

pended his ammunition. Securing a fresh supply of grenades, he again charged the emplacement, neutralized the weapon and killed the crew, but was forced back by hostile small-arms fire. When the enemy emplaced another machine-gun and resumed fire, Sergeant Edwards again renewed his supply of grenades, rushed a third time through a vicious hail of fire, silenced the second gun and annihilated its crew. In this third daring assault he was mortally wounded but his indomitable courage and successful action enabled his platoon to regain and hold the vital strongpoint.

Edwards Hall at Fort Des Moines was named in his honor as was Camp Edwards, 2nd Supply and Transport Battalion compound, located near Kumchon, Korea.

Vietnam Conflict

Baker, John F., Jr.

Sergeant (then Private First Class), Company A, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry, 25th Infantry Division; Republic of Vietnam; November 5, 1966; Iowa residence: Davenport.

Citation: . . . Enroute to assist another unit that was engaged with the enemy, Company A came under intense enemy fire and the lead man was killed instantly. Sergeant Baker immediately moved to the head of the column and together with another soldier knocked out two enemy bunkers. When his comrade was mortally wounded, Sergeant Baker, spotting four Viet Cong snipers, killed all of them, evacuated the fallen soldier and returned to lead repeated assaults against the enemy positions, killing several more Viet Cong. Moving to attack two additional enemy bunkers, he and another soldier drew intense enemy fire

and Sergeant Baker was blown from his feet by an enemy grenade. He quickly recovered and single-handedly destroyed one bunker before the other soldier was wounded. Seizing his fallen comrade's machine-gun, Sergeant Baker charged through the deadly fusillade to silence the other bunker. He evacuated his comrade, replenished his ammunition and returned to the forefront to brave the enemy fire and continue the fight. When the forward element was ordered to withdraw, he carried one wounded man to the rear. As he returned to evacuate another soldier, he was taken under fire by snipers, but raced beyond the friendly troops to attack and kill the snipers. After evacuating the wounded man, he returned to cover the deployment of the unit. His ammunition now exhausted, he dragged two more of his fallen comrades to the rear . . .

Dethlefsen, Merlyn Hans

Major (then Captain), United States Air Force; in the air over North Vietnam; March 10, 1967; Iowa residence: Greenville.

Citation: On March 10, 1967, Major Dethlefsen was one of a flight of F-105 aircraft engaged in a fire suppression mission designed to destroy a key anti-aircraft defensive complex containing surface-to-air-missiles (SAM), an exceptionally heavy concentration of anti-aircraft artillery, and other automatic weapons. The defensive network was situated to dominate the approach and provide protection to an important North Vietnam industrial center that was scheduled to be attacked by fighter bombers immediately after the strike by Major Dethlefsen's flight. In the initial attack on the defensive complex the lead aircraft was crippled, and Major Dethlefsen's aircraft was extensively damaged by the intense enemy fire. Realizing that the success of the impending fighter bomber attack on the

center now depended on his ability to effectively suppress the defensive fire, Major Dethlefsen ignored the enemy's overwhelming firepower and the damage to his aircraft and pressed his attack. Despite a continuing hail of anti-aircraft fire, deadly surface-to-air-missiles, and counterattacks by MIG interceptors, Major Dethlefsen flew repeated close range strikes to silence the enemy defensive positions with bombs and cannon fire. His action in rendering ineffective the defensive SAM and anti-aircraft artillery sites enabled the ensuing fighter bombers to strike successfully the important industrial target without loss or damage to their aircraft . . .

Now a Lieutenant Colonel, Dethlefsen lives in Montgomery, Alabama. He will move soon, however, to become an instructor in a Pennsylvania war college.

Hibbs, Robert John

2nd Lieutenant, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 28th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division; Don Dien Lo Khe, Republic of Vietnam; March 5, 1966; Iowa residence: Cedar Falls.

Citation: Lieutenant Hibbs was in command of a 15-man ambush patrol of the 2nd Battalion, 28th Infantry when his unit observed a company of Viet Cong advancing along the road toward the 2nd Battalion's positions. Informing his command post by radio of the impending attack, he prepared his men for the oncoming Viet Cong, emplaced two mines in their path and, when the insurgents were within 20 feet of the patrol's position, he fired the two antipersonnel mines, wounding or killing half of the enemy company. Then, to cover the withdrawal of his patrol, he threw hand grenades, stepped onto the open road, and opened fire on the remainder of the Viet Cong force

of approximately 50 men. Having rejoined his men, he was leading them toward the Battalion perimeter when the patrol encountered the rear elements of another Viet Cong company deployed to attack the Battalion. With the advantage of surprise, he directed a charge against the Viet Cong which carried the patrol through the insurgent force, completely disrupting its attack. Learning that a wounded patrol member was wandering in the area between the two opposing forces, and although moments from safety and wounded in the leg himself, he and a sergeant went back to the battlefield to recover the stricken man. After they maneuvered through the withering fire of two Viet Cong machine-guns, the sergeant grabbed the dazed soldier and dragged him back toward the friendly lines while Lieutenant Hibbs remained behind to provide covering fire. Armed with only an M-16 rifle and pistol, but determined to destroy the enemy positions, he then charged the two machine-gun emplacements and was struck down. Before succumbing to his mortal wounds, he destroyed the Starlight telescopic sight attached to his rifle to prevent its capture and use by the Viet Cong.

Howard, Jimmie E.

Gunnery Sergeant (then Staff Sergeant), Company C, 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Marine Division; Republic of Vietnam; June 16, 1966; Iowa residence: Burlington.

Citation: Gunnery Sergeant Howard and his 18-man platoon were occupying an observation post deep within enemy-controlled territory. Shortly after midnight on June 16, a Viet Cong force of estimated battalion size approached the Marines' position and launched a vicious attack with small arms, automatic weapons, and mortar fire. Reacting swiftly and fearlessly in the face of overwhelm-

ing odds, Gunnery Sergeant Howard skillfully organized his small but determined force into a tight perimeter defense and calmly moved from position to position to direct his men's fire. Throughout the night, during assault after assault, his courageous example and firm leadership inspired and motivated his men to withstand the unrelenting fury of the hostile fire in the seemingly hopeless situation. He constantly shouted encouragement to his men and exhibited imagination and resourcefulness in directing their return fire. When fragments of an exploding enemy grenade injured him severely and prevented him from moving his legs, he distributed his ammunition to the remaining members of his platoon and proceeded to maintain radio communications and direct air strikes on the enemy with uncanny accuracy. At dawn, despite the fact that five men were killed and all but one wounded, his beleaguered platoon was still in command of its position. When evacuation helicopters approached his position, Gunnery Sergeant Howard warned them away and called for additional air strikes and directed devastating small-arms fire and air strikes against enemy automatic weapons positions in order to make the landing zone as secure as possible. Through his extraordinary courage and resolute fighting spirit, Gunnery Sergeant Howard was largely responsible for preventing the loss of his entire platoon.

Jimmie Howard retired from the Marine Corps on March 25, 1972. He is now a VA representative and is living in San Diego, California, with his wife and six children. His son will enter the Naval Academy this fall.