



# Honoring Our Vietnam War and Vietnam Era Veterans



February 28, 1961 - May 7, 1975



Town of West Seneca, New York

**Name:** **VAINE**  
**WILLIAM**

**Hometown:** GRAND ISLAND

**Address:**

- Vietnam Era*
- Vietnam War Veteran*

**Service Branch:** ARMY

**Rank:**

**Year Entered:**

**Year Discharged:**

**Unit / Squadron:**

**Medals / Citations:**

*Served in War Zone*      *Theater of Operations / Assignment:*

**Service Notes:**

William Vaine honorably served in the united States Army / William Vaine served 4 years in the Army Military Police

**Base Assignments:**

**Miscellaneous:**

William Vaine worked for 40 years as a dispatcher for NFTA Metro, and as a school bus driver / William Vaine passed away on 5 December 2017 at the age of 77 years old



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Town of West Seneca, New York

**Name:** VALENTINE  
GERALD W.

**Hometown:** SPRINGVILLE

**Address:**

Vietnam Era

Vietnam War Veteran

**Service Branch:** MARINE CORPS

**Rank:**

**Year Entered:**

**Year Discharged:**

**Unit / Squadron:**

**Medals / Citations:**

Served in War Zone Theater of Operations / Assignment:

**Service Notes:**

Gerald Valentine honorably served in the United States Marine Corps

**Base Assignments:**

**Miscellaneous:**

Gerald Valentine was a profession Truck Driver for over 40 years / Valentine was a charter member of AMVETS Boston Post 219 / Gerald Walter Valentine passed away while traveling in Argentina on 18 March 2024 at the age of 82 years old



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Town of West Seneca, New York

**Name:** **VANDERBROOK**

**GARY L.**

**Hometown:** BUFFALO

**Address:**

**Vietnam Era**

**Vietnam War Veteran**

**Service Branch:** ARMY

**Rank:** PFC

**Year Entered:**

**Year Discharged:** KIA

**Unit / Squadron:**

1ST INFANTRY DIVISION, 2ND BATTALION, 18TH INFANTRY, A COMPANY

**Medals / Citations:**

PURPLE HEART

VIETNAM CAMPAIGN MEDAL

MARKSMANSHIP BADGE

VIETNAM GALLANTRY CROSS

GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL

VIETNAM SERVICE MEDAL

COMBAT INFANTRYMAN BADGE

ARMY PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION

NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL

**Served in War Zone** **Theater of Operations / Assignment:** VIETNAM

**Service Notes:**

Private First-Class Gary Laurence Vanderbrook honorably served in the United States Army / PFC Gary Vanderbrook was deployed to Vietnam on 19 January 1969 as a Light Weapons Infantryman / PFC Gary Vanderbrook was Killed in Action on 27 February 1969 from enemy small arms fire during combat operations in Gia Dinh Province, South Vietnam

**Base Assignments:**

**Miscellaneous:**

Gary Vanderbrook was a graduate of Buffalo State University College and was an art teacher at the Alexander Hamilton Elementary School in Kenmore prior to being drafted into the Army / Gary Laurence Vanderbrook was 24 years old at the time of his passing and is interred at Sodus Rural Cemetery, Sodus, New York

Gary Laurence Vanderbrook is honored on the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in Washington D.C. - Name inscribed at VVM Wall, Panel 31w, Line 86

Light Weapons Infantryman lack heavy weapons and armor or with a reduced vehicle footprint / Light infantry units lack the greater firepower, operational mobility and protection of mechanized or armored units, but possess greater tactical mobility and the ability to execute missions in severely restrictive terrain and in areas



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where weather makes vehicular mobility difficult / Light infantry forces typically rely on their ability to operate under restrictive conditions, surprise, violence of action, training, stealth, field craft, and fitness levels of the individual soldiers to compensate for their reduced lethality / Despite the usage of the term "light", forces in a light unit must carry everything they require to fight, survive and win due to lack of vehicles

The 1st Infantry Division (1ID) is a combined arms division of the United States Army, and is the oldest continuously serving division in the Regular Army / It has seen continuous service since its organization in 1917 during World War and was officially nicknamed "The Big Red One" (abbreviated "BRO") after its shoulder patch and is also nicknamed "The Fighting First" / A few weeks after the American entry into World War I, the First Expeditionary Division, later designated the 1st Infantry Division, was constituted on 24 May 1917, in the Regular Army, and was organized on 8 June 1917, at Fort Jay, on Governors Island in New York / The 1st Infantry Division fought in World War I and World War II / During the Korean War, the Big Red One was assigned to occupation duty in Germany, while acting as a strategic deterrent against Soviet designs on Europe / 1st Infantry Division troops secured the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials and later transported seven convicted Nazi war criminals to Spandau Prison in Berlin / The division fought in the Vietnam War from 1965 to 1970 / Arriving in July 1965, the division began combat operations within two weeks / By the end of 1965, the division had participated in three major operations: Hump, Bushmaster 1 and Bushmaster II / The division was involved in the Tet Offensive of 1968, securing the massive Tan Son Nhut Air Base / In the first half of 1969, the division conducted reconnaissance-in-force and ambush operations, including a multi-divisional Operation Atlas Wedge / The last part of the year saw the division take part in Dong Tien ("Progress Together") operations / These operations were intended to assist South Vietnamese forces to take a more active role in combat / The division officially departed South Vietnam on 7 April 1970 / During its involvement in the Vietnam War, the division lost 6,146 killed in action, with a further 16,019 wounded / Twenty of its number were taken as prisoners of war / 11 members of the division were awarded the Medal of Honor

The 18th Infantry Regiment ("Vanguards")[1] is an Army Infantry regiment / The 18th Infantry Regiment currently exists with one active battalion under the U.S. Army Regimental System and has no regimental headquarters / 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment's home duty station is located at Fort Riley, Kansas with the 2nd "Dagger" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division / It is a combined arms battalion / The 18th Infantry participated in the invasion of Sicily and Normandy during World War II / The 18th Infantry Regiment would experience almost eleven months of continual combat operations from the allied invasion of Normandy (June 6, 1944) to the end of World War II in Europe in May 1945 / Among the many actions that the regiment participated in were Battle of Aachen, Battle of Hürtgen Forest, The Battle of the Bulge and crossing at the Remagen bridgehead 15–16 March 1945 / Sent to Vietnam in 1965, the 2nd Battalion participated in a total of 11 campaigns of the conflict there: Defense, Counteroffensive, Counteroffensive Phase II, Counteroffensive Phase III, Tet Counteroffensive, Counteroffensive Phase IV, Counteroffensive Phase V, Counteroffensive Phase VI, Tet 69/Counteroffensive, Summer-Fall 1969, and Winter-Spring 1970 / After returning from Vietnam, the Battalion was inactivated on 15 April 1970 at Fort Riley, Kansas, and relieved from assignment to the 1st Infantry Division

The Purple Heart was instituted in 1782 by George Washington and is the first and oldest military American decoration / The Purple Heart is awarded to military service members wounded or killed in action, in the latter case posthumously



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The Vietnam Service Medal is a military award of the United States Armed Forces established on 8 July 1965 by order of President Lyndon B. Johnson / The medal is awarded to recognize service during the Vietnam War by all members of the U.S. Armed Forces provided they meet the award requirements / Bronze Service stars were awarded to all services for participation in designated campaigns

The Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, also known as the Vietnam Campaign Medal is a South Vietnamese military campaign awarded during the Vietnam War (Second Indochina War), the South Vietnamese government awarded the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with Device (1960–) to members of the U.S. military for support of operations in Vietnam In May 1966 / The medal was awarded for two different periods of service in Vietnam / The first period for the award was from 8 March 1949 to 20 July 1954 / The second period was from 1 January 1960 to the end of the Vietnam War

The Combat Infantryman Badge (CIB) is a United States Army military decoration. The badge is awarded to infantrymen and Special Forces soldiers in the rank of colonel and below, who fought in active ground combat while assigned as members of either an Infantry or Special Forces unit of brigade size or smaller at any time after 6 December 1941

A Marksmanship Badge is a U.S. military badge or a civilian badge which is awarded to personnel upon successful completion of a weapons qualification course (known as marksmanship qualification badges) or high achievement in an official marksmanship competition (known as marksmanship competition badges) / The U.S. Army and the U.S. Marine Corps are the only military services that award marksmanship qualification badges / The U.S. military marksmanship qualification badges are awarded in three grades (highest to lowest): expert, sharpshooter, and marksman while their marksmanship competition badges are awarded in three to four grades (highest to lowest): distinguished, silver, and bronze for the U.S. Army and distinguished, gold, silver, and bronze for the Marine Corps

The Presidential Unit Citation, originally called the Distinguished Unit Citation, is awarded to units of the United States Armed Forces for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy on or after 7 December 1941

The Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross Medal, also known as the Vietnamese Gallantry Cross or Vietnam Cross of Gallantry is a military decoration of the former Government of South Vietnam (Republic of Vietnam) / The medal was created on August 15, 1950 and was awarded to military personnel, civilians, and Armed Forces units and organizations in recognition of deeds of valor or heroic conduct while in combat with the enemy / Individuals who received the medal, ribbon, and a citation were personally cited at the Armed Forces, Corps, Division, Brigade or Regiment level / The United States military began authorizing the Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross in March 1968 with retroactive presentation of the decoration to 1961

The National Defense Service Medal (NDSM) is a service award of the United States Armed Forces established by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1953 / It is awarded to every member of the US Armed Forces who has served during any one of four specified periods of armed conflict or national emergency from 1950 to the present / Combat or "in theater" service is not a requirement for the award

The Good Conduct Medal is one of the oldest military awards of the United States Armed Forces / The U.S. Navy's variant of the Good Conduct Medal was established in 1869, the Marine Corps version in 1896, the Coast



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Guard version in 1923, the Army version in 1941, and the Air Force version in 1963 / The Good Conduct Medal is awarded to any active duty enlisted member of the United States military who completes three consecutive years of "honorable and faithful service" / Such service implies that a standard enlistment was completed without any non-judicial punishment, disciplinary infractions, or court martial offenses



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**Name:** **VANDERHEID**

**MARK E.**

**Hometown:** TONAWANDA

**Address:**

**Vietnam Era**

**Vietnam War Veteran**

**Service Branch:** MARINE CORPS

**Rank:** LCPL

**Year Entered:**

**Year Discharged:** KIA

**Unit / Squadron:**

1ST MARINE DIVISION, 1ST BATTALION, 1ST MARINES, B COMPANY

**Medals / Citations:**

PURPLE HEART

VIETNAM CAMPAIGN MEDAL

MARKSMANSHIP BADGE

VIETNAM GALLANTRY CROSS

NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL

VIETNAM SERVICE MEDAL

COMBAT ACTION RIBBON

ARMY PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION

MARINE CORPS EXPEDITIONARY MEDAL

GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL

**Served in War Zone** **Theater of Operations / Assignment:** VIETNAM

**Service Notes:**

Lance Corporal Mark Edward Vanderheid honorably served in the United States Marine Corps / LCPL Mark Vanderheid was deployed to Vietnam on 13 January 1968 as a Rifleman / LCPL Mark Vanderheid was Killed In Action on 28 June 1968 from enemy mortar fire during combat operations in Quang Tri Province, South Vietnam

The brother of LCPL Mark Vanderheid, Sergeant William Carl Vanderheid honorably served in the United States Air Force

**Base Assignments:**

Parris Island Marine Corps Recruit Depot, South Carolina - Abbreviated as MCRD, Parris Island is an 8,095-acre military installation located within Port Royal, South Carolina, approximately 5 miles south of Beaufort / MCRD Parris Island is used for United States Marine Corps Recruit Training of enlisted United States Marines / Recruits living east of the Mississippi River report there to receive initial training / Marines were first assigned to Parris Island on 26 June 1891 with military buildings and family quarters constructed between 1891 / World War I formed the nucleus of the Parris Island and was officially designated a Recruit Depot / From 1941 to 1945, the Marines trained 204,509 recruits there, and at the time of the Japanese surrender, the Depot contained more than 20,000 recruits / The Korean War began in 1950, when 2,350 recruits were in training / From then until the 1st Marine Division withdrew from Korea, Parris Island drill instructors trained more than 138,000 recruits / In March 1952, the training load peaked at 24,424 recruits / The recruit tide again flooded during the years of the



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Vietnam War, reaching a peak training load of 10,979 during March 1966

Camp LeJeune, North Carolina - Marine Corps Base Camp LeJeune is a 246-square-mile United States military training facility in Jacksonville, North Carolina / Constructed in 1942, the base is named in honor of the 13th Commandant of the Marine Corps, John A. Lejeune / Its 14 miles of beaches make the base a major area for amphibious assault training, and its location between two deep-water ports (Wilmington and Morehead City) allows for fast deployments / One of the satellite facilities of Camp Lejeune served for a while as a third boot camp for the Marines, in addition to Parris Island and San Diego

### *Miscellaneous:*

Mark Vanderheid graduated from Tonawanda High School / Vanderheid played varsity Football and Little League baseball / A catcher, Vanderheid was with the Veteran of Foreign Wars (VFW) team that won the Tonawanda American Little League title in 1961 / He went on to play for Tondisco and the Yankees Babe Ruth League teams / Mark Edward Vanderheid was 19 years old at the time of his passing and is interred at Elmlawn Cemetery, Tonawanda, New York

Mark Edward Vanderheid is honored on the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in Washington D.C. - Name inscribed at VVM Wall, Panel 54w, Line 8

Infantryman or Rifleman refers to soldiers moving and fighting on foot, armed with hand weapons such as rifles, machine guns, grenades, mortars, etc.

The 1st Marine Division (1st MARDIV) is a Marine division of the United States Marine Corps headquartered at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California / It is the ground combat element of the I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) / It is the oldest and largest active duty division in the United States Marine Corps, representing a combat-ready force of 22,000 personnel / It is one of three active duty divisions in the Marine Corps today and is a multi-role, expeditionary ground combat force. It is nicknamed "The Old Breed" / The division is employed as the ground combat element (GCE) of the I Marine Expeditionary Force or may provide task-organized forces for assault operations and such operations as may be directed / The 1st Marine Division must be able to provide the ground amphibious forcible entry capability to the naval expeditionary force (NEF) and to conduct subsequent land operations in any operational environment / In March 1966, the 1st Marine Division Headquarters was established at Chu Lai, South Vietnam / By June 1966, the entire division was in South Vietnam, its Tactical Area of Responsibility (TAOR) was the southern two provinces of I Corps — Quang Tin and Quang Ngai / In August 1966 the division conducted Operation Colorado / Between March and October 1966 to May 1967, the division conducted 44 named operations and the division received its 7th Presidential Unit Citation for service from 29 March 1966 to 15 September 1967 / By April 1971, the Division was back in the United States / During combat actions in Vietnam, the 1st Marine Division lost 7,012 men killed in action / In 1975, the division supported the resettlement of South Vietnamese refugees by providing food and temporary shelter at Camp Pendleton for Vietnamese refugees as they arrived in the United States

1st Battalion, 1st Marines (1/1) is an infantry battalion in the United States Marine Corps based out of Camp Pendleton, California, consisting of anywhere from 800 to 2,000 Marines and Sailors, but the number fluctuates depending on the battalion's mission / Falling under the command of the 1st Marine Regiment and the 1st Marine Division, they are commonly referred to as "The First of the First" / The battalion has been organized



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around fire and maneuver warfare in tropical, woodland, desert, or Arctic environments / 1/1 deployed to Da Nang, Republic of Vietnam in August 1965 and were reassigned to the 3rd Marine Division / They remained in Vietnam until May 1971, serving in or around Da Nang, Dong Ha, Con Thien, Quảng Trị, Hue, Phu Bai and Khe Sanh / 1st Battalion, 1st Marines returned to Camp Pendleton, California, in May 1971

The Purple Heart was instituted in 1782 by George Washington and is the first and oldest military American decoration / The Purple Heart is awarded to military service members wounded or killed in action, in the latter case posthumously

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The Combat Action Ribbon (colloquially "CAR"), is a high precedence United States Navy, United States Coast Guard, and United States Marine Corps military decoration awarded to United States sea service members "who have actively participated in ground or surface combat" / Coast Guardsmen, Navy sailors, and Marines active in clandestine, stealth or special operations are deemed eligible for consideration of the award / The U.S. Navy first authorized the Combat Action Ribbon on 17 February 1969 / The CAR is awarded to members of the Navy and Marine Corps with a rank no higher than captain and colonel, respectively

A Marksmanship Badge is a U.S. military badge or a civilian badge which is awarded to personnel upon successful completion of a weapons qualification course (known as marksmanship qualification badges) or high achievement in an official marksmanship competition (known as marksmanship competition badges) / The U.S. Army and the U.S. Marine Corps are the only military services that award marksmanship qualification badges / The U.S. military marksmanship qualification badges are awarded in three grades (highest to lowest): expert, sharpshooter, and marksman while their marksmanship competition badges are awarded in three to four grades (highest to lowest): distinguished, silver, and bronze for the U.S. Army and distinguished, gold, silver, and bronze for the Marine Corps

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Individuals who received the medal, ribbon, and a citation were personally cited at the Armed Forces, Corps, Division, Brigade or Regiment level / The United States military began authorizing the Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross in March 1968 with retroactive presentation of the decoration to 1961

The Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal is a military award of the United States Marine Corps / It was established on 8 May 1919 as the Marine Corps Expeditionary Ribbon / To be awarded the Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal, a Marine must have engaged in a landing on foreign territory, participated in combat operations against an opposing force, or participated in a designated operation for which no other service medal is authorized / After 1961, some commands permitted eligible personnel to choose between the Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal, or the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, depending on the nature of the operation in question

The National Defense Service Medal (NDSM) is a service award of the United States Armed Forces established by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1953 / It is awarded to every member of the US Armed Forces who has served during any one of four specified periods of armed conflict or national emergency from 1950 to the present / Combat or "in theater" service is not a requirement for the award

The Good Conduct Medal is one of the oldest military awards of the United States Armed Forces / The U.S. Navy's variant of the Good Conduct Medal was established in 1869, the Marine Corps version in 1896, the Coast Guard version in 1923, the Army version in 1941, and the Air Force version in 1963 / The Good Conduct Medal is awarded to any active duty enlisted member of the United States military who completes three consecutive years of "honorable and faithful service" / Such service implies that a standard enlistment was completed without any non-judicial punishment, disciplinary infractions, or court martial offenses



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**Name:** **VANDERHEID**

**WILLIAM**

**C.**

**Hometown:** TONAWANDA

**Address:**

**Vietnam Era**

**Vietnam War Veteran**

**Service Branch:** AIR FORCE

**Rank:** SGT

**Year Entered:**

**Year Discharged:**

**Unit / Squadron:**

**Medals / Citations:**

**Served in War Zone** **Theater of Operations / Assignment:**

**Service Notes:**

Sergeant William Carl Vanderheid honorably served in the United States Air Force and was stationed at Ft. Meade, Maryland

The brother of William Vanderheid, Marine Corps Lance Corporal Mark Edward Vanderheid, was Killed In Action on 28 June 1968 from enemy mortar fire during combat operations in Quang Tri Province, South Vietnam

**Base Assignments:**

Fort George Meade, Maryland - Fort Meade became an active Army installation in 1917 and was named in honor of Major Gen. George Gordon Meade, whose victory at the Battle of Gettysburg proved a major factor in turning the tide of the Civil War in favor of the North / Fort Meade was used as a World War II recruit training post / In September 1943, the first shipment of 1,632 Italian and 58 German prisoners arrived at Fort Meade

**Miscellaneous:**

William Carl Vanderheid passed away on 21 December 2022 at the age of 76 years old in Mason, Ohio



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**Name:** **VANDRUFF**

**ROGER**

**B.**

**Hometown:** **BUFFALO**

**Address:**

**Vietnam Era**

**Vietnam War Veteran**

**Service Branch:** **MARINE CORPS**

**Rank:**

**Year Entered:**

**Year Discharged:**

**Unit / Squadron:**

**Medals / Citations:**

**Served in War Zone**      **Theater of Operations / Assignment:**

**Service Notes:**

Roger Barry VanDruff honorably served in the United States Marine Corps

**Base Assignments:**

**Miscellaneous:**

Roger VanDruff was employed by Checkpoint Foreign Cars / Roger Barry VanDruff passed away on 13 February 2026 at the age of 81 years old



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**Name:** **VANOVERSTRAETE**  
**ROGER J.**

**Hometown:** ANGOLA

**Address:**

- Vietnam Era**
- Vietnam War Veteran**

**Service Branch:** ARMY

**Rank:** SSGT

**Year Entered:** 1961

**Year Discharged:** 1964

**Unit / Squadron:**

**Medals / Citations:**

**Served in War Zone**     **Theater of Operations / Assignment:**

**Service Notes:**

Staff Sergeant Roger Jon VanOverstraeten honorably served in the United States Army

**Base Assignments:**

**Miscellaneous:**

Born in Blue Island, Illinois, Roger VanOverstraeten moved to Buffalo / VanOverstraeten started his career in Buffalo as the Director of Dietary at Mercy Hospital / Roger VanOverstraeten went to work for McCullagh Coffee as the Vice President of Operations and later worked for Premium Coffee in Buffalo, New York as an Account Executive and Master Roaster / VanOverstraeten volunteered with the Boy Scouts and Coached Evans Youth Baseball / Roger Jon VanOverstraeten passed away on 18 December 2024 at the age of 86 years old



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**Name:** **VARGAS**  
**NARCISO**

**Hometown:** WEST SENECA

**Address:**

- Vietnam Era**
- Vietnam War Veteran**

**Service Branch:** NAVY

**Rank:**

**Year Entered:**

**Year Discharged:**

**Unit / Squadron:**

**Medals / Citations:**

**Served in War Zone**     **Theater of Operations / Assignment:** VIETNAM

**Service Notes:**

Narciso "Mike" Vargas honorably served in the United States Navy

**Base Assignments:**

**Miscellaneous:**

Narciso Vargas retired after 45 years as a machinist / Narciso "Mike" Vargas passed away on 23 January 2026 at the age of 89 years old and is interred at St. Matthew's Cemetery, West Seneca, New York



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**Name:** **VARNEY**

**KENNETH A.**

**Hometown:** TONAWANDA

**Address:** 273 DESMOND DRIVE

*Vietnam Era*

*Vietnam War Veteran*

**Service Branch:** ARMY

**Rank:** PFC

**Year Entered:** 1966

**Year Discharged:** KIA

**Unit / Squadron:**

4TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 2ND BATTALION, 8TH INFANTRY, A COMPANY

**Medals / Citations:**

PURPLE HEART

VIETNAM CAMPAIGN MEDAL

MARKSMANSHIP BADGE

VIETNAM GALLANTRY CROSS

GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL

VIETNAM SERVICE MEDAL

COMBAT INFANTRYMAN BADGE

ARMY PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION

NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL

NYS CONSPICUOUS SERVICE CROSS

*Served in War Zone* **Theater of Operations / Assignment:** VIETNAM

**Service Notes:**

Private First-Class Kenneth Arthur Varney honorably served in the United States Army / PFC Kenneth Varney was deployed to Vietnam on 23 July 1966 as a Light Weapons Infantryman / PFC Kenneth Varney was Killed In Action on 1 May 1967 as a result of enemy small arms fire during combat operations in Pleiku Province, South Vietnam

"A" Company, Second Battalion, 8th Infantry, had a series of contacts that eventually led to an engagement with a North Vietnamese Army battalion on 30 April 30 - 1 May 1967, in a large, well-fortified base area between the Landing Zone Oasis and Plei Me camp in Pleiku Province, RVN / The NVA battalion had infiltrated before the division's redeployment and was preparing for offensive operations in this area north of the Ia Muer River / It was during this period that the 2d Battalion, 8th Infantry, converted to a Mechanized Infantry Battalion / On 30 April, a dismounted platoon from Company A, 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry, ambushed a NVA platoon moving on a trail / They pursued the survivors into a bunker complex; but heavy enemy machine gun fire prevented them from penetrating into the position / During the night, artillery and TAC Air continually fired on the bunker area as the remainder of Company A, which had joined with the platoon, withdrew 1000 meters and requested Armored Personnel Carriers (APC's) and tanks / The next day, with two tanks from the 1st Squadron, 10th Cavalry in the lead, the mounted company moved toward the area of the preceding day's contact / They drew fire from their flank and reacted by moving towards the enemy fires and into the well-concealed base camp of the 2nd Battalion, 95B NVA Regiment / The enemy battalion had established a secret base from which to



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operate during the impending monsoon season / The base area was well camouflaged with no trails leading into it and no fire lanes cut / There were no visible signs of the enemy anywhere in the vicinity of the camp / As the tanks and APC's fired cannister rounds and machine guns, the infantry periodically dismounted and moved through dense undergrowth to neutralize bunkers with hand grenades / Sweeps of the area the following day produced 133 NVA bodies, numerous weapons and documents at a cost of only three US lives for both day's activities / Most of the NVA bodies were found where they had fallen, indicating the enemy unit had suffered heavy casualties that prevented policing of the battlefield / The three lost Americans were PFC David H. Bass and SSG Barry J. Short on April 30th, and PFC Kenneth A. Varney on 1 May 1967

## *Base Assignments:*

## *Miscellaneous:*

Kenneth Varney graduated Kenmore West Senior High School in 1965 / Kenneth Arthur Varney was 21 years old at the time of his passing and is interred at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia

Kenneth Arthur Varney is honored on the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in Washington D.C. - Name inscribed at VVM Wall, Panel 19e, Line 8

Light Weapons Infantryman lack heavy weapons and armor or with a reduced vehicle footprint / Light infantry units lack the greater firepower, operational mobility and protection of mechanized or armored units, but possess greater tactical mobility and the ability to execute missions in severely restrictive terrain and in areas where weather makes vehicular mobility difficult / Light infantry forces typically rely on their ability to operate under restrictive conditions, surprise, violence of action, training, stealth, field craft, and fitness levels of the individual soldiers to compensate for their reduced lethality / Despite the usage of the term "light", forces in a light unit must carry everything they require to fight, survive and win due to lack of vehicles

The 4th Infantry Division is a division of the United States Army based at Fort Carson, Colorado / The division was first activated in 1917 and has served in World War I, World War II, Vietnam War, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom1 / The 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry is a battalion of the United States Army and assigned to the 4th Infantry Division, currently stationed at Fort Carson, Colorado

The 8th Infantry Regiment was constituted as an infantry regiment on 5 July 1838 in the Regular Army / The 8th Infantry is also known as the "Fighting Eagles", is an infantry regiment in the United States Army / The 8th Infantry participated in the Mexican War, American Civil War, Philippine Insurrection, Moro Rebellion, World War I, World War II, Vietnam War, and Iraq Campaign / The 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, was originally constituted on 5 July 1838 in the Regular Army as Company B, 8th Infantry, and organized at Detroit, Michigan / It consolidated in May 1869 with Company B, 33d Infantry, with the consolidated unit being designated as Company B, 8th Infantry / During Operation Wayne Grey at Landing Zone Brace 3 March 1969 in Vietnam, the 3rd Battalion Company "A" had at least 21 fatalities

The Purple Heart was instituted in 1782 by George Washington and is the first and oldest military American decoration / The Purple Heart is awarded to military service members wounded or killed in action, in the latter case posthumously



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The Combat Infantryman Badge (CIB) is a United States Army military decoration. The badge is awarded to infantrymen and Special Forces soldiers in the rank of colonel and below, who fought in active ground combat while assigned as members of either an Infantry or Special Forces unit of brigade size or smaller at any time after 6 December 1941

A Marksmanship Badge is a U.S. military badge or a civilian badge which is awarded to personnel upon successful completion of a weapons qualification course (known as marksmanship qualification badges) or high achievement in an official marksmanship competition (known as marksmanship competition badges) / The U.S. Army and the U.S. Marine Corps are the only military services that award marksmanship qualification badges / The U.S. military marksmanship qualification badges are awarded in three grades (highest to lowest): expert, sharpshooter, and marksman while their marksmanship competition badges are awarded in three to four grades (highest to lowest): distinguished, silver, and bronze for the U.S. Army and distinguished, gold, silver, and bronze for the Marine Corps

The Presidential Unit Citation, originally called the Distinguished Unit Citation, is awarded to units of the United States Armed Forces for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy on or after 7 December 1941

The Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross Medal, also known as the Vietnamese Gallantry Cross or Vietnam Cross of Gallantry is a military decoration of the former Government of South Vietnam (Republic of Vietnam) / The medal was created on August 15, 1950 and was awarded to military personnel, civilians, and Armed Forces units and organizations in recognition of deeds of valor or heroic conduct while in combat with the enemy / Individuals who received the medal, ribbon, and a citation were personally cited at the Armed Forces, Corps, Division, Brigade or Regiment level / The United States military began authorizing the Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross in March 1968 with retroactive presentation of the decoration to 1961

The National Defense Service Medal (NDSM) is a service award of the United States Armed Forces established by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1953 / It is awarded to every member of the US Armed Forces who has served during any one of four specified periods of armed conflict or national emergency from 1950 to the present / Combat or "in theater" service is not a requirement for the award

The Good Conduct Medal is one of the oldest military awards of the United States Armed Forces / The U.S. Navy's variant of the Good Conduct Medal was established in 1869, the Marine Corps version in 1896, the Coast



# Honoring Our Vietnam War and Vietnam Era Veterans



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Town of West Seneca, New York

Guard version in 1923, the Army version in 1941, and the Air Force version in 1963 / The Good Conduct Medal is awarded to any active duty enlisted member of the United States military who completes three consecutive years of "honorable and faithful service" / Such service implies that a standard enlistment was completed without any non-judicial punishment, disciplinary infractions, or court martial offenses

The NYS Conspicuous Service Cross may be awarded to any current New York State citizen or person who was a New York State citizen while serving on federal active duty; whose entire service was honorable subsequent to the time of receipt of the citation while serving in the U.S. Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard or in the Army female nurse corps, and who has received a personal decoration issued by a brigade or equivalent higher headquarters. The Conspicuous Service Cross may also be awarded to any citizen of New York State, who while serving with the allied forces, received a personal decoration published in order issued by a brigade or equivalent higher headquarters



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Town of West Seneca, New York

**Name:** VASI

ROBERT F.

**Hometown:** EAST AMHERST

**Address:**

Vietnam Era

Vietnam War Veteran

**Service Branch:** ARMY

**Rank:**

**Year Entered:** 1955

**Year Discharged:** 1957

**Unit / Squadron:**

510TH ENGINEER COMPANY

**Medals / Citations:**

GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL

Served in War Zone Theater of Operations / Assignment:

**Service Notes:**

Robert F. Vasi honorably served in the United States Army / Robert Vasi was deployed to France for 17 months as an Ordnance Parts Specialist with the 510th Engineer Co.

**Base Assignments:**

**Miscellaneous:**

Robert F. Vasi passed away on 31 May 2024, at the age of 90 years old

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Town of West Seneca, New York

**Name:** **VATICANO, JR.**  
**BARTOLO**

**Hometown:** HAMBURG

**Address:**

- Vietnam Era*
- Vietnam War Veteran*

**Service Branch:** (UNKNOWN)

**Rank:**

**Year Entered:**

**Year Discharged:**

**Unit / Squadron:**

**Medals / Citations:**

VIETNAM SERVICE MEDAL

VIETNAM CAMPAIGN MEDAL

NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL

*Served in War Zone*    **Theater of Operations / Assignment:** VIETNAM

**Service Notes:**

Bartolo Vaticano, Jr. honorably served in the United States Military / Bartolo Vaticano was deployed to Vietnam

**Base Assignments:**

**Miscellaneous:**

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Town of West Seneca, New York

**Name:** VERDI

GERALD P.

**Hometown:** HAMBURG

**Address:**

- Vietnam Era  
 Vietnam War Veteran

**Service Branch:** NAVY

**Rank:** PO

**Year Entered:** 1966

**Year Discharged:** 1970

**Unit / Squadron:**

USS NICHOLAS (DD-449)

USS MCCLOY (DE-1038)

**Medals / Citations:**

VIETNAM SERVICE MEDAL

REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM CAMPAIGN MEDAL W/1960 DEVICE

NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL

GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL

Served in War Zone Theater of Operations / Assignment: VIETNAM

**Service Notes:**

Petty Officer Gerald P. Verdi honorably served in the United States Navy / PO Gerald Verdi was trained as a Aviation Machinist Mate and assigned to the destroyer, USS Nicholas (DD-449) and the frigate, the USS McCloy (DE-1038) / Petty Officer Verdi participated in the Gulf of Tonkin and supported the Apollo recovery missions / PO Verdi served for 3 years and 8 months on active duty, with 2 years 8 months Sea Service

**Base Assignments:**

**Miscellaneous:**

Gerald Verdi attended Burgard Vocational High School / After his Honorable Discharge from the U.S. Navy, Gerald Verdi earned a degree from Villa Maria College / Verdi worked as a carpenter, a photographer and a pathologist's assistant / Gerald P. Verdi passed away on 23 July 2025 at the age of 78 years old

Aviation Machinist's Mates (abbreviated as AD) are United States Navy aircraft engine mechanics that inspect, adjust, test, repair, and overhaul aircraft engines and propellers / More specifically, ADs install, maintain, and service various aircraft engine types as well as various accessories, gear boxes, related fuel systems, and lubrication systems; determine reasons for engine degradation using various test equipment; perform propeller repairs; handle and service aircraft ashore or aboard ship; and can also serve as aircrewman in various types of aircraft

USS Nicholas (DD/DDE-449) was a Fletcher-class destroyer of the United States Navy, serving for a total of 27



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years, including through most of World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War / She was the second Navy ship to be named for Major Samuel Nicholas, an American Marine and military officer who was the first officer commissioned in the United States Continental Marines (predecessor to the United States Marine Corps) and by tradition is considered to be the first Commandant of the Marine Corps / The Nicholas was commissioned on 4 June 1942 and served in the Pacific through three armed conflicts/ During World War II, the Nicholas participated in the Battle of Kula Gulf, the Battle of Kolombangara and the Lingayen Gulf assault / During the Korean War, the Nicholas screened American carriers off the west coast of Korea; conducted exercises between Yokosuka and Okinawa; and patrolled the Taiwan Strait / In March 1965, during the Vietnam War, the Nicholas became one of the first ships engaged in Operation Market Time; patrol of the jagged South Vietnamese coastline to prohibit smuggling of men, weapons, and supplies into South Vietnam by Viet Cong and North Vietnamese junks and sampans / On 30 January 1970, having become the navy's oldest active destroyer eight years earlier, the "Nick" was decommissioned in a ceremony at Pearl Harbor, stricken from the Navy List, towed to Portland, Oregon, and then broken up in 1972 / At the time she was retired, only seven other Fletchers remained in service with the US Navy / As of 2023, the ship's mast was at the Veterans Memorial Museum in Chehalis, Washington and the ship's bell was at Center House, Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C. / In addition to her Presidential Unit Citation, Nicholas earned 16 battle stars in World War II, placing her among the most decorated US ships of World War II, a total surpassed among destroyers only by her sister ship, USS O'Bannon / She earned five more in the Korean War and nine in the Vietnam War for a total of 30, a number unmatched by any other U.S. Navy ship in the twentieth century

USS McCloy (FF-1038) was the second and final Bronstein-class frigate / The McCloy was named for LCDR John C. McCloy, recipient of two Medals of Honor / Commissioned on 21 October 1963 as a destroyer escort, McCloy was redesignated as frigate on 30 June 1975 / McCloy was decommissioned on 14 December 1990, stricken from the Naval Vessel Register on 17 December 1990, and transferred to Mexico on 1 October 1993 along with her sister ship Bronstein. In the Mexican Navy, McCloy was renamed ARM Nicolás Bravo (E40) for Nicolás Bravo, a Mexican politician and soldier

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**Name:** **VERNON, JR.**  
**SAMUEL J.**

**Hometown:** HAMBURG

**Address:**

**Vietnam Era**

**Vietnam War Veteran**

**Service Branch:** MARINE CORPS

**Rank:**

**Year Entered:**

**Year Discharged:**

**Unit / Squadron:**

**Medals / Citations:**

**Served in War Zone** **Theater of Operations / Assignment:**

**Service Notes:**

Samuel J. Vernon, Jr. Honorably served in the United States Marine Corps

**Base Assignments:**

**Miscellaneous:**

Samuel Vernon attended Hamburg High School / Vernon worked for Cassens Transport in Niagara Falls, New York / Vernon was the Crew Chief for the stock car "Jake Vernon Racing Team" / Samuel Vernon was a volunteer fireman for the East Eden Fire Department and a member of the Hamburg American Legion Post #527 / Samuel J. Vernon, Jr. passed away on 10 August 2024 at the age of 68 years old and is interred at St. Mary's Church Cemetery, Eden, New York



# Honoring Our Vietnam War and Vietnam Era Veterans



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Town of West Seneca, New York

**Name:** **VERRASTRO**

**JAMES P.**

**Hometown:** BUFFALO

**Address:**

**Vietnam Era**

**Vietnam War Veteran**

**Service Branch:** AIR FORCE

**Rank:**

**Year Entered:**

**Year Discharged:**

**Unit / Squadron:**

**Medals / Citations:**

**Served in War Zone** **Theater of Operations / Assignment:**

**Service Notes:**

James P. Verrastro honorably served in the United States Air Force

**Base Assignments:**

**Miscellaneous:**

James Verrastro was a 1974 graduate of the University of Buffalo / Verrastro was an Attorney and senior partner at Spadafora & Verrastro, LLP / James Verrastro was a member of the New York State and Erie County Bar Associations / Verrastro served as a Confidential Law Clerk and Assistant District Attorney / James P. Verrastro passed away on 18 January 2025 at the age of 75 years old



# Honoring Our Vietnam War and Vietnam Era Veterans



February 28, 1961 - May 7, 1975



Town of West Seneca, New York

**Name:** **VILLANI**

**KURT**

**M.**

**Hometown:** GRAND ISLAND

**Address:**

**Vietnam Era**

**Vietnam War Veteran**

**Service Branch:** ARMY

**Rank:**

**Year Entered:**

**Year Discharged:**

**Unit / Squadron:**

**Medals / Citations:**

**Served in War Zone**      **Theater of Operations / Assignment:**

**Service Notes:**

Kurt M. Villani honorably served in the Army National Guard

**Base Assignments:**

**Miscellaneous:**

Kurt Villani was a graduate of LaSalle High School / Villani operated Gui's Lumber-Ace Hardware since the mid-eighties, expanding to seven locations in Western new York / Kurt M. Villani passed away on 6 August 2022 at the age of 72 years old and is interred at Saint Stephens Roman Catholic Cemetery, Grand Island, New York

The Army National Guard (ARNG) is an organized militia force and a federal military reserve force of the United States Army / It is simultaneously part of two different organizations: the Militia of the United States (consisting of the ARNG of each state, most territories, and the District of Columbia), as well as the federal ARNG, as part of the National Guard as a whole (which includes the Air National Guard) / It is divided into subordinate units stationed in each state or insular area, responsible to their respective governors or other head-of-government



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Town of West Seneca, New York

**Name:** **VODRASKA**

**STANLEY**

**L.**

**Hometown:** **BUFFALO**

**Address:**

**Vietnam Era**

**Vietnam War Veteran**

**Service Branch:** **NAVY**

**Rank:**

**Year Entered:** **1953**

**Year Discharged:** **1957**

**Unit / Squadron:**

**Medals / Citations:**

**Served in War Zone** **Theater of Operations / Assignment:**

**Service Notes:**

Stanley Luis Vodraska honorably served in the United States Navy

**Base Assignments:**

**Miscellaneous:**

After his Honorable Discharge from the U.S. navy, Stanley Vodraska earned a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree (with honors) in Philosophy from St. John's University (Minnesota) / Vodraska continued his education as a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Louvain in Belgium / Prof. Vodraska earned a Master of Arts (MA) degree as a Woodrow Wilson Fellow at the University of Chicago and joined the faculty of Canisius College (Buffalo) in 1964 / Vodraska later earned a PhD in philosophy from the University of London, Warburg Institute / Professor Stanley Vodraska taught philosophy at Canisius College for over 40 years, and also served on its faculty senate (1972-1988) / Prof. Vodraska later focused on Philosophy of the Family, a subject he often taught from 1991 until his retirement in 2008 / Professor Vodraska published an anthology, "Philosophical Essays concerning Human Families" in 2014 / Stanley Vodraska was a member of the American Legion / Professor Stanley Luis Vodraska passed away in Lancaster, New Hampshire on 15 October 2025 at the age of 90 years old



# Honoring Our Vietnam War and Vietnam Era Veterans



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Town of West Seneca, New York

**Name:** **VOGEL**

**CHARLES E.**

**Hometown:** AMHERST

**Address:**

**Vietnam Era**

**Vietnam War Veteran**

**Service Branch:** MARINE CORPS

**Rank:**

**Year Entered:**

**Year Discharged:**

**Unit / Squadron:**

**Medals / Citations:**

**Served in War Zone**      **Theater of Operations / Assignment:**

**Service Notes:**

Charles E. Vogel honorably served in the United States Marine Corps

**Base Assignments:**

**Miscellaneous:**

Charles Vogel was a graduate of Kenmore East Senior High School and attended the University of Buffalo / After his Honorable Discharge from the U.S. Marine Corps, Vogel was employed by the Ford Motor Company as an Industrial Electrician for over 36 years / Charles E. Vogel passed away on 25 June 2024 at the age of 79 years old



# Honoring Our Vietnam War and Vietnam Era Veterans



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Town of West Seneca, New York

**Name:** VOLKER

DAVID

C.

**Hometown:** KENMORE

**Address:**

Vietnam Era

Vietnam War Veteran

**Service Branch:** ARMY

**Rank:**

**Year Entered:**

**Year Discharged:**

**Unit / Squadron:**

**Medals / Citations:**

Served in War Zone    Theater of Operations / Assignment: VIETNAM

**Service Notes:**

David C. Volker honorably served in the United States Army and was deployed to Vietnam

**Base Assignments:**

**Miscellaneous:**

David C. Volker passed away on 23 December 2025 at the age of 76 years of age and is interred at St. Stanislaus Cemetery, Cheektowaga, New York



# Honoring Our Vietnam War and Vietnam Era Veterans



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Town of West Seneca, New York

**Name:** VOLKER

LEIGH

C.

**Hometown:** HAMBURG

**Address:**

Vietnam Era

Vietnam War Veteran

**Service Branch:** ARMY

**Rank:** SP5

**Year Entered:**

**Year Discharged:**

**Unit / Squadron:**

**Medals / Citations:**

VIETNAM SERVICE MEDAL

VIETNAM CAMPAIGN MEDAL

NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL

Served in War Zone Theater of Operations / Assignment: VIETNAM

**Service Notes:**

Specialist Fifth-Class Leigh C. Volker honorably served in the United States Army / SP5 Leigh Volker was deployed to Vietnam

**Base Assignments:**

**Miscellaneous:**

Leigh Volker was the Past Secretary of the Sturgeon Point Sportsmen's Club, past President of the Evans Jaycees and a member of the Old Ford Athletic Club / Leigh C. Volker passed away on 25 February 2008 at the age of 62 years old and is interred at Forest Avenue Cemetery, Angola, New York

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# Honoring Our Vietnam War and Vietnam Era Veterans



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Town of West Seneca, New York

**Name:** **VOLLMER, JR.**

**FRANCIS X.**

**Hometown:** AMHERST

**Address:**

**Vietnam Era**

**Vietnam War Veteran**

**Service Branch:** AIR FORCE

**Rank:**

**Year Entered:** 1964

**Year Discharged:** 1968

**Unit / Squadron:**

6924TH SECURITY SQUADRON

**Medals / Citations:**

VIETNAM SERVICE MEDAL

REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM CAMPAIGN MEDAL

NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL

**Served in War Zone** **Theater of Operations / Assignment:** VIETNAM

**Service Notes:**

Francis X. Vollmer, Jr. honorably served in the United States Air Force / Francis Vollmer was stationed in Italy and volunteered for a duty assignment in Da Nang, Vietnam as an Intelligence Specialist / Vollmer and his unit came under fire during the Tet Offensive in 1968

**Base Assignments:**

Da Nang Air Base, Republic of Vietnam - Da Nang Air Base was a French Air Force and later Republic of Vietnam Air Force (RVNAF) facility located in the city of Da Nang, Vietnam / During the Vietnam War (1959–1975), it was a major base with United States Army, United States Air Force (USAF), and United States Marine Corps (USMC) units stationed there / Air Vietnam also used the facility from 1951 to 1975 for civilian domestic and international flights within Southeast Asia / When American forces left Vietnam in March 1973, the Air Base was turned over to the South Vietnamese government / The People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN) captured Da Nang AB from the South Vietnamese on 29 March 1975 / The PAVN captured 10,000 tons of air munitions worth \$18 million, various ground radar equipment and 176 aircraft, including an F-5E, 5 F-5As, 24 A-37s and 80 UH-1s

**Miscellaneous:**

Born in Buffalo, Francis X. Vollmer, Jr. Attended Cardinal Dougherty High School, later graduating from Kenmore West Senior High School / While attending high school, Vollmer was a member of the Civil Air Patrol / After graduation, Vollmer enlisted in the U.S. Air Force / After his Honorable Discharge, Vollmer went to work for the Buffalo News and enrolling at Millard Fillmore College / Vollmer retired from the Buffalo News in 2002 / Vollmer was a member of the Charles N. DeGlopper Memorial Post 9249 and served as President of the Western New York Chapter 77, Vietnam Veterans of America / Francis X. Vollmer, Jr. passed away on 20 March 2022 in



# Honoring Our Vietnam War and Vietnam Era Veterans



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Town of West Seneca, New York

## Knoxville, Tennessee

The 6924th Security Squadron - USAF Security Service, was located at DaNang AB from January 1962 Until April 1971 / The 6924th SS was subordinate to the 6922 Security Wing, Clark AB, PI, and the Pacific Security Region, USAFSS Hawaii / Its primary mission was Signal & Communications Intelligence / Its operations area and antenna field were located on the west side of the base in the middle of the USMC area / In April 1971 the 6924th SS relocated to Ramasun Station, Thailand

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