



# The Military Order of the World Wars

**The Association of All Military Officers**  
**Chapter 131, West Valley, Arizona**  
**P. O. Box 7938, Surprise, AZ 85374**  
**WEB SITE-[www.mowwestvalleyaz.org](http://www.mowwestvalleyaz.org)**



Bulletin No. 5

May 2023



## Commander's Message

**John Hannan**  
**Commander**

Companions, thanks to all who attended our April breakfast meeting. We started off with a staff meeting, reviewing our financial position with an update from CAPT BUZ Isban and receiving operational results from our various activities.

We are fast approaching our JROTC and ROTC awards ceremonies. Junior Vice, Randy Meyer, announced we have communicated with each High School cadre and they are prepared as we are also. Looking forward to this opportunity to mingle with these bright young future military leaders.

We discussed the next MOC. The date and place have been determined and we are now moving forward to find a speaker for this

## *SPECIAL FEATURE* (Page 8)

**Robert L. Howard: Only soldier to be nominated for 3 Medal of Honors**



## Breakfast Meeting

An in-person meeting is planned for May 13, 2023 at 0930 at Chef Peter's Bistro, 17300 N. Village Parkway, Surprise Arizona, 85374. This will be the last meeting of this MOWW year.

ceremony, more information to follow. Next year's MOC will be even better.

G.O. Jenson reviewed his recruitment team's efforts. We have outstanding results, recruiting many new and enthusiastic companions. We must grow or fade away. It's clear to me that this chapter will be celebrating another 50 years of success. We came out of the Covid pause with renewed drive. Thank you to our recruitment team.

We also discussed candidates for leadership positions for the next operational year. Each position, with the exception of one, has a very qualified candidate to move our chapter forward. We need someone to fill in the position of senior vice. This position is a great opportunity to take in all the activities of our chapter and see how we coordinate with other chapters and headquarters. You can occupy this position or advance – it's up to you. We need your leadership and wisdom. Please seriously consider stepping up to this position. Each position has past chapter companions available for mentoring and guidance.

Once again Chef Peter's Bistro served an outstanding breakfast. Our speaker was Lee Bradley of Edward Jones on Sunrise Blvd. in Surprise. He and his partner Mircea did a great job of explaining and simplifying the rules and procedures of converting ones IRA into a Roth IRA, explaining the advantages and disadvantages of

this option. They also explained the opportunity to convert IRA assets to a charity of your choice. I'm not a "do it yourself" person when it comes to complicated financial issues so this presentation was very timely.

I'll have to say, everything we attempted this year was a success. We did not sit back and get locked into the comfort zone. We reached out to accomplish new initiatives after this long national Covid pause. This was not done by solitary efforts but rather, teams forging ahead. Veterans' Service groups are struggling in general; our chapter has grown and has been more and more recognized as a formidable local organization. We have a tight group that knows how to accept challenges and keep their focus on our important missions. These bedrock veterans have inspired me. I'm looking forward to the May meeting when we can recognize these warriors and install a new great team led by Linda Howry.

See you on May 13th.

Gratefully,  
John F. Hannan

### Surgeon's Note

By Linda Howry RN MS

#### Coronary Heart Disease

The leading cause of death in both men and women in the United States is heart disease. Currently, every 34 seconds, someone dies of cardiovascular disease in the United States. Men make up more than one half of people who die of heart disease.

Heart disease describes several conditions that affect the heart. Coronary artery disease (CAD) is the most common cause of heart disease affecting one in ten individuals between the ages of forty to eighty. This condition affects the blood flow to the heart. This is due to a narrowing of the coronary arteries most commonly due to plaque. This leads to the formation of blood clots in the arteries. Plaque is made up of cholesterol, calcium, waste product and the clotting

### MOWW Chapter 131 Leadership

Commander: John Hannan

Senior Vice: Linda Howry

Junior Vice: Randy Meyer

Adjutant: Mel Howry

Treasurer: Buz Isban

Marshal: Ken Coffman

Surgeon: Linda Howry

Chaplain: John Hannan

Bulletin Editor: Carlton Bjerkaas

Web Master: Ken Coffman

Historian (Archivist): Ken Coffman

Membership Chairman: Jerry Jenson

Immediate Past Commander: Buz Isban

material fibrin. These substances collect inside the artery wall causing them to become stiff and narrow where they clog and limit or stop blood flow to the heart muscle. Adequate blood supply to the heart is essential to maintaining the function of the heart to supply blood to the entire body. One of the two most common forms of CAD is acute coronary syndrome which is a medical-emergency crises when plaque suddenly ruptures which causes a blood clot stopping blood flow to the heart. This is known as a heart attack. The second type is called stable ischemic heart disease and in this chronic type, plaque forms over time but you can live with this and may experience only minor symptoms.

When the heart does not receive blood to its tissues, it starts to die leading to chest pain called angina. The pain can be mild to severe, causing a feeling of pressure, burning and this can spread to the neck, shoulder, arm, back or jaw. Other symptoms can be trouble breathing, shortness of breath, heart palpitations, dizziness, indigestion with nausea or vomiting, and feeling tired or weakness. Women tend to feel fatigue, shortness of breath, pain in the back, shoulders, neck, arms, or abdomen, feeling hot or flushed and the heart racing. These symptoms call for emergency medical intervention.

*Sources CDC, Mayo Clinic, and Cleveland Clinic  
Part 2 to be continued in June*

## Legislative Affairs

By Phil Hanson



### Latest State Legislature News

Three bills were originally submitted to the State Legislature this session pertaining to property tax exemptions: SB11130, SB1230 and HB2064. SB1113 did not receive hearing before chamber deadline. Defines competent medical authority deadline and is considered dead.

HB 2064 limits property tax to one exemption category. Defines medical competent authority and permanent disability and has been forwarded to the Senate. It is on hold at this time for consideration by the Senate Finance Committee. It is noted that both chambers strongly supported the bills.

There is no information on the cost currently available, but it be would quite high which may result in that part of the budget not being approved. It would be appropriate for members to contact their legislators to ask for their assistance in getting the funds approved.

## Treasurer's Report

Buz Isban  
Treasurer



### Financial Report

As of 11 Apr 2023

<b>General Fund</b>	\$15,054.29
Petty Cash	\$50.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$15,104.29</b>

<b>Patriotic Savings Account</b>	\$5,635.71
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Endowment Fund	\$14,743.77
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<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$35,483.77</b>
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## Chapter Dues

Chapter dues is only one source of revenue. The other two sources are from the 50/50 raffle and MOWW National Headquarters' annual dividend for our perpetual members. We need every bit to fulfill our Chapter's financial obligations.

Our dues remain the same as last year; \$15 for a member and spouse and \$10 for a member without a spouse. We hope all of you will see your way clear to help our Chapter remain financially sound. Make checks payable to "**MOWW Chapter 131**". You can mail your payment to our treasurer Michael Isban at 8980 W. Runion Drive, Peoria, AZ 85382. Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter.

## This Day in History in Viet Nam

**May 1961:** Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson visits President Diem in South Vietnam and hails the embattled leader as the 'Winston Churchill of Asia'.

**May 1961:** President Kennedy sends 400 American Green Beret 'Special Advisors' to South Vietnam to train South Vietnamese soldiers in methods of 'counter-insurgency' in the fight against Viet Cong guerrillas. The role of the Green Berets soon expands to include the establishment of Civilian Irregular Defense Groups (CIDG) made up of fierce mountain men known as the Montagnard. These groups establish a series of fortified camps strung out along the mountains to thwart infiltration by North Vietnamese.

**May 1962:** Viet Cong organize themselves into battalion-sized units operating in central Vietnam.

**May 1962:** Defense Secretary McNamara visits South Vietnam and reports "we are winning the war."

**May 1963:** Buddhists riot in South Vietnam after they are denied the right to display religious flags during their celebration of Buddha's

birthday. In Hue, South Vietnamese police and army troops shoot at Buddhist demonstrators, resulting in the deaths of one woman and eight children. Political pressure now mounts on the Kennedy administration to disassociate itself from Diem's repressive, family-run government. "You are responsible for the present trouble because you back Diem and his government of ignoramuses," a leading Buddhist tells U.S. officials in Saigon.

**May 1964:** President Johnson's aides begin work on a Congressional resolution supporting the President's war policy in Vietnam. The resolution is shelved temporarily due to lack of support in the Senate, but will later be used as the basis of the Gulf of Tonkin resolution.

**May 3, 1965:** The first U.S. Army combat troops, 3,500 men of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, arrive in Vietnam.

**May 11, 1965:** Viet Cong over-run South Vietnamese troops in Phuoc Long Province north of Saigon and also attack in central South Vietnam.

**May 13, 1965:** The first bombing pause is announced by the U.S. in the hope that Hanoi will now negotiate. There will be six more pauses during the Rolling Thunder bombing campaign, all with same intention. However, each time, the North Vietnamese ignore the peace overtures and instead use the pause to repair air defenses and send more troops and supplies into the South via the Ho Chi Minh trail.

**May 13, 1965:** Viet Cong attack the U.S. special forces camp in Phuoc Long. During the fighting, 2nd Lt. Charles Williams, earns the Medal of Honor by knocking out a Viet Cong machine-gun then guiding rescue helicopters, while wounded four times.

**May 19, 1965:** U.S. bombing of North Vietnam resumes.

**May 2, 1966:** Secretary of Defense McNamara privately reports the North Vietnamese are infiltrating 4,500 men per month into the South.

**May 14, 1966:** Political unrest intensifies as South Vietnamese troops loyal to Prime Minister Ky over-run renegade South Vietnamese Buddhist troops in Da Nang. Ky's troops then move on to Hue to oust renegades there. Ky's actions result in a new series of immolations by Buddhist monks and nuns as an act of protest against his Saigon regime and its American backers. Buddhist leader Tri Quang blames President Johnson personally for the situation. Johnson responds by labeling the immolations as "tragic and unnecessary."

**May 1, 1967:** Ellsworth Bunker replaces Henry Cabot Lodge as U.S. ambassador to South Vietnam.

**May 2, 1967:** The U.S. is condemned during a mock war crimes tribunal held in Stockholm, organized by British philosopher Bertrand Russell.

**May 9, 1967:** Robert W. Komer, a former CIA analyst, is appointed by President Johnson as deputy commander of MACV to form a new agency called Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) to pacify the population of South Vietnam. Nearly 60 percent of rural villages in South Vietnam are now under Viet Cong control. \$850 million in food, medical supplies, machinery, and numerous other household items, will be distributed through CORDS to the population in order to regain their loyalty in the struggle for the "hearts and minds" of common villagers. CORDS also trains local militias to protect their villages from the Viet Cong.

**May 13, 1967:** In New York City, 70,000 march in support of the war, led by a New York City fire captain.

**May 18-26, 1967:** U.S. and South Vietnamese troops enter the Demilitarized Zone for the first time and engage in a series of fire fights with NVA. Both sides suffer heavy losses.

**May 22, 1967:** President Johnson publicly urges North Vietnam to accept a peace compromise.

**May 5, 1968:** Viet Cong launch "Mini Tet," a series of rocket and mortar attacks against Saigon

and 119 cities and military installations throughout South Vietnam. The U.S. responds with air strikes using Napalm and high explosives.

**May 10, 1968:** An NVA battalion attacks the Special Forces camp at Kham Duc along the border of Laos. The isolated camp had been established in 1963 to monitor North Vietnamese infiltration. Now encircled by NVA, the decision is made to evacuate via C-130 transport planes. At the conclusion of the successful airlift, it is discovered that three U.S. Air Force controllers have accidentally been left behind. Although the camp is now over-run by NVA and two C-130s have already been shot down, Lt. Col. Joe M. Jackson pilots a C-123 Provider, lands on the air strip under intense fire, gathers all three controllers, then takes off. For this, Jackson is awarded the Medal of Honor.

**May 10, 1968:** Peace talks begin in Paris but soon stall as the U.S. insists that North Vietnamese troops withdraw from the South, while the North Vietnamese insist on Viet Cong participation in a coalition government in South Vietnam. This marks the beginning of five years of on-again off-again official talks between the U.S. and North Vietnam in Paris.

**May 1969:** The New York Times breaks the news of the secret bombing of Cambodia. As a result, Nixon orders FBI wiretaps on the telephones of four journalists, along with 13 government officials to determine the source of news leak.

**May 10-May 20, 1969:** Forty-six men of the 101st Airborne die during a fierce ten-day battle at 'Hamburger Hill' in the A Shau Valley near Hue. 400 others are wounded. After the hill is taken, the troops are then ordered to abandon it by their commander. NVA then move in and take back the hill unopposed.

The costly assault and its confused aftermath provoke a political outcry back in the U.S. that American lives are being wasted in Vietnam. One Senator labels the assault "senseless and irresponsible." It is the beginning of the end for America in Vietnam as Washington now orders MACV Commander Gen. Creighton Abrams to

avoid such encounters in the future. 'Hamburger Hill' is the last major search and destroy mission by U.S. troops during the war. Small unit actions will now be used instead. A long period of decline in morale and discipline begins among American draftees serving in Vietnam involuntarily. Drug usage becomes rampant as nearly 50 percent experiment with marijuana, opium, or heroin which are easy to obtain on the streets of Saigon. U.S. military hospitals later become deluged with drug related cases as drug abuse casualties far outnumber casualties of war.

**May 14, 1969:** During his first TV speech on Vietnam, President Nixon presents a peace plan in which America and North Vietnam would simultaneously pull out of South Vietnam over the next year. The offer is rejected by Hanoi.

**May 1, 1970:** May Day, the traditional Communist holiday. A combined force of 15,000 U.S. and South Vietnamese soldiers attack NVA supply bases inside Cambodia. However, throughout this offensive, NVA and Viet Cong carefully avoid large-scale battles and instead withdraw westward, further into Cambodia, leaving behind their base camps containing huge stores of weapons and ammunition.

**May 1, 1970:** President Nixon calls anti-war students "bums blowing up campuses."

**May 2, 1970:** American college campuses erupt in protest over the invasion of Cambodia.

**May 4, 1970:** At Kent State University in Ohio, National Guardsmen shoot and kill four student protesters and wound nine.

In response to the killings, over 400 colleges and universities across America shut down. In Washington, nearly 100,000 protesters surround various government buildings including the White House and historical monuments. On an impulse, President Nixon exits the White House and pays a late night surprise visit to the Lincoln Memorial and chats with young protesters.

**May 6, 1970:** In Saigon over the past week, 450 civilians were killed during Viet Cong terrorist

raids throughout the city, the highest weekly death toll to date.

**May 3-5, 1971:** A mass arrest of 12,000 protesters occurs in Washington.

**May 1, 1972:** South Vietnamese abandon Quang Tri City to the NVA.

**May 4, 1972:** The U.S. and South Vietnam suspend participation in the Paris peace talks indefinitely. 125 additional U.S. warplanes are ordered to Vietnam.

**May 8, 1972:** In response to the ongoing NVA Eastertide Offensive, President Nixon announces Operation Linebacker I, the mining of North Vietnam's harbors along with intensified bombing of roads, bridges, and oil facilities. The announcement brings international condemnation of the U.S. and ignites more anti-war protests in America. During an air strike conducted by South Vietnamese pilots, Napalm bombs are accidentally dropped on South Vietnamese civilians, including children. Filmed footage and a still photo of a badly burned nude girl fleeing the destruction of her hamlet becomes yet another enduring image of the war.

**May 9, 1972:** Operation Linebacker I commence with U.S. jets laying mines in Haiphong harbor.

**May 15, 1972:** The headquarters for the U.S. Army in Vietnam is decommissioned.

**May 17, 1972:** According to U.S. reports, Operation Linebacker I is damaging North Vietnam's ability to supply NVA troops engaged in the Eastertide Offensive.

**May 22-30, 1972:** President Nixon visits the Soviet Union and meets with Leonid Brezhnev to forge new diplomatic relations with the Communist nation. Nixon's visit causes great concern in Hanoi that their Soviet ally might be inclined to agree to an unfavorable settlement of the war to improve Soviet relations with the U.S.

**May 30, 1972:** NVA attack on Kontum is thwarted by South Vietnamese troops, aided by massive U.S. air strikes.

## Future Events

**13 May 2023** – Chapter Meeting

**14 October 2023** – Chapter Meeting

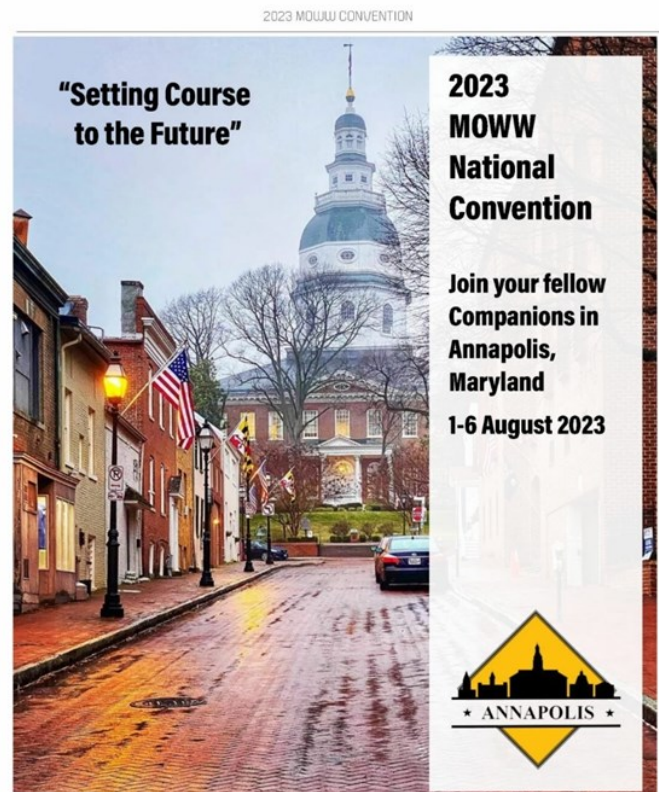
## Bulletin Deadline

The deadline for submission of articles for the June 2023 Bulletin is the 22<sup>th</sup> of May. The June Bulletin is the last of the year and will have information for the next MOWW year.

Email articles to [carltonbjerkaas@gmail.com](mailto:carltonbjerkaas@gmail.com)

Thank you.

Carlton Bjerkaas, Editor



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Join Us for the 2023 National Convention in Annapolis, MD. Convention and Hotel Reservation Information are now live on the Convention page. We hope to see you there!

[Learn More](#)

## Do You Know About Our Chapter's Region?

Region XIII is one of ten regional support sub-element organizations, within the Military Order of the World Wars - veterans services organization, providing administrative and operational oversight to 75 field Chapters throughout the continental United States and US territories abroad. Region XIII is the third largest regional support organization with 9 operational Chapters in the western and southwestern region of the country. Within the geographical operational area of Region XIII are the states of Wyoming, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado, and the Greater El Paso Chapter in western panhandle of Texas. Region XIII is further subdivided into three Departments; the Department of Arizona (5 Chapters), Department of the Rio Grande (1 Chapter in the state of New Mexico and the Greater El Paso Chapter in west Texas) and the Department of the Rocky Mountains (2 Chapters). There are also two stand-alone states without any local in-state Chapter support; the State of Utah (1 Chapter Cadre operation under consideration) and the State of Wyoming (no current local Chapter operations).



You can get more information at the Region XIII website: <https://www.mowwscv.com/home>

The **Department of Arizona** is one of three supporting departmental support element organizations, within the MOWW, Region XIII field operational hierarchy. The Department of Arizona provides administrative and operational oversight to five field Chapters throughout the state of Arizona. Three are geographically located in central Arizona (Phoenix metropolitan area) and two Chapters operate in southern portions of the state in the greater Tucson and south of Tucson

urban and rural communities, all the way south on the I-19 corridor southward to the Arizona-Mexico international border region in Nogales, AZ.



## MOWW News and Information

### Want to Become a MOWW Companion?

MOWW chapters provide opportunities to support veterans of all ranks and service, youth patriotic education, college ROTC and high school JROTC, Scouting, monuments and memorials, public safety/law & order, national and homeland security programs, and stimulate love of our country and flag.

[Click for More Information](#)

**"It is nobler to serve than to be served."**

**MAY IS MILITARY  
APPRECIATION  
MONTH**



## *SPECIAL FEATURE*

# Robert L. Howard: Only soldier to be nominated for 3 Medal of Honors

**Robert Lewis Howard** (July 11, 1939 – December 23, 2009) was the most highly decorated officer of Vietnam United States Army Special Forces and Medal of Honor recipient of the Vietnam War.

He was wounded 14 times over 54 months of combat, was awarded the Medal of Honor, eight Purple Hearts, a Distinguished Service Cross, a Silver Star, and four Bronze Stars.

He was nominated for the Medal of Honor three times over a 13-month period. He was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions on December 30, 1968, his third nomination.

He retired from the US Army after 36 years of service as a full colonel. He was one of the most decorated soldiers in the Vietnam War and was "said to be the most decorated service member in the history of the United States".

Howard enlisted in the Army in 1956 at Montgomery, Alabama and retired as colonel, Army Special Forces, in 1992.

Howard's service in Vietnam included assignments with 1/327th Airborne Infantry, 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, 5th Special Forces Group and MACV-SOG.

As a staff sergeant of the highly classified Military Assistance Command, Vietnam – Studies and Observations Group (MACV-SOG), Howard was recommended for the Medal of Honor on three occasions for three individual actions during thirteen months spanning 1967–1968. The first two nominations were downgraded to a Silver Star and the Distinguished Service Cross due to the covert and top secret nature of the operations in which Howard participated.



While leading a covert SOG platoon-sized mission in southeastern Laos on November 16, 1967, Sergeant First Class Howard carried out actions that led to his being recommended for his nation's highest honor. While the main body destroyed an enemy cache, Howard's team came upon four North Vietnamese Army soldiers, whom he shot. The team was then pinned down by heavy machine gun fire. Howard first eliminated a sniper and then charged the machine gun position, killing its occupants. When a second machine gun opened up, he crawled forward to within point-blank range and threw a hand grenade, disabling that gun.

When more of the North Vietnamese took over the same gun, Howard stood in the open and fired a light anti-tank weapon, knocking it out once again. The team was then successfully extracted by helicopter. Although recommended for the Medal



of Honor, Howard's award was downgraded to the Distinguished Service Cross. This would be the first of three recommendations within 13 months for the Medal of Honor for Robert Howard.

In mid-November Howard accompanied an FOB-2 Hatchet Platoon into Laos. After four days in the area, on November 19, 1968, the force was ambushed by Vietnamese troops, including a Soviet-built PT-76 tank. Braving intense fire, Howard crept forward and knocked out the PT-76 with an anti-tank rocket. After a medivac helicopter was shot down, Howard, already wounded, charged forward 300 yards through North Vietnamese fire to lead the two pilots and a wounded door gunner to safety. He was again wounded, this time by 14 pieces of shrapnel, but all that this seemed to do was aggravate him.

He charged the Vietnamese, killed two and dragged back a third as a prisoner. North Vietnamese anti-aircraft fire halted the extraction of the platoon until the following morning, when Howard, already perforated multiple times, moved forward and silenced a 37 mm anti-aircraft gun, allowing the extraction to be completed. For the second time, Howard was recommended for the Medal of Honor, but his award was again downgraded to a Distinguished Service Cross.

This series of events illustrates the difficulties faced when special operations personnel exhibited extraordinary bravery in denied areas. Recommendations for decorations always stipulated the location and circumstances of the action, and since the award of such a high decoration became public knowledge, the citation would have to be changed to place the action within territorial South Vietnam. The U.S. Congress and President were loath to create any sense of falsehood about the actions of the nation's most highly decorated military personnel, so, in many instances, awards were downgraded to keep the recipient out of the limelight.

On December 30, 1968 Howard was serving as a member of a 40-man Bright Light rescue mission into northeastern Cambodia. The unit was in search of MACSOG Private First Class Robert Scherdin, who had been separated from his recon team. Bypassing a North Vietnamese Army company, Howard was leading his men up a hill when he and Lieutenant Jim Jerson were wounded by a land mine. While administering first aid to Jerson, a bullet struck one of the wounded man's ammunition pouches, detonating several magazines. His fingers in shreds, Howard was dragging Jerson off the hill when he was shot in the foot.

The remaining 20 men were organized by Howard, who administered first aid, directed their fire, and encouraged them to resist. After three and one-half hours under attack, Howard prepared for a fight to the death. The team was saved from that fate, however, when an emergency night extraction took them off without any further casualties. As badly wounded as he was, Howard was the last man to board a helicopter. After his third recommendation in 13 months, Robert Howard was finally awarded a well-deserved Medal of Honor. He learned of the award over a two-way radio while under enemy fire, immediately after being wounded, resulting in one of his eight Purple Hearts.

Perhaps no man represented the quandary of the political and moral dilemma of the Vietnam War in the heart and mind of America better than Howard. He had become arguably the most highly decorated serviceman in American military history, yet few of his countrymen even knew who he was. Unlike Alvin York or Audie Murphy before him, Howard was not touted as a national hero by the media, he was given no ticker tape parade, and no Hollywood movie was made depicting his extraordinary exploits. Of course, none of this bothered the quiet, unassuming Howard. He remained in the Army and retired as a full Colonel, after 36 years of active service, in September 1992.

For his distinguished service, Howard received a direct appointment, battlefield commission from Master Sergeant to First Lieutenant in December 1969.

Howard graduated from Ranger School class 7-73 in May 1973 and served with the 2nd Ranger Battalion at Fort Lewis, Washington as company commander. From 1977 to 1978 he served as Mountain Ranger Training instructor.

Howard later served as officer-in-charge of Special Forces training at Camp Mackall, near Ft. Bragg, N.C., and later, commanding the Mountain Ranger Training Camp at Dahlonga, Georgia

Howard graduated from the National War College, Class 1987–1988. He received two master's degrees during his Army career which spanned 1956 to 1992.

He was one of the most decorated soldiers in the Vietnam War. *NBC News* said that Howard may have been the most highly decorated American soldier of the modern era, while KWTX-TV states that he was "said to be the most decorated service member in the history of the United States". John Plaster in his 1998 book *SOG: The Secret Wars of America's Commandos in Vietnam* states that Howard "remains to this day the most highly decorated American soldier.



His residence was in Texas and he spent much of his free time working with veterans until the time of his death. He also took periodic trips to Iraq to visit active duty troops.

Howard died of pancreatic cancer at a hospital in Waco, Texas, on December 23, 2009. He was survived by four children and five grandchildren. His funeral was in Arlington National Cemetery on February 22, 2010.

The President of the United States in the name of The Congress takes pride in presenting the MEDAL OF HONOR to



FIRST LIEUTENANT  
**ROBERT L. HOWARD**  
UNITED STATES ARMY

for service as set forth in the following CITATION:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. 1st Lt. Howard (then SFC.), distinguished himself while serving as platoon sergeant of an American-Vietnamese platoon which was on a mission to rescue a missing American soldier in enemy controlled territory in the Republic of Vietnam. The platoon had left its helicopter landing zone and was moving out on its mission when it was attacked by an estimated 2-company force. During the initial engagement, 1st Lt. Howard was wounded and his weapon destroyed by a grenade explosion. 1st Lt. Howard saw his platoon leader had been wounded seriously and was exposed to fire. Although unable to walk, and weaponless, 1st Lt. Howard unhesitatingly crawled through a hail of fire to retrieve his wounded leader. As 1st Lt. Howard was administering first aid and removing the officer's equipment, an enemy bullet struck 1 of the ammunition pouches on the lieutenant's belt, detonating several magazines of ammunition. 1st Lt. Howard momentarily sought cover and then realizing that he must rejoin the platoon, which had been disorganized by the enemy attack, he again began dragging the seriously wounded officer toward the platoon area. Through his outstanding example of indomitable courage and bravery, 1st Lt. Howard was able to rally the platoon into an organized defense force. With complete disregard for his safety, 1st Lt. Howard crawled from position to position, administering first aid to the wounded, giving encouragement to the defenders and directing their fire on the encircling enemy. For 3½ hours 1st Lt. Howard's small force and supporting aircraft successfully repulsed enemy attacks and finally were in sufficient control to permit the landing of rescue helicopters. 1st Lt. Howard personally supervised the loading of his men and did not leave the bullet-swept landing zone until all were aboard safely. 1st Lt. Howard's gallantry in action, his complete devotion to the welfare of his men at the risk of his life were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit on himself, his unit, and the U.S. Army.



*Military Order of the World Wars*  
West Valley Chapter 131, Arizona  
P. O. Box 7938  
Surprise, AZ 85374  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**TO:**