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Medal Likely

Local Soldier Didn't Want To Be Hero

BY JOSEPH GALLOWAY

PLEIKU, South Viet Nam (UPI) — Sgt. Maj. Basil Plumley didn't want to be a hero. He could have run the other way when the burning flare landed in the middle of the ammunition dump.

But he didn't.

And now the Columbus, Ga., soldier of the 1st Cavalry Division has been recommended for the nation's highest military combat award — the Medal of Honor.

The enemy flare was burning fiercely when it landed in the middle of the supply dump. The ammunition would have blown up at any moment.

Plumley, a huge bear of a man, charged into the stacks of explosives and, using his bare hands, picked up the flare and hurled it away to a safe distance.

His hands and arms were burned, and he will carry the scars for life.

Doing His Job

Plumley did not want to be a hero. He just did his job. It happens that way.

None of the men of the trapped platoon wanted to be heroes, but they were. There will be medals for the cavalymen, both to those alive and dead. At least three recommendations for the Medal of Honor are being sent in.

Plumley's is one of them.

It was a night of hell when the outnumbered 1st Cav. platoon was trapped for 30 hours earlier this week on the slopes of Chu Pong Mountain by fanatical regulars of the North Vietnamese Army.

Medals Recommended For These Two Yanks



A former Beaver man, Sgt. Maj. Basil Plumley (above) is being recommended for the Congressional Medal of Honor because of his actions during a battle early this week on Chu Pong Mountain in South Viet Nam.

An article written by a war correspondent describing a battle involving the U. S. Army 1st Cavalry Division stated:

"One of the recommendations for the nation's highest military honor is for Sgt. Maj. Basil Plumley, a huge, bear of a man who makes his home in Columbus, Ga.

"A flare landed in the middle of a supply dump. It was burning fiercely and the supply dump would have blown up at any moment. Plumley should have run the other way. He didn't.

"Plumley charged into the stacks of high explosives and using his bare hands, picked up the flare and hurled it away to a safe distance. His hands and arms were burned, and he will carry the scars for life.

"Plumley did not want to be a hero. He just did his job. It happens that way."

Plumley, a son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Clay Plumley, is married to the former Douriza Dillon, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Dillon of Beaver. The Plumleys have a 14-year old daughter, Debbie. He is a brother of Mrs. Marie Sneed, and Mrs. Catherine Gibbons, both of Beaver, Mrs. Gerlie Lucas of Deepwater, Fred Plumley of Crab Orchard and James Plumley of Crow.



"Strong as an ox but never harmed a fly."

That was the way State Police Sgt. Walter J. Marm of Washington, Pa., described his son Army Lt. Joe Marm who is being recommended for the nation's highest military honor.

Lt. Marm, 23, charged an enemy machinegun nest near Chu Pong Mountain in South Viet Nam earlier this week and single-handedly killed 10 Viet Cong.

Marm's company commander termed him "a fantastic man" and put in a recommendation for the Medal of Honor.

"I'm overwhelmed but it's not a complete surprise," said Sgt. Marm last night after returning from California. "Every letter he asks me to pray for him and his men. I guess he saw his men getting hurt and probably were wild."

"He said he thought the war wouldn't harden him unless he saw his men getting hurt," the elder Marm said. "I guess he's getting hard."



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