

"Once again with my brothers...as we were together then...we are together now..."



SHOULDER TO SHOULDER

A Nationally acclaimed and award winning Veteran Newsletter & Website

QUAD CITIES CHAPTER 299 WWW.QCVVA299.ORG

AUGUST 2010

THE LITTLE SERGEANT COMES HOME

He was born in Davenport and was raised in Moline. He grew up tough and he grew up hard. Public housing by any standard has never been considered a day at the beach. He was short and well muscled. Years of gymnastics toned his body while life taught him what he needed to get by...and get by he did. With due respect to education, it was not where he wanted to be and it turned out, not where he needed to be, so off he went to the US Army.

Six months later, John Baker was on a different kind of senior class trip, he was "in-country" and fighting a determined resolute enemy. As things go, 5 November 1966 was to be the day that John not only took enemy lives, but he saved his brothers. A man small in stature accomplished what few ever have. That day, a common man demonstrated uncommon heroics. To the protected, fighting men are always believed to be fighting for God and Country. As this is our sworn duty, we also believe it to be true. But when the first shot is



fired in anger, things come better into focus, "Lord, please help us get through this together and don't let me fail my brothers." With these thoughts and utter disregard for his own personal safety, John stepped up and into history. A grateful nation gave John the Medal of Honor...sought by none, respected by all.

And now, forty-four years later, on 31 July, 2010 in Rock Island, IL, I stood watching a giant who stood five foot nothing accept the naming of a bridge and a monument after him. And this he accomplished with the humility and dignity of a Buddhist monk. The little sergeant has come home, and we are all the better for it.

- Bill Albracht

CHAPTER 299

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Andy Anderson - Parades
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IA Workforce Vet Reps,
563.445.3200

MINUTES VVA 299 BOARD MEETING - MOLINE VFW HALL -07-14-2010**MINUTES VVA 299 CHAPTER MEETING - ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL -06-15-2010**

MINUTES VVA 299 BOARD MEETING – MOLINE VFW – 13 July, 2010

The Board meeting was called to order by Chapter President Ray Hamilton with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for our fallen and missing brothers.

Ray gave an update on the John Baker/Vietnam Vet monument dedication. All is on schedule and progressing. John Baker's health is still a question, but Rocky Bleier's appearance has been nailed down. It was noted that Rocky Bleier is now an official member of our Chapter as Larry Tschappat received his Chapter transfer.

The Honor Flight fund raiser held at Bud's Skyline in June raised enough money to fund a HF guardian who will accompany a vet that needs assistance.

Volunteers: The Chapter is involved in numerous community activities as well as fund raiser efforts. There is something out there for everyone. Volunteers, for even a couple hours, are always in demand.

The second annual "9/11" Chapter Golf Outing is scheduled for September 10th at Highland Springs (see add in STS). Everyone is asked to seek \$100 hole sponsorships and to turn in your reservations as soon as possible.

Our new office "digs" are located in the Safety Building in downtown Rock Island.

The move from IL Oil will be complete prior to the end of July. Phone number and PO Box remain the same.

The Fifth Annual WELCOME HOME VETERANS DAY DANCE will be held FRIDAY, 5 November, 2010 at Jumer's

Grand Ballroom. Coupe De Ville is booked. Much more to follow.

Charities/Donation Committee: The Board recommended the following to the Charities committee -

1. \$400 maximum to a disabled veteran deer bow hunt this fall at loud Thunder.
2. \$400 MAVAs 25th Anniversary celebration
3. \$400 UAW's Vets Day Illinois

Membership: We now stand at 444 (187 life) members & 52 AVVA.

VET 2 VET: At 1400 hours Wednesday, 15 September, Vet 2 Vet will visit The Lighthouse in Silvis, IL. There are approx 20 resident vets and our Chapter will be there to visit with and spread cheer to all those that have served before us. Please put this on your schedule.

Honor Guard: Dennis Laird brought everyone up to date on prior and future HG activities. Jim Loveless, HG member and STS Co-Editor will start publishing HG appearances in the Newsletter.

Treasurer: Terry Kramer presented the Treasurer's report and all was in order. He also stated that he had received a voucher for "mileage" and did not know the Chapter's policy on paying mileage. Secretary Albracht stated that the Chapter does not pay mileage...ever, and only pays for gas if the travel has been pre-approved by the Board. Terry stated that he would turn the voucher over to Ray at the end of the meeting for further action. Under old business, the

Chapter HG has decided not request additional American flags as was discussed in the June membership meeting. Donations continue to roll in reference to the Baker/VN Vet monument.

Interested Board members and HG members were asked to meet at the IL Oil office at 1300 on 17 July to sort out what goes to the new office and what stays.

Mike Blaser, renowned local artist and Chapter member, is working on a "Bridge Called Baker" commemorative print. This will ultimately become a Chapter fund raiser project. The limited edition prints (200 in total) will be signed by John Baker & Mike and will sell for \$100 each (see story in STS). Chapter 299 will hold the copyright.

Meeting Adjourned

MINUTES 299 MEMBERSHIP MEETING – RIA – 20 JULY, 2010

The meeting was called to order by President Ray Hamilton with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for our missing and fallen brothers.

A motion was made and passed to accept the minutes as printed in the July STS. Ray spoke briefly on 2011 election protocol. The draft is finished and is in review.

The final product will be presented for approval by the membership prior to the next election. Currently all Board members have been given a copy.

The Baker/Vet Bridge & Monument dedication is ready. The ongoing issue with John's health is posing serious problems. Transportation to/fm the QCA is being examined. A

private jet seems the best and maybe the only alternative. The Monument Committee continues to work on this issue. Rocky Bleier is a lock and will arrive the QCA on 30 July.

Secretary Albracht highlighted the logistics about the Friday night reception and Ray did the same for the dedication on Saturday. The Friday night reception is a "pay-back" for all those who have done so very much to make this monument happen. It is far too little for many of our benefactors, but it is our way of saying thank you.

The Hog Roast program is doing well. Any & all are encouraged to volunteer. Fred Barks asked for another clarification of the monument funding in reference to Chapter assets. In a nutshell the Chapter started out with XXX dollars in assets. The Monument Committee was given marching orders and a budget by the Chapter membership. The goal was to raise all monies needed to cover all expenses associated with the monument project so that in the end, when all the monument bills are paid, the Chapter assets that were in place at the beginning would still be there. This was NOT a promise, but it was a PLEDGE. Initial calculations indicate that the pledge was kept. The Treasure will provide a full & complete report after all monies are in and all bills paid.

In conclusion, ALL monies raised by this Chapter via Hog Roasts, Bingo, Golf Outing, Trivia Night, Vets Day Dance, or any other fund raising activities belong to the Chapter. How they are spent

"minutes" cont. from page 2

or invested is the Chapter's decision. Monies raised specifically for a project, such as the case of the monument, are still the Chapter's assets, but they are directed to retire bills associated with a specific project or event. Another example is the WELCOME HOME VETS DAY DANCE. Monies are raised by the Chapter, but they go directly to the Holiday Food Basket Program.

The above explanation has been addressed at a half dozen membership meeting since the Monument project was passed by a membership quorum. Therefore it is requested that this be read and re-read as apparently it does not completely sink in with a small percentage of the membership.

Bud's Skyline Honor Flight fund raiser cleared enough where our Chapter can pay for an attendant to an infirmed WWII vet. Thanks Bud!

Golf Outing – see add in STS. Hole Sponsors at \$100 each needed, as well as gifts for drawings. See John Katherman (Phone in add). The Office move from IL Oil to the RI Safety Bld. will be completed before 1 August. The Mike Blaser will produce a limited run of 200 commemorative prints of A BRIDGE NAMED BAKER. They will be sold exclusively by our Chapter – see story this STS. John Baker will get #001 & Rocky Bleier will get #002. Dennis Lair made the recommendation the Baker's former outfit, the 25th Infantry Division

receive print #025 (or the 27th Regiment receive #027). All in attendance agreed by acclamation.

Once again, our Chapter's friends and veteran advocates at the Dwyer & Michaels show on 97X will be involved in pre-dedication publicity. At 0800 on 29 July, Ray & Bill will be on the show with Beth, Gregg, Bill, Goose, et al as they interview Rocky Bleier telephonically. If we could buy this type of publicity, we couldn't afford it! Thanks again to D&W on 97X!

Larry Tschappat reported that at present we have 439 Chapter members and 45 AVVA. All are asked to recruit our VN brothers and retain our current members. It is still only \$10 and a DD-214 for a one year membership. A small cost compared to the price one pays to be eligible. Rocky Bleier is now officially a member of Chapter 299. Bobby Mac McSparin presented the donation requests as outlined in the Board minutes. A three were approved by the membership.

It is further requested that any bow hunters interested in volunteering to assist the October Disabled Vet bow deer hunt at Loud Thunder contact Butch Huber (309.721.1453) and anyone that wishes to donate or loan a bow & bow hunting supplies also contact Butch. Andy Andersen brought the membership up to date on recent and future Honor Guard Activities. From this point forward, Jim Loveless, STS Co-Editor & HG member, will be the point of contact

for all HG activities and will put upcoming events in the STS. Contact Jim at jloveless75@hotmail.com or 309.786.4260.

Have some other upcoming item of interest for Chapter members? Contact Jim for inclusion in the STS. Dan Carothers is asking for HELP! Dan needs fabricators and mig welders to assist in the completion of the Chapter's Flying Pig II hog roaster. Dan says that if you were prone to work on customizing your Hot Rod in your misspent youth, you're his guy! Please contact Dan at 309.752.9711. Chapter member Mike Healey is also knee deep in this project and can be contacted at 309.786.2452.

VET 2 VET – See Board minutes.

The Moving Wall – Clinton, IA – 29 September to 4 October – see story in STS.

Ron Roman responded to President Hamilton's question posed in the May STS in reference to "the last man standing". Ron's presented options & suggestions will be in the STS. It is Ray's intention to generate ideas about our Chapter legacy and disposal of our Chapter assets. Although we are years away from facing this head on, we must plan for the future now. President Hamilton singled out Chapter member Gib Dekoster for his tireless work on the double hog roast on the weekend of 17 July. Starting at 0900 on Friday, Gib worked straight through from meat prep to serving until 1700 on Saturday. Although this is an extreme case, it represents the true

spirit of who we are and what we are about (a sidebar to this is that your president was there with Gib only he wished not to be named). Terry Kramer presented the Treasure's report. All was in order. Terry added that upon completion of the monument & bridge dedication, the Chapter will receive a full accounting of money in, money out.

Todd Harlow took the floor and stated that when acting as Chapter secretary in Bill Albracht's absence (the 9 March Board meeting), he noted in the minutes Andy Ortiz's motion in reference to an election protocol change and that it was Albracht's responsibility to pass it on to the election committee. Albracht disagreed stating that since he was not there, he was unaware therefore it was indeed the acting secretary's responsibility. President Hamilton duly noted both arguments. In conclusion, it was further suggested (from the floor) that neither Todd nor Bill could receive ice cream until they can learn to play together.

The \$25 Pot-O-Gold drawing was won by Terry Kramer who promptly donated it to the QCA Honor Flight Program. Thanks Terry! Ed Hanna won the Chapter 50/50 Life Membership drawing. Meeting Adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Bill Albracht – Chapter Secretary

ROCKY BLEIER, THE PERFECT FIT FOR THE PERFECT DAY

As we stood, shoulder to shoulder in the mix of clouds and sun, I was struck by how appropriate it was to have one of our own as the keynote speaker for the dedication of the John Baker, Jr. Bridge and the Baker/Veteran Monument. One of our own...a genuine guy with a Midwestern upbringing, who went to a Midwestern college (Notre Dame), and became an NFL legend for a team that is far more Midwestern than East Coast! It's the Pittsburgh Steelers, not the Pittsburgh Quiche Eaters.

We could identify with Rocky because of a shared value system. We grew up with the same shaping and

molding in our life as he had in his. A Midwestern NFL legend would make a fine speaker anywhere, but this particular guy was first and foremost our brother. As he recounted the events that happened in 1969 in another world and another lifetime far away... we stood, we listened, we remembered. In heavy combat, he was hit by enemy fire and then... hit again. The men of the 196th Light Infantry carried their comrade. The fact the he was an NFL rookie mattered not. What did matter was that they came into the operation with him and now it was time to get him out. Rocky told his



story and as it unfolded it took life and form before our eyes. Those that were never there now had insight and began to understand what the rest of us already knew. Men who wore sunglasses that day were lucky as the tears that slowly rolled down their cheek were barely noticeable. Others accepted the fact that this man touched their very soul and simply wiped away the tears with dignity and poise. I was in the first group. As a lad growing up in a male dominated culture, we were never allowed to show emotion. So in my life, as in baseball, to quote Tom Hanks - there

are no tears. But now, standing there feelings long buried rose and I, like so many others... remembered. He spoke to me. He spoke of my dead and missing brothers. He spoke of where we were and how very far we came. But most importantly Rocky made it OK for me to allow my emotions to go unchecked, at least for this moment in time on this very special day. We hit the keynote speaker lottery when Rocky agreed to be ours. He was the perfect fit for the perfect day.

Just on man's opinion...
Bill Albracht

NBC NIGHTLY NEWS FEATURES A HERO'S RETURN

How many Chapters do you know that have made the National News? Whatever the number, we are now among them. On the Monday, 2 August NBC Evening News, Brian Williams featured the dedication of the Baker Bridge. Short, concise and right on point (not unlike words used to describe John Baker) the story was about a returning hero and the love and appreciation his brother veterans and his hometown area showed him.

When they ask "what does your Chapter do in the community", tell them to grab a chair and take notes for we are the preeminent Veteran Organization in the QCA. This is no accident, for we are the product of hard work, visionary leadership and a dynamic membership. We served with honor then and we serve with honor now.

VETERANS' GRAVE MEDALLION AVAILABLE FOR ORDER

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric Shinseki announced June 29 that the Department of Veterans Affairs is offering bronze medallions to attach to existing, privately purchased headstones or markers, signifying a deceased's status as a veteran.



The new item can be furnished instead of a traditional government headstone or marker for veterans whose death occurred on or after Nov. 1, 1990, and whose grave in a private cemetery is marked with a privately purchased headstone or marker. Under federal law, eligible veterans buried in a private cemetery are entitled to either a government-furnished grave marker or the new medallion, but not both.

The medallion is available in three sizes: 5 inches, 3 inches and 1½ inches in width. Each bronze medallion features

the image of a folded burial flag adorned with laurels and is inscribed with the word "Veteran" at the top and the branch of service at the bottom.

VA is currently developing an application form for ordering the medallion. Until it is available, applicants may use the form for ordering government headstones and markers, VA Form 40-1330. Instructions on how to apply for a medallion are found on the VA website at

www.cem.va.gov/hm_hm.asp.

Veterans with a discharge issued under conditions other than dishonorable, their spouses and eligible dependent children can be buried in a VA national cemetery. Other burial benefits available for all eligible veterans, regardless of whether they are buried in a national cemetery or a private cemetery, include a burial flag, a Presidential Memorial Certificate and a government headstone or grave marker.

Information on VA burial benefits can be obtained from national cemetery offices, from the VA website on the Internet at www.cem.va.gov or by calling VA regional offices toll-free at 800-827-1000. (Courtesy of VA News)

*Another thank you to Chapter member and cub reporter
Dan Johnson for this information!*

THE MOVING WALL

The Moving Wall, a smaller version of The Wall in Washington, D.C., is coming to Clinton, Iowa! If you have not yet had the chance to visit The Wall, this would be a great opportunity. It is a smaller replica, but every bit as moving.

It is scheduled to arrive in Clinton on 29 September. It is then scheduled to be taken to Riverview Park at 0830 on 30 September where it will be set up. Any and all volunteers will be welcome to help erect The Wall. There will be a rehearsal on 26 September at 1300 to get ready for the opening ceremony which will be held on 30 September at 1300 at the band shell in the park. The VVA Chapter 299 Honor Guard has been invited to participate in the ceremony. The Wall will be available for visitation until 1300 on 4 October at which time the closing ceremony will take place in the band shell.

The Clinton County Historical Society is "in charge" and all military procedures are under the direction of LCPL Paul Williams, USMC.

For more information, please contact Andy Andersen.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

VVA Chapter 299 currently has a total of 439 members. Please welcome our newest members Paul Flores & Franklin Lawson. Also, our newest Life members are Jim Rodgers, Terry Englehaupt and Ed Hanna (Ed by way of the 50/50 Membership Drawing held every meeting). Welcome aboard, guys!!

Need some help folks, Frank Whitaker, where are you?!? Someone paid me cash for your dues at our April election, but I failed to get your address or phone number (Blue Grass?). Anyone that can help me please call me at 788-2729 so I may process his membership. I also need a copy of his DD214.

Thanks!!

Larry Tschappat – Membership Chair

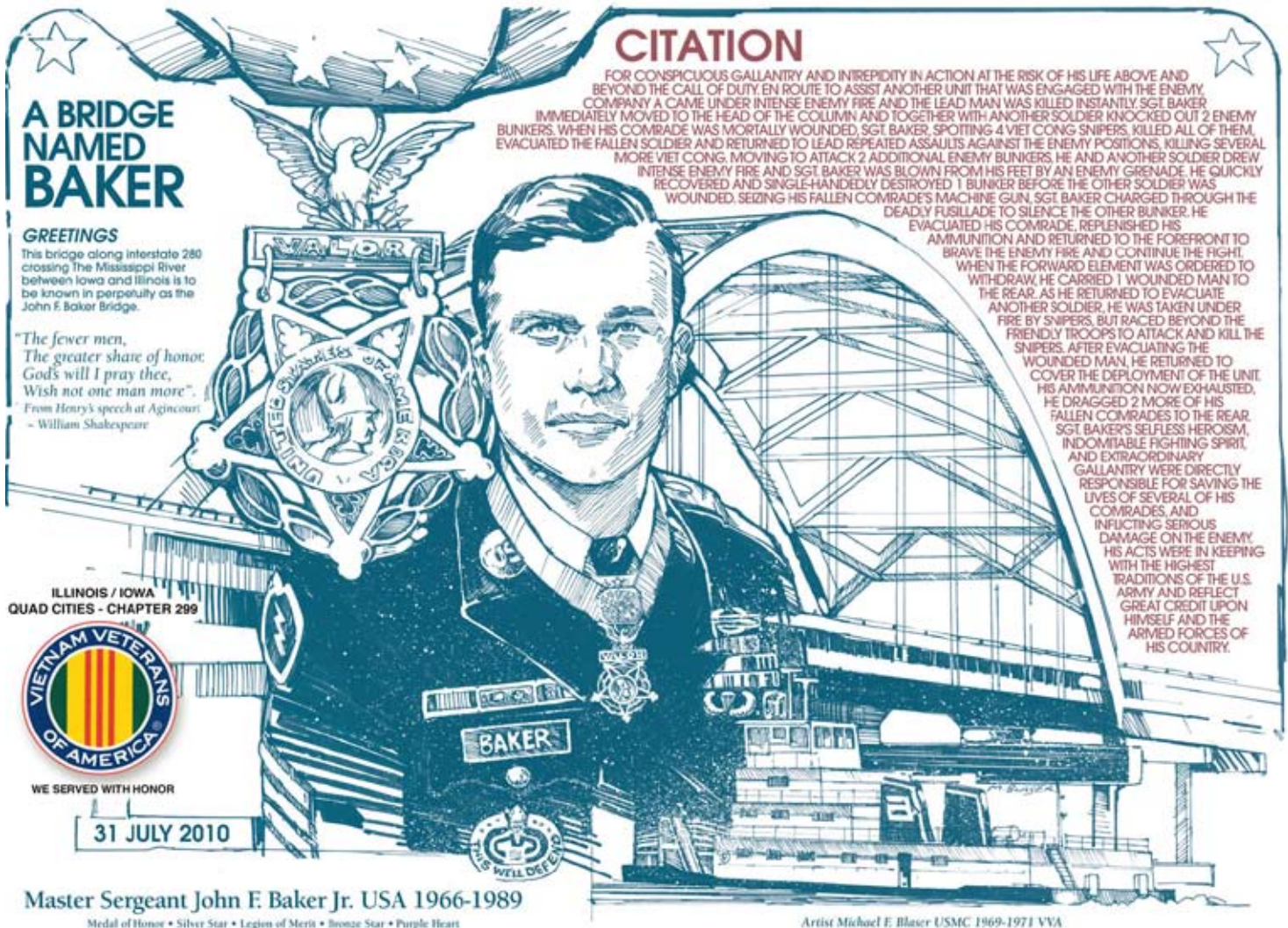
MIKE BLASER CAPTURES "OUR FINEST HOUR"

Nationally renowned Quad Cities artist and Chapter 299 member Michael Blaser, has captured Chapter 299's finest hour. Mike has created a remarkable limited edition print featuring John Baker, the Baker Bridge and our Chapter. The print, titled A Bridge Named Baker is limited to two hundred (200) in total. All are personally signed by MSGT John F. Baker, JR and Michael Blaser. This print is a valuable and collectable piece of artwork and stands as a tribute to all veterans; past, present & future. As prints go, we have no knowledge of any other signed by a Medal of Honor recipient as well as the artist. The prints are one hundred dollars (\$100) each, with

tube shipping extra. The proceeds will go to the John Baker/Vietnam Veteran Monument Project. Any monies in excess after the monument project debt is retired, will go to Chapter 299's community initiatives. The \$100 is considered a donation to Chapter 299 which is an IRS designated 501 C19.

Chapter 299 Monument Committee,
PO Box 6076, Rock Island, IL 61201-6076

To order on line, contact walbracht@gmail.com or r.hamilton@mchsi.com



WWW.QCVVA299.ORG

AIRMEN MISSING FROM VIETNAM WAR IDENTIFIED

The Chapter would like to thank Chapter member Dan Johnson for the following article.

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced June 8, 2010 that the remains of these nine U.S. servicemen, Air Force Col. William H. Mason, Camden, Ark.; Lt. Col. Jerry L. Chambers, Muskogee, Okla.; Maj. William T. McPhail, Chattanooga, Tenn.; Maj. Thomas B. Mitchell, Littleton, Colo.; Chief Master Sgt. John Q. Adam, Bethel, Kan.; Chief Master Sgt. Calvin C. Glover, Steubenville, Ohio; Chief Master Sgt. Thomas E. Knebel, Midway, Ark.; Chief Master Sgt. Melvin D. Rash, Yorktown, Va.; and Master Sgt. Gary Pate, Brooks, Ga., missing in action from the Vietnam War since May 22, 1968 when their C-130A Hercules was shot down over northern Salavan Province, Laos, have been accounted for and returned to their families for burial with full military honors.

Analysts from DPMO developed case leads with information spanning

more than 40 years. Between 1989 and 2008, teams from Laos People's Democratic Republic and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, pursued leads, interviewed villagers, and conducted 10 field investigations and four excavations in Quang Tri Province, Vietnam. They recovered aircraft wreckage, human remains, crew-related equipment and personal effects.

Since late 1973, the remains of 927 Americans killed in the Vietnam War have been accounted for and returned to their families. With the accounting of these airmen, 1,719 service members still remain missing from the conflict.



For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO Web site at www.dtic.mil/dpmo or call 703-699-1169.

Thank you Dan Johnson for making the Chapter aware of this news.

FRAUD ALERT WARNING!!!

If there's a nickel to be made at another's expense, there is someone out there to perpetrate the fraud.

This just in: The United States Fallen Heroes Foundation based out of North Texas is currently under investigation. The smoke & mirrors used to solicit donations (some reports place the figure at \$2 million) have been penetrated to reveal a want-a-be VN veteran praying on the families of casualties from Iraq & Afghanistan. All indications point to fraudulent activities.

Thanks to Chapter member Hugh Pries for this timely piece of information.







**TO VIEW MORE IMAGES FROM
THE EVENT LINK TO
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PHOTO GALLERY TAKEN BY
PHOTOGRAPHER WILLIAM
BAUMGARDNER**

MAVA CELEBRATES 25 YEARS

MEXICAN AMERICAN VETERANS ASSOCIATION (MAVA)
PROUDLY CELEBRATES ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY!!!

Saturday, 28 August at the East Moline Downs from 1400-2300 hours. There will be a formal military ceremony at 1700 hours.

Everyone is invited. There will be food, music, dancing and camaraderie for all to enjoy! Come celebrate with your brothers.



Rocky's Book – SOLD OUT - (but wait - there's more!)

By request, we received two cases of Rocky Bleier's book *Fighting Back*. We sold them at the reception and what was left we sold prior to the dedication. We did this so Chapter members and others could have a great souvenir and memento of the dedication. The books are "a hard paperback" which means they are bigger than a paperback, but a bit smaller than a regular book. Each book was signed by Rocky and was sold for \$20.

The story is an inspiration to all. It is exactly what your children and grandchildren need to read. Triumph of spirit over daunting physical injury. A journey that goes from a VA Hospital to four Superbowls.

Since many members missed the opportunity or want additional copies to give as gifts, we will be putting together a second offering. Same quality and of course signed by Rocky himself. The cost remains at \$20 unless it must be shipped, and then add an additional \$3.00.

Please call (309.797.2660) or e-mail (walbracht@gmail.com) Bill Albracht to place your order. Like the Chapter Jackets, we will place the order when the number ordered justifies the shipping cost.



The below article is being reprinted in our Newsletter in its entirety. Due to its length, it will come in three installments. For every vet that was in-country or stateside, who carried a rifle or used a typewriter, please give this a read.

James Webb is a former Secretary of the Navy and served with the USMC in VN. He holds both the Navy Cross & Silver Star as well as other awards for his actions in country. His best know work is Fields of Fir
Our thanks to Chapter Member CC Childers of CA for bringing this to our attention.

Heroes of the Vietnam Generation, Part One

By James Webb

The rapidly disappearing cohort of Americans that endured the Great Depression and then fought World War II is receiving quite a send-off from the leading lights of the so-called 60s generation. Tom Brokaw has published two oral histories of "The Greatest Generation" that feature ordinary people doing their duty and suggest that such conduct was historically unique. Chris Matthews of "Hardball" is fond of writing columns praising the Navy service of his father while castigating his own baby boomer generation for its alleged softness and lack of struggle. William Bennett gave a startling condescending speech at the Naval Academy a few years ago comparing the heroism of the "D-Day Generation" to the drugs-and-sex nihilism of the "Woodstock Generation." And Steven Spielberg, in promoting his film "Saving Private Ryan," was careful to justify his portrayals of soldiers in action based on the supposedly unique nature of World War II. An irony is at work here. Lest we forget, the World War II generation now being lionized also brought us the Vietnam War, a conflict which today's most conspicuous voices by and large opposed, and in which few of them served. The "best and brightest" of the Vietnam age group once made headlines by castigating their parents for bringing about the war in which they would not fight, which has become the war they refuse

to remember. Pundits back then invented a term for this animus: the "generation gap." Long, plaintive articles and even books were written examining its manifestations. Campus leaders, who claimed precocious wisdom through the magical process of reading a few controversial books, urged fellow baby boomers not to trust anyone over 30. Their elders who had survived the Depression and fought the largest war in history were looked down upon as shallow, materialistic, and out of touch. Those of us who grew up, on the other side of the picket line from that era's counter-culture can't help but feel a little leery of this sudden gush of appreciation for our elders from the leading lights of the old counter-culture. Then and now, the national conversation has proceeded from the dubious assumption that those who came of age during Vietnam are a unified generation in the same sense as their parents were, and thus are capable of being spoken for through these fickle elites. In truth, the "Vietnam generation" is a misnomer. Those who came of age during that war are permanently divided by different reactions to a whole range of counter-cultural agendas, and nothing divides them more deeply than the personal ramifications of the war itself. The sizable portion of the Vietnam age group who declined to support the counter-cultural agenda, and especially the men and women who opted to serve in the military during



the Vietnam War, are quite different from their peers who for decades have claimed to speak for them. In fact, they are much like the World War II generation itself. For them, Woodstock was a side show, college protestors were spoiled brats who would have benefited from having to work a few jobs in order to pay their tuition, and Vietnam represented not an intellectual exercise in draft avoidance, or protest marches but a battlefield that was just as brutal as those their fathers faced in World War II and Korea. Few who served during Vietnam ever complained of a generation gap. The men who fought World War II were their heroes and role models. They honored their father's service by emulating it, and largely agreed with their father's wisdom in attempting to stop Communism's reach in Southeast Asia. The most accurate poll of their attitudes (Harris, 1980) showed that 91 percent were glad they'd served their country, 74 percent enjoyed their time in the service, and 89 percent agreed with the statement that "our troops were asked to fight in a war which our political leaders

in Washington would not let them win." And most importantly, the castigation they received upon returning home was not from the World War II generation, but from the very elites in their age group who supposedly spoke for them.

Nine million men served in the military during Vietnam War, three million of whom went to the Vietnam Theater. Contrary to popular mythology, two-thirds of these were volunteers, and 73 percent of those who died were volunteers. While some attention has been paid recently to the plight of our prisoners of war, most of whom were pilots; there has been little recognition of how brutal the war was for those who fought it on the ground. Dropped onto the enemy's terrain 12,000 miles away from home, America's citizen-soldiers performed with a tenacity and quality that may never be truly understood. Those who believe the war was fought incompletely on a tactical level should consider Hanoi's recent admission that 1.4 million of its soldiers died on the battlefield, compared to 58,000 total U.S. dead.

PHOTOS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE...

For more photos, please go to the chapter's website at qcvva299.org and for links and photogalleries of additional photos from the weekends events. Also, join us on Facebook for more photos and more upcoming events.

WWW.QCVVA299.ORG



Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 299 Golf Tournament

September 10, 2010
Highland Springs Golf Course
9500 35th Street
Rock Island, Illinois



In Service to America

"9/11"

Always Remember

Listen Up!!

**Preferred Ball 4 Man Scramble
1:00 Shotgun start
Entrance Fee \$240.00 per team
(\$60.00 per person)
Includes**

- Golf
- Hog Roast to follow (Roast only \$10.00)
- Door Prizes
- 1 Complimentary Keg of Beer after golf
- 2 Drink complimentary beverage tickets in cart

Prizes for 1st Place, 2nd Place
and Middle Score
Womens and mixed teams welcome!
50/50 Raffle

ALSO

- Mulligans for sale
- Special events
- Car for hole in one

Team/Captain.....phone.....

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Questions call Jim Lavell @ 786-0521 or
Dick Schroeder @ 788-8849 Chairman John
Katherman 799-7995

**Register by August 15, 2010
Checks payable to VVA QC Chapter 299
P.O. Box 6076
Rock Island, Illinois 61201-6076**



**All proceeds support Veterans /
Community Programs and
Honor Guard Service**



**DONATIONS ACCEPTED
No Ringers Please!!**

SHOULDER TO SHOULDER IS BROUGHT TO YOU EACH MONTH BY:

**BILL ALBRACHT & JIM LOVELESS NEWSLETTER CO-EDITORS
and SEAN MURPHY - CHAPTER WEBMASTER & NEWSLETTER COORDINATOR**

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE: HALLELUJAH!

The week preceding the dedication of the John Baker Bridge and Monument was one of many twists and turns shrouded by clouds of doubt and apprehension. John Baker lay in the VA Hospital in Columbia South Carolina recovering from a relapse after undergoing heart surgery in late June. Weather had been hampering the final touches on the Monument and numerous last minute matters needed attention

Well, John rallied in the last couple of days before the event and he stepped to the front as we know he has in the past and through sheer intestinal fortitude, desire and a burning desire to be there when it counted he made the rendezvous with his fellow chapter members, family and well wishers in the Quad Cities for his day in the sun. John was not well enough to travel via normal commercial conveyances but through some critical networking with those close to John in South Carolina, John and Donnell were delivered to us through the kindness and generosity of the Boeing Aircraft Corporation which provided its corporate jet to assist in this matter.

On Saturday July 31, 2010, the clouds parted, the sun shone brightly and a breeze of emotion bathed those in attendance. What a nice tribute to a "national treasure" and one of our own. Keynote speaker Rocky Bleier complimented the occasion with kind and poignant remarks about his journey and how his early upbringing had prepared him for his military experience and how that in turn prepared him for the next phase of his life keeping in

mind that John was the man of the hour and how significant his accomplishments under extreme hardship underscore the importance of teamwork and cooperation. After his remarks, Mr. Bleier ordered the monument unveiled which was facilitated by two soldiers who had come to the event from Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, home of the "Wolfhounds."


The Monument stands like a sentinel facing the Baker Bridge which now carries John's name and spans the mighty Mississippi River less than a mile away. Both structures will be an everlasting testimony to all veterans as John prefers to say but they also serve as a constant reminder to our community that John Baker passed this way at one time when he was a soldier and we as a community are grateful, better for it and we should never forget that!

For fear of leaving out a name, I would like to thank all of our corporate and individual sponsors as a group for your unwavering support of this project and to the Tri-City Building and Construction Trades Council and the people who got their hands dirty.

Respectfully

Ray G. Hamilton
President
Chapter 299





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YOUR UNCLE WANTS YOUR HELP!

Your Uncle wants you to know that we need YOUR HELP, for the Rock Island Grand Prix VVA drum, fence and sand bag project. Wed. Sept. 1st, Thurs. Sept 2nd, Tues. Sept. 7th and Wed. Sept. 8th. Each day from 8 AM to about 11:00 AM. Please call Bob Jackson @309-781-8190 to sign up for any hours that you can help. Your hours bring a nice donation to our chapter. Thanks to those of you who have already committed. **THANK YOU!**

**God Bless America
&
God Bless
Our Troops & Veterans.**



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