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Hometown hero Gould flying high

Noah T. Gould moved to Cass City in 1996 when his father, the Rev. Todd Gould, was called to pastor the Evangelical Free Church. Home-schooled up until high school, he chose public education when his parents gave him the option in 1998. He thrived there, both in academics and sports.

In his sophomore year, Gould decided he wanted a future in the U.S. military. His father encouraged him to go as an officer, which led to a discussion about the various military academies. Because he wanted to fly and secure a Marine Corps commission, the U.S. Naval Academy became the school of choice — provided he could gain acceptance.

After months of administrative paper work, including a waiver for less than perfect vision, and selection by U.S. Rep. James Barcia, Gould was accepted at the U.S. Naval Academy. He was the first student from Cass City to attend a U.S. military academy in 20 years.

Gould graduated with the Class of 2002 and reported as a plebe to Annapolis that summer. He says the Navy definitely “accelerated his life” during that time. He truly enjoyed his four years there and won the east coast championship for the Naval Academy Karate Team in his senior year.

Gould graduated in the U.S.N.A. Class of 2006, took his Marine Corps commission, completed six more months of The Basic School in Quantico, Va., then was off to flight school.

He completed his training both in Pensacola, Fla., and Corpus Christi, Texas. Finally, Gould reported to his first duty station at Camp Pendleton, Calif., as a Cobra helicopter pilot.

Eventually his squadron shipped out to the frontlines of Afghanistan in 2010. As a participant in Operation Enduring Freedom, Lt. Gould flew numerous combat missions in support of the U.S. Marines. In fact, his squadron flew the most missions of the entire war up to that point. Rotating back to the states after his initial tour, he returned to the Afghan theater in 2012 while his parents and others prayed Isaiah 54:17 over him just as they did the first time.

Gould’s second tour complete and finished with combat for a while, Captain Gould and his new wife were stationed in Okinawa, Japan, for three years. From there he was offered an instructor’s position back at U.S. Navy Flight School, Pensacola, where he currently serves as a helicopter pilot instructor for Navy and Marine Corps aviators.



CAPTAIN Gould with his wife, Chaelyn, and their daughter, Poppy, near the flight deck in Pensacola, Fla.



CAPTAIN Gould and his Cobra helicopter in California.



THEN-LT. NOAH T. Gould and Major D.M. Crousore prepare for a combat mission in Afghanistan.

McNaughton served country and community with valor

Dave McNaughton, Cass City, served with Echo and Headquarters Companies, 2nd Battalion, 506th Airborne Infantry, of the 101st Airborne Division (paratroopers). E Company was the same unit depicted in the HBO series “Band of Brothers” It was a tough history to follow and not disappoint those who served in World War II.



Dave McNaughton

McNaughton was married to his wife, Connie, Feb. 24, 1968, and flew out about two weeks later. They met for Christmas in Honolulu while he was on R and R.

McNaughton’s MOS (military occupational specialty) was 11F4P (infantry operations and intelligence specialist).

He served for more than 25 years on the Elkland Township Fire Department and managed the local ambulance service for 12-plus year before it was sold to Mercy.



Dave McNaughton, then

McNaughton and his wife still reside in Cass City. They’re children are Justin J. McNaughton, Jennifer J. McNaughton Johnson, Jude J. McNaughton, Joshua D. McNaughton and John J. McNaughton.

In memory of Charles A. Drier

In memory of Sgt. Charles A. Drier, who lost his life May 24, 2005 while serving in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Drier was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 76th Field Artillery, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Ga.

Drier was serving as a sniper when an improvised explosive device detonated near his Humvee in Baghdad.

Drier was a 1995 graduate of Unionville-Sebewaing Area High School.



Charles A. Drier

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Lance Corporal Chippi member of U.S. Marines



LCpl Cole Lewis Chippi is currently in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves.

He graduated from boot camp at Parris Island, S.C., Sept. 8, 2017, completed his marine combat training at Camp Lejeune, N.C., and received his MOS training at Fort Lee, Va.

A 2017 graduate of Cass City High School, his parents are Joseph and Brenda Pomeroy; and Matt and Elissa (Hendrick) Chippi all from Cass City.

Lance Corporal Cole Chippi



U.S. Marine F. Anchor served in Vietnam

Frank C. Anchor Jr. served with the U.S. Marine Corp during the Vietnam war from 1969 to 1971.

After the war Anchor moved to Detroit where he worked as a police officer until his retirement.

Frank and his wife Sandra moved to Cass City where they now reside. They have 2 children Frank and Candy.

Frank Anchor Jr.

Father/son duo remembered for their courageous service

by Deborah Robinson
Cass City

In 1967, at age 20, Newton R. Robinson, along with thousands of other young men, was drafted into military service during the Vietnam War. As years would pass, the military action would be called a conflict or era, but Newt called it war. Fortunately, he survived and returned home to continue his life.

After working thirty years at General Motors and raising three children, Vietnam became more than a distant memory.

At age 56, he was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, which is linked to Agent Orange, and died 14 months later. Agent Orange was a potent herbicide used to kill foliage. The idea was to clear the dense jungles of Vietnam and reduce areas for the enemy to hide. Although the plan did indeed kill foliage, it also exposed thousands of men and women to this deadly chemical.

Sadly, the United States made an improper decision as they declared that this stuff won't kill people, just plants. Some young troops experienced being soaked with the herbicide as they followed orders to administer the liquid.

In 2002, shortly before his death, Newton Robinson watched his youngest son leave for basic training, supporting Operation Enduring Freedom. The events of Sept. 11, 2001, spurred many young men and women to join the military.

Brian David Robinson was no exception. Brian Robinson was ten days short of his 18th birthday when he left for basic training with the dream of becoming an Army Ranger.

What an amazing soldier he proved to be! Brian graduated from boot camp, jump school and was deployed to Afghanistan before turning 19 years old. Four months into his tour Brian, was called home by the American Red Cross because of Newt's rapidly declining health.



Brian Robinson



Newton Robinson

Brian was able to spend a few precious days with his dad before the cancer claimed his life. Two months later, Brian was sent to Iraq and began his second deployment. He began to show signs of anxiety which we now know as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

As he attempted to rejoin civilian life, it was obvious that he'd been deeply afflicted from his military experience coupled with trauma of losing his dad. Riddled with anxiety and addiction to the medications prescribed to ease his PTSD symptoms made life very difficult for this young veteran and for those who loved him.

At age 27, Brian died from an accidental, prescription drug overdose.

I grieve for my son, his dad and so many others who have served this great nation. My mission is to spread awareness and respect for our nation's heroes and the families who love them.

Cpl Rich stationed on USS America

Corporal Braydon Rich was stationed on the USS America from June 2014 to June 2018. He received his basic training in Camp Pendleton, Calif.

He is the son of Dale and Tracy Rich of Ubyly.



Braydon Rich

In remembrance of Corporal Pallas



Herbert Pallas

In remembrance of Corporal Herbert Pallas who served from 1951 to 1953 and was stationed at Fort Campbell located along the Kentucky-Tennessee border with the United States Army. He was a Corporal with the 51st Infantry Division in the 11th Airborne Quartermaster Company. He earned a Parachute Badge, National Defense Service Medal and a Good Conduct Medal.

After Fort Campbell he was reassigned to Indiantown Gap Military Reservation base. Pallas drove around the generals and other officials during his time at Indiantown. He served with the U.S. Army during the Korean War.

After serving Pallas came back to Decker, where he and his wife Mary Louise raised 3 children Judith, Sandra and Wayne. Pallas worked on the Peppermint Farm, for many area farmers, Farmers Coop Elevator of Marlette, Buick Motors of Flint, Marlette Homes for 32 years, Coachman Homes in Indiana, and retired from Active Homes in Marlette.

Caister stationed at Fort Bragg, N.C.



Randall Caister

Randall Duane Caister, formerly of Elkton, served in the Army from September 1983 to July 1986, he was an Administrative Specialist in Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

Caister is the son of Duane and Janet Caister of Elkton. He and his wife Mary have 2 children Matthew and Lily.

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Graham wounded in action, awarded the Purple Heart

Joseph Graham served with the U.S. Marine Corps in Vietnam.

Knowing he was going to be drafted in 1968, he said he "decided to join up, so I could get it over with. I signed up in Caro and was put on a bus to Detroit the next day."

Graham underwent a physical and then flew to San Diego for boot camp. From there, he went to Camp Pendleton for artillery training.

"My MOS (military occupational specialty) was artillery, fire directional control. After school I was sent to Twentynine Palms, Calif., where, after several months, I received orders to Vietnam."

In September 1969 Graham arrived near Danang, Vietnam, where he served for nine months and was wounded by shrapnel from a rocket in May 1970.

"I was in the 'hooch' and saw someone running out the other end and wondered what was going on," he recalled. "I immediately felt an electric shock like grabbing onto a bare wire. I ripped off my dog tags thinking to get rid of the metal."

The shock Graham felt was caused by shrapnel sticking in the back of his head from the blast of a rocket nearby.

"One guy came and grabbed me by the arm and took me to the first-aid bunker," Graham said. "At this time, I was 90 percent blind. The medic

looked at my wound and said, 'We can't do anything for him'. They put me on a stretcher. From there I was loaded onto a personal carrier, which when it took off, my stretcher started to slide off. Another wounded guy held onto it to stop it from going out the back end.

"At the 'helo' pad, the medic said, 'Put him on last so he can come off first'. I was flown 30 miles to a hospital in Danang, where they removed the shrapnel from my head."

Graham spent nearly a month there until he regained his eyesight. He was eventually transported to recover at Great Lakes in Chicago, where he was released in August 1970. Graham retired as a corporal with a national defense ribbon, Purple Heart, and two Vietnam medals.

After returning home, Graham recalled, "Within a few weeks I was in college and realized, because of the atmosphere in this country about the Vietnam war, it was best not to talk about my experience there. There were no parades for the vets. The sacrifices made by them, to serve the country they loved, seemed not to be appreciated. So, we just didn't talk about it."

Graham and his wife, Kaye, currently live in Cass City.

He spoke of the pride for his family's continued service, saying, "We have two grandsons in the service — PFC Tracey Moore Jr. and LCpl Reice Kimball — that we couldn't be more proud of for their service to our country."



Joseph Graham with his parents Mildred & John Graham at Boot Camp graduation in camp Pendleton, Calif.



Graham receiving a Purple Heart while recovering from war injuries during his hospital stay.



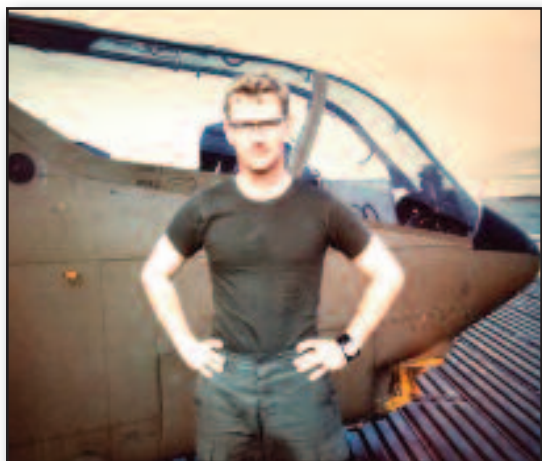
Joseph Graham stationed in a gun tower in Vietnam

Turner stationed at Red Beach Base '71

George Turner was stationed in Da Nang, Vietnam, at Red Beach Base in 1971, with the U.S. Army. He a door gunner with the 142nd Helicopter Company. Door gunner's were tasked with firing and maintaining manually directed armament aboard helicopters.

After he served his time, Turner returned to Cass City, where he worked at General Cable and the state hospital in Caro. He retired as a fire safety officer.

Turner and his wife, Margot, live in Vassar. A 1968 graduate of Cass City High School, he is a member of VFW Post 3644, Cass City.



George Turner

Stimpfel served aboard the USS Grand Canyon

After graduating with the Ruth High School Class of 1962, Thomas Anthony Stimpfel joined the U.S. Navy and served from 1962 to 1966.

Stimpfel attended boot camp at Great Lakes, Ill. He then served his term aboard the U.S.S. Grand Canyon AD-28, working in the foundry. The U.S.S. Grand Canyon provided tender and repair facilities for destroyer-type ships. He was stationed at the Cuban Blockade during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962.



Thomas Stimpfel

Stimpfel also completed four tours of the Mediterranean and was stationed in Newport Rhode Island Naval Base.

Stimpfel and his wife, Doris, have been Cass City residents for the last 40 years, they have four children, Tammie, Renae, Tom and Jim; and eight grandchildren.

Stimpfel ran his own business, Tom's Drywall, until his recent retirement.

PFC Moore stationed at Camp Geiger

U.S. Marine Corps PFC Tracey Moore Jr. completed boot camp at Parris Island, S.C., May 25, 2018, and is now stationed in Camp Geiger, N.C., where he is completing marine combat training.

Moore is the son of Tracey and Perry Moore of Cass City. He is a 2017 graduate of Cass City High School.



PFC Tracey Moore Jr. US Marine Corp



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In memory of Sgt. D. Wilson



Sgt. Donald Wilson

Sgt. Donald R. Wilson, served with the 83rd Armored Division during World War II.

Wilson was decorated with the Silver Star – the third highest medal a civilian can receive in the United States — for his courage and bravery during combat in Germany.

Wilson earned his Silver Star by singlehandedly capturing an enemy tank. He noticed the enemy German tank advancing on other soldiers. Out of the sight of the Mark V German tank, he ran towards the tank, climbed up and opened the hatch, grabbing the enemy commander and pulling him out of the advancing tank.

The German Mark V tank was the first German tank captured intact, and it was then sent stateside, where experts were able to study the tank and develop bullets able to pierce its armor. The tank was on display at Fort Knox for many years.

Wilson was also awarded two Purple Hearts for injuries sustained in battle.

The Wilson family came to Cass City in 1973. He was married for 58 years to Martha Wilson, who passed away in 2016. They had eight children; Donald (1953-1976), Joseph, Ann, Jeanette, Sarah, Robert, Stan, and Mary.

Wilson was a hero not only to his family, but was also a true American Hero. He passed away in his Cass City home in August 2010.

Lance Cpl. Hulburt completes training

Ethan Hulburt is a lance corporal in the U.S. Marine Corps, stationed at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Hulburt is a 2016 Cass City High School graduate, he completed boot camp at Parris Island, S.C., July 14, 2017.

Hulburt is the son of Shari Hulburt of Bay City and Jason (Tres-sica) Hulburt of Lansing.

BELOW LCpl Hulburt proudly poses after graduating from Parris Island's boot camp with his mother Shari Hulburt.



LCpl Ethan Hulburt



ABOVE Sgt. Donald Wilson during WWII in Europe, giving his rations to local children.

BELOW Sgt. Donald Wilson receiving a Silver Star for exemplary service to our country.



M. Kirn served aboard the USS Oak Ridge ARDM1

Michael (Mick) F. Kirn, Cass City, also served in the U.S. Navy, as an Electricians Mate 2C from February 1974 through 1978. He completed his boot camp training at Great Lakes, Ill.

Kirn served aboard the USS Oak Ridge ARDM1 floating drydock in Rota, Spain. The Oak Ridge was attached to Submarine Squadron 16 and dry docked submarines.

Kirn, an electrician who has owned and operated his own business for many years while also volunteering with the Cass City Fire Department since 1980, and his wife, Barb, a retired veteran Cass City Public Schools teacher, have two children, Whitney and Meredith.



Michael "Mick" Kirn



Stanley P. Kirn, Jr.

In remembrance of Electricians Mate Stanley P. Kirn Jr.

Stanley P. Kirn Jr., Cass City, served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. After completing boot camp training at Great Lakes, Ill., he served as an Electricians Mate 3C aboard the USS Nashville CL-43 from 1944 through 1946.

The Nashville was General Douglas McArthur's flagship when he returned to the Phillipines in October 1944. The Nashville was hit by a Kamikaze plane in December 1944, resulting in 133 deaths and many injuries.

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SPC A. Mazzone receives Distinguished Unit Award



ABOVE SPC MAZZONE gears up to work with the 460th Chemical Company out of Fort Custer.

SPC Alexander T. Mazzone is a member of the U.S. Army Reserves, 460th Chemical Company out of Fort Custer. A graduate at Fort Leonard Wood in September 2015, he is a CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear) specialist.

Mazzone, a 2015 graduate of Cass City High School, is currently attending Saginaw Valley State University, where he is studying computer information systems.

He recently received the Distinguished Unit Award from the Department of Defense, as well as the Army Achievement Medal from the 460th Chemical Company.

Mazzone is the son of Joseph and Hope Mazzone of Cass City and Angela Sillman of Columbiaville.



SPC Alexander Mazzone

PFC Warford completes U.S. Marines training

PFC Brady R. Warford, 19, is on active duty, serving with the U.S. Marine Corp.

The 2017 Cass City High School graduate was an honor graduate of Parris Island, South Carolina, in April 2018, earning the distinguished title of High Shooter for Fox Company with a score of 329 out of 350 points. He also earned the Marksmanship Expert Badge.

Warford graduated from Marine Combat Training school in June 2018. He earned the title of company guide for Hotel Company Camp, Lejeune, N.C.

He is currently stationed at Camp Johnson, N.C., waiting to begin MOS instruction to become a Financial Management Resource Analyst.

Warford is the son of Joseph and Hope Mazzone and Robert Warford III, all of Cass City.



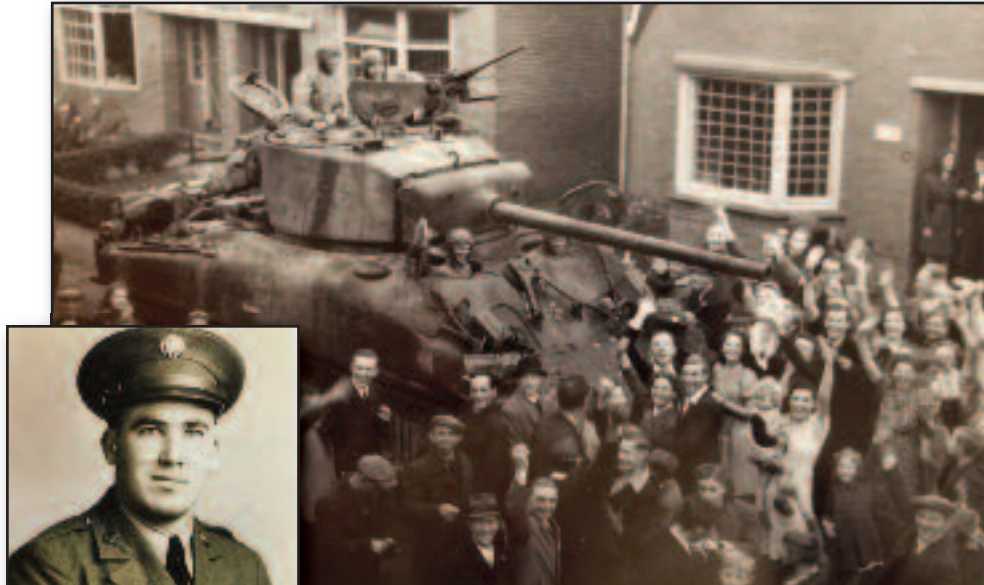
ABOVE PFC Brady Warford displays his High Shoot Award for received top marks with 329 out of 350 points.

In memory of Warren R. Kappen

In remembrance of Warren R. Kappen, March 28, 1920 – Sept. 18, 1944.

Warren R. Kappen, TEC (technician) 5, served with the 67th Armored Division during World War II.

Next to the entrance of the Petrus en Marcellinus Roman Catholic Cemetery in Galeen, Netherlands, is a memorial to commemorate the Second Armored Division "Hell on Wheels". The memorial contains the names of American soldiers, including Kappen's, who were killed in September 1944 during the liberation of southern Limburg.



Warren Kappen

ABOVE left, citizens and U.S. troops celebrated the liberation of southern Limburg before receiving a surprise attack. Right, in 2008 Tilly Hulbert Stevens commemorated Kappen along with many other fallen soldiers listed on "Hell on Wheels" monument in Galeen, Netherlands.



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Specialist Pink presented with distinguished Silver Star Award



NICHOLAS PINK displays his Purple Heart and Silver Star Awards.

Nicholas Pink joined the U.S. Army in 1968. He was a machine gunner with the 5th Infantry along the DMZ border in Vietnam.

According to a letter from the Department of the Army Headquarters, Pink was presented with a Silver Star Award "for gallantry in action while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. Specialist Four Pink distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions while serving as a machine gunner with Company D, 1st Battalion, 11th Infantry.

"During the afternoon, the company was conducting a search and destroy mission, when he was caught in cross fire from an enemy bunker complex," the letter states. "Specialist Pink observed a piece of vital equipment that had been abandoned during the initial fighting. With complete disregard for his own safety, he proceeded to retrieve the lost equipment.

"On his return through heavy enemy fire, he noticed a wounded comrade. With calmness and bravery, he carried both the wounded man and the equipment, along with his machine gun, back to a secure area. Once safe, he volunteered to help rescue other wounded.

When one of the rescue party was wounded by enemy fire, Specialist Pink laid down an accurate base of fire with his machine gun, covering the withdrawal of the casualties. He continued his intense fire, although wounded himself, until enemy fire damaged the machine gun.

"Specialist Pink's extraordinary heroism in close combat was in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army."

Pink also received the Purple Heart for being wounded in combat.

After the war Pink, worked for 15 years in construction as an electrician. He was involved in several large projects, including the Alaska Pipeline and the subway in New York. He spent 30 years working at Chrysler as an electrician.

He and his wife, Fran, moved to Cass City in 2014 from Detroit. They have two children, Nicole Kurzawa and Erik Pink; and two grandchildren, Katelyn and Jonathan Kurzawa.

R. Schneeberger drove fuel semi-trucks for the 5th Army Headquarters, Calif.

Longtime local businessman and Cass City native Russell Schneeberger joined the U.S. Army in 1958. He attended boot camp at Ft. Leonard Wood, Mo.

"My barrack was one away from Elvis Presley's barrack. Sometimes I could hear him singing and other's excited about him being there, but Elvis just wanted to be treated like the other soldiers out of the spotlight," he recalled.

Schneeberger was stationed in San Francisco at 5th Army Headquarters. He was a fuel semi-truck driver.

"I would drive back and forth from San Francisco to Oregon, but the truck had no muffler — the continuous loud noise made me lose my hearing," said Schneeberger. "The V.A. has helped over the years to supply hearing aids, as my hearing never (returned) fully."

In 1956, Schneeberger opened a fruit/produce store in Cass City. "During my time in the reserves, I would close the business, go serve, then come back to Cass City and re-open the market," he said.

After being discharged from the U.S. Army, Schneeberger returned to Cass City and eventually opened Schneeberger's Furniture and Appliance with his brother, Clarence "Bud" Schneeberger, and the brothers have owned and operated the business along Main Street for more than 58 years.

Schneeberger and his wife, Olga, have three children, Gloria, Cindy and Rusty.



Russell Schneeberger

Sgt. D. Miller served along the DMZ with U.S. Marine Corps



Sgt. Donald Miller E5 graduated from Flint Central High School in May 1967. Shortly after graduating, he was drafted and served with the U.S. Marines starting in July 1967. He was immediately sent to San Diego to attend boot camp before being shipped out to Vietnam.

Miller was stationed in the Northern DMZ (demilitarized zone), fighting VC/NVA communist troops and the Viet Cong.

While home on leave, Miller joined the Genesee County VFW. He signed up for a second tour overseas in 1969. This time he was stationed in Da Nang, Vietnam, near the South China Sea.

Miller was promoted to crew chief of his amphibious tractor. Miller had 30 days left to serve in 1971 when his vehicle ran over a land mine. He suffered injuries to both legs and was shipped home to recover. An expert rifleman, Miller spent the last 16 months of his term on light duty at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina, qualifying new marines on the rifle range.

Miller received several medals including a Purple Heart, Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry, Combat Action Medal, and Good Conduct Award.

Miller later attended the police academy in Flint. He and his wife, Bridget, moved to Cass City, where he served as a Cass City police officer for 41 years until his retirement in 2013.

The Millers have three children, Ron, Sarah and Dale; and three grandchildren, Caleb, Kenzie and Katelyn.

LEFT SGT. MILLER POSES with captured Northern Vietnamese weapons after the battle of DIA Do/DMZ in May of 1968.

SPC Merchant served as part of the Berlin Brigade

SPC 4 Leslie Merchant enlisted into the U.S. Army in August 1972 and was sent to Fort Knox, Ky., for basic training. He also completed Advanced Individual Training where he trained to be a gunner with anti-tank rockets and 106mm recoilless rifles. The anti-tank rockets are shoulder-launched rockets designed to destroy tanks. He also trained to work with wire-guided missiles.

After training, Merchant was sent to Berlin, where he was part of the Berlin Brigade. The brigade's units would march along Berlin to demonstrate an American presence to the people free in Berlin.

Merchant was part of the Berlin Occupational Army. He pulled guard duty at Spandau Prison in West Berlin, where Rudolf Hess, an appointed deputy of Adolf Hitler, was imprisoned and guarded. The prison was controlled by the United States, France, Britain and the Soviet Union.

Merchant completed his service in August of 1974. He returned to Cass City, working for UPS, driving trucks and delivering packages, until he retired after 42 years of service.

Merchant and his wife, Marcia, live in Cass City. He is a member of VFW Post 3644, Cass City.



Leslie Merchant

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hometown HEROES

We Salute You!

Merchant stationed at fire direction center in Vietnam

Shortly after graduating with the Cass City High School Class of 1968, Dennis "Joe" Merchant enlisted in the U.S. Army in June of 1970 and was sent to Fort Knox, Ky., where he completed basic training before being deployed to Vietnam.

Merchant, SPC 4, served with the Fire Direction Center for artillery with the 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery, 1st Cavalry Division. Merchant was granted security clearance in Vietnam to handle unclassified and top-secret missions. The orders for all fire missions would come to the Fire Direction Center before being sent out to the troops.

Merchant served in Vietnam until May of 1971. After returning home, he worked in the family business — Sommer's Bakery in Cass City — alongside his parents, the late Stuart and Joan Merchant.

Merchant has spent the past eight years serving as commander of VFW Post 3644, Cass City. His job as commander is to help lead support of local veterans and their families in the community.



SPC Dennis "Joe" Merchant



ABOVE Merchant stands in front of his barracks in Vietnam.

Crawford volunteers to go overseas as others drafted

Kenneth Crawford graduated from Cass City High School in 1965, and the next year he volunteered to serve in the U.S. Army. He was then sent to Ft. Knox, Ky., to complete basic training.

Crawford was on the armor and engineer board in Fort Knox, where he spent 11 months testing new equipment.

"I grew bored with the testing, so I requested a 1049 form to go overseas. I received my shipment orders in March of 1967 to go overseas," recalled Crawford, who was shipped to Pleiku, Vietnam. He was stationed at Camp Enari as part of the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division.

"During my time there I was a light truck driver through Northern Vietnam," he said. "I would go to the different bases, delivering supplies and mail to our troops. I also rotated on weekly patrol duty."

Crawford was stationed in Vietnam during the TET Offensive. "The North Vietnamese attacked every large city from January to March of 1968," he said. "It was a very dark time; a lot of fallen soldiers and local civilians were scattered among the streets."

"When I came home, I was proud to have served, but was sad for the attitude and nasty treatment from Americans who hadn't seen what it was like in Vietnam," he added. "I still suffer from PTSD. My family has dealt with horrible nightmares nearly every night from all the terrible things I saw. It's just something you cannot adjust to knowing about."

Crawford, who received the Army Commendation Medal for his service, returned home and met the woman who would become his wife.

"My sister, Patricia Ferris, asked a young lady, Carolann, to send me... letters while I was stationed overseas," he said. "She would send me wonderful letters that would always smell so nice. During Christmas she sent me a package of six snowballs in dry ice. When I opened the package and saw the snow, it was then that I knew I had to meet this wonderful woman, who then became my wife."

A 1965 Cass City High School graduate, Crawford worked in several construction jobs, building bridges for more than 40 years, following his time in the service.

He and Carolann have three children, Ken, John and Bobbi-Jo; and 10 grandchildren.



Kenneth Crawford

Corporal Ferris served in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1954-57

Corporal Gerald N. Ferris served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1954 to 1957. He completed his basic training at San Deigo MCRD before being stationed at the Marine Corps Base Camp in Pendleton, Calif.

Ferris, an infantry rifleman and section leader for 3.5 rocket launchers, served with the 1st Marine Division, 3rd Battalion, 5th Regiment, item company 35. In 1957 he was sent to Desert Rock, Nev., where the U.S. government was testing atomic bomb explosions. During his time in the service, Ferris was also on roving patrol at the brig (military prison).

Ferris received marksmanship badges — the sharpshooter rifle award and a high expert medal. He was also presented with good conduct ribbons and the Presidential Unit Citation award for the Korean War.

After he was discharged from the service, he attended Bible college in Grand Rapids to become an ordained minister. He was a minister in Oqueoc for 13 years before moving to Deford with his wife, Pat. He worked around the county, preaching, and even ran a ministry group at the Caro prison.

Ferris also worked at Cole Carbide for many years until his retirement. He then preached at the Tuscola County Jail. Ferris has three sons, Cass, Randal and Raymond; nine grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.



Gerald Ferris



Hoyt B. Merchant

H. Merchant joins U.S. Air Force

Hoyt B. Merchant, E2, is currently stationed in Dover, Delaware in the United States Air Force.

Merchant works as a Fuel Mobile Distribution Operator. He completed his Basic Military Training in Lackland, Tex.

Merchant is a 2017 graduate of Cass City High School.

He is the son of proud parents Deanna Merchant and Dan Merchant; and even prouder grandparents: Dean & Nancy Hutchinson (Cass City) and Bill & Marlene Merchant (Cass City).

In remembrance of POW Venema

In honorable remembrance: Peter Venema was drafted into the U.S. Army during World War II. He completed his basic training at Camp Roberts in California. and was then shipped overseas to Portsmouth, England, where he joined the 76th division.



Peter Venema

Venema served as a first scout in enemy territory. In 1945, he fought along the Rhine River, where his company was captured by the Nazi army. The prisoners of war were forced to walk across the Rhine River with their hands over their heads.

Venema's and his fellow soldiers were forced to march for about a week, day and night, 24 hours a day, and those who disobeyed orders were shot and killed. Eventually the prisoners arrived at Stalag Seven. Venema and his company were held for nearly 30 days before being rescued by U.S. forces.

After being liberated, Venema was sent home, serving remainder of his term with a military police unit in Miami, Fla.

He and his wife, Pearl, later moved to Caro, and he worked for many years as a truck driver for Dow Chemical in Midland. The Venemas had six children together, Allen, Calvin, Doreen, Edwin, Frank and Bruce.

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