Combat Team. Mr. Rascon, who currently heads up the Selective Service Department, received his own belated award in the year 2000, when members of his unit learned that a military oversight had deprived the heroic medic from Vietnam of his just recognition. **Photo © 2001 by Robert Mick Bush, CMOHS Photographer**



The oldest of 17 children, Ron Rosser joined the Army at the age of 17, shortly after the end of World War II. Discharged after his enlistment ended, Ron returned to service when his younger brother was killed in Korea in 1951. Bent on a vengeance that pushed him to heroic levels, Ron earned the Medal of Honor while also showing great compassion for the youth of war-torn Korea, personally looking out for one young war orphan. Today, Ron is quick to encourage, inspire, and motivate other young men and women in whom our future is entrusted.



Five days after his 17th Birthday, Marine Private Jack Lucas jumped on two grenades at Iwo Jima to save the lives of his fellow Marines. Miraculously, he survived. Having come so close to death, Jack has learned to live every moment to its fullest. Here he enjoys some of the ethnic culture of Pueblo, Colorado during the Medal of Honor Convention in September 2000.



Tom Hudner (US Navy – Korea) and George E. *Bud* Day (US Air Force – Vietnam) salute their fallen comrades during a memorial service in Washington, DC as part of the Presidential Inaugural ceremonies. Photo © 2001 by Robert Mick Bush, CMOHS Photographer



Two former Army Special Forces commanders from the Vietnam War share a warm handshake. They are General Henry Shelton, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Roger H.C. Donlon who, as a Captain a Green Beret Team at Nam Dong, Vietnam, was the first American of that war to earn the Medal of Honor. **Photo © 2001 by Robert Mick Bush, CMOHS Photographer**



Vietnam War hero Sammy L. Davis shares his pride in America and the youth in Cody, Wyoming who won first place for their float in the annual Independence Day Parade. Mr. Davis had visited the small town for the holidays to share with family, and joined the youth in their patriotic effort. **Photo Courtesy of Sammy Davis**



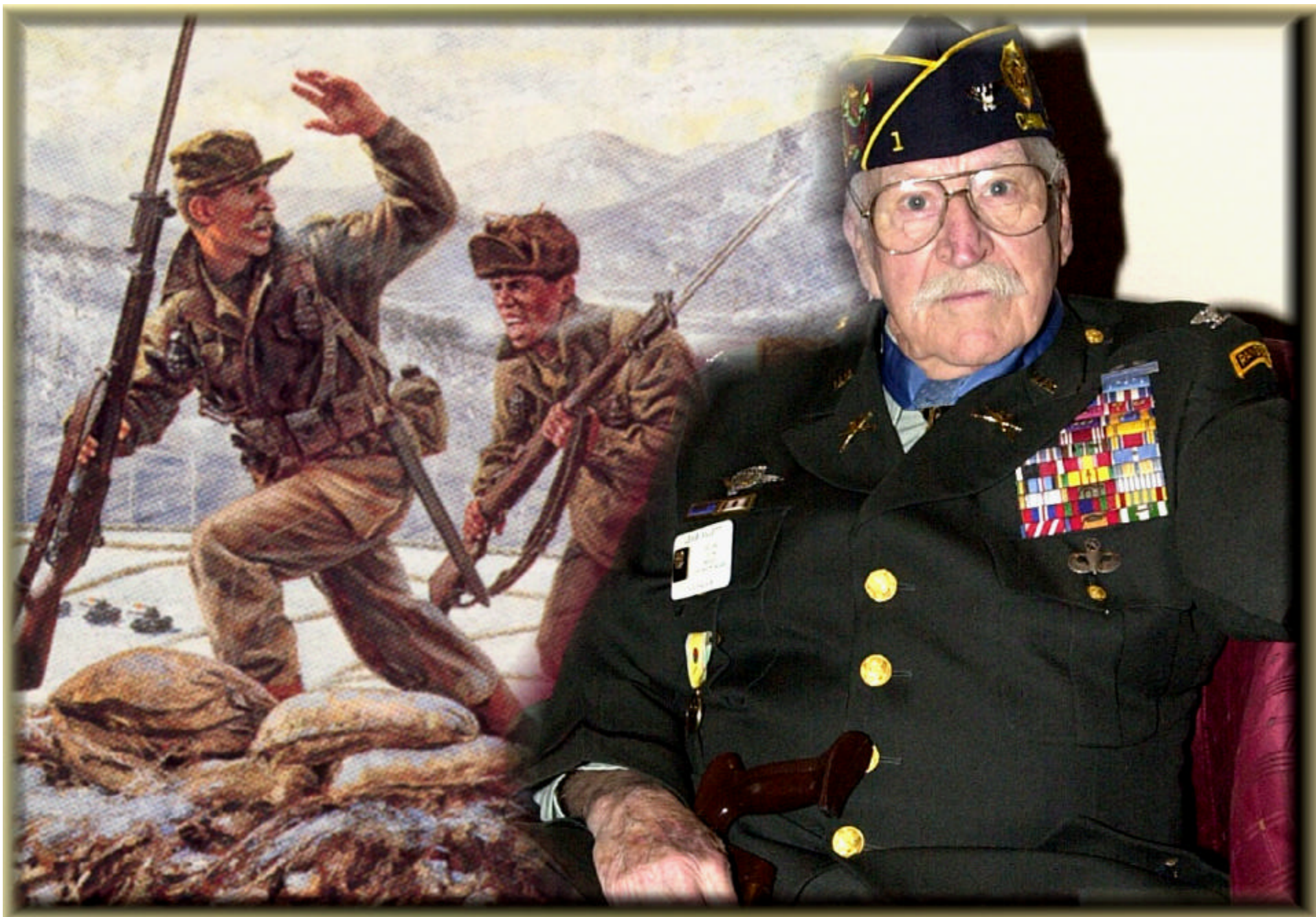
The five living recipients of the Air Force Medal of Honor share a moment together. They are (l-r) Bernard F. Fisher, Joe M. Jackson, George E. *Bud* Day, Leo K. Thorsness, and James Fleming. In addition to their heroism, Mr. Day and Mr. Fleming also endured captivity as Prisoners of War at the *Hanoi Hilton*. **Photo © 2001 by Robert Mick Bush, CMOHS Photographer**



Vietnam War hero and Medal of Honor Recipient Nick Bacon poses with the new *Army of One*, at the 2001 Convention in Boston, MA. Mr. Bacon was elected President of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society for the term from 2001 – 2003. Photo © 2001 by Robert Mick Bush, CMOHS Photographer



Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen (left) joins San Antonio Spurs Chairman Peter Hold in honoring Medal of Honor Recipients Jose Lopez, Lucian Adams and Richard Rocco during halftime in a March 2, 2000 game against the Minnesota Timberwolves in San Antonio. **DOD photo by R.D. Ward**



Lew Millett is a **LIVING LEGEND** – beginning as an Army private in World War II where he earned the Silver Star and Bronze Star, earning the Medal of Honor in the Korean War having worked his way through the ranks to captain, and then retiring in 1973 as Colonel following service in Vietnam. Among heroes—Lew Millett is One-of-a-kind!



Ernest *Chief* Childers is an all-American hero, the first Native American to earn the Medal of Honor during World War II. He began his military service when he enlisted in the Oklahoma National guard in 1937 as a 19-year old student at the Chilocco Indian School. Today, an elementary school is named in his honor in his hometown in Oklahoma, and *Chief Childers* can often be found there, visiting the students to tell them about "honor, duty, country".



The Congressional Medal of Honor Society is the organization, chartered by Congress, that is the official representative of the recipients of the Medal of Honor. You can contact individual recipients, ask questions, and obtain information directly from the CMOH Society.

CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR SOCIETY

**40 Patriots Point Road
Mount Pleasant, SC 29464**

Phone: (843) 884-8862

Web Site: www.cmohs.org

This is the last page of the Calendar_1 file for Ink Jet Printers

**When this page appears, rotate your stack of pages 90 degrees
(so this arrow is pointing into your feed tray)**

Insert it in the Feed Tray FACE UP

REMOVE THIS ORIENTATION PAGE

Then print the Calendar_2 File

