



DAVID WAYNE DePRIEST

(FEBRUARY 23, 1948 - JANUARY 30, 1968)



Army
Specialist 4



Parachutist



3rd Battalion,
319th Artillery



173rd Airborne
Brigade

Years of Service: 25 FEB 1966 - 30 JAN 1968

Medals & Awards:

Purple Heart

Army Commendation Medal

Army Presidential Unit Citation

Valorous Unit Award

National Defense Service Medal

Vietnam Service Medal

Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation

Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal



For 18 months, **Specialist Fourth Class David DePriest** served as a paratrooper with the 173rd Airborne Brigade, an infantry combat unit known as the "Sky Soldiers." DePriest enlisted in the United States Army in February, 1966, and completed basic training at Fort Jackson, S.C. After receiving airborne training at Fort Benning, GA, he joined the 3rd Battalion, 319th Artillery Regiment. In 1967, following a pivotal operation known as the Battle of Dak To, in which the unit sustained heavy losses, the 173rd Airborne Brigade was awarded the Army Presidential Unit Citation and Valorous Unit Award for their combined efforts. One of DePriest's fellow Sky Soldiers, Rick Koziana, posted the following remembrance on Wall of Faces: "I remember the day you left us...I also remember the day you saved my life, in 1967...you will never be forgotten."

Known to friends as "Dave," DePriest was born in Lynchburg. His father, Carl Elmer DePriest, worked as a truck driver, and later as a salesman for a local beer distributor. Carl DePriest died in 1962, as a result of an accident at a construction site. David's mother, Evelyn Callahan DePriest, eventually remarried and resided on Lemon Drive. Dave became a member of Thomas Road Baptist Church, as well as the Lynchburg chapter of DeMolay, an organization for young men that promotes community engagement and teaches leadership skills. During the summer of 1965, DePriest served as a camp counselor for an interdenominational youth camp sponsored by Thomas Road, on Treasure Island, located in the James River. He graduated from E. C. Glass High School in 1966. A fellow Glass graduate, Frank Daughtrey, remembered DePriest as a quiet, friendly person with a "great smile and sense of humor."