



GUARDMOUNT

Volume 8, Issue 4

April, 2003



35TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TET 1968 OFFENSIVE

Commemorating the 35th Anniversary of the TET 1968 Offensive to help instill AP/SP heritage in the SF airmen of today.

Major Gregory Reese, Commander and CMSgt Gerald McDorman, Security Forces Manager for the 28th Security Forces Squadron, Ellsworth AFB, SD had a plan, it was simple; they wanted to instill in their young airmen the heritage and history of our outstanding career field.

They wanted to reinforce the courage, honor and sacrifices made by their predecessors. They both felt that if they could instill this into their young airmen, that if and when they went into any combat action they would have some idea of what to expect. Knowing that others in our career field have lead the way as Air Base Ground Defenders. Some of these folks even giving they're all in service to their country.

Major Reese put the word out over the Air Force Security Police Association (AFSPA) and Vietnam Security Police Association (VSPA) Internet websites. He asked for any ideas, pictures and stories to be sent to him for the display they are planning. He also asked for an appropriate guest speaker who could talk about the events that hap-

pened during the 31 January 1968 TET Offensive.

Well, having been there and knowing a little bit about the ABGD program, I could not pass this up. I sent an email to Major Reese with an info copy to Jerry Bullock (AFSPA) and Don Poss (VSPA), saying that I would like to come up and talk to his airmen. Now stop a minute and think about this. It is January and it is South Dakota during the very cold of wintertime. Not like being in Vietnam during the warm days and nights that is for sure.

Having committed to this I started putting things together that I would like to take to show the SF airmen. Not to hard since I had a book with pictures and stories that I had already written about my three tours in Vietnam. I then contacted Nick Keck, Editor of Tiger Flight (AFSPA) and Dave Dobson, Editor of Guardmount (VSPA). I told both of them I would do a story for both issues when I got back home about this event.

Major Reese contacted me and said they would pick up the tab for my trip. They would fly me up on 30 January 03 and back on 1 February 03. He asked me if I would say a few words at the ceremony and then talk to some of his airmen at a luncheon afterward. I said I would love to do it, not being on to talk too much on any subject, but would give it my best shot.

So at 0500 hours, 30 January 2003, I got up to begin my journey to Ellsworth AFB, SD. Hopefully

(Continued on page 4)

VSPA POINTS OF CONTACT

F-105 CRASHES TAKES OUT BRAVO TWO NINE NAKHOM PHANOM RTAB THAILAND

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Having been only 350 air miles from Hanoi, North Vietnam Nakhom Phanom (Naked Fanny as we locals called it) was safe haven for many of the battle damaged "fast movers"; F4's 105's FB111's etc. We even saw our share of the Navy's stuff, A4's, F4's, A6's etc. "Any oil port in a storm," as the saying goes. All this lent for some interesting times, this particular day wasn't so different. I don't remember the exact day but I do remember that I was downtown at Johnney's, a quaint little bar along the Mekong river, with some of the local talent.

Having to work that night, I decided that I would return early and catch a decent meal. We had pretty good food at the 'Sky Raider Inn'; this is named after our many A! Sky Raiders, call sign Hobo/Sandy. I hopped on a bus getting off at the main gate and booked a taxi back to the hooch. When I got back to the hooch I heard that a F-105 Thunder Chief (Thud) was inbound with a fire warning light and smoke in the cockpit. Word traveled fast.

The pilot, a Lt. Col., could not make it back and punched out about a quarter mile out. The aircraft impacted just outside the perimeter and the debris splash took out the three strands of concertina wire and our tangle foot, we K9 types hated that tangle foot, and set of numerous trip flares. This left a gaping hole in our defenses. The remains of the aircraft slid across the perimeter road taking out the observation tower and the bunker at it's base. Given the fact that it was day light, the tower was not manned by Security Police. The Thai guard that was in the bunker at the time was killed. The pilot made it out and was rescued.

At guardmount that night I was taken aside and met with my flight chief, Sgt. Roger Zero, the kennel master and some of the brass from the head shed. I was briefed on the events of the day and promptly given my post assignment. Yep, you guessed it - that gaping hole at Bravo two nine....

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Thirty-five years ago, as I left home en route to Vietnam, my Father told me that I would soon meet some incredible men who would change my life forever. He told me that I would share experiences with them that no other person would understand, or be able to share, unless they were from the same group. I soon found that his words were true, but I did not know how true they were until I joined the VSPA and was able to regain the friendships from so long ago. One of the most valuable aspects of our experience as Air Policemen and Security Policemen in Vietnam and Thailand was the opportunity to share in the common cause of freedom, to defend an air base against all threats, to work under intense pressure, and to know that the man next to you shared the same danger, the same hardships, and the same need to know that you would take care of each other if attacked.

Each year we come together at our annual reunion and often surprise each other with the depth of understanding that we still have for our shared experiences. Seemingly funny stories often convey complex issues that we faced as young men. Through it all, we always go away from the reunions with renewed friendships and the knowledge that we lived through a very tough time, that we served with distinction and that no base guarded by an Air Force Security Policeman was ever overrun or taken by the enemy. At the reunions, we honor the memory of our friends who did not come home, and we also link-up with current members of the Air Force Security Forces to hear about their current training and assignments. We are often humbled by the reverence of young airmen and their leaders as they tell us that we created their history, that we are their predecessors. They are quick to tell us that the lives lost and lessons learned in Vietnam and Thailand have kept them alive in an ever-changing world. As young and old meet, we learn from each other and experience the lasting value of a bond created by shared experience. There is no question that we are brothers who share priceless honor and a tradition that transcends rank, age, experience and education.

We came together in Vietnam and Thailand during an extraordinary time in the history of our country. Today, the same holds true with the war in Iraq. I encour-

age each of you to come together again at our reunion in October. Come to Lackland and share the experience with your families as you renew old friendships. As veterans, we know what it means to take care of our own. Encourage friends from your old squadron to attend the reunion and be prepared for a great time. The enclosed flyer will give you additional information about the reunion that will be held October 16th through the 19th. Be there! We will be staying at the Holiday Inn Market Square in San Antonio. Call the Holiday Inn at 1-210-225-3211 to make your hotel reservations. An event registration package will be sent to you in a separate mailing. However, you should call the hotel today after you review the enclosed itinerary.

My best to all of you. See you in San Antonio.

*Steve Gattis, President
VSPA Life Member #49
Cam Ranh Bay 68 - 69*

DISMOUNT

Once again we must gather to pay our last respect to two brothers who have DEROS'ed to that great Guardmount in the sky where we will all meet someday.

Dannie Davis passed away on 20 July 2002. Dannie was a VSPA Member and a K9 handler at Tan Son Nhut from 4/67-68, also a member of VDHA

Theodore Apostol (Ubon) passing away December 27, 2002. He was in the 8th SPS, Ubon, Thailand, 70-71.

Life Member Daniel W. Schuricht died 12-22-02 from a fall. He was in the 37th SPS, Phu Cat 67 and 633rd, Pleiku 67-68

Our prayers go out to the families of these brothers.

(Continued from page 1)

the weather would be nice and not snow me in along the way or after I get there. I flew out from Oklahoma City, OK to Denver, CO. and then on to Rapid City, SD. I arrive at the Rapid City Regional airport at 1129 hours the same day. Where Major Greg Reese and CMSgt Gerald McDorman met me.

We then went to a local restaurant in Rapid City and had lunch with some of Major Reese's staff. After lunch we went to Ellsworth AFB and put my stuff up in a DV Suite. Then we went to the 28th Security Forces Squadron Operations building and I was taken on a tour of the building. During the tour, I talked to some of the SF troops in each section and gave them some insight into how we did our jobs with the equipment we had when I was in the USAF (1960-1988).

My Friday (31 Jan 03) morning started off weird. I woke up and rolled over and looked at the clock. It showed the time as 0300 hours. Now this would not mean anything to most folks, but since that was the time the rockets started coming into Bien Hoa AB on 31 January 1968 and the ground attack came thirty minutes later, it was like a flash back to thirty-five years ago.

I could not go back to sleep and when 0700 hours came around I was outside waiting to be picked up by Capt Chris Bromen, 28th SFS/SFO. He picked me up and we went to the Bandit Inn for breakfast with several airmen from the Day and Night Shift flights.

We had breakfast and I talked to these airmen. I gave them some insight to what went on that morning of the attack and how we reacted to it. They asked me several questions about what happened that night and about my 28 years in the service. I answered them and also gave them some insight into their time in the USAF and hopefully they will make it a career too.

At 0930 hours, 31 January 03, we went to the squadron operations building to get ready for the

TET 68 Commemoration Ceremony. During this time, I got to meet with SSgt Jeremiah Jessen and his K-9, Brian. They took Third Place in the USPCA and are the top K-9 team in ACC for three years in a row.

Also before the ceremony I handed over to Major Reese the 2nd edition paperback book of Keith William Nolan titled, *The Battle for Saigon, TET 1968*. This book has the stories about the attacks on Tan Son Nhut AB and Bien Hoa AB on 31 January 1968. I also signed and put a phrase in the book to the men and women of the 28th Security Forces Squadron. Major Reese said he would place the book in the cabinet with all the other mementos that the squadron has on display. I thanked him for doing that.

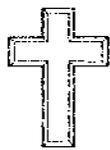
At 1000 hours, the ceremony started. The Distinguished Guests were welcomed. Then TSgt Robert Martin sang the National Anthem. Major Reese gave the welcoming remarks. 2Lt. Stephanie Cherrier and Senior Airman Kelly Luzum did the honors of reading a brief history of the TET 68 Offensive at Bien Hoa AB and Tan Son Nhut AB to everyone.

Then it was my turn to get up as the Guest Speaker and talk to the folks attending about my thoughts on that night. I told them some of the history that lead up to this event and what we as a squadron did to prepare for such an event. How LTC Kent Miller, Capt Maisey, Capt Marty Strones and the Senior NCOs worked all the flights into a hard training schedule to ensure that we could deploy from our vehicles and defend Bien Hoa AB from any type of attack.

How we had one big party on the morning of 25 January 1968 after all this training. Little did any of us know that in six days we would be in the biggest battle of our lives with an enemy force that outnumbered us four to one and wanted to overrun Bien Hoa AB and kill as many of us as they could.

I concluded my speech by telling them that I just did my job as I was trained to do and that I did not consider myself a hero. I also saluted those security forces personnel in attendance because they are fol-

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CHAPLAIN'S CORNER



very touched by this. Then Col. Joe Brown, acting 28th Bomb Wing Commander got up and made several comments about the ceremony. One comment that he made to me was that in everyone else's eyes, I was a hero, even if I did not think I was. He then saluted me and I stood up and returned the salute to him. I also thanked him for what he just said and did.

WHEN JESUS CAME

" He came unto His own. " John 1:11

What was more natural. Where else would we expect Him to come? It was

His own before He came, but He made it His own in a new sense by coming.

Think of the difference that coming made to the world:

1. It was light coming to a world of darkness.
2. It was love coming into a world of hate.
3. It was life coming into a world of death.

By Steve Janke

lowing in the footsteps of many other MP's, AP's and SP's and are carrying on the traditions that were started back on 18 September 1947 when the USAF got its start.

Yes, I even got choked up a little while talking to these folks, but held up through it. Then I sat down and the audience gave me a standing applause that seemed to last for several minutes. Again, I was very touched by this. Then CMSgt McDorman came up and presented me with a plaque from the men and women of the 28th Security Forces Squadron for my actions during the TET 68 Offensive.

I thanked everyone for the plaque and when I went and sat down I asked Major Reese how was I going to get the plaque home, because it had a bayonet on it I told him I did not think the airport security folks would like or understand what it was for. We laughed and he said they would mail it to my home for me.

Then the 28th SFS Honor Guard came in and did a US Flag folding ceremony. They were very professional about the way they did it and everyone was

The ceremony ended and many of the folks in the audience came up to me and wanted to just shake my hand and say thanks for a job well done. Later as I was leaving the building, I had the feeling that I was there accepting this honor for all the Security Policemen and Augmentees that served with the 3rd and 377th Security Police Squadrons at Bien Hoa AB and Tan Son Nhut AB that morning.

Then on the morning of 1 February 2003, I left Ellsworth AFB, SD. Major Reese and CMSgt McDorman came to the airport to see me off. We sat in the coffee shop at the airport and had a cup of coffee before my plane took off. We talked about the tour of the squadron, the ceremony and the time I had to meet and talk to the squadron personnel.

I told both of them that I appreciated talking to the SF troops very much and hopefully I passed on some of the heritage and history that will make those SF folks better appreciate the job they are doing for the USAF and this great country of ours. Then it came time for me to depart. We said, good-bye but not farewell!

I made it home all right and then I had to sit down and write this story so other "Sky Cops" will know that there are some folks looking at us even after thirty-five years. I will remember my time with the 28th SFS and The Bond of the Blue Beret and Defensor Fortis.

By William "Pete" Piazza, SMSgt (Ret)
wpiazza@aol.com

Vietnam Security Police Association Reunion in San Antonio, Texas

October 16-19, 2003

The reunion will be held at The Holiday Inn Market Square in San Antonio, Texas. Hotel rates are only \$82 per night, plus tax. The hotel is located just 4 blocks from the San Antonio River walk and 2 blocks from the Mexican Market. Registration information will be sent in a separate mailing. However, the following itinerary is being provided for your review:

- ~ Registration will include a welcoming package with reunion identification, itinerary, a list of attendees, & local information.*
- ~ Golf for those interested on Thursday morning, October 16*
- ~ Welcoming Reception and dinner on Thursday Evening, October 16*
- ~ Tour of Lackland AFB and Camp Bullis on Friday, October 17*
- ~ Business Meeting Breakfast on Saturday Morning, October 18*
 - ~ Banquet Dinner on Saturday Evening, October 18*
 - ~ Memorial Service on Sunday Morning, October 19*
 - ~ Commemorative 2003 Reunion QC Pin*
- ~ Hospitality Room stocked with snacks & beverages*
 - ~ All associated taxes and gratuities*

Call the Holiday Inn Market Square at 210-225-3211 to make your hotel reservations. The hotel will provide free parking. Airport transportation will be approximately \$14 round-trip per person. Group Airfare is available by calling Divine Destinations at 1-800-336-5502. This is guaranteed to be the lowest available airfare!

An optional Texas Friday Night Extravaganza is available for \$55 per person at the Far West Rodeo and includes: Texas Bar B Q Dinner, Dancing on the largest dance floor in Texas, Mechanical Bull rides, our own private Armadillo Races & prizes, a National concert act (performer to be announced), transportation and all associated taxes and gratuities.

COME JOIN US AS WE SHARE OLD MEMORIES AND MAKE NEW ONES!!!

REGISTRATION INFORMATION WILL COME TO YOU IN THE NEAR FUTURE IN A SEPARATE MAILING. Call the hotel now!

SEE YOU IN SAN ANTONIO!

SERVICE OFFICER CORNER

SUBMITTING RECORDS TO THE VA

You sent off all the forms requesting records from everywhere and now there's a big pile sitting on the table, what do you do with it?

1. Keep files from each source separated; don't mix them together for any reason. Keep originals including the envelope and letter. In the event of the originals being "LOST", your copy with original envelope and letter will be accepted by the VA as "ORIGINAL" documents.
2. Read through each file, if the pages are not numbered, number them as you go through for future reference.
3. Make a logbook page for each file and list all page numbers that have information pertinent to your Claim.
4. Make two (2) copies of all pages on your log book lists for each file.
5. On the copies only, highlight all pertinent information on each page (Yellow highlighter works best). If the pages selected do not have the file name and origin, add a note on the first page to reference the file the information came from.
6. Create a table of contents for all the information highlighted including all page numbers and a brief overview of the information content
SAMPLE* Military Med Record Pgs-1-22-30-etc notes on medical exams in service Pg-66 thru 68 Medical review board findings (Same for each set of records)

7. Keep a complete copy in your records and forward a complete set, with a cover letter, to your Service Officer, for submission to the VA as evidence for your Claim.
8. Enter the date of submission in your journal for future reference.
9. Keep an accurate journal of all information about your claim including dates, contacts, evidence submission, and requests. A journal in your own handwriting is submissable in the event of an appeal.

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Well.... Who am I to argue, after checking out my weapon and a few extra slap flares I proceeded to the kennels and picked up my best friend and pardner 'Ango' (ear tattoo OK31). A dark dog, 5 years of age and 75 pounds. He knew his job and did it well.

This night he was to save my life! Upon entering the area I immediately sized up the situation, wind direction, cover and concealment and the best way out should things heat up, bunker locations, etc. Call sign, 'Nightfighter Six Four.'

Earlier at the briefing it was best determined that I clear the area and then take up a defensive position where I could detect anyone entering the area and call in the K9 alert then get the help of a Quick Reaction Team (QRT), Quick Reaction Force (QRF), K9 Security Alert Team (K-SAT) and of course the Thai AF. There was also our orbiting HH-55 with flare kickers and sun spot search light. We also had a very eager mortar pit crew at our disposal.

Now the vegetation was something else as you could get on your hands and knees and see for yards, if you stood up you might see a few feet. As *Ango*

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and I were clearing the area he stopped, looking over his right shoulder, streaked passed me and proceeded to rip into one of three individuals lurking in the bush at my side just inches away.

I let him chew as I was not very busy with the other two who failed to heed my challenge. I'm now popping illumination and squeak'n and freak'n - it did not take long for the QRF, in a M113, to come busting in followed by the QRT from bravo sector in their V100 armored car. I had learned later that they were never very far away.

One Thai national got away, which we figured was alright as he could tell the others that you don't fool with the Security Police at NKP. One was captured by one of the other teams and of course *Ango* had his trophy.

As things settled down and we debriefed it was determined that the Thai that *Ango* had got hold of had a good size blade with him at the time the dog struck, all this guy would have had to do was just raise his arm and hand to get me in the ribs or liver - I would have just bled out right there.

Things settled down and pretty soon it was business as usual, a few months later I rotated back to the world. Of course saying good by to *Ango* was tough. Did ya ever see a grown man cry.....?

Now, thirty years later as I reflect back, the good Lord had his hand on my shoulder as he did for all of us during those difficult times. I often think about the, "good o'l days" at NKP. Someday I hope to return for some closure and to reminisce. There is not a day that goes by that I don't think of *Ango*.

George L. Conklin
56th Security Police K-9 Sector
1 April 70 - 31 Mar 71

REGIONAL GET TOGETHER

USAF, 377th Security Police Squadron
Tan Son Nhut Air Base Vietnam - All Years
Reunion: January 29 - February 1, 2004
Albuquerque, NM

Contact: James Stewart, O.D.

PO Box 67

Montrose, MI 48457-0067

Home Ph: 810-639-5755

Email: jstewart@centurytel.net

MATERIAL NEEDED

To keep *Guardmount* interesting and filled we need a continual flow of material. We all have stories of your time there and others would like to hear them too. May be sent by email or snail mail.

Editor

SOURCES NEEDED

Van Digby has taken over the BX after the sudden passing of Mike. He is trying to keep it stocked but he does not have sources for some of the items that are needed for a reasonable price. If anyone can help please contact him. Any help will be appreciated.

Notice

If you are planning any VSPA activities in your area and would like them to be mentioned in *Guardmount* please send me the information with enough lead time to print it in an issue that will come out before the event.

Editor



VSPA BX PRODUCT SALES



Patches:

- a. VSPA Patches _____ \$ 5.00
- b. QC Patches _____ \$ 5.00
- c. SP Badge Patch _____ \$ 4.00
- d. Air Force Vietnam Vet Patch _____ \$ 4.00
- e. Tet 68 Survivor Patch _____ \$ 4.00
- f. 7th Air Force Patch _____ \$ 4.00
- g. POW/MIA Patch _____ \$ 4.00
- h. I've Been There Vietnam Patch _____ \$ 4.00
- i. Brothers Forever Patch _____ \$ 4.00
- j. In Memory Patch _____ \$ 4.00
- k. Vietnam Service Ribbon Patch _____ \$ 4.00
- l. QC Back Patch (9") _____ \$15.00
- m. U.S. Air Force Back Patch (10") _____ \$15.00

Pins:

- a. QC Pin _____ \$ 4.00
- b. 7th Air Force Pin _____ \$ 4.00
- c. Air Force Vietnam Vet Pin _____ \$ 4.00
- d. Tet 68 Survivor Pin _____ \$ 4.00
- e. POW/MIA Pin _____ \$ 4.00
- f. POW/MIA Pin w/Eagle _____ \$ 4.00
- g. POW/MIA Cross w/Black Ribbon Pin _____ \$ 4.00
- h. In Memory Pin _____ \$ 4.00
- i. Vietnam Tab Pin _____ \$ 4.00
- j. Vietnam Base Pins (Bien Hoa, Binh Thuy, Cam Ranh Bay, Da Nang, Nha Trang, Phan Rang, Pleiku, Phu Cat, Ton Son Nhut) _____ \$ 4.00
- k. U.S. Air Force (Geretic) _____ \$ 4.00
- l. Vietnam Service Ribbon Pin _____ \$ 4.00
- m. Vietnam Veteran With Ribbon Bar Pin _____ \$ 4.00
- n. New Air Force Security Forces Pin _____ \$ 4.00
- o. Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) Pin _____ \$ 4.00

Stickers:

- a. VSPA Bumper Sticker _____ \$ 1.00
- b. 7th Air Force _____ \$ 3.00
- c. Vietnam Service Ribbon _____ \$ 3.00
- d. U.S. Air Force _____ \$ 3.00

Hats: (Baseball Style Black) \$12.00

- a. VSPA Association
- b. QC Plain
- c. QC w/Flight Tab above QC (Rangcr, Tiger, Phantom, Cobra)
- d. Security Police Shield
- e. U.S. Air Force Vietnam Veteran With Ribbon Bar
- f. QC w/K-9 Tab above QC and Dog Embroidered on side of the hat \$14.00

Miscellaneous:

- a. Security Police Mini Shields (Numbered) * \$10.00
- b. Security Police Qualification Badges _____
(Lg \$4.00 - Sm \$2.00)
- c. 7th Air Force Coin _____ \$12.00
- d. Paper Weights Marble w/QC SP Shield or VSPA _____ \$15.00
- e. VSPA Stoneware Coffee Mugs Coblt Blue W/Logos _____ \$12.00
- f. VSPA 1 3/4 oz. Shot Glass w/Logos _____ \$ 6.00
- g. Stainless Steel USAF Travel Coffee Mug _____ \$10.00
(U. S. Air Force Available Only)
- h. U.S. Air Force Magnate (Size Approx. 3") - \$ 3.00
- i. Belt Buckels (Vietnam Veteran w/Ribbons)
(U.S. Air Force Generic) _____ \$12.00
- j. Black Laminated Wood Clocks (U.S.A.F. or Vietnam Memorial) _____ \$45.00
- k. Full Size Vietnam Service Medal w/Ribbon Set _____ \$12.00
- l. 3x5 Flags (U.S.A.F. or POW/MIA) _____ \$12.00
- m. 4"x 6" USA/POW/MIA Flag set _____ \$ 4.00
- n. Challenge Coin Gold _____ \$12.00
- o. Larry Sutherland/Wall Print _____ \$ 1.00
- p. Motorcycle License Vietnam Vetran Holder \$3.00
- q. VVA with Helicopter Front License Plate \$ 8.00
- r. SP Qualification Front License Plate _____ \$ 8.00

Shirts:

- a. Deluxe Polo Style Shirt w/QC Emblem on the Front (Size L- \$25.00)
- b. T-Shirt, Gray with Security Policeman and Names (Size M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL) _____ \$12.00
- c. T-Shirt, Gray with US Flag W/Eagle (Size L, XL, XXL) _____ \$12.00
- d. B-15 type Black Jacket with QC Patch _____ \$85.00
(Upon request only)

* Sold Out

Please Add \$3.00 For Shipping and Handling for All Orders Under \$50.00 - Orders Over \$50.00 Please Add \$4.50 For Shipping and Handling.

Please Make Checks or Money Orders Payable to Vietnam Security Police Association (VSPA)

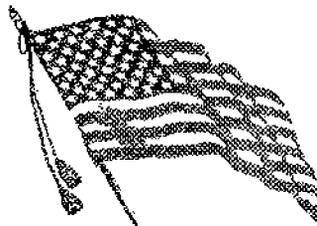
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DAVID DOBSON
5315 BEVENS AVE.
SPRING HILL, FL 34608

Guardmount



AMERICA IS #1
Thanks to our
Veterans

First Class

A SOLDIERS PRAYER

For the men and women of the armed services

Oh Lord, on bended knees, I bow before thy awesome presence. Mayest I beg of thee to hear this plea from thy humble servant? I am a soldier, one who protects and defends my people, our land and our way of life. Although I may hold the sword and the shield, thou art my fortitude. I am man, I am woman. My skin is of many colors. My language is of many tongues. My culture is diverse, both old and new. As a soldier, I loath the thought of war. In my heart, I find it to be an abomination. I would gladly lay down my life for my brethren, but, alas, is not my enemy also a brother and one of your children? Take this cup of fear and confusion and replace it with courage from thy immaculate hand, for on the morrow, I may do battle. Should the terrible need arise and I must slay mine enemy or be slain by him,

I ask for thy forgiveness and for thy absolution. Thou hast blessed mine heart with the knowledge, that even should I walk away from thee, thou shalt never abandon me.

If it be your will and I should fall in battle, then I beg of thee to let it be with dignity. Even with my last breath, I will praise thy name.

Lay this corruptible shell beneath the ground, hallowed by the bravery of other fallen comrades. May our souls rise again incorruptible and fly to thy sweet bosom to live again for time eternal. Is it not true, that when a flower dies and it's seeds are buried, from this, new life sprouts forth? I beg thee to give me the courage and the wisdom to enlighten me and to do my duty with honor. Guide me to make the right decisions and do the deeds that are expected of me. In thy holy name, I humbly ask. Amen.

Michael R. Farley

(Note: This was appropriate in January 2001 and it is again.)