

**Donated by 1SG (Ret) Joey "Brasso" Welsh
San Antonio, Texas**

Co E (LRP) 20th Infantry (ABN) Member prior to Infiltration with a 6 man team, the team was pinned down by a sniper shortly after the infil, he was stabbed in the knee by a punji stick while taking cover, another team member was also stabbed in the thigh by another punji stick, after pursuing the sniper the team was attacked by at least a platoon size element of NVA soldiers , during the battle the soldier who was stabbed in the thigh had a grenade thrown into the teams position, he jumped on the grenade, then picked it up and threw it back towards the oncoming NVA, the grenade never went of, then he called in artillery fire around the teams small defensive position so close that the team was getting debri from the shelling, after finally being extracted by choppers, the team had killed at least 11 NVA, the two team members didn't realize they were hit by the punji sticks until they were on the chopper, due to the action , he was put in for the Medal of Honor, however it was downgraded to the Distinguished Service Cross, (some say it was because it didn't explode) the nations second highest medal for heroism, and was finally awarded it in FT Bragg, NC, after he left Vietnam, I was proud to be at FT Bragg with him then. Both men received the purple heart and 10 days later returned to the team, the soldier who jumped on the grenade was Jimmie B Kessler, he was on my team for awhile and one of my best friends, however he has since passed away. As the saying goes "RANGERS LEAD THE WAY". May he rest in peace with the big "RANGER IN THE SKY".

