

THE ALUMNI ORANGE & BLACK

ISSUE #3 - 12

Memorial Day Military Issue, May 26, 2012

WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL, SIOUX FALLS, SD

An Internet Publication Especially for the Classes of the 1950's.

Your Photos & Stories Are Both Requested & Encouraged. Please Send to Jack Phillips: jackmp@me.com

MILITARY EDITION 2012 Memorial Day May God Bless America!

This special edition is to remember, honor and thank all WHS Alumni who have given their lives in defense of our country.

THE FALLEN SOLDIER

Patricia Krull

Don't weep for me

O' Land of the free

When it was my time to fall

'Twas for my country's call

'Twas for the land that I
loved,

That I gave my all
And for the land that I
loved,

I did freely give
And in her freedom
And her courage
I'll continue to live

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PLEASE JOIN ME IN HONORING THE MILITARY DEAD of WHS

It has been 104 years since Washington High School, our great Alma Mater, graduated it's very first class and from those 104 classes, beginning with WWI, literally thousands of our Alumni brothers and sisters have answered the military call of our country. Even though I have been unable to determine the exact number due to incomplete early records I have determined that the number that served from WHS is in the thousands and sadly a very large, but an also unknown number have paid the ultimate price for the beautiful sweet freedom we all cherish so dearly.

Since this publication is read primarily by graduates from the fifties, I would like to single out and especially honor the four WHS graduates from the 1950 decade who gave their lives for each of us in the service of our country. I think most of us that grew up in the '50's have always felt we were indeed fortunate and even blessed for growing up when we did. One of the many blessings of being part of the '50's generation was that it was the decade that probably called the fewest number of its young people into harms way through military service. Most of us were too young for Korea and too old for Vietnam. Therefore, I was thankful to only find four WHS Alumni from the '50's decade that were killed in war time action.

These four are **Ronald Ray Van Regenmorter, '54, Roger "Whitey" Axlund '55, Eugene William Kimmel, '56 and Samuel Fantle III, '57.** All four of these truly fine

young men attended WHS at the same time I did and I am so proud to have known each of them. My heart aches and my tears flow every time I read of their heroic service on behalf of us all. It is extremely sad and tragic that each of their bright, promising and vibrant lives were cut so short and that each of them were so prematurely taken from their wives, children and loved ones. I hope their stories are as moving to you as they are to me and that each of you are also brought to tears.

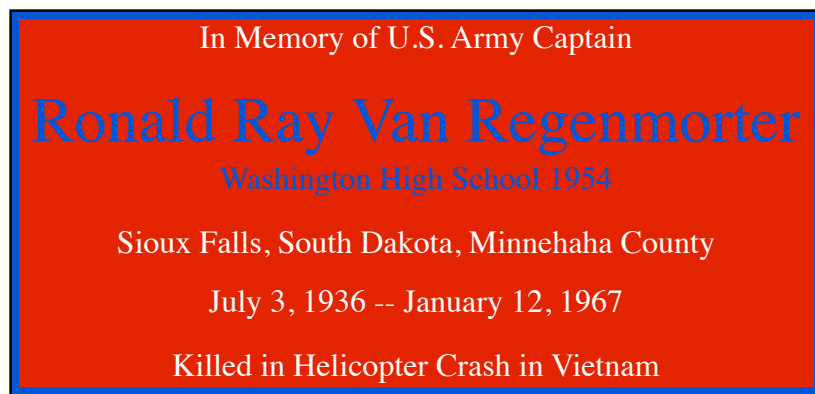
Since there is a large number of WHS graduates from the '40's and '60's that now subscribe to ***The Alumni Orange & Black***, I am including in this memorial edition the names of other WHS Alumni that gave their lives during the Korean War and the Vietnam War. Unfortunately no records could be found listing casualties from WWII that could be traced back to WHS. You will see below the 10 WHS Alumni casualties of the Korean War and 13 additional WHS Alumni that lost their lives during the Vietnam War.

On this Memorial Day of 2012, let us remember and honor each of these very special men as well as the hundreds of thousands of their brave comrades, both men and women, that have died defending and preserving our freedom. Let us each pray that God gives them eternal peace. And on this, one of our most meaningful and inspirational holidays, each of us needs to also ask God to bless each one of our men and women that are still in harms way fighting for America and defending our liberties around the world. May God bless each of them and the United States of America.

Jack M. Phillips Class of '54



Ronald Van Regenmorter
WHS '54 Senior Photo.



Ronald Ray Van Regenmorter and his twin brother, Donald, were born to Henry and Nellie Van Regenmorter on July 3, 1936, in Worthington, Minnesota, but were raised in Rushmore, Minnesota. Their father died in 1948 and the family moved to Worthing, where the boys finished grade school. At that point, Ronald moved to Minneapolis where he attended his freshman year of high school apart from Donald. Then they were reunited when they went to live with their sister in Sioux Falls, where they completed their sophomore year at Washington High School. Then Ronald went to Brandon High School for a year while he worked on a farm. After their mother remarried, the twins were reunited and **graduated from Washington High School in 1954.** During his years at Washington, he met his future wife, Karen Ann Dibben, whom he married on July 28, 1956, in

Sioux Falls. Ronald and Karen eventually had two children, Kim Marie and Randy Ray. Ronald Van Regenmorter—and his twin brother, Donald, first entered the service after high school in June of 1954 and were trained at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri. Ronald went on to Airborne training at Fort Dix, New Jersey, and was then stationed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, before being sent overseas to serve at Fort Wood in Japan, where Ronald served as a Chaplain's assistant. At that time, Ronald decided to train as a pilot. He attended helicopter training at Camp Wolters, Texas, and Fort Rucker, Alabama. He earned his wings and commission as a warrant officer in 1958; but because he wanted to be “in a position where he could lead men” he then went on to Officer's Candidate School and graduated as a second lieutenant in 1962. First stationed at Fort Carson, Colorado, he went on to duty in Hawaii with the 25th Infantry Division from January 1964 through March 1966. During this time he was promoted to captain. From there he went overseas to Vietnam in March 1966 with the 720th Maintenance Battalion as company commander, but later transferred to the 196th Light Infantry Brigade, 8th Support Battalion as their aircraft maintenance officer. Two days before his death he sent a letter to his family and described his meeting a four-year-old Vietnamese girl who was going blind, so he took her and her mother to a doctor and helped pay their expenses. When asked why he had done it, Ronald mentioned his children at home and he hoped that if they needed help, someone would help them. The following is a short quote from his letter home:

“Children are the same the world over and if nothing else can get to GI, a kid can... Looking at that little four-year old girl makes me realize how fortunate and lucky we are. God has been good to us and I can appreciate and love more each day our children and you....”

On January 12, 1967, Captain Ronald Van Regenmorter was killed in Vietnam “while moving a helicopter from one part of the airstrip to another when the engine failed and the helicopter crashed and burned” at Tay Ninh near Saigon. After his death, his body was returned to the United States. A funeral service was held at East Side Presbyterian Church and then he was buried at Hills of Rest Cemetery with full military honors.

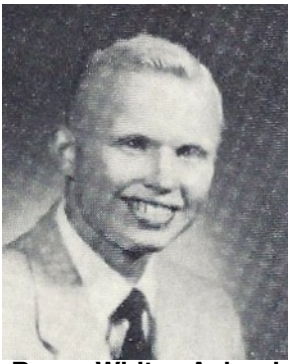
Among Capt. Van Regenmorter's many awards were the Good Conduct Medal, Airborne Jump Wings, Flight Wings, Vietnam Service and Campaign Medal, Purple Heart, Bronze Star, and Air Medal with multiple Oak Leaf Clusters.

At the time of his death he was survived by his mother, Mrs. Richard Brinkman; four brothers, Peter, Cornelius and Leonard, and his twin brother Captain Donald Van Regenmorter, and three sisters, Mrs. John Poppens, Mrs. Melvin Osterkamp, and Mrs. Eugene Cummings, plus his widow, Karen, and his children, Kim and Randy.

This entry was respectfully submitted by Sami Stadel and Hannah Wattier, 8th grade, Spearfish Middle School, Spearfish, South Dakota, on March 28, 2006. Information for this entry was provided by a South Dakota Vietnam Veteran's bonus application, the *Argus Leader*, issues, January 16, 17, 22 of 1967 and the VVMF website at www.vvmf.org. Additional information and profile approval by Donald Van Regenmorter, Captain, USA Retired, Fremont, Indiana. End Van Regenmorter story.

WE MUST REMEMBER!

We pause on this Memorial Day, a brief moment in time,
To bring close to our hearts those memories we hold so dear
Of the men and women before us who unselfishly put their
dreams, their lives on the line.
Where danger lay as a stalker,
waiting to take away each breath, while the soldier
plowed with determination the furrows of death.
We must remember, we must, you and I,



Roger Whitey Axlund
'55 WHS Senior Photo

In Memory of U.S. Air Force 1st LT

Roger C. "Whitey" Axlund

Washington High School 1955

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

August 7, 1937 - August 28, 1963

Killed during combat training 15 miles West of
Destruction Island, Washington in the Pacific Ocean.



Whitey's actual F-105A, #59-142
plane that he crashed in.
His body has never been found.

Sometime during the afternoon of August 27, 1963, First Lieutenant Roger C. Axlund of the 498th FIS, began his flight planning routine for a night ECM/ECCM intercept training mission against an EB-57E (According to the accident report, it was a TB-57E, though the B-57 did not have a training variant. The B-57E had dual controls and was sometimes used for training and was hence designated a TB-57 in those instances. And some referred to it as a TB-57 at all times. Because it was being used as a defense system evaluator, it will be referred to as an EB-57 here.) temporarily deployed to McChord AFB, Washington from Hill AFB, Utah.

Lieutenant Axlund would likely have been taken out to his aircraft about an hour before launch. He was assigned to F-106A #59-142 and took off at 0005 on August 28, 1963, with two+ hours worth of fuel. The EB-57 had departed McChord AFB at five minutes before midnight with 4+ hours of fuel.

SAGE (Semi-Automatic Ground Environment, a kind of Air Defense Ground Control) conducted the approach. Both the B-57 and the F-106 (Six) were in contact with the SAGE controller. The B-57 was communicating with voice comm, while the six was using a data-link (only mandatory safety and intercept calls were made by voice). Weather was clear, visibility was six miles in smoke.

The mission had been fully briefed between the crews of the Sixes and the B-57, since the ECM equipment in the EB-57 was new to the ADC training inventory. The B-57 turned on all of its jammers (four in number) until one of the generators failed, so the crew turned off the forward two jammers. This would be no problem since all of the attacks were expected to be from the aft quarters. There were two F-106s up conducting intercepts, alternating attacks. The B-57 maintained 250 KIAS (Knots Indicated Air Speed) and headings as directed by the SAGE controller.

Axlund called two successful attacks to the SAGE controller, even though there was non-standard language used. Axlund had reported no malfunctions or deficiencies. He made another visual contact on the B-57 and called separation on and visual contact with the other F-106. He then called a lock-on to the ECM jamming source. He continued to attack the ECM Jamming source and collided with the B-57. The six's vertical stabilizer hit the B-57's number one engine (Left) and the six continued on from under the B-57's wing. The top 52 inches of the vertical stabilizer separated from the F-106.

The B-57 reported the collision to the SAGE controller and turned back toward McChord, about 95 miles East. The collision occurred at 0109 local, at 47 degrees 43 minutes N. , 124 degrees 45 minutes West. This was approximately 15 miles off shore, due West of Destruction Island, Washington.

Axlund was observed flying straight and level for about a mile, when he began a gentle left turn. He did not transmit after he reported the ECM lock-on. About three minutes prior to the collision. The UHF antenna was destroyed in the collision. The other F-106 had Axlund in sight and watched him begin and accelerated descent, seemingly stabilized on a heading toward shore. Axlund's aircraft began to pitch down and increased speed, in the opinion of the Six observing him, into the trans-sonic region. Somewhere under 20,000 feet, the observer saw a flash from Axlund's aircraft, which he took to be an ejection. Immediately after that, he lost radar and visual contact with Axlund's plane.

The B-57 returned to McChord safely. The crew was uninjured, though the pilot had to shut down his number one engine due to fire/overheat indications.

It appears, from this partial report, that Axlund was never located. One suspects wreckage from the aircraft was picked up, since the exact measurements of the lost vertical stabilizer appears to be known.

The track on the map that came with this partial report shows that the intercepts were conducted from the North Western tip of Washington down to about even with the Kalaloch area, where the collision occurred. The left and right elevons appear to have drifted quite a ways, having been located somewhere in the vicinity of Grays Harbor.

June 30, 2011

Hi Jack – My name is Russ Huhn (Class of 55). Most know me as Rusty. My brother Robert (Class of 50) and I met you at the all school reunion in 2010. Like so many others I want to thank you for all the time you spend to keep everyone up to date. I have an interesting story about my Gibbs Hi-Y buddy Roger “Whitey” Axlund. After graduation he went off to the Air Force Academy and I enlisted in the Air Force about the same time frame. In 1957 I was walking through the Seattle Air port to catch a flight to Alaska. Out of no where I heard this loud “Rusty” and turned to see Whitey breaking ranks from a line of Air Force cadets and racing across the terminal. He picked me up and held me above his head sporting a big audacious smile. Then he glanced back at his group and said “uh oh – I’m going to get in trouble for this. Oh well, it was worth it. It was great seeing you, Rusty”. With that he gently put me down, smiled, and jogged back to the line of cadets. It was the last time I saw him.

In the year 2000, my wife, Carole, and I visited the Air Force Academy and we looked up the heroes’ wall which honors those of the Academy that have given their lives. We found his marker and took a piece of tissue paper and penciled it. I have to say it was one of the most touching moments of my life. He was a remarkable human being. By the way, did you know that he won the award of Air Defense Command Pilot of the year? I believe it was his first year out of the Academy. Russ Huhn ‘55

Editor’s Note: After several hours of searching I have been unable to find any record of there ever having been a funeral service for Whitey, or even an obituary ever being written. If that is indeed true I suspect it is because his body was never recovered. I was able to discover that Whitey married Judith M. Brawner in 1961. Judith was born, grew up and educated in the Spokane, WA area. She and Whitey had one son, Roger Scott Axlund, who would have been approximately one year old at the time of his father’s death.

Whitey was a member of the very first class of the Air Force Academy starting as a freshman in 1955 and then being a member of the first graduation class in 1959. There are no records available for the Academies first baseball team roster in 1956, but if they had a team I am sure Whitey was on it. He is listed as a member of the ’57, ’58 & ’59 teams. Whitey was always an outstanding athlete and while at WHS excelled in football. He was also a very popular and respected young man while at WHS as evidenced by him being elected to homecoming royalty in his 1955 senior year.

I would like to thank Russ Huhn ’55, Don Noordsy ’58 and Richard O’Connor ’58 for sending me some source material on Whitey. End of Axlund story.



Whitey - 1955 WHS football team



In Memory of U.S. Marine Corps Captain

Eugene William Kimmel

Washington High School 1956

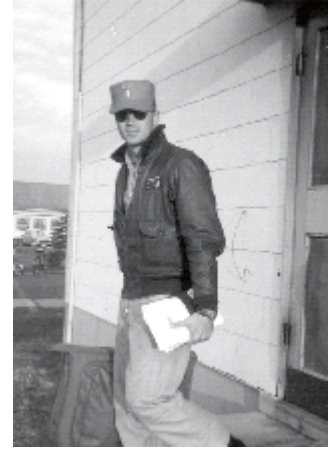
Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

August 20, 1938 -- October 22, 1968

Died When an Aircraft He Was Flying Crashed in Combat in Quang



Gene Kimmel
WHS Class of '56
(Photo: Sophomore,
University S.D., 1991)



Eugene William “Gene” Kimmel was born on August 20, 1938, to Otto and Beatrice Isabel (Mellenberndt) Kimmel in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. He attended Washington High School and graduated in 1956. Right out of high school, Eugene joined the service, training with the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. During his first enlistment, he completed 36 parachute jumps. After being discharged, he attended the University of South Dakota. While in college, he married his wife, Mary Lou Heacock, on August 1, 1961, in Rapid City, South Dakota. Eugene first received his BA Degree in 1963 followed by an MA in government from USD in 1964. While at USD, he was the editor of the Volante, President of the Strollers, Treasurer and Pledge Trainer of Delta Tau Delta Fraternity, Vice President of the Press Club, President of the Publications Board, and a member of Omicron Delta Kappa. His son, Greg, also told us that Gene was a published writer, loved racing sports cars, and was a skilled hunter who loved the outdoors.

After college Kimmel enlisted in the service again in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, in 1963, this time in the Marine Corps where he was commissioned as a second lieutenant and completed flight school. In 1965 he was sent to Vietnam flying the A-4 Skyhawk (a single-seat jet) out of Chu Lai, Vietnam. While in Vietnam in 1966, Captain Kimmel wrote to his parents the following words: “... I’d like to think I have made an attempt, although small it may be, to leave a safer more secure world than the one I had... I don’t want you to think this war is for nothing... God made us all different, to think and feel and do what we think is right.”

On June 21, 1966, Captain Kimmel’s plane exploded in Vietnam just before takeoff on his 113th mission from the Marine Expeditionary Air Base at Chu Lai, Vietnam, and he suffered a lot of burns. After he had some time recovering, he was assigned as an advanced jet instructor in Kingsville, Texas. While there he experienced another close call while he was teaching “a young aviation cadet how to fly a Navy jet over Corpus Christi, Texas,” and he and his student had to bail out of the plane. Eventually he went for a second tour of Vietnam in the summer of 1968, this time as a pilot of an OV-10 Bronco, a two-seat reconnaissance plane armed with rockets and machine guns that flew much lower and slower than his A-4 had. Because of that, he wrote home that he had been shot at more in a single month than he had been during his whole first tour in 1965-1966. In a letter to Dr. Farber at USD, he wrote, “...*I really enjoyed my tour as an instructor at Kingsville, Texas, but tired of simply reading about the war and not doing anything about it. So I volunteered for another Viet Nam tour and here I am flying as a Forward Air Controller. And it’s been exciting. The war is much more personal from these little planes than it ever was as a fighter pilot....but*

it's a damn sight more dangerous and the daily control over another man's life or death, both from my own guns and from the impersonal air strikes and artillery I control, is a heavy responsibility to carry...."

Marine Captain Eugene William "Gene" Kimmel died on October 22, 1968, "in Quang Nam Province, Republic of Vietnam when the aircraft he was flying crashed while on a combat mission." The body of Eugene Kimmel was returned to his family in the United States and his funeral service was at First Presbyterian Church followed by his burial with military honors at Hills of Rest in Sioux Falls.

At www.vvmf.org, there is a posting in remembrance of Captain Kimmel. In it are the following words: "He was a dedicated Captain of Marines and an exceptional Naval Aviator." The author, C.P. Calvert, Jr., went on to say, "In support of his brother Marines on the ground that October day in 1968 Gene made the ultimate sacrifice that others might live. I am honored to have known him and inspired by his sense of duty to his country and Corps. As I packed Gene's gear and wrote the letter of condolence home, I put our loss behind me and continued with the job at hand but never forgetting the sacrifice made."

Captain Kimmel received lots of awards and honors. Among them were the Air Medal with multiple Oak Leaf Clusters and the Distinguished Flying Cross; the citation is as follows:

"For heroism and extraordinary achievement in aerial flight while serving as a Pilot with Marine Observation Squadron Two, Marine Aircraft Group Sixteen, First Marine Aircraft Wing in connection with operations against insurgent communist (Viet Cong) forces in the Republic of Vietnam. On the morning of 22 October 1968, Captain KIMMEL launched as Pilot aboard an OV-10 Bronco observation aircraft assigned as a Tactical Air Controller (Airborne) in support of the First Marine Division. Proceeding to the designated area, he alertly observed the movement of a large enemy force, and while requesting tactical aircraft to conduct air strikes against the enemy emplacements, his aircraft came under intense hostile fire. Upon the arrival of the fixed wing aircraft, Captain KIMMEL directed his comrades to orbit while he skillfully maneuvered his Bronco into a run to pinpoint the hostile locations with smoke rockets. Ignoring a heavy volume of enemy fire directed at his aircraft, he fearlessly commenced his approach and, while attempting to mark the hostile targets, his aircraft crashed. Captain KIMMEL's courage, exceptional aeronautical ability and steadfast devotion to duty inspired all who served with him and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and of the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life in the service of his country."

In addition, Tom Brokaw wrote about Gene in an essay for the Virtual Wall in September of 2000. In it, he refers to Gene as his friend "who did not come back." He called Gene "a daring, iconoclastic and brilliant young man from the South Dakota prairie." He also recalled how before Gene's second tour, they had talked long into the night about the war. After Gene's funeral just a few months later, Gene's father took Brokaw by the hand and quietly remarked, "Whatever he done, he done good, didn't he?"

Current survivors of Eugene are his widow, Mary Lou Emanuel, Aurora, Nebraska; his son, Greg Kimmel, La Jolla, California; and his daughter, Susan Yurchuck, Woodstock, Georgia. His mother, Beatrice Kimmel, recently passed away.



This entry was respectfully submitted by Samantha Sparrow, 8th grader, Spearfish Middle School, February 7, 2005. This information was provided by the Argus Leader, October 23, 1968, issue, the Vietnam Veterans Bonus Application, and <http://www.vvmf.org//index.cfm?SectionID=110&anClip=24391>. Additional information, photos, and profile approval by the Kimmel family via Greg Kimmel. End of Kimmel story.

The Promise Kept

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Their son was only two weeks old; their daughter's years were three

When duty called this pilot to the war across the sea.

"Let's just pretend you're only going on a business trip.

Each day we'll write about the things we've done and then we'll slip a note into an envelope and put it in the mail.

You send me yours; I'll send you mine, I promise, without fail."

He walked away with pounding heart while fighting back the tears with "Come home soon, I love you, Daddy" ringing in his ears.

They kept that promise, sealed with love some 30 years ago.

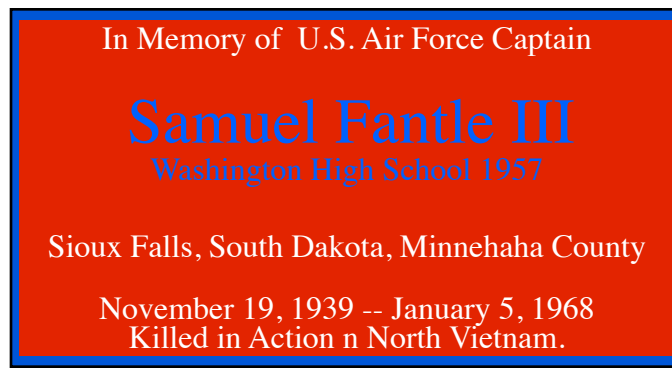
They sent him tapes and photographs so he could watch them grow.

They're married now with children of their own who, at the Wall, ask "Was my Grandpa brave?" and Grandma says, "Bravest of all."

By Theodore O'Hara, 1847
The muffled drum's sad roll
has beat
The soldier's last tattoo'
No more on life's parade shall
meet
That brave and fallen few;
On Fame's eternal camping
ground
Their silent tents are spread;
But Glory guards with solemn
round
The bivouac of the dead.



Sam Fantle
1956 High School
Football Student Manager



Sam Fantle
Senior Photo from
1957 WHS Yearbook.

Samuel Fantle III was born November 19, 1939, in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, to Samuel Jr. and Evelyn (Mochlas) Fantle. He had three siblings: Stephanie, Steve, and Susan. The family owned, among other successful business ventures, a chain of department stores in the Midwest. Samuel attended grade school in Sioux Falls and graduated from Washington High School in 1957. Among his high school activities, Sam was a straight- A student, active in Science Club, Pep Club, Boy's State, chorus (including All-State) Spanish, track, debate, and was student manager in football. In addition to being a "handsome, popular boy" he was described as a "big, strong guy," who stood 6'4. Samuel attended the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. He went on to finish his degree at the University of Ohio with a degree in applied mathematics.

Samuel Fantle III first entered the service in September 30, 1960, at Harlingen Air Force Base, Texas. Although he wanted to be a pilot, his asthma, his height, and his superior educational background were factors in his placement as a radar interceptor operator instead. On February 5, 1962, in Houston, Texas, at the Houston Waldorf-Astoria, Samuel married his wife, Mary Louise, whom he had met while he was in flight school. Later Samuel and Mary had two children, Gregory and Melissa. In December 1965, the Air Force approved orders for Sam to attend Stanford University to obtain a Ph.D. in applied mathematics. Samuel, Louise and son Greg were in the process of moving to California when Sam received a temporary reassignment to go to Vietnam to fly the "100" missions requirement. They were redirected to go to Nellis AFB at Las Vegas, NV where Samuel trained for his war mission. Greg was three when his father was first sent overseas to Takhli AB, Thailand in May 13, 1966. In 1967, Louise went into labor with Melissa; while she was at the hospital, a category-5 hurricane, Beulah, destroyed their home. Louise, Greg, and newborn Melissa had no possessions until the Red Cross provided some relief. Shortly afterward, Samuel came back on leave and bought a house for his family in Alamo, Texas.

Stationed in Thailand as an Electronics Warfare Officer in the U.S. Air Force, 357th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Captain Fantle flew aboard an F-105 "Thud" Thunderchief. Called the Wild Weasels, these two-seater aircrafts' job *"was to precede a strike force into the target area, entice enemy surface-to-air missile and antiaircraft radars to come on the air, and knock them out with bombs or with missiles that homed on the radar's emissions. Often they were in a high-threat area for half an hour while the strike force attacked its targets and withdrew,"* according to the *Air Force Magazine Online*.

The following details about Captain Fantle's death were at www.pownetwork.org. On January 5, 1968, Captain Samuel Fantle III, co-pilot of an F-105, went on a combat mission over North Vietnam from the Air Force Base at Takhli Royal Thai Air Force Base. As the lead plane of four, "at about 35 miles northeast of Hanoi" Fantle's plane was hit by enemy fire "causing the plane to go out of control and forcing the crew to eject." A witness saw Samuel

landing but “*intense hostilities prevented rescue.*” At that time, he was officially listed as missing in action and his family was notified.

This was Samuel’s 99th mission and he was set to rotate back to the United States and his family after his 100th. His wife, Louise, remembers clearly the day the three military men drove up to her house. Since they were not living close to the Air Force base, she knew immediately why they were there. After a long period of waiting, when no further word was received, in January of 1969, Samuel’s parents asked Senator McGovern to meet with North Vietnamese officials who claimed Samuel had “*hit a rock on bailout.*” Although other plausible scenarios exist as to the fate of Captain Fantle, the official record states that he was considered missing in action until December 9, 1969, “*the date on which evidence received in the Department of the Air Force was considered sufficient to conclusively establish the death.*” Sometime after the war was over, Samuel’s remains were “*discovered*” and returned to U.S. authorities. He was buried with military honors at the Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado in 1976. Samuel Fantle is survived by his mother, Evelyn, Aurora, Colorado; his sister, Susan Fantle, Denver, Colorado; his widow, Louise Fantle, Aurora, Colorado; his son, Greg (Barbara) Fantle and their three children, Sarah, and twins, Max and Lauren, Littleton, Colorado; and his daughter, Melissa (Thomas) Davis, and their two children, Samuel and Nathan, Hupperath, Germany

This entry was respectfully submitted by Gavin Cordell, 8th grade, Spearfish Middle School, Spearfish, South Dakota, on March 29, 2006. Information for this entry was provided by a South Dakota Vietnam Veterans’ bonus application, the *Sioux Falls Argus Leader* issue, Sunday January 7, 1968, www.pownetwork.org, and <http://www.afa.org/default.asp>. Additional information by Greg Fantle, son, and Louise Fantle, widow. Profile approval by Louise Fantle. End of Fantle story.

REMEMBER ME

This long black wall is somber, true.
Name after name of those who died for you,
And as I sit and weep beneath a tree
I hear them scream, 'REMEMBER ME'.

I touch the granite stone. It's cold.
Their average age was but twenty years old.
They hardly left their mother's knee!
"Remember me. PLEASE, remember me".

Vietnam was so very far away.
Their call was duty, not for play.
Our country had a pledge to keep.
They answered it. We stayed to weep.

I reach to touch each name I can.
Some left, a boy; returned a man.
The others are upon this wall I see
I hear them whisper, "Remember me".

--Esther B. (Campbell) Gates

The Hero

The angel hovered just above-
The lifeless form below-
A life that started with a cry-
Not many years ago.

Come now my son, you must arise-
Your work here now is ended-
You have fought for right and freedom-
Your country you have defended.

We go now to another place-
Where peace and love abide-
And join your comrades who will greet you-
In your heavenly home on high.

All those you love, and those who love you-
In their hearts you will forever be-
The one who gave his very all-
That the living may be free.
Ex Sergeant, Claude Peter Dhuet
USAF World War II

WHS KOREAN WAR CASUALTIES

In Memory of
U.S. Air Force First Lieutenant
Kenneth D. Frank

Washington High School 1932
Sioux Falls, South Dakota
Minnehaha County

February 25, 1918 – November 14, 1951
Died in an Plane Crash in Farmingdale, SD



In Memory of
U.S. Army Private First Class
LeRoy Kenneth Halvorson

Washington High School 1942
Sioux Falls, South Dakota
Minnehaha County

March 29, 1925 – June 6, 1951
Killed in Action in Korea

In Memory of
U.S. Air Force Captain
Garland DuWayne Hanson

Washington High School 1943
Sioux Falls, South Dakota
Minnehaha County

January 4, 1925--December 7, 1954
Killed in Non-Hostile Crash of a T-33
Jet Trainer near Lake Huron, Michigan



In Memory of
U.S. Army Private
Richard Calvin Hargus

Washington High School 1949
Sioux Falls, South Dakota
Minnehaha County

August 23, 1929 – August 6, 1951
Killed in Action in Korea

In Memory of
U.S. Naval Fireman E3
Dale Lloyd Hoover
Washington High School '48
Sioux Falls, South Dakota
Minnehaha County
May 11, 1930 -- September 26, 1950
Missing in Action, Lost at Sea



Dale was the
brother of
Dwight "Ike"
Hoover '52



In Memory of
U.S. Army First Lieutenant
Burdell Merle Krueger

Washington High School 1943
Sioux Falls, South Dakota
Minnehaha County

July 29, 1925 – October 30, 1954
Died in a Car Accident near Gainesville, TX

& Lone Hoover Schmidt '56. Also cousin of Darlene '52,
Gayle '54, LuJean '56 and Wyman Hoover '57.

In Memory of
U.S. Marine Corps Private First Class
Ronald Dean Murphy

Washington High School 1943
Sioux Falls, South Dakota
Minnehaha County

October 30, 1929 – March 26, 1953
Killed in Action in Korea



In Memory of
U.S. Army Sergeant
Marvin Edward Pascoe

Washington High School 1942
Sioux Falls, South Dakota
Minnehaha County

October 14, 1925 – January 1, 1951
Killed in Action in Korea

In Memory of
U.S. Army Private
Ronald Lee Preston

Washington High School 1948
Sioux Falls, South Dakota
Minnehaha County

July 18, 1932 -- July 25, 1950
Killed in Action in South Korea



In Memory of
U.S. Air Force Captain
Talvin Judine Roraus

Washington High School 1939
Sioux Falls, South Dakota
Minnehaha County

May 27, 1922 – October 20, 1950
Killed in Action in Korea

WHS VIETNAM WAR CASUALTIES

In Memory of U.S. Navy Captain

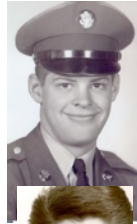
Donald Deane Aldern

Washington High School 1948

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

May 5, 1930 – June 29, 1970

Missing in Action, Declared Dead in So. Laos



In Memory of U. S. Army Private First Class

Louis James Cunningham, Jr.

Washington High School 1964

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

November 19, 1947 – December 19, 1965

Killed in Action in Ankie, Vietnam

In Memory of U.S. Marine Lance Corporal

Paul Olynn Evans

Washington High School 1962

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

June 21, 1945 -- December 22, 1966

Killed in Action in Quang Tri Province, So. Vietnam



In Memory of U.S. Marine Private First Class

Edgar Allen Flowers

Washington High School 1967

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

August 16, 1948 – March 31, 1969

Killed Near Quang Nam Province, Vietnam

In Memory of US Army Specialist Fourth Class

Ronald Charles Gehler

Washington High School 1960

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

September 12, 1943 -- February 15, 1967

Killed in Action in Vietnam



In Memory of Army Cpl.

Robert Milton Jacobs

Washington High School 1964

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

June 15, 1946 – May 10, 1968

Killed in hostile ground action in An Nukt Tan, Gia Din Province, South Vietnam

In Memory of U.S. Marine Private First Class

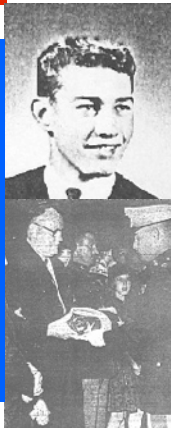
Dennis Clark Knutson

Washington High School 1964

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

November 17, 1945--July 23 1966

Died of Wounds in Vietnam



In Memory of U.S. Navy Hospitalman

Roger Miller Nelson

Washington High School 1965

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

September 16, 1947 – April 7, 1968

Killed in Action at Khe Sanh, Vietnam

In Memory of Marine Lance Corporal

Roger Allen Petersen

Washington High School 1964

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

February 8, 1947 - October 14, 1966

Died in Quang Ngai Province, South Vietnam



In Memory of U. S Marine Corps Private First Class

Donald Wayne Simonson

Washington High School 1967

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

March 14, 1949 – August 29, 1968

Killed in Action in Quang Nam Province in Vietnam

WHS VIETNAM WAR CASUALTIES

Continued

In Memory of U.S. Army Private First Class

Darrell Dean Venenga

WHS & Lincoln High School 1965

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County
September 3, 1947 – November 17, 1967
Died of Wounds in Vietnam



In Memory of U.S. Army Specialist Fifth Class

Randall Lee Williams

Washington High School 1965

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

February 8, 1947 – June 2, 1969
Died of Battle Wounds in Vietnam



In Memory of U.S. Marine Lance Corporal

Larry Dean Winterton

Washington High School 1965

Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Minnehaha County

June 3, 1947 – July 17, 1968

Died in the U.S. General Army Hospital,
Yokohama, Japan from wounds received in Vietnam.



We all walked the same halls, sat in the same classrooms, and attended programs in the same wonderfully grand old auditorium at Washington High School, but the path the men above chose after leaving WHS led them in such a different direction. It was a path of such great distinction and service that made not only those that knew and loved them so very proud, but all of America proud. It took them in a direction that ultimately asked for all they had to give, *and they did indeed give all they had to give*. It is so inadequate, but now all we can offer these extremely brave and selfless men are our tears and a simple, ***Thank You and May God Bless You For Eternity.***

**DONALD
KNUTSON '54**

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Highland, CA 92346
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Cell 909-534-6329
dok@dslextreme.com



I first learned a bit about Don's incredible acts of bravery at my 50th reunion, but the thought of his heroism stayed with me long after I returned home. The more I thought about the very real and terrifying dangers Don faced and endured for all of us, the more I felt his story should be more widely circulated. I finally called Don and asked for his permission to let me share with you some of the unbelievable stories of his duty in Viet Nam as a fighter pilot in the U.S. Air Force.

I am in possession of a copy of the biography the United States Air Force has prepared on Colonel Knutson and it is indeed an impressive document. And yes, it even includes Don graduating from Washington High School. When Don graduated from pilot training



**Colonel Donald O. Knutson
United States Air Force**

**Donald Knutson '54
WHS Senior Photo**

Each year when our great country celebrates Memorial Day my American pride always wells up inside as I am sure it does with most of you since we are from the generation that always stands when our American flag passes in front of us. Since it is a National Holiday set aside to honor the brave heroes of our military service I thought it appropriate to re-publish the full length tribute to Colonel Donald O. Knutson that I wrote 4 years ago. The O&B mailing list has significantly increased in numbers since I last published the full length version, so I am sure many of you are unaware of what a true American hero Don is and of his highly decorated and heroic military career.

school as a cadet and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force he was just 20 years old and at the time was the youngest jet fighter pilot and second lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force.

Here are a few of the highlights from that bio that I think deserve special mention. Don flew 394 combat missions over Laos and Vietnam. 394 is a staggering number of combat missions for one man to fly.

He was shot down behind enemy lines on two of those missions and no doubt survived because of his excellent training, his own tough tenacity and the grace of God. On the first occasion the Vietcong searched for him all night and were so dangerously close he could hear them talking and walking within feet of where he was hiding.

In counting Don's ribbons and medals referred to in his bio, I count 34 medals plus TWO DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSSES and numerous other awards. He has logged over 5,200 hours of military flying.

Try to imagine this frightening scenario. It was very late afternoon, just about dusk. Don had just completed a bombing run somewhere over North Vietnam. He was just starting to pull up out of the run at 350 miles an hour and at an altitude of about 800 feet when his plane was hit by enemy fire.

He was over a thick jungle, deep behind enemy lines and was forced to bail out. He knew Vietcong patrols would be rapidly converging on his location in search of him. Sure enough, he heard them coming almost immediately but was able to find a temporary hiding place. Through out the night they were close enough that he worried they would hear his heart pounding. It was now dark and he knew there was no chance of a rescue until the next morning. He was forced to continually move from one hiding place to another through out the night to avoid being found. It had to be one of the longest and most frightening nights anyone ever spent.

The other members of his squadron had circled while his parachute descended and recorded his exact location. He knew rescue helicopters would arrive at first light. He just had to stay alive and avoid capture through the night.

American helicopters did arrive the next morning and Don, using a mirror, was able to

signal them his location. Under heavy enemy fire one of the helicopters was able to come in for the pickup. The rescue helicopter was under such heavy fire, they couldn't even wait to reel Don in. As soon as he was in the rescue sling, the helicopter elevated just enough for Don to clear the tree tops and took off with him swinging like a puppet on a string far below the helicopter to a safe landing.

The other time Don was shot down his plane was disabled by ground fire. This time by flying just above the tree line and slowing his speed to 50 knots, which is stall speed, his plane fell/crashed into the top of a thick grove of tall trees where it came to a crashing halt entangled in the tree tops.

Again, he knew the enemy would be there very quickly so he hurriedly scrambled out of his precariously dangling plane that is hanging in the tree tops 60 feet above the ground and shimmies down the trees, injuring his shoulder in the process. But this time there was enough daylight left that rescue helicopters were able to pick him up within a relatively short time.

In addition to the two Distinguished Flying Crosses and the 34 medals, Don received one other extremely high and special honor that should be noted. In 1981 he was awarded the "Order of the Rising Sun" medal by the Emperor of Japan. It is the Japanese government's 2nd highest award.

I hope you are as moved and as impressed as I am with the Don Knutson story. I can't imagine anyone not sharing my feelings that Don Knutson is truly a very special man, an extremely courageous American and a super patriot that freedom loving men and women all over the world owe such a huge and totally un-payable debt of gratitude. I wish I could share his story with the entire world!

I would like to end this story on Don with a bit of humor. Don and an Air Force buddy recently took an 11 day Caribbean cruise together and on the two formal nights chose to wear their Air Force dress uniforms. (As seen in above Photo)

Because Don was the much more decorated officer of the two, he had the unpleasant task all of both evenings of having to fight ladies off that continued to mistake him for the ships Captain and insist on dancing with him.

Don, have a wonderful Memorial Day. We are all so glad you are still with us. End Knutson story.