

Graveside Service

On behalf of the United States Army, I would like to welcome family and friends to this memorial remembrance. We are gathered here this evening to remember and to honor a brother, a friend, and a soldier - Major

Please bow your heads with me in prayer. (Invocation)

Yesterday I had the honor of meeting with the family of Major____ his friends and family. I got the privilege to listen to____, his brother and his sisters and to his ex-wife to reminisce about their brother and friend and to just talk.

I always feel honored to spend a few moments in other people's life to get a picture of who we are honoring - and whom many of you here today know.

At this time, his brother____, would like to read a few comments. ____will now read a letter from____, his daughter.

If there is anyone, at this time who would like to share a memory of____, please do so:
(Time to share memories)

Thank you for your thoughts!

Today we are here to honor a soldier - one who in a sense gave his life for his country.

If____were here today, he would probably say to me to keep it short and to get on with it chaplain. I was told that____was a private man. However, I am going to take a little liberty today as we honor____as a soldier.

First let me read from the scriptures:

Psalms 23 – Warrior's scripture. It says and I quote:

*The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures.
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the*

*Paths of righteousness for His name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the
Shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for
Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff They comfort me.
Thou prepares! a table before me in the presence of
Mine enemies: thou annoitest my head with
Oil; my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all
The days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord For Ever.*

_____ believed in God.

So Today we honor a Father, Brother, Soldier, and friend. It is always a privilege to honor our fallen comrades. We are doing that today! One of our own, who has answered the last bugle call, who echo's the call of a soldier that says, it is a hard thing to have survived when we owe our place to the dead. _____knew combat and survival.

He was commissioned at Fort Belvoir and served two tours in Vietnam. His brother tells the story of how in Vietnam, _____was driving by while there was a small firefight - (I wanted to ask him what he meant by a small fire fight). _____drives madly through the blockade and, calls out his brother's name. Two brothers together serving their country during a time of War.

Following his tour in Vietnam, _____ went to the Career Course at Fort Belvoir, and then was assigned to Fort Wainwright, Alaska from 1970-1973. (Another humorous story is that the Colonel, the Garrison Commander of Fort Wainwright was his uncle while he served there. _____would get amusement out of hearing the Colonel, his uncle, referred to as a cagey old character.

From FWA, he finished his degree at ST Martin's college in Civil Engineering 1973-75. Upon completion of his degree, he was sent to Okinawa where he was involved as the Engineer for the installation. Leaving Okinawa in 1978, he and his family were sent to

Fort Bragg where he served in several assignments including an appointment as a Foreign Affairs Officer. During his time at Fort Bragg, he was the commander to a Psychological Operations Battalion that he loved dearly.

It was said of _____ that his soldiers loved him. He was a Soldier's commander. He was not a pretentious man - a private individual – who did the job well - not an apple polisher. It was said that he hated politics - all he wanted to do was to get the job done, take care of his soldiers and move on to the next mission. (However, it should be noted that in another career- for a time - in 1992 he was the chairman for the state Republican Party here in the state of Alaska - and most recently worked as an Engineer here on Fort Wainwright with the US Army Corps of Engineers.)

_____ loved the military, and the Service meant everything to him.

His awards and decorations Include:

Two bronze stars; Vietnam Cross of Gallantry; Meritorious Service medal; Army Commendation Medal (Oak Leaf); The Soldier's Medal; National Defense Medal; Armed Forces Reserve Medal; Good Conduct Medal; Meritorious Unit Citation (584th Engineer & 87th Engineer Battalion); and the Parachutist Badge.

_____ was involved heavily in Cold War operations participating in the Iran Hostage affair, operations behind the iron curtain - operations in Africa and other hot spots that we are not privileged to know about. It should be noted that his a son and a daughter whom you already heard from loved their father dearly.

So, today we honor a soldier who served his country for over twenty years. There is a poem that soldiers understand that I would like to read to you today it goes like this:

*A moth-eaten rag, on a worn eaten pole
Doesn't seem likely to stir a Man's soul
But it's the deed that were done be'neath that worn
Eaten Flag when that pole was a staff
And that rag a flag.*

That is why we are here today to remember, to honor and to pay respects to a fallen soldier. To recognize those deeds beneath that flag that were done many years ago, and are still fresh in the minds of those with whom he served. So today, we do not forget.

We honor his call to defend what you here have today – that is, freedom.

_____ is now on his last journey. The bivouac of soldiers who have slipped away stand in honor guard today for Major (state full name). The bugle call has sounded. Taps have already been played and a flag has already been draped over the final resting place of

_____. But perhaps, it would be fitting to end with the words of Taps as we pay tribute to a fallen comrade.

“Day is done, gone the sun, from the lake, from the hills, from the sky. All is well, safely rest, God is nigh.”

Please bow your heads with me for the Benediction: