

2005 Hall of Heroes Inductees

Short Bios



Stephen G. MILLBURN

Silver Star Medal

Bronze Star Medal "V"

Army Commendation Medal "V"

Stephen Millburn is a native Californian who enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1961. After being commissioned in 1967, Lieutenant Millburn began the first of his two tours of duty in Vietnam.

1st Lt. Millburn distinguished himself for gallantry in action while serving as senior advisor, 32nd ranger battalion, Army of the Republic of Vietnam. During operations on May 8th 1969 Lt. Millburn's unit came under intense fire. Lt. Millburn, without regard to his personal safety, moved through withering fire to reach the forward most position where he willingly and continually exposed himself to intense fire so he could adjust air strikes onto enemy positions. Inspired by his valiant and courageous example, the rangers, though at a decided tactical disadvantage, pressed the attack... broke the enemy defenses and destroyed a battalion base camp.

For his gallantry in action Lt. Millburn received the Silver Star.

On March 5th, 1969 Lt. Millburn was recognized for heroism while serving as senior advisor to the 44th ranger battalion. On that date Lt. Millburn was supporting Vietnamese troops that were engaging enemy forces. He repeatedly put himself in harm's way by leaving protected positions so he could observe enemy positions and direct air and ground fire against the enemy. For his unselfish act of bravery Lt. Millburn was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with valor.

Later that same year, on August 29, 1969, Lt. Millburn again distinguished himself by heroic action with the 44th rangers. On that date Lt. Millburn was moving with the command group of a combined ranger/armored cavalry unit when the column came under small arms and mortar fire inflicting casualties on the friendly forces. Under intense fire, Lt. Millburn left the safety of his armored vehicle to coordinate the attack against the enemy and direct tactical air support... he also called in a medavac helicopter and in disregard for his own safety he was able to evacuate all the dead and wounded.

For Lt. Millburn's heroic action on that date he was awarded the Army Commendation Medal with valor.

Lt. Millburn was also decorated with two Purple Heart Medals... for being twice wounded

during his service in Vietnam. Stephen Millburn retired from the U.S. Army as a Major in 1982. He currently works in civil service as Director of the Targets Management Office, Redstone Arsenal. He has lived in Huntsville the past five years. He and his wife, Carlene, have 4 children.



William F. CASTLEBERRY

Silver Star Medal

While serving with the 4th Cavalry, 25th Infantry Division, Sergeant William F. (Fred) Castleberry distinguished himself by heroic actions in the predawn hours of April 14th 1968 in the Republic of Vietnam. This was Easter Sunday...his 21st birthday.

When his unit came under heavy enemy fire Sergeant Castleberry withstood the devastating assault and rendered aid to his fellow soldiers. As he lifted a severely wounded soldier in his arms he was shot in the shoulder by an enemy bullet... as he returned fire he was again hit, this time in the legs by enemy machine gun fire.

Despite multiple wounds Sergeant Castleberry continued to return fire until he was wounded a third time... by a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG), which resulted in the loss of his right arm and left leg. For his personal bravery and devotion to duty Sgt. Castleberry was awarded the Silver Star Medal for Gallantry in Action.

Following his military service Fred Castleberry served the communities he lived in by working for over 25 years with abused and neglected children. He and his wife Cathy have been living in Huntsville since for the past four years.

Because of the sacrifices he made while serving his country, Fred Castleberry has a part in the "Price of Freedom" exhibit at the Smithsonian museum of American History in Washington, D.C.



Benjamin F. ASKEW

Distinguished Flying Cross

Benjamin Askew was born in Washington D.C. and first entered military service in 1969 at San Antonio, Texas. Benjamin Askew retired from the United States Air Force at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in 1993 after 23 years of dedicated service. After working in the defense industry in Huntsville for several years he passed away on May 18th of this year at the age of 59.

Colonel Askew was the recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism while participating in aerial flight. On December 18th 1972 while serving as a B-52 Electronics Warfare Officer with the 307th Strategic Wing based in Thailand, Benjamin Askew was flying on a high priority mission against a heavily defended target in North Vietnam. Despite the hazards presented by numerous surface-to-air missiles, Benjamin Askew, a Captain during this mission, assisted his crew in releasing their ordnance precisely on target and flying safely out of the high threat area.



Peter D. SCHOFIELD

Bronze Star Medal with "V"

Peter (Pete) Schofield was born in Canada and his family moved to Schenectady, New York when he was twelve years old. Pete Schofield received his commission in the United States Army in 1966.

While serving as a Captain and Commander of company C with the 93rd Engineer Brigade he distinguished himself during hostile action at the Ben Luc Bridge, Republic of Vietnam, on July 15th 1969. On that date, Viet Cong sappers attempted to blow up the Ben Luc Bridge with explosive charges. The Viet Cong had taken control of the north end of the bridge and during the ensuing firefight had cut power to the security lights on the bridge. Knowing that the enemy was using the darkness to cover their operations, Captain Schofield, without regard to his own safety, worked his way to the south end of the bridge while receiving intense fire from enemy forces. He then made temporary repairs to the lighting system on the bridge. His action allowed the Republic of Vietnam soldiers to engage and destroy the enemy and regain control of the bridge.

For his heroic action on that date Captain Schofield was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor. Three years after this event Peter Schofield became a citizen of the United States. He and his wife Pamela, who have three children, have lived in Huntsville since the early 80's and he is employed with Sparta Corporation.



Rex S. WILSON

Bronze Star Medal with "V"

Rex Steven Wilson was born in Davenport, Iowa and was commissioned in the United States Army in 1965. In 1967, First Lieutenant Wilson was stationed in Vietnam and commanded the 44th Explosive Ordnance Detachment (EOD) in support of the 25th infantry division.

Lt. Wilson was decorated for heroism in action on December 27th 1967. On that date the 25th division's forward headquarters was saturated with a Viet Cong mortar attack just after darkness. Some 200-mortar rounds had fallen on the base camp and some had not exploded on impact. Lt. Wilson and his EOD team determined that many of the unexploded bombs were fused with a chemical long-delay fuse that could explode minutes or even hours after landing.

Using bayonets and bare hands, Lt Wilson and his team dug out the unexploded ordnance from the sensitive areas of the camp and then moved it to a disposal area to be safely destroyed. For his exemplary courage under extremely hazardous conditions Lieutenant Wilson was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor. Rex Wilson left the active duty in 1970 and worked with the CIA for 10 years. He remained in the United States Army reserves and National Guard for 20 years, and served in both Desert Storm and Bosnia. He is currently employed by NASA contractor, EG&G. He has lived in Huntsville for the past twelve years.



Nicholas G. HLYWA

Air Medal with “V”

Nicholas G. Hlywa (Nick) is originally from Detroit, Michigan. He enlisted in the United States Army in 1954 and was commissioned in 1955.

Major Hlywa distinguished himself by heroic action as aircraft commander and flight leader in the Republic of Vietnam while attached to company B, 227th Aviation Battalion.

On February 11th 1966, during air assault operations, supporting an infantry unit on a search and destroy mission, Major Hlywa off loaded troops into an increasingly dangerous landing zone, becoming the prime target for enemy fire. By the fourth lift, the troops initially landed were pinned down and were becoming critically low on ammunition. With darkness approaching, Major Hlywa volunteered to re-supply the troops and when he returned to the landing zone, the village around the position was in flames. Mortar rounds were hitting the village causing smoke and dust, further restricting visibility. Despite enemy fire directed at his aircraft, Major Hlywa guided his flight to a safe landing and remained until the ammunition was off-loaded and the wounded were safely aboard. For his heroism while participating in aerial flight, Major Hlywa was awarded the Air Medal with Valor.

Nick Hlywa retired from the United States Army after 20 years of service. Following retirement, he served with the Peace Corps from 1982 to 1984 in Botswana. Nick has been a resident of the Huntsville area since 1994.