



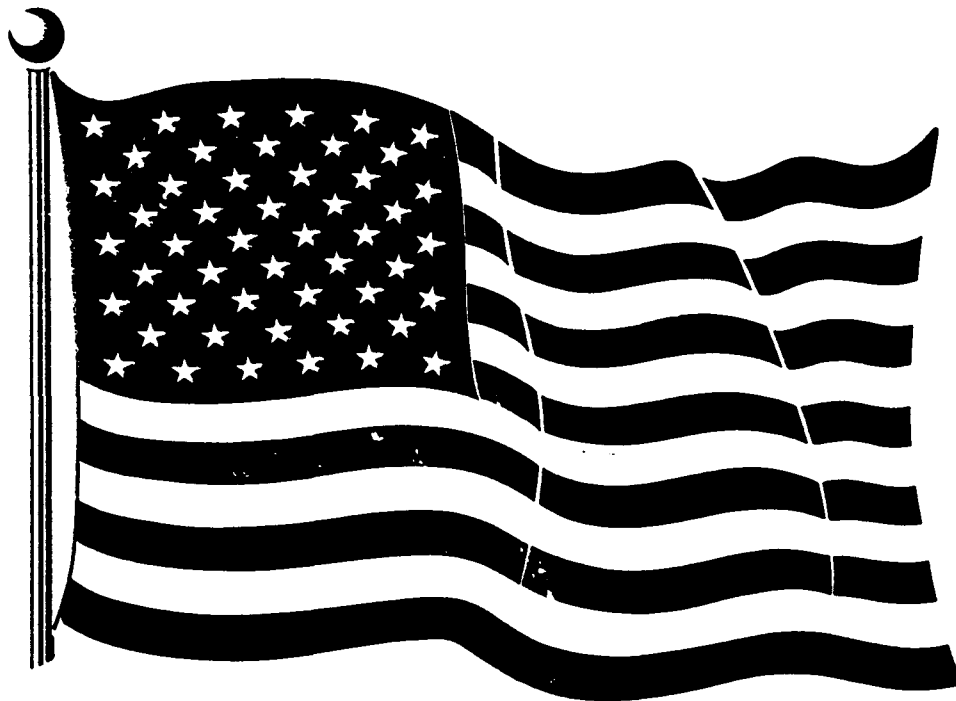
THE DUSTOFFer NEWSLETTER



DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION

FEBRUARY 1991

**12th Annual Reunion
Great American Weekend – February 22, 23, 24, 1991
San Antonio, Texas**



Great American Weekend

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As events in the Middle East take shape, a new chapter of DUSTOFF history begins. The association is grateful to Ben Knisley for his letter that will someday be an important piece of that narrative. The DUSTOFF association wishes the entire task force and most importantly the DUSTOFF crews the best of luck. As is evidenced from Ben Knisley's letter, the DUSTOFF units are well represented in Operation Desert Storm and will play an integral role in their time honored tradition of saving lives.

The Executive Council is pleased to announce our plans to award the first ever DUSTOFF scholarship grant in 1991. Thanks to the efforts of Mike Toennis, this program is well in place and speaks to the growing interests and concerns of the entire membership.

Reservations are pouring in for the 12th Annual Reunion. With a hope and a prayer, our Desert Storm crews will be returning and a first hand account of their history

shaping events will be first heard at the 12th Annual DUSTOFF Reunion.

Thanks to membership response and a special thanks to Joe Kralich the DUSTOFF memorial boards are nearing completion with plans for all three boards to be made available at the reunion.

Congratulations are in order for the 377th Medical Company and the Korean DUSTOFF personnel being awarded the Army Aviation Association of America award for excellence. This is further testimony to the professional excellence witnessed throughout DUSTOFF units and members. Congratulations Rick!!

As the window closes on my last of three years as an officer of the association, I am forever grateful for this opportunity and for the many lasting associations I have made. The list is endless of volunteers and folks who have made this a rewarding experience. To all, the best of luck and a sincere thanks for all the help.

DESERT STORM

Hello from the land of the great Sand-Box. Jerry Foust and I were commenting to each other just a day ago (while standing in 100 plus degree temperature with sand blowing all around us) that we should initiate a Saudi Arabian chapter for the DUSTOFF Association. We were of course just joking, but as we parted for the day it occurred to me that once again another chapter in the DUSTOFF Legacy is being written.

As I watch the planes and ships unload, it is a vivid reminder that very soon a large portion of our MEDEVAC assets will be in residence over here. Needless to say, most of us may not be with you for this year's convention, and I thought I would take a moment to write to you on behalf of all the DUSTOFF personnel here in the desert.

In the interest of operational security I won't enumerate the units that are on the ground or soon to arrive. When you see the list of units – you will not be surprised to recognize that most of the DUSTOFF flags are no strangers to Combat Operations. The Companies and Detachments that most of us served with in the previous conflicts are for the most part all here – and ready again. The environment and the elements are ex-

acting its toll on the hardware (helicopters never have liked sand) but the heart of DUSTOFF – its people – are doing great and not complaining. I don't know what the future days will bring for us. (most folks over here will tell you that combat is more likely than not) but you all should be very proud (as I am) for what our units have gone through just getting here – and for what they are prepared to do when the shooting starts.

I think everyday about some of the "old" DUSTOFFer's and how they taught many of us the survival techniques of combat flying. How I wish we could have you here again for just a few days in those first furious moments of combat to perform that mentorship mission once again. For it is you that know, all too well that the old lessons must be relearned again.

It is ironic, but all of the old parts and pieces to the DUSTOFF story are present again. We have forward division outposts and the distances require us to put standby crews in the most ungodly locations, we have hospital ships. (the names are different this time), and although we have traded the triple canopy jungle for bare bone desert, the terrain once again dictates that the only sensible way to transport patients is by air.



FOUNDER: EGOR JOHNSON DUSTOFF OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE BOARD

PRESIDENT Jerry Nolan
VICE-PRESIDENT Jim Truscott
SECRETARY Bill Thresher
TREASURER Rick Prouty

MEMBERS AT LARGE:

John D. Colvin
Jerome V. Foust
John M. Lankford
Ray Salmon
John F. Sapanos

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Art Hapner

And oh yes, that marvelous call sign (which by the way is most appropriate in this environment) has once again become common knowledge by everyone in the country.

There will soon be about 75 air ambulances operating in theater and maybe more to come. In the first 60 days we have moved 300 patients and logged 1500 hours. The legacy of DUSTOFF in Saudi Arabia is alive and well. Every day that training occurs, the units and crews get a little better at what they may be called upon to do. This one, if it comes, will be a tough one, and our units are fully aware of that – but they will not falter.

How nice it would be if all of us here could be with you in San Antonio this coming year, but standing watch in this distant desert will probably preclude that marvelous thought. We wish you all a very happy and fun filled gathering and maybe one small request – tie a couple of yellow ribbons somewhere this year for all of us that would like to be home, and for the many others whose freedom to go home is so blatantly denied. DUSTOFF – once again!

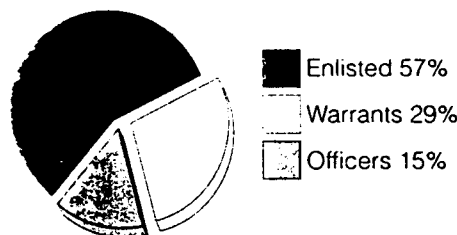
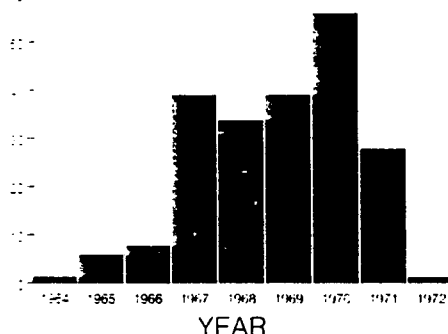
Ben M. Knisley

VIETNAM DUSTOFF

I'm forwarding a graphic analysis that I put together from the September 1990 DUSTOFFer Newsletter. As you can see, I did a comparison by Unit and by Year. It would be interesting to be able to identify those fatalities that were a result of direct enemy action vs a fatal accident.

Tom G. Harrison

DUSTOFF CREWMEMBER FATALITIES (Vietnam 1964-1972)



CRITICAL SCRUTINY

The August-September 1990 issue of Army Aviation magazine, contains an article written by the Honorable William L. Dickinson, (R-AL), the ranking Republican, House Armed Services Committee, on the History, Accomplishments, and the Future of Army Aviation. Among other things, the article highlights "The Helicopter Era", mentioning Pat Brady by name and including the following excerpt on Dustoff aviation:

"No Army aviator flew more dangerous missions than Dustoff pilots. Losses of air ambulances to hostile fire were one and a half times greater than those flying combat missions. One third of all Army air ambulance aviators became casualties. Despite

the high risk, Army DUSTOFF pilots flew more than 800,000 patients to medical aid and clearly saved thousands of US soldiers who would otherwise have died."

Notwithstanding several slight inaccuracies, i.e., medical evacuation missions are, in fact, combat missions and the real figure of Vietnam evacuees is more than 900,000, the point is clear: Although AMEDD Aviation is a continual target of sniping and under resourcing by the Army Aviation community at large, there are some important people who understand its past and future contributions on the battlefield.

It may behoove us to quote Mr. Dickinson ever so often as we extol our proponentcy in of medical evacuation. There can be little doubt that, with massive force reductions, our field health service support system will again be subjected to the greatest critical scrutiny.

Jim Truscott

DUSTOFF PRAYER

I'm enclosing a simple DUSTOFF PRAYER that I would like published, if possible, in the DUSTOFFer Newsletter as a dedication to all DUSTOFFers, past, present, and future. As my unit heads out the door along with all the other DUSTOFF units to support our fellow soldiers in the Middle East, I hope this prayer reminds us of what we are all about, and what it means to be DUSTOFF. Thanks.

When we are called to duty, Lord,
Wherever wars may rage,
Give us strength to save some life,
Whatever be its age.

Help us save a soldier's life,
Before it is too late,
Or save a wounded citizen,
From horrors of that fate.

Enable us to be alert,
And guide our skills to bear,
Both quickly and efficiently,
Provide the best of care.

The "mission" is our calling,
To give the best we can,
To guard against the pains of war,
When man is killing man.

And if, according to our fate,
We are to lose our lives,
Please bless, with your protecting hand,
Our children and our wives.

Kent S. Nabarrete

WIPE-OUT-ONE

Thank you for the letter regarding the DUSTOFF association. I cannot for the life of me figure out how you received my name. Please tell Mike Novosel hello. I was his medic on his first mission in "Wipe-Out-One", the crewchief was Victor Joseph Honeysett. I would like to get in touch with Victor. Other members of our unit were William Matthews M.D., Gordon Guskin, medic and R.J. Alvarez Jr., crewchief.

Gregg J. Garcia

GOD BLESS DUSTOFF!

I will be unable to attend the 12th Annual Convention/Reunion February 22-24, 1991

I am proud of my service with 54th DUSTOFF in Vietnam and I am also proud of the DUSTOFF Association and what it has meant to many Veterans. Keep up the good work.

Thank you and God Bless DUSTOFF!

Jon Wiest

THERE BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD GO I

Boy, someone there sure knows how to knock a guy flat on his butt!!

I'm referring to the DUSTOFF Memorial Board. I had forgotten how many names that I knew personally. One that I trained with and 7 that I flew with including Dulin and Love who were my crewchief and medic the night I was wounded ... all good men! It is a reminder of the infamous "There but for the grace of God go I" phrase!!

And how close it was that the 4 names of MOST of our crews aren't there! How often did we survive by only inches, literally? The list could easily have been twice as long; or even three times! But it isn't, and I am very thankful for that. Only those of us that have flown to save a life can know that although the price is sometimes high, there can be no other feeling, no other pride like that of flying DUSTOFF!

Phil Marshall

NOCCM

The National Order of Corpsmen & Combat Medics came about to bring together medics and corpsmen who served in a combat theater of operations during war-time. NOCCM supports the DUSTOFF Association and welcomes members to join. NOCCM plans reunions in San Antonio, San Diego and Portsmouth, Virginia as a

continued...

Letters continued...

means of getting combat medics together. Our newspaper "DOC" deals with the history and tradition of the combat medic and the locating of fellow medics! All Korea and Vietnam DUSTOFF members are eligible for full memberships; others may apply as associates! Our network of veteran medics and other resources are available to all in the DUSTOFF Association. For information call 1-800-542-5682 or write "Doc" Bosma at NOCCM, PO Box 141, Boonville, MO 65233.

Joe Kralich

1st CAVALRY DIVISION

I am attempting to put together a directory of the men who served with the 1st Cavalry Division's 15th Medical Battalion air ambulance platoon (MEDEVAC) in Viet-

nam. Personnel who served in the unit or who know personnel who served with the unit are asked to send the platoon members names, address, phone numbers, ranks, MOS, and the dates served with the unit to Officer John Crespi, 9600 Hadley, Overland Park, Kansas 66212. Upon compilation of the directory you will be sent a copy of the directory.

John Crespi

MY DAD

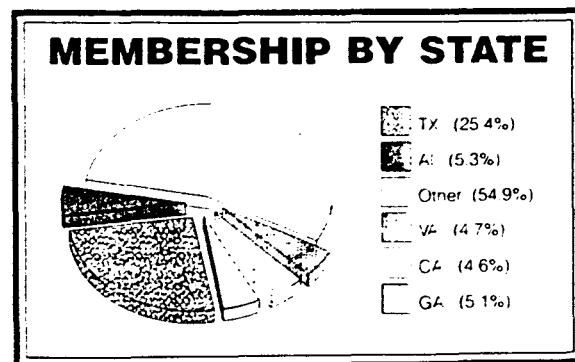
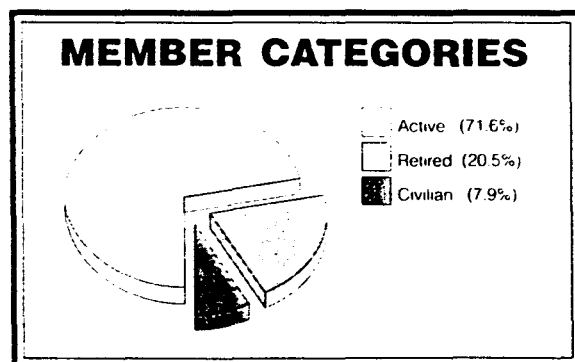
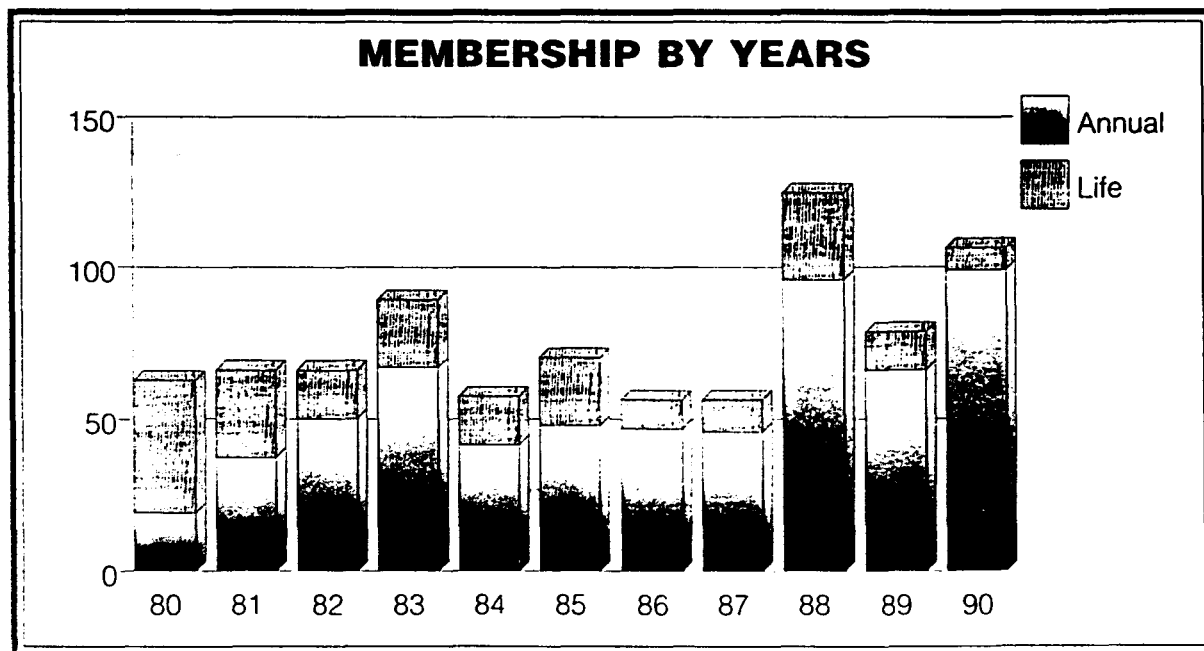
My dad flies helicopters. He has been a pilot for 16 years. He picks up wounded soldiers and flies them to the hospital roofs. My dad loves to fly. I am proud of my dad.

*Tim Fletcher
(8 years old)*



Sgt. Basil Boatright
Korea April 6, 1951

MEMBERSHIP PROFILE



GREAT AMERICAN WEEKEND

12th ANNUAL MEETING OF THE DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION

Holiday Inn Riverwalk • San Antonio, Texas

February 22, 23, & 24, 1991

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS*

Friday, 22 February 1991

- 8:00a Registration Foyer, 7th Floor
 8:00a 8th Annual Chuck Mateer Golf Classic
 Lee T. Smith
 Ft. Sam Houston Golf Course
 Hospitality Suite Open
 12:00a "Great American Celebration"
 (Cash Bar) Buffet, featuring
 Roast Beef, Chicken Strips,
 Rumaki, Shrimp Eggrolls, Fruit,
 Veggies & Cheese Tarantella Ballroom
 12:00a Hospitality Suite Open 7th Floor

Saturday, 23 February 1991

- 12:00p PROFESSIONAL MEETING ... Tarantella IV
 8:30a - 8:35a Opening Remarks ... Jerry Nolan, President,
 DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION
 8:35a - 8:45a Introduction LTC Art Hapner, Aviation
 Consultant, OTSG
 9:15a - 9:15a Sikorsky Update Mr. John Soehnlein,
 Program Manager;
 Sikorsky Aircraft
 Division of United Technologies
 9:45a - 9:45a LUCAS Life-Saving
 Award Mr. Richard C. Murphy,
 District Sales Manager,
 LUCAS Aerospace
 10:00a Break
 10:30a "General Medical Support for
 Desert Storm" COL Jerry Foust,
 Cmdr, 44th Medical Brigade,
 Ft. Bragg, N.C.
 10:45a - 10:45a "DUSTOFF Support of Operation,
 Desert Storm" MAJ Scott Heinz,
 Delta Company, 326th Med.
 11:15a "DUSTOFF Europe
 Update" LTC Ray Keith, Cmdr,
 421st Medical Evacuation Bn,
 W. Germany
 11:15a - 11:45a "DUSTOFF Korea
 Update" LTC Leonard Sly
 52nd Medical Bn, Korea

- 11:45 - 12:00 Closing Remarks President
 12:15 - 2:30p WIVES LUNCHEON
 River Barge Trip San Antonio
 1:30 - 3:30p BUSINESS MEETING Tarantella IV
 1:30 - 1:45p Call to Order President
 1:45 - 1:50p Minutes, 11th Annual Meeting ... Secretary
 1:50 - 2:00p Financial Report Treasurer
 2:00 - 2:30p Old Business Floor
 2:30 - 3:30p New Business
 Election of New Officers
 Other New Business
 3:30p Adjournment President
 3:00 - 6:00p Hospitality Suite Open
 6:30 - 8:00p DUSTOFF Pre-Banquet Social Terrace Area,
 (Cash Bar) 7th Floor
 8:00 - 10:00p DUSTOFF Banquet Tarantella Ballroom

- MENU -

French Onion Soup
 Riverwalk Tossed Salad with
 Pepper Parmesan Dressing
 Rib Eye Champignon
 Twice-Baked Potato
 Green Beans with Pecans
 English Trifle
 Rolls and Butter
 Coffee, Tea, Wine

- 9:00 - 9:15p Remarks and Introduction
 of Special Guests President
 9:15 - 9:45p Guest Speaker TBA
 9:45 - 9:50p Introduction of New Officers President
 9:50 - 10:00p Closing Remarks Jim Truscott
 President, 1991-92
 10:00 - ??? Hospitality Suite Open 7th Floor

Sunday, 24 February 1991

- 9:00 - 9:50a MEMORIAL SERVICE Tarantella IV
 9:00 - 9:05a Presentation of Colors
 9:05 - 9:45a Memorial Service
 Chaplain Kenneth M. Rupper
 9:45 - 9:50a Retirement of Colors

* Desert Storm will necessitate changes in Professional Meeting agenda.

Saudi Arabia Odyssey

USAREUR medical unit deploys for Operation Desert Shield.

by Gini Sinclair

Members of the 7th Medical Command's 421st Medical Battalion (Evacuation) conducted what may be the longest unit self-deployment of UH-60A Black Hawk helicopters in the history of the U.S. Army. Soldiers flew from their headquarters near Darmstadt, Germany, to Saudi Arabia in August to provide air medical evacuation support to Operation Desert Shield forces. The trip took them over Austria, Italy, Greece, Turkey and Egypt.

Workers spent 16 to 20 hours each day working on the aircraft for a week before the aircraft took off, said Lt. Col. Ray Keith, battalion commander.

Because the flight took the aircraft over long stretches of water and long distances between refueling points, several of the aircraft were fitted with external store support systems with extra fuel tanks. Survival gear for aircraft personnel included rafts, since at least nine hours of the flight were over water, Keith said.

At one point in the journey, crews set the aircraft down on a Greek island where they were met by CH-47 Chinooks from the Southern European Task Force loaded with fuel.

The first group made the trip in six days. The second group, with Keith aboard, arrived in five days.

"We would get up about 4 a.m. each morning to get ready to be out at the airfield by 6 a.m.," said Keith. "Then we had to do a check of each aircraft before we left. By 7 a.m. we would be in the air. We usually finished for the day about 10 p.m. Then, because we were not permitted to sleep at the airfields, we traveled to hotels. Most nights we managed to get to sleep about midnight.

"We were extremely fortunate on our trip. Everywhere we landed we met very helpful people. We stopped to refuel 20 times during the trip," said Keith.

"The crew chiefs took care of the aircraft repairs themselves," he added. "That was one thing I was very impressed with, the ability of the NCOs. It was evident they were trained professionals. I didn't have to worry about the job because I knew I could rely on the troops to do it right." During a stopover in Italy, crew members had to remove a rotor blade from one of the Black Hawks for repair before continuing their trip.

"Saudi Arabia presents some special challenges," said Keith. "The temperature is so hot that the exposed areas of an aircraft will burn unprotected skin. It is between 45 and 50 degrees centigrade each day."

Support played a large role in the mission.

"The soldiers in the 421st worked very hard to get everything ready. We received support from the USAREUR community. We needed parts, equipment, tools and other supplies that were provided by many different units.

"We also received a lot of help from the Darmstadt Military Community during this time," said Keith. "They were very helpful in getting the thousand little and many big things done for soldiers who were leaving the country. They and the 32nd Army Air Defense Command provided bottled water, equipment and supplies for our use while on the trip.

"Now my job is to help with the challenges of the people left behind," said Keith. "The spouses have been wonderful. The Nellingen, Darmstadt and Landstuhl military communities are giving them all kinds of assistance, and we are relying on the support groups within the battalion to help also. "Some of the spouses will be faced with doing things they have never done before," Keith noted. "I'm not saying they aren't capable of handling anything, but in a marriage there are just so many things to handle it takes two. These people who are left behind have a difficult job and we intend to help make it easier."

DUSTOFF ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES ITS

1991 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM!

- A \$500 scholarship is available for a college entry freshman.
- Scholarship is available to children of current and deceased DUSTOFF members.
- Applications are available on request.

DUSTOFF Association
P.O. Box 8091
San Antonio, Texas 78208

- Cutoff for the receipt of applications is May 1, 1991. Winner will be announced not later than June 1, 1991.

NOTE: The member who sponsors the greatest number of new members during the 1991 year ending 31 December 1991, will win an all expense paid trip to the DUSTOFF Annual Convention, as well as a \$100 cash award.

IN MEMORY

SSG Adrain Rosado (1989) Served with the 214th Medical Detachment, Panama; died while returning from a DUSTOFF mission during Operation Just Cause. (UH60)

LTC Jerry Hahn (1990) Commander 34th Medical Battalion
1LT Peter Rose (1990) Enroute to Operation Desert Shield;
CW2 Carol McKinney from the 868th Medical Detachment,
SGT Dallas Cooper Missouri; Carol McKinney became the first female casualty of Operation Desert Shield (UH1H)

CW4 Dan Scott (1991) Returning from a mission in El Salvador; Dan flew with the 507th Medical Company, Fort Sam Houston, Texas. (UH1H)

A Great American

Time Magazine July 2, 1965

Each week, U.S. Army Major Paul Bloomquist writes his parents in Salt Lake City the same kind of letter. "The surf's good," he tells them. "The weather's fine. The beaches are beautiful." All the same. "Big Bear" Bloomquist will hardly miss the swimming when his turn comes to go home.

No Place for Sentiment. With 40 other pilots and crewmen of MEDEVAC (for medical evacuation team), Bloomquist has one of the most taxing and perilous assignments in South Vietnam. Cruising above the battlefields in search of the wounded, MEDEVAC's helicopters fly a twelve-hour day, seven days a week, every week of the year. In 18 months of duty in South Vietnam, burly, green-eyed Major Bloomquist, 32, has flown 750 combat missions, been wounded three times, won 27 citations.

In the process, he has rescued 800 wounded soldiers and carted home more corpses than he cares to remember. To help counter the pervasive stench of death and mutilation, MEDEVAC pilots and crewmen

stuff their nostrils with Vicks VapoRub. And they are curiously unwilling to make friends with infantrymen. "You don't want to get too close to people when you know tomorrow they may be dead," Bloomquist explains. "There's no place for sentiment in this business."

Yet the job takes plenty of heart as well as guts, and the MEDEVAC teams are known throughout South Vietnam as "the gamest bastards of all." Their deep-chested, \$250,000 "Huey" choppers (capacity: ten patients each) have evacuated 8,864 wounded troopers—Vietnamese and American—since 1962. Through the end of last year, fully 20% of the personnel in Bloomquist's detachment had been killed in action and another 45% wounded, even though their unarmed, unarmored ships are clearly marked with red crosses on their noses. As Bloomquist grimly says: "The red cross makes us that much better a target."

No Time for Leave. Losses would have

been higher but for the consummate skill of the MEDEVAC pilots. During one recent battle, Bloomquist found himself swooping in behind four fighter-bombers to pick up seven wounded Americans. Suddenly one of the escorting Skyraiders burst into flames from a ground hit, and its partners peeled away to protect it. All alone, Bloomquist's chopper—call sign "Dustoff 174"—touched down amid withering crossfire from Viet Cong .50-cal. machine guns. Bloomquist ordered his crew to load the wounded, calmly polished his sunglasses, then rotated out in a hail of tracers.

Though he volunteered for another tour of duty last December and refused to take a leave during the first 15 months he was in Vietnam, Big Bear Bloomquist admits: "I've been here too long." Why does he stay? "Because," he explains slowly, "I like the excitement. And because, I think that my crew and I can do this job better than anyone else. It's the job that counts, above all, and it's a job that somebody has to do."

Unit in Germany Honors Vietnam Medevac Hero Killed by Terrorist Bomb

by Ann Keays

The 68th Medical Group dedicated its newly renovated headquarters installation here Monday to a man who survived more than 800 combat medical evacuations in Vietnam — yet died by a terrorist's bomb explosion on the steps of the Frankfurt officer's club.

The Ziegenberg installation was named U.S. Army Camp Paul Bloomquist in honor of the lieutenant colonel who died in May 1972 — only weeks before his scheduled return to the States.

Bloomquist's widow, Mrs. Joanne Gill, and his son, Douglas Bloomquist, unveiled a bronze plaque and stone monument erected here with contributions from Medical Service Corps aviators and a memorial fund.

About 400 German and American guests listened as the man who spent three tours in Vietnam was eulogized for his efforts to ease suffering.

Lt. Col. Robert F. Elliott, executive officer of the 68th Medical Group, spent about 18 months delving into Bloomquist's past to present a case to the Army's surgeon general for naming the installation after the former Medical Service Corps member who was assigned to the V Corps staff surgeon's office in July 1971.

Elliott described the day Bloomquist was killed. "He worked late May 11, 1972," said Elliott. "He still had his greens on and had busted a button off. He was looking for a needle and thread when he left the Terrace Club."

The first bomb blast stopped Bloomquist on the steps of the Terrace Club, aid Elliott. "The second one killed him."

Bloomquist, who was born Oct. 30, 1932, in Orem, Utah, became a second lieutenant in 1954. He attended the Medical Service Corps and Army Aviation School helicopter courses.

He flew air ambulances in Korea and Vietnam on medical evacuation missions.

During his first Vietnam tour in 1964-65, he was wounded and was cited for heroism. He received four awards of the Distinguished Flying Cross, three awards of the Purple Heart, 26 of the Air Medal, and a Bronze Star.

He was selected Army Aviator of the Year for that same period. He had made 859 medical evacuations — or dustoffs — in Vietnam. The term "dustoff" was the original radio call used by Army aeromedical evacuation units there.

"But Paul was no particular hero," said Col. J.D. Pantalone, present commander of

the 68th Medical Group. "There were others who did the same sort of thing in Vietnam. What stands out most about Paul is that he was just the image of what an officer should be."

"Paul had super rapport," said Col. Dewitt Hudson, V Corps provost marshal. He knew Bloomquist during a time of severe racial unrest in Europe. Bloomquist commanded the 3rd Armd Div's 45th Medical Bn in Hanau and was able to win the support and confidence of black soldiers," said Hudson.

When the medical group was reactivated here in October 1978, and placed under V Corps' 3rd Support Comd, Elliott and Pantalone felt the installation should be named after a Medical Service Corps officer — and Bloomquist's name "just came up," they said.

A fellow officer, in describing the environment in which Bloomquist grew up, said he feels that the ultraconservative lifestyle of Mormon Utah helped shape Bloomquist.

"I'm from that area. I know the people — industrious, straight shooters, close-knit families. We're farmers, beet diggers, or work at Kennicott Copper. The kids grow up without problems like dope or crime," said the officer.