

The veteran with Dieter was serving in Vietnam in 1970-1971. On the 23 of August traveling in Tay Ninh Province just behind the Black Virgin Mountain while being transported to be inserted along with members of the 33rd ARVN Ranger to meet a recruited intelligence at a point outside of a small village known as Phu " Khuong where he and his team were to drop off and fade into the jungle. Before reaching the insertion point the unit was engaged with what is believed to have been a 500 pound aerial bomb buried beneath the jungle roadway that was command detonated under the lead vehicle. All three of us soldiers one Counterintelligence Agent and two troopers from the 11th ACR who top side suffered multiple compression fractures and some shrapnel wounds. Those who had concealed themselves in the vehicle did not survive the explosion. Immediately after the explosion the enemy exacted withering fire on the trapped unit until air and artillery support broke the contact. Treated by a medic he was Medically evacuated from the area by helicopter. Initially had no feeling from about 5 inches above the belly bottom to the soles of my feet. While waiting in the evacuation hospital a high ranking officer can to the Agent's bedside and pinned a Purple Heart medal on the wounded soldiers PJ's, thanking him for his service and moved down to the next bed to do the same for the next man. After several months of light duty and a intensive physical therapy the agent was able to walk, stand for short periods of time and was given a P-5 physical profile that was waived because his injuries were a direct result of an enemy action. Of note in addition the Agent was awarded an individual award of the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry, (VNCOG) for his actions that day on behalf of his South Vietnamese counterparts who would provide. Additionally his team also were named on VN Orders to receive a unit award, of the VNCOG with palm. The individual award of VNCOG to an American was quite unusual and usually only went to those who worked directly with ARVN units. He continued to serve under a medical waiver until 5 Jul 1981 when he was released from Active Duty for combat incurred medical issues and assigned initially as temporary disabled retired list and on review was in 1985 upgraded to permanently disabled retired list.

With age this former Military Intelligence Agent experienced a decline in his ability to ambulate and approximately 17 years ago had to go to using a manual wheelchair. Years of pushing have caused break down in the Agent's shoulders and he was able to get a service dog who pulls him around in his wheelchair and is his constant companion. Beginning in 1981 he actively began to actively advocate for his former brothers and sisters who had been injured or became ill because of their service. Ten or so of those years he served as a National Service Officer for one of the leading Veterans Service Organizations, (VSO) and rose to the national leadership. Later being recruited to serve with another of the VSOs he has been a national leader in this organization for several years as well. Over the years he has spent all of the savings that he and his wife had built up over the decades serving his passion for serving those who also served.

One evening out of the blue one of the VSO's called and told him that there is a program called Feed the Dog, and as a result he has been able to feed his service dog premium food and has had a custom harness made for his Service Dog to pull him around in his wheelchair. Surely, he would not be able to travel as he does all over the Country working with one of the leading VSO's to increase treatment for the younger veterans who find themselves in an adversarial relationship with the Veteran's Administration. He is very appreciative of what Ms. Hellwig has done to help himself and others with service dogs gain the independence they enjoy.