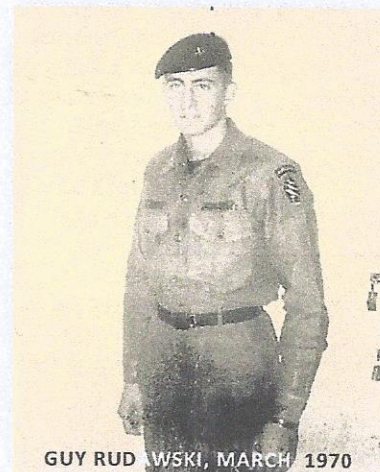


**VETERAN'S DAY 2015**  
**RAISING AWARENESS OF THE VIETNAM EXPERIENCE**  
**THIS STORY TOOK PLACE ON MAY 20, 1970, NEAR PHU BAI, SOUTH VIETNAM**  
*BY GUY RUDAWSKI, COMPANY MEDIC FOR ALPHA COMPANY A/2-501, 101<sup>ST</sup> AIRBORNE DIVISION, 1970*

VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL	PANEL W10 LINE 73
<b>TONY R WARD</b>	
<i>East Point, GA</i>	<i>10/31/1949 – 05/20/1970</i>
<i>Age: 20</i>	
A CO, 2 <sup>ND</sup> BN 501 <sup>ST</sup> INFANTRY 101 <sup>ST</sup> ABN DIV, USARV NON-HOSTILE GROUND CASUALTY	

VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL	PANEL W10 LINE 69
<b>ROY LYNN CARTER</b>	
<i>Circleville, OH</i>	<i>08/26/1946 – 05/20/1970</i>
<i>Age: 23</i>	
A CO, 2 <sup>ND</sup> BN 501 <sup>ST</sup> INFANTRY 101 <sup>ST</sup> ABN DIV, USARV NON-HOSTILE GROUND CASUALTY	



GUY RUDAWSKI, MARCH 1970

This was my first combat mission. I was apprehensive, but a year of preparation including Special Forces Survival and SF Medic training gave me confidence. We left Camp Eagle on foot just before dark and eventually set up positions near a Vietnamese burial ground on a knoll covered with high grass. This mission was a night ambush to stop the NVA from shooting rockets into our base camp. After a few hours, we received a radio message that ground sensors were picking up activity moving in our direction. We went on high alert and everyone was keyed up. Artillery fire was called in and the sensor activity stopped so we resumed our regular 2 hour watch.

It started raining. Then there was an explosion in a position on the south end of our perimeter. Believing we were under attack, we engaged the enemy with overwhelming firepower. At the same time a soldier started screaming: "They're out there! Gooks! My leg! I need a Medic!" Adrenaline kicked in and I began low-crawling through the grass with my Medical Bag and M16 in the direction of the wounded soldier about 15 meters away. Half way there I saw movement on my left and I froze; my heart was racing. Crouched down and moving along beside me was SSG Nichol, covering my back. We reached the hysterical soldier who was sitting up, pointing and yelling: "They're out there! Help me I'm dying! My leg!" His leg was broken from the explosion. SGT Ward lay dead a few feet away and next to him was PFC Carter, who was alive but unconscious. Carter was bleeding badly, he had extensive wounds including head wounds and multiple sucking chest wounds on his left side. I tried to stay focused despite the intensity and chaos of the situation. The soldier with the broken leg kept screaming with pain and fright; his piercing cries were maddening and giving away our position. I stuck him with 2 morphine syringes and he quieted down. The gun fire finally stopped and artillery support gave us overhead illumination. There was no enemy!

Kneeling over Carter, I was frantically trying to seal his chest wounds while SGT Ward's lifeless eyes stared up at me. The rain and darkness frustrated my efforts. Incredibly, there was no enemy anywhere and my mind was trying to make sense of what happened to these men. Carter was fighting to live but he was mortally wounded. I could hear the medivac helicopter making its approach. With no time to start an IV we loaded the three soldiers on the chopper. Covered with Carter's blood, I stood in the rain watching the medivac lift off.

***Epilogue:** Tragically, Carter and Ward sacrificed their lives after only twenty one days of service in Vietnam. They were killed by an apparent accidental grenade explosion. No one knows how or why this happened. Their deaths are listed as "Non-Hostile Ground Casualty". I learned quickly to be emotionally detached and to suppress these haunting memories; however, nothing could prepare me and my soldier brothers for the brutality we would soon experience during Operation Texas Star and the 23 day Battle for Fire Support Base Ripcord.*

*"When you hold war experiences inside, it eats you up..."*

Dave Smith, Wounded Warrior Project, 2015 [www.wwp.org](http://www.wwp.org)