



River Currents



A PUBLICATION OF
THE MOBILE RIVERINE FORCE ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 32, NUMBER 1
Winter, 2023

Message From the Radio Shack



Hello from the
Radio Shack:

Happy New
Year! We
are looking
forward to
another great
year here at the
MRFA!

As we wrapped up 2022, we received the sad news of the passing of our Board Member and past Treasurer/Membership Chairman, Charlie Ardinger. Charlie was well known and respected by all our members. He served in that position for 17 years. Our condolences go out to his wife and helper, Georgie. Charlie will be missed by all his friends here at the MRFA! RIP Charlie. Fair winds and following seas!! An article reflecting on Charlie's Naval career and life is in this issue.

The MRFA placed our Memorial trailer in the Russell Road Military Museum this past fall. It was time to retire the trailer from its many road trips and to find a permanent home where our members, as well as the public, could visit. This was Charlie Ardinger's last trip with the trailer. He as well as Georgie and Bruce Graff drove the trailer to the North Chicago suburbs. MRFA members will get free admission to the mu-

continued on page 2

MRFA 2023 Reunion Sheraton Westport Chalet Hotel St. Louis, MO Sept. 14-17, 2023 - Register, and Make Your Reservations, NOW!



The 2023 MRFA Reunion will again be held in St. Louis, Missouri!

Check-in will be from 9:00am to 5:00pm on Thursday 9-14-23 and 9:00am to 1:00pm, on Friday 9-15-23.

You are encouraged to make your reservations, now! The number to call for reservations is 888-627-7066 Monday thru Friday.

Please make sure to reference the MRFA (Mobile Riverine Force Association) when making your reservation. The cutoff date for reservations is Aug. 23, 2023. The room rate for all rooms is \$139. All registered guests will receive a breakfast buffet every morning at the hotel. As this is included with the room. It is only free for registered MRFA guests.

The hotel will run a free daily shuttle service to and from the airport. The shuttle stops at both terminals at the hotel shuttle pickup zone, every half hour. (5:30am to 11:00pm daily) This regular airport shuttle is not ADA approved. A flight form is included here for those who need an ADA approved shuttle for airport transportation. Please send the ADA flight form to Frank Jones. We have also arranged for an ADA accessible shuttle bus to transport our guests to pre-arranged locations downtown and a shopping mall. The bus will run Friday 10:00am, to 4:00pm, and Saturday 1:00pm, to 5:00 pm. The hotel is pet friendly. A \$50 one-time cleaning fee is required.

continued on page 2

**Your membership
expiration date is
printed on your
River Currents just
above your name
and address.**

Message From The Radio Shack

continued from page 1

seum which is located between Chicago and Milwaukee just off Interstate 94. The address is 43363 N US Highway 41, Zion, IL 60099. The trailer, boat models and memorabilia are on full display. The museum is open spring to fall, so check to make sure you visit during the times it is open!!

This September the MRFA will again hold its reunion in the St. Louis area. This venue was a success at our 2021 reunion, and we are repeating the use of the Sheraton Westport Chalet. One of the changes this year is that there will be no on-site registration. All registrations must be in advance. We are changing this process to speed up the registration so that members, as well as our workers, can better enjoy the reunion. So please get your registration in early. Necessary forms are included in this edition as well as being available online.

While speaking of the worker bees, my thanks go out to those who work daily to make sure your MRFA organization functions. This includes those who process your memberships as well as create and produce this publication. If you have any contributions to this newsletter, please send them to your editor, Terry Sater, at terry.s8er@yahoo.com.

Harry Hahn, President, SparksRivRon13@aol.com

MRFA 2023 Reunion

continued from page 1

On Friday, September 15th, and Saturday, September 16th, buses will be available to the St. Louis Soldiers Memorial, which is currently running a special exhibit on the Vietnam War free of charge. The exhibit opened on Veterans Day, 2022, and will run through Memorial Day, 2024. A "Ho Chi Minh/Kiss My Ass" banner purchased in Ben Tre by U.S. Navy Petty Officer Third Class Terry Slater, is on display as part of "Vietnam: At War & At Home". The banner flew briefly on T-131-9. Soldiers Memorial also features exhibits from WWI, WWII, Korea, and America's conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.



Service dogs are allowed in the hotel at no charge.

There are plenty of restaurants both on and off property for lunches, and dinners.

The hotel parking is free. RV parking is allowed on the outer edges of the parking lot in the designated area only for registered guests. No AC power is provided.

Questions, contact Frank Jones at 314-303-2730, or mrfatango48@gmail.com

Mobile Riverine Force Association Membership Application Form

- ☐ New Member ☐ Associate Member ☐ Renewal ☐ Sponsor
☐ Donation ☐ CCB-18 ☐ Mobile Museum
☐ *Change of address below.*

NEWSLETTER DELIVERY

- ☐ Postal Delivery ☐ Go Green with Email

Name _____
 Street _____
 City _____
 State _____ Zip Code _____
 Phone _____
 Cell _____
 E-mail _____

- ☐ WW-II ☐ Korea ☐ Vietnam

☐ *Army Member*
 Unit (Division, Brigade, Battalion, Company, Platoon, Battery)

☐ *Navy Member*
 Unit (Ship, Boat Hull Numbers, Navy Activity/Detachment, etc.)

Dates Served in Unit (mm/yr - mm/yr) _____ to _____

MEMBERSHIP RATES

- ☐ 1 Year \$20 ☐ 3 Years \$50

DONATION

☐ _____

To become a member, mail your check or money order
 (payable To MRFA) to Frank Jones, MRFA Membership Chairman, 9 San
 Marino Pkwy, Fenton, MO 63026-7513



**2023 MRFA & 9th Infantry Division
Reunion 9/14/23 TO 9/16/23
Registration Form
(PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY)
Must be received by 9/1/2023**



Name _____

Unit in Vietnam (one unit only) _____ Dates _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Name(s): Spouse/Girlfriend or 1st Guest _____ City _____ State _____

Name(s): Additional Guest(s) _____ City _____ State _____

Send my registration form to me by e-mail Yes ☐ No ☐ First reunion ☐

Registration includes member and 1 guest (Does not cover lodging, food or drinks)

MRFA Member Registration \$75 Nonmember Registration \$100 \$ _____

Late registration fee at the hotel for members Thursday and Friday \$75 or \$100

only 1PM - 2PM: (\$125) Non-Member (\$150) Must pay by check NO

CASH

Total number of other guest(s) _____ x \$ 25 ea. **Guests under 12 are free** \$ _____

Grand Total Enclosed \$ _____

Shuttle to Soldier's Memorial, Gateway Arch, St. Louis Aquarium/Wheel, West County Mall, and Hollywood Casino on a first come, first serve basis.

Please send this form with your check or money order payable to the MRFA. Mail to MRFA 2023 Reunion, C/O Frank Jones, 9 San Marino Parkway, Fenton, MO 63026 before 9/1/2023.

Full refund for cancellations will be made until 9/1/23. After this date NO REFUNDS WILL BE MADE

Returned checks will be charged a \$25 processing fee.

Note: You will still have to check in at the registration desk to receive your name tag. There will be no admission to MAIN ROOM or hospitality rooms without your lanyard/name tag. NO EXCEPTIONS! REGISTRATION WILL BE OPEN ON THURSDAY, SEPT. 14, 9AM TO 5PM AND FRIDAY, SEPT. 15, 9 AM TO 1PM.

**ONLY SEND THE FLIGHT FORM IF YOU NEED ADA TRANSPORTATION!
Please fill out the 2023 MRFA Reunion Flight Form and send to Frank Jones**

From the October 2nd 1968 “Old Reliable” Vol 2, No 39, and the Spring, 2006 “River Currents.”

“VC Nurse Leads 2nd/39th to Hideout Rach Kien”

Seven VC who buried themselves alive to escape detection were found by 9th Inf Division soldiers being led to a hospital complex by a former enemy nurse. The nurse had rallied to the government under the Chieu Hoi program 13 September and the next day volunteered to take men of the 2nd Battalion, 39th Infantry, to a VC hospital where she had worked. Company A was inserted and she led them to a large house enclosed by a storm fence. “The VC were using the house as a hospital,” said 1st LT Phil Ward of Houston, Texas, A Co. 2nd/39th platoon leader. There were 11 beds for wounded, the hospital was very clean, and had running water, toilets and three showers. After searching the hospital and finding medical supplies and clothing, 2nd/39th elements began sweeping the surrounding area. Spec 4 Anderson Durham, 22 of Dallas, Texas, spotted an enemy running into a bunker and detained him. The suspect said more VC were in the area hiding in tunnels and bunkers. Minutes later eight VC were seen running toward a wood line. The 1st Brigade elements opened up on them killing all eight during a brief firefight. The search continued in the area indicated by the suspect when Private 1st Class George L. Greendeer, 24 of Dallas, Wisconsin, hit something hard as he probed the ground with his bayonet. He started digging and found a suspect hiding underground in a 50-gallon barrel. It had been cut in half and a layer of wood covered the top. “I couldn’t believe it,” Greendeer said. The suspect told interpreters he had been underground for a day and a half. Continuing his search, Greendeer found five more barrels containing suspects who had buried themselves alive more than 30 hours earlier. In one, a suspect nurse and a man were found plus a .45 cal. pistol. Also discovered were VC flags, documents, a flag with a hammer and sickle and a picture of Ho Chi Minh. “I still can’t figure how they could live in the barrels so long,” Greendeer said.

First Combined Army/Navy Operations



For the history buffs, I have found what I believe was the first combined Army/Navy operation against hostile forces. The operation occurred during the Seminole War in Florida more than a quarter of a century before the Civil War (when combined operations were much larger). The purpose of war was to forcibly remove Seminole Indians from Florida to Oklahoma. In late October 1837, Lt. Levi N. Powell, USN, was ordered to lead a force of 85 sailors, two companies of artillery (serving as infantry) and one company of militia to penetrate the Everglades as part of a multi-prong attack on the Seminoles. Lt. Powell’s force used a variety of boats (whatever the Navy could buy, rent, build, or steal), including (apparently) dug-out canoes. Powell skirmished with the Seminoles several times, but the biggest fight was on January 15, 1838, when it attacked a village lead by a chief believed to be Tuskegee. In a fierce fire fight, the Americans were forced to withdraw with five KIAs and 15 WIAs. Showing the inter-service nature of the operation, the KIAs included Naval Surgeon Dr. Frederick Leitner, two enlisted sailors, and two enlisted Army soldiers. A number of similar combined operations occurred during the remainder of the war, which ended officially in 1842 when the United States permitted the Seminoles not already removed to stay in Florida. —Bob Dyson Co. B, 2/47 Inf. First Combined Army/Navy Operations



As a side note: In a series of wars against the Seminoles in Florida, about 1,500 U.S. soldiers died. The Seminoles never surrendered to the United States Government; hence, the Seminoles of Florida call themselves the “Unconquered People.” The Florida Seminoles are the only American Indian tribe never to have signed a formal peace treaty with the United States. Check out the book by Buker, George E. 1975. *Swamp Sailors: Riverine Warfare in the Everglades 1835-1842*. Gainesville, Florida: The University Presses of Florida. —Joe Rosner, From the Spring, 2008 River Currents

SECNAV Del Toro Names Future Destroyer After MoH Recipient Thomas Gunning Kelley

By: Heather Mongilio
January 11, 2023 8:16 PM



ARLINGTON, Va. – The future guided-missile destroyer DDG-140 will be named after Medal of Honor recipient retired Navy Capt. Thomas Gunning Kelley, Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro announced on Wednesday.

The Flight III Arleigh Burke destroyer will honor Kelley, who received the Medal of Honor for actions during the Vietnam War.

Del Toro announced the naming of the ship during his speech at the Surface Navy Association's annual symposium on Wednesday. Although Kelley could not attend, Del Toro had him on the phone when he announced the name.

"May we all, and especially the future men and women assigned to the ship, always be inspired by Kelley's brilliant leadership, bold initiative and resolute determination," Del Toro said when announcing the name.

According to the citation, in 1969 then-Lt. Kelley was in command of eight river assault craft that were extracting a company of U.S. Army infantry troops in Kien Hoa Province when the Army's troop transport malfunctioned and the boats came under fire from North Vietnamese forces.

"After issuing orders for the crippled troop carrier to raise its ramp manually, and for the remaining boats to form a protective cordon around the disabled craft, [Kelley], realizing the extreme danger to his column and its inability to clear the ambush site until the crippled

unit was repaired, boldly maneuvered the monitor in which he was embarked to the exposed side of the protective cordon in direct line with the enemy's fire, and ordered the monitor to commence firing," reads the citation.

During the fighting, Kelley suffered severe head injuries from shrapnel from an enemy rocket, but was able to direct the column to safety.

Del Toro told reporters after his speech that he called Kelley on Tuesday to tell him his decision to name the future ship in his honor.

Del Toro told reporters that he received thousands of requests for ship names, but Kelley's story stood out to him.

"In review of the many candidates that were before me, it was obvious that Capt. Kelley stood up above, not that his was more important than others, but his stood above him, and above the call of duty and what he did, and it was time to name a ship after him," Del Toro said.

Kelley left the service in 1990 and served as the secretary of the Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services from 2003 to 2011.

This is the third ship Del Toro has named in a month's time. In December, Del Toro named future LHA-9 after the Battle of Fallujah and future survey ship after Titanic finder Robert Ballard.

Del Toro said that he has four submarines and a few towing ships that he plans to name in the coming months.

He may also rename USS Chancellorsville (CG-62) and USNS Maury (T-AGS-66) later this year. Both ships received recommendations for renaming by the commission examining military installations and assets with names associated with the Confederacy.

Contact Changes

Please send Frank Jones any changes in address, phone number or e-mail addresses so that he can keep our database updated.

His address is:

9 San Marino Parkway,
Fenton, MO 63026

Frank's e-mail address is
mrfatango48@gmail.com

Find us on Facebook

Hey Brothers, check out our Facebook page, "The Mobile Riverine Force and 9th Infantry Division Vietnam" Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/195572170458597/>

Our Facebook Group is dedicated to all Army and Navy men who served with pride and distinction in a place called the Mekong Delta. Be it on water or land, they all served their country. Whether they were on a Monitor or making a helo assault, setting an ambush on a lonely, quiet, dark night, walking through waist-deep water in a rice paddy, riding a tango boat up a narrow canal, or at anchor in the middle of a brown-water river for long hot hours. Places like Dong Tam, Tay Ninh, Snoopy's Nose, the Cross Roads, Ambush Alley, My Tho, Rach Kien, Plain of Reeds, Parrot's Beak, Tan An, Nha Be or Ben Tre and names like Colleton, Washtenaw, Windham, Benewah, Westchester, Satyr, Askari, PBR, and Swiftboat are names and places we'll never forget.

This group is to preserve a living memory of all those who served in the Mobile Riverine Force and 9th Infantry Division Vietnam.

Many friendships from days past have been renewed because of our group page. It is a great place to make connections with others who served with the Mobile Riverine Force and 9th Infantry Division.

A few rules are in place to keep order in the group. They are:

1. Politics and religion are the fastest way to start an argument and cause hard feelings and absolutely have no place on this page.
2. We expect members to treat each other with respect.

We hope you enjoy the group.

In Brotherhood,
Doc Pries - MRFA Vice President and Group Admin



4 January 2023
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

TO: Mrs. Georginia Ardinger and the Ardinger Family
1857 County Rd. Decorah, IA.52101

Dear Mrs. Ardinger,

It was my good fortune and distinct honor to know Charlie 'Boats' Ardinger, U.S. Navy (Retired) and to be the beneficiary of the exceptional support and service to his fellow Veterans that he (and you) provided over the many years since our 'joint' service in Vietnam. Everyone who served with him and who knew him held him in the highest esteem, including me. Please accept my sincere condolences at his passing.

Our mutual friend and Veteran, Albert Moore, has shared with me that "Charlie was an outstanding Sailor and Shipmate. Very low key but when he spoke in his low key I for one always listened. He was one of the most loyal persons I have ever had the privilege and honor to have known. I could always count on Charlie for good advice. He will be greatly missed." That tribute sums up what I have always heard from fellow members of the Mobile Riverine Force Association. I know the Navy is deeply embedded in the Ardinger family, but if you will permit me to say, 'Boats' Ardinger was a very good 'soldier' indeed.

I will always remember Charlie with great admiration and appreciation for his contributions to the security of our nation and for his personal service and sacrifice. I hope you and all your family will always be very proud of him.

I offer my final salute...

Patrick M. Hughes

Lieutenant General, U.S. Army (Retired)

Former 2nd Lieutenant, "Dagger" company, 4th battalion, 39th Infantry (Hardcore Recondo), 9th Infantry Division

Former Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency

Former Assistant Secretary and Acting Under Secretary at the Department of Homeland Security



TAPS Tribute to a Fallen One

Charles Edward Ardinger



"Fair winds and following seas" to Board Member, Charles Edward Ardinger, a founding member of the MRFA, passed away on the morning of January 3, 2023, after a brief hospital stay at Gundersen Hospital in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

Charles was born on July 7, 1942 to Ralph and Clara Ardinger in Norfolk, Virginia. He graduated from Spring Grove High School in 1960. After high school, he

joined the U.S. Navy. On July 2, 1965, he married Georginia Leader in San Francisco, California. His various duty stations included Recruit Training, Great Lakes, Illinois; Atlantic Reserve Fleet, Orange, Texas; USS Mattaponi A0 41, San Francisco; CHB Subic Bay, PI, Danang, Vietnam; USS Graffias AF 29, San Francisco; USS Catskill MCS-1, Long Beach; River Assault Squadron 15, Boat Captain of Tango 151-11, Mekong Delta, Vietnam; U.S. Naval Training Center, Hancock, Michigan; U.S. Naval Station, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; and Correctional Center, Corpus Christi, Texas. After his 22 ½ years of service, he retired from the U.S. Navy in June 1980. He returned to the Mabel area and bought and remodeled his grandmother's house in Hesper. He retired to Iowa, in 1980.

He was a member of the Hesper Lutheran Church; life member of the American Legion, AMVETS, Disabled American Veterans, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Mobile Riverine Force Association, VFW, and VVA; and a member of the Fleet Reserve Association, USS Graffias, USS Mattaponi, and Guantanamo Bay Association. He was past Commander of the American Legion Post 299 and the VFW Post 5769 in Mabel.

In his bio, Charlie added, "I advertised for my boat crew in the VFW, American Legion, and other organizations. I had a lot of calls from River Rats and Raiders. They all wanted to have a reunion. I compiled their name and phone number. In 1991 or 1992, Albert called and said he was going to have a reunion. We talked about who to ask to come to Hickory, NC. What a time we all had and that was the start of the MRFA reunions. I have been to every one since. I held office as Treas-

urer and membership from 2002 to 2018. Only reason we stayed that long was a great working relationship with Albert and Georgie."

Charles is survived by his wife Georginia, son Charles Ardinger, Jr. (Teresa), cousin Rita Anderson, nephews Doug (Kristy), Brian, and Greg, and other nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents Ralph and Clara, grandparents Julius and Hilda Selness and Nellie Ardinger, and his brother and sister-in-law, Ralph and Ingrid Ardinger, and father and mother-in-law Russell and Belle Leader.

Charlie's good friend and former President of the Mobile Riverine Force Association, Albert Moore, received the following letter from retired Lt. General Patrick M. Hughes, who knew Charlie very well.

In lieu of flowers, please give memorials to the Mabel American Legion Post 299, shake a Veteran's hand or tell a Vietnam Vet "Welcome Home."

Meaning of "Fair Winds and Following Seas."

"Fair Winds and Following Seas" is a gesture of good luck to those we will miss and sailors who have served with honor and courage. The combination of phrases implies that a vessel will have good winds, and not have to pound into the waves. The phrase can be used as a toast or salutation between mariners. It is often used at a "beginning" ceremony such as a commissioning ceremony, as well as in retirement, change of command, or farewell ceremonies.

Following seas are defined by Bowditch's American Practical Navigator as *"A sea in which the waves move in the general direction of the heading"* and can be dangerous if the winds and sea are too strong. But the mariners' traditional blessing implies that both are comfortably rolling in the same direction as the boat.

(Sources include the former Naval Historical Center and Wikipedia)

Contact the Editor

If you have questions, stories, or comments for "River Currents," please e-mail Terry Sater, at terry.s8er@yahoo.com. Not all stories can be published. All must be family friendly. We want a good balance of Army and Navy stories, so please participate!

E-mail

**FREE
SHIPPING**
ON ORDERS OVER \$60

NEW MRFA GEAR LOCKER

www.mrfa.org

Cotton Hats

Cotton hats with embroidered patch on front. Adjustable back.

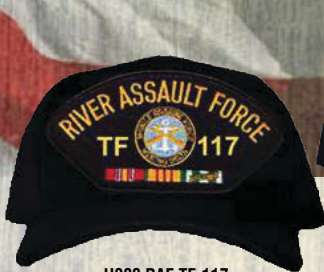
\$25.00



H001 MRFA Vietnam



H002 9th Inf Div Vietnam



H003 RAF TF-117



H004 RAF Army/Navy



H005 Old Reliables
9th Inf Div Vietnam



H009 39th Infantry Regiment
w/black 6"x3" patch on black cap
(covers 2nd/39th, 3rd/39th, and
4th/39th 9th Inf Div)



H010 47th Inf Regiment
w/black 6"x3" patch on black cap
(covers 2nd/47th, 3rd/47th, and
4th/47th 9th Inf Div)



H011 60th Infantry Regiment
w/black 6"x3" patch on black cap
(covers 2nd/60th, 3rd/60th, and
5th/60th 9th Inf Div)

Mesh Back Hats



H017 Combat
Infantryman



H018 Purple Heart



H019 9th Med Bn Dong Tam Vietnam



H020 Combat Medic Vietnam



H022 Silver Star
w/black 6"x3" patch
on mesh back
black cap



H021 U.S. Navy Corpsman Vietnam



H023 Bronze Star
w/black 6"x3" patch on mesh back
black cap

Service Award Hats

Service Award hats are available in five styles on an olive drab base. All cotton, washable with pewter finish clasp.

\$25.00



H012 MRF PUC



H013 MRF Svc Ribbon



H015 9th Inf. Div. Vietnam
SVC Ribbon



H016 MRF CAR Vietnam

ASK MIKE



We invite members who have questions on VA Matters, Awards and Decorations, and MRF History, to send your questions to Mike Harris. Mike is uniquely qualified, as a former Veteran Service Representative (VSR), and Historian, for the Mobile Riverine Force. Send your questions to Mike, at mekong152@99w.us. Following, is some valuable information for all MRFA members and their families! Send your questions to Mike!

As Webmaster of the MRFA website I receive a lot of requests from folks who want me to add their links to our MRFA Veteran Advocate page. Since we are an aging group most of them do not apply. However, there are some issues that are appropriate to discuss at our age. I'll cover a few here in hopes that many will benefit from the information.

As a former Veteran Service Representative (VSR), I always encouraged my veterans to keep a file folder for their spouse. Doing so makes it so much easier on those we leave behind to transition. Include information like I am sharing here. I will focus on 100% service-connected veterans as well as those who are drawing 100% compensation due to Total Disability due to Individual Unemployability (TDIU), but some apply to lesser service-connected percentages:

1) Burial Allowance:

You may be eligible for a VA burial allowance if:- you paid for a veteran's burial or funeral, AND
- you have not been reimbursed by another government agency or some other source, such as the deceased veteran's

employer, AND
- the veteran was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.

Service-Related Death:

VA will pay up to \$2,000 toward burial expenses for deaths on or after September 11, 2001. VA will pay up to \$1,500 for deaths prior to September 10, 2001. If the veteran is buried in a VA national cemetery, some or all of the cost of transporting the deceased may be reimbursed.

Nonservice-Related Death:

VA will pay up to \$796 toward burial and funeral expenses for deaths on or after October 1, 2019 (if hospitalized by VA at time of death), or \$300 toward burial and funeral expenses (if not hospitalized by VA at time of death), and a \$796 plot-interment allowance (if not buried in a national cemetery). For deaths on or after December 1, 2001, but before October 1, 2011, VA will pay up to \$300 toward burial and funeral expenses and a \$300 plot-interment allowance. For deaths on or after April 1, 1988 but before October 1, 2011, VA will pay \$300 toward burial and funeral expenses (for Veterans hospitalized by VA at the time of death).

There are other stipulations and criteria. Usually, a Funeral Home will assist with this benefit. The VA Form 21P-530 is utilized:

<https://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/claims-special-burial.asp>

Full Military Honors:

Discuss this matter with the funeral home director.
https://www.cem.va.gov/military_funeral_honors.asp

2) ChampVA Healthcare Insurance:

This is excellent insurance for the spouse and dependent children of 100%/TDIU veterans. Believe it or not, I have come across many veterans who fail to have their spouses file for this benefit. Even if you feel that you have adequate insurance through your retirement and/

or Medicare, you should still have your spouse apply for ChampVA. Your retirement insurance is usually 1st Payer. Medicare is 2nd. Then ChampVA covers the rest. So, you may be paying "out of pocket" expenses when you do not need to. I always say that I wish us veterans could have healthcare like our spouses as all of their needs are met outside the VA with very few complications.

ChampVA requires only a \$50 co-pay per calendar year. The insurance also has a "Catastrophic Cap" of only \$3,000.00 per year. If there is a long-term health crisis then you pay no more than the \$3K per year.

Do not confuse ChampVA with ChampUS/Tricare. The latter is for the spouses and children of military retired veterans.

ChampVA is located in Denver, CO and they are very easy to work with. ChampVA is the spouse's benefit so she will have to coordinate with them.

Of course, any parent can coordinate for dependent children. The spouse will use the veteran's Claims File number (in upper right-hand corner of the VA Rating Decision letter), as well as other pertinent documentation, in order to make the initial ChampVA application.

VERY IMPORTANT: If a spouse and/or children have had any **out-of-pocket medical expenses during the time of the veteran's retroactive grant "Effective Date"** they can submit them to ChampVA after being approved and **ChampVA will reimburse the expenses**. This can be a substantial amount if there have been health issues with the spouse and/or children.

NOTE: ChampVA does not cover Dental, Eyeglasses and Electives.

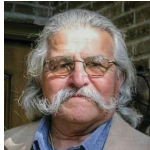
VA Health Administration Center
CHAMPVA
P.O. Box 65023
Denver, CO 80206-9023
(800) 733-8387 Fax: (303) 331-7809

TAPS Tribute to a Fallen One



Michael J. Kirby

Former Member Michael J. Kirby passed away on October 7, 2022. While in Vietnam he served with Alpha Company 6th Battalion, 31st Infantry, 9th Infantry Division from June 1969 to October 1970



Milton Thomas Estrella

Member Milton Thomas Estrella passed away in October 29, 2022. While in Vietnam he served with Alpha Company, 4th Battalion, 47th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division from June 1966 to July 11,

1967 when he was seriously wounded and medically discharged. Milton was preceded in death by, Georgia, his beloved wife of 45 years.



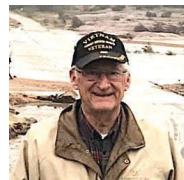
Donald Anderson

Donald Anderson passed away on September 26, 2022. While in Vietnam he served with Delta Company, 3rd Platoon, 15th Combat Engineers, 9th Infantry Division from August 1967 to August 1968



Dennis A. Carter

Member RM1 Dennis A. Carter (USN Ret.) passed away on December 14, 2022. While in Vietnam he served with River Assault Squadrons 11 & 15, Divisions 112 & 152 onboard T-112-12 & T-152-10 (T-50) from February 1969 to February 1970.



Donald E. Anderson

Former Member Donald E. Anderson passed away on September 26, 2022. While in Vietnam he served with Delta Company, 15th Combat Engineers, 9th Infantry Division from August 1967 to August 1968. Donald is survived by his wife Cindy.



Daniel Irvin Anders

Member Sergeant Major Daniel Irvin Anders (U.S. Army Ret.) passed away on December 24, 2022 following a brief battle with Leukemia. While in Vietnam he served with Bravo Company, 2nd Platoon, 3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division from November 1968 to March 1969. Daniel is survived by his wife, Louise, of 54 years.

In Memory Of

This section is for members who wish to sponsor the MRFA by placing a notice in memory of one of their fallen comrades. In some instances, the name of the sponsor will precede the name of the person who was KIA, or has passed on since Vietnam. It's \$25 for four issues.

Wendell Affield, for "Buddha" Ed Thomas, Boat Captain Tango 112-11 (02/68-02/69)
 Ron Baker, In memory of BM2 William Comer KIA 2/68
 Serena Barnes, in memory of Michael Barnes
 Bill Buffie, in memory of Lyle Parin, USS Floyd County LST-762
 David Wilson, 2nd/60th KIA 08/05/69,
 Timothy Shelton, 4th/39th KIA 06/25/69,
 Steven Murrar, 4th/39th, KIA 05/26/69,
 Harvey Crabtree, 2nd/4th Arty KIA 06/19/69, and Dennis Mattox, 1st/501st 101st Abn KIA 08/23/69
 Orville "Lee" Daley, for Marvin Marks, WWII, USS Askari ARL-30
 Robert Flaige, for SFC Fernando Quintero, KIA 02/27/68 and SP4 Robert "Bob" Jenks, E Co. 3rd/60th, KIA 03/03/68
 Bill Frede, for BM1 Guy Dail, BM3 Johnny Maness, and SN David Flamburis, T-112-2, 1967
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 Susan Hanmer, for SFC Michael Hanmer, RivRon 13 and 153 (07/69-02/71)
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 Henry Velez, for my fallen brothers, B Co. 2nd/39th Inf.



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