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President Donald Trump awarded the Medal of Honor to Spc. 5 James McCloughan at the White House, July 31. McCloughan was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroic acts during the Vietnam War as a combat medic.

McCloughan distinguished himself during 48 hours of close-combat fighting against enemy forces, May 13-15, 1969. At the time, then-Pfc. McCloughan was serving as a combat medic with Company C, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry, 196th Light Infantry Brigade, Americal Division, in the Republic of Vietnam.

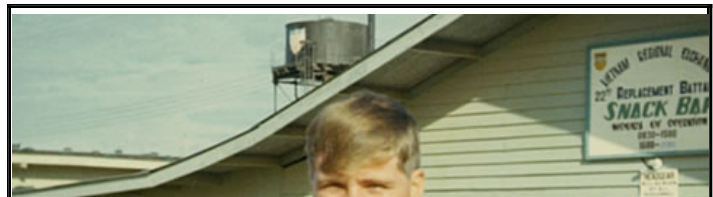
On the morning of May 13, 1969, “Charlie Company” was combat assaulted into an area near Tam K? and Nui Yon Hill and came under small arms and machine gun fire. During the combat assault, two American helicopters were shot down, one of which had crashed roughly 100 meters from the company’s position. With fierce enemy gun fire surrounding the position, a rescue helicopter could not land. Instead, a squad was sent out and ordered to bring the pilot and crew back to Charlie Company’s defense perimeter.

When the squad reached the perimeter around the crash site, they saw a wounded Soldier lying on the ground nearby, too injured to move. McCloughan ran 100 meters to the Soldier through an open field, ducking and dodging the crossfire of his company and a charging platoon of North Vietnamese Army. Upon reaching the wounded Soldier, McCloughan shouldered him and raced back to the company, saving his fellow Soldier from being captured or killed.

Later that afternoon, 2nd Platoon was ordered to scout the area near Nui Yon Hill. The platoon was ambushed by a large NVA force and sustained heavy casualties.

McCloughan entered a trench as American airstrikes were being dropped on the nearby NVA targets.

Looking over the top of his trench, McCloughan



saw two Soldiers without weapons, huddled near a bush.

With complete disregard for his life and personal safety, McCloughan handed his weapon to a fellow warrior, leaped on the berm of the trench and ran low to the ground toward the ambush and the two U.S. Soldiers. While McCloughan was looking for wounds on the men, a rocket-propelled grenade exploded and pelted him with shrapnel. He pulled the two Soldiers back into the safety of a trench.



McCloughan ignored a direct order to stay back and braved an enemy assault, moving into the kill zone on four more occasions to extract wounded comrades.

On May 14, 1st Platoon was ordered to move out toward Nui Yon Hill. The Platoon advanced to the initial trench line, and were approaching the second trench when they saw the enemy moving in the grass ahead of them. The Americans fired on the NVA while an airstrike was called on the enemy's position. The platoon then received orders to continue forward, but they were ambushed. The medic from 1st Platoon was killed, leaving McCloughan as the sole medical specialist in the company. In the intense battle, McCloughan was wounded a second time by small arms fire and shrapnel from a RPG while rendering aid to two Soldiers in an open rice paddy.

In the final phases of the attack, two companies from the NVA and an element of 700 soldiers from a Viet Cong regiment descended upon Company C's position on three sides. McCloughan, again with complete disregard for his life, went into the crossfire numerous times throughout the battle to extract wounded Soldiers, while also fighting the enemy. His relentless, courageous action inspired and motivated his comrades to fight for their survival. When supplies ran low, McCloughan volunteered to hold a blinking light in an open area as a marker for a nighttime resupply drop. He remained steadfast while bullets landed all around him and RPGs flew over his exposed body.

McCloughan's Army awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal with "V" device and Oak Leaf Cluster, the Purple Heart with Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster, the Good Conduct Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal with three Bronze Service Stars, the Army Valorous Unit Citation, National Defense Service Medal, the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with "60" Device, the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with palms and one Oak Leaf Cluster, the Combat Medical Badge, and the M16 Expert Rifle Badge.

He currently lives in South Haven, Michigan with his wife Chérie.

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