

March 2018 VIETNAM April 2018

MILITARY POLICE AMERICA

212TH MP CO
595TH MP CO
981ST MP CO
HAWK BATTALIONS



Vigil

SENTRY DOGS

*My eyes are your eyes
To watch and protect you*

*My ears are your ears
To hear and detect the evil minds
in the dark*

*My nose is your nose
To scent the invaders to our doma*

*And so you may live
My life is also yours*

ALUMNI

Vietnam Military Police
Sentry Dog Handlers Alumni

"Chips was strong and smart, and we knew he'd be good."

John Wren, about the family pet sent to serve in the Army

Story by MARYLOU TOUSIGNANT • Washington Post • Photos by KIRSTY WIGGLESWORTH



WWII HERO

Everyone in the Wren family knew that Chips was a special dog. Just how special, though, it would take a war to discover.

In 1942, shortly after the United States entered World War II, Americans were eager to aid the war effort. The military even asked people to donate their dogs to be trained for guard and patrol duty. More than 11,000 dogs ended up serving with the Army and Marine Corps.

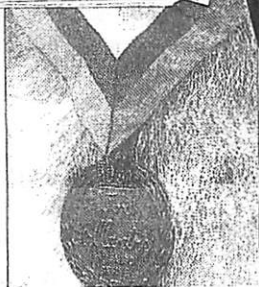
Chips was one of them.

"He was a rascal," recalled John Wren.

The German shepherd-collie-husky mix chased and barked at the mailman and trash collectors.

"It killed my mother to part with him," said Wren, then a toddler. "But Chips was strong and smart, and we knew he'd be good" at Army duty.

So good, in fact, that in 1943 Chips became the only animal ever awarded the Silver Star, the U.S. military's third-highest medal for bravery in combat. He was also nominated for the Distinguished Service Cross (the second-highest award) and a Purple Heart for wounds he received while in Italy.



WARTIME BRAVERY

John Wren was 4 when his family pet, Chips, was sent to war.

Seventy-five years later, he watched as Chips' heroism was honored with the Dickin Medal, worn by stand-in military dog Avron.

His story was big news back home. But some people didn't think animals should get the same medals as humans. They made a fuss, and Chips' Silver Star was taken away. John's mother reacted by telling reporters that Chips would probably like a pound of hamburger more than a medal, anyway.

Chips returned home a hero in 1945. He died the following year, but now he's back in the news. He was awarded the Dickin Medal, the highest honor for wartime bravery by an animal, from a group called PDSA.

Chips is the 70th recipient of the PDSA Dickin Medal, which honors exceptional bravery or devotion to duty by animals during wars or other conflicts. "PDSA" refers to the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals, a British charity begun in 1943 by animal welfare activist Maria Dickin.

Chips was nominated for the medal by Robin Hutton, a California writer who loves stories about brave animals. Another of her nominees, a Korean War horse named Reckless, won a Dickin Medal in 2016.

A very proud John Wren flew to London for the big event.

Chips spent 3½ years in the Army. He served in North Africa, Italy, France and elsewhere in Europe. He met President Franklin Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and General Dwight Eisenhower (a future president). When Eisenhower tried to pet Chips, the dog nipped him, having been trained to respond only to his handler.

July 10, 1943, was Chips' date with history.

An Italian machine-gun crew had U.S. forces pinned down on a beach in Sicily. Chips broke from his handler and charged the enemy's hut.

A shot rang out. Moments later, a soldier appeared, with Chips at his throat. Three more soldiers followed, hands in the air.

Chips had a scalp wound and burns to his mouth and left eye, but that didn't stop him. Later that day his keen sense of smell detected 10 enemy soldiers, who also were captured.

Chips' platoon leader cited him "for extra heroism in action."

Four months later, he was awarded the Silver Star. And even though Chips didn't get to keep it, Wren said his family always knew that their dog was a true hero.



THE DOGS WE LOVED: BABE

Babe, born in November of 1967 and Preston branded with alphanumeric 84A4, was the dog I trained at Lackland with and brought to Vietnam in January of 1970. She was a beautiful young German shepherd and a good worker and very affectionate.

Since I became Company Clerk shortly after arriving in-country I did not walk Babe on sentry duty. So most of my recollections of her were from my Lackland training period. I had originally been assigned a large Great Dane mix named Duke, and Babe had been assigned to my good friend and Lackland roommate Mark Arnold. The two dogs were very different from each other. Duke was big and wayward, with a mind of his own that did not take into account the wishes of his handler. Babe, smaller and more self-controlled, was much more accommodating. We noticed that she would not defecate in her outdoor kennel area and would wait to do so until her handler took her out for training and began walking her. Duke on the other hand would dump his load all over his kennel area, step and re-step in it with vigor, and then jump up and smear his by now filthy paws all over my fatigue shirt in a morning ritual he never varied from. Since we had to clean up after our dogs before daily training began, it wound up taking me the longest of all the handlers to clean up after the shit-crazed Duke, whirling dervishly around me. It was not a good way to start the day.

Eventually I had a lot of trouble subduing and controlling Duke and it was decided that because Mark was bigger and broader than I, we should exchange dogs. Mark was game and took it with good grace, but please believe me when I tell you that despite what was now happening to Mark it was the happiest day of my life thus far.

Training with Babe turned out to be a dream by comparison, albeit one with snags of its own. She had been very well trained, possibly because this had occurred while she was still technically in puppyhood. But she turned out to be a very subtle scent alerter -- in other words she moved her ears not a lot. At first I had trouble recognizing when she was alerting on something, until one of the instructors pointed it out to me. I saw she was doing so, but if you blinked you would miss it. But I did get the hang of it eventually, although I later wondered what it would be like to be on daily post with so subtle an alerter in the middle of a dark night in Vietnam. She was also very quiet compared to the always ready to roll Duke, and that was all to the good for a successful sentry dog.

Another problem with Babe was that she eventually came to dislike the kibble the dogs were given at the end of each day of training -- each piece the size of a rather large pretzel nugget and the ocher color of a pale tobacco leaf. We were told to stay with our dogs until they finished eating, and not to go to the truck transporting us back to the dorm until every dog had finished. It

got to the point where she was the only dog not eating. I was blamed for this by the instructors, and by my fellow handlers who were understandably impatient to get back to our dorm rooms. I tried everything, including hand feeding her (she sniffed the kibble, licked my hand, but would not eat) but nothing worked until each day she was given a

... Continued to Page 3

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small can of horsemeat mixed in with the kibble -- this met with her approval and she then ate everything, including the kibble.

Despite these peculiarities Babe was a joy to work with. Since she was not large, she enjoyed the obstacle course at Lackland, even including the narrow pipe tunnel -- a feature the heftier dogs hated, growling and moaning all along the way. Babe meanwhile flew through it and out the other end where I would be to greet and praise her. And at Cam Ranh Bay before she was reassigned to another handler, I would frequently meet her at the kennels, take her through the obstacle course there, and into the densely wooded training area, both of which she loved.

(THIS STORY WILL BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER!)

ATTENTION!

4 To: Fellow Texas Sentry Dog Handlers, my name is Gary Smith 981st 71-72. I am writing to help Allen Wood 981st 71-72. David Johns 981st 70-71 is visiting Allen in Texas around the middle of June 2018. Allen thought it would be nice to have a central Texas get together while David is visiting. Allen's idea of the get together is go to a firearms range and shoot and then have a meal at a restaurant afterwards. Allen needs to know how many folks are going to attend. You can reach him by email: aewood96789@gmail.com or phone: 808-256-5128.

I got this from Tom Watson 720th MP BN Reunion Assoc.

Fellow Veterans,

I recently received an Email from Deb Holland-Evans notifying me that the handler in Photo G1839, taken 1969 (attached), who was previously unidentified is her brother Russell E. Holland who served with the 212th from 1968 to 1970. She identified him as a member of the Scout Dog Unit, and that he had two differed K9 partners during his tour. One was named "Arko." During his tour Russell may have also worked at a Sentry Dog Detachment either before or after his time with the Scout Dog Unit.

Unfortunately Russell passed from our ranks in 2013.

Deb was also interested in any information on Russell's tour, etc.

If anyone recalled working with Russell or can provide some background on him or his duties, please take a moment to send her an Email.

Thank you,

Deb can be reached at ditwds@icloud.com Tom

Obituaries

DAN RICHARD CROWDER

DAN RICHARD CROWDER, 71, of Fort Wayne, passed away on March 1, 2018

Frederick "Fritz" Picken (1946 - 2017) 981st 71-72 Toy Hog
passed away on March 16, 2017 at the age of 70.



IN MEMORY OF



Dennis Henderson

(December 4, 1945 - February 6, 2017)

212th 65/66

R.I.P. Brother

Monica Hughs has informed us that Alumni member Rob Hughs

passed on March 17th

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2019 Military Police Sentry Dog Alumni

April 12,13,14

Double Tree Riverfront by Hilton

New Bern, North Carolina



Hotel Registration: You may register with the Double Tree starting May 1st, 2018.
All Rooms are Non-Smoking
DeadLine for Hotel Registration is 3-13-2019

Call - 252-638-3585 (Hotel is not yet set up for 2019 Reservations, please use link below)

[www.http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/E/EWNMSDT-VMP-20190412/index.jhtml](http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/E/EWNMSDT-VMP-20190412/index.jhtml)

Room Costs:	King, City View	\$139
	King, RiverView	\$139
	2 Dbl Beds, CityView	\$139
	King, MobilityAccess w/Tub	\$139
	Queen, Mobility Access w/Tub	\$139
	2 Dbl Beds, Mobility Access w/Tub	\$139
	2 Dbl Beds, RiverView	\$139
	2 Dbl Beds, Balcony, RiverView	\$159
	King, Balcony, RiverView	\$159
	King, WhirlPool, Partial View	\$189
	King, 1BDRM, Balcony, RiverView Suite	\$209
	2 Dbl Beds, 1BDRM, Balcony, River Suite	\$209
	King, 1BDRM, WhirlPool Suite	\$239
	2 Kings, 2 BDRM, RiverView Suite	\$299

Breakfast vouchers come with room: two per room per night

Alumni Registration: Form in Newsletters or
Facebook "Vietnam Military Police Sentry Dog Alumni"

Deadline for registration 3/13/2019

Airport/Airline/ Shuttle: Coastal Carolina Regional Airport www.flyEWN.com
American Airlines & Delta
Free Shuttle to Hotel
All Major Rental Cars Available

Banquet Date: evening of April 13th in the Neuse/Pamlico Room, CASH Bar, Time TBA

Sunday Morning Breakfast: served in the Lawson Room, Time TBA

Silent Auction @ Banquet: Contact Jim & Debbie Heard on Facebook to make donation arrangements or with suggestions



Alumni Registration Form
2019 Vietnam M.P. Sentry Dog
Reunion



New Bern, North Carolina
April 12, 13, 14, 2019

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Attending: _____ Spouse/Guest Name: _____

Reg. at Double Tree: Yes _____ No _____ Arrival Date: _____

Attending Banquet Saturday: Yes _____ No _____ # _____

Food Allergy: _____

Attending Breakfast Sunday: Yes _____ No _____ # _____

Check One: 212th _____ 981st _____ 595th _____

Please Register with Hotel & Alumni by March 13th, 2019

Alumni Registration Fee: \$125 **each person**, checks payable to Lee O. Ruth
(any excess registration \$\$ will be turned over to the Alumni)

Mail Alumni Registration to: Lee O. Ruth
P.O. Box 113
Winterville, N.C. 28590-9748

Double Tree by Hilton Registration: on-line at
[www.http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/E/EWNMSDT-VMP-20190412/index.jhtml](http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/E/EWNMSDT-VMP-20190412/index.jhtml)