

**MY LIFE AS A SOLDIER**

By Skypilot Freelance Writer

I remember sitting on the bench and the coach wanted to talk with all of us. Well the news was not to good, two of our fellow players who graduated the year before went into the service and were killed in a place known as Vietnam. That day I decided as soon as I graduated I was enlisting.

Well I finished school in January and went to Fort Leonardwood, MO. for basic training and from there I went to Fort Benning, Ga. I went thru Infantry school, then Jump school, then through 9 weeks of pure hell Army Ranger school and then Recon school.

Got assigned to Fort Bragg, N.C. and served with the 82nd a few short months and shipped out to Panama for Jungle School. When I finished I got assigned to go through NCO school and made Buck Sergeant along with a set of orders to Vietnam.

When I arrived in country was assigned as a door gunner on a Huey of course our's was a gun ship so we came in to lay fire on hot LZ'S (landing zones) before the troops were dropped in. Well after a couple times getting shot down I requested ground duty.

Next morning the Commander called me in and said I have a ground assignment for you, that was the good news he said. After reading your jacket I called and got an old favor from this Colonel I know, your being reassigned to Co N 75 Rangers 173rd Airborne Brigade as a Team Leader of a LRRP squad (Long Range Recon Patrol).

I had 11 men assigned to me so we could break down into 2 five man Teams and the Sniper would go out with one of the Teams. If we had a big mission we all headed out together. Our fun part of the job is we were search and destroy and it was just as it sounded we searched it then destroyed it. The bad part of two years of what I called Bungle In The Jungle I got wounded twice. Once with rocket shrapnel above my right eye and two rounds from an AK 47 Assault rifle. I also lost nine good troops in two years. It got to the point new guys would come in and I'd tell them all I want to know about you is your name.

When I returned home I worked in the steel mill in Indian harbor and went to school at Perdue University. After a year of that I went back in the Army keep my old rank. The job at the mill was shoveling cook where the temp was always like 140 degrees or so and that was the shit's.

When I went down to talk with the Recruiter I found out I could keep my rank, change from Infantry to Vehicle Maintenance field and pick my first assignment. So I went to maintenance training at Aberdeen Proving Ground for school then to Germany.

It was so beautiful I didn't want to come home, I spent almost eight years there and my 2 oldest sons were born there. When I got back to the states I got stuck in Recruiting at first I hated it but after a bit I got use to it wasn't to bad, long hours a lot of paper work so when time came I retired with 21 years in serving my nation.

There you have a little pit about a soldier and my life. I'd like to thank those who are serving our Country now and carrying the "Torch Of Freedom".

Preacher and Lorie have been at this and if it wasn't for the readers it would not have happened.

Congratulations to you both, thank you to the readers and thank you with putting up with me. To everyone spring is here Bikes are out and please be safe, your going to have and watch for the cages, because they are not going to watch out for you.

Until you read my article again keep our troops in your prayers and their families. And remember our POW and MIA. Peace to all and my the Great Eagle fly with you and guide you families. " KEEP ON TRIKEING' "

Skypilot



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