

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
OCTOBER 23, 1987

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DOLE ANNOUNCES NAME OF WICHITA NATIVE TO BE ADDED TO
VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL

Washington, D.C. -- Senator Bob Dole (R-KS) today announced that the name of Major Samuel R. Bird, a Wichita native, will be added to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington by the National Park Service. Major Bird was seriously wounded on January 27, 1967 in Vietnam and died on October 10, 1984 in Wichita.

"He epitomizes the dedication and sacrifice that have made this country great," said Dole. "All Kansans can be proud of his service."

Bird grew up in Kansas, attended military school and graduated from the Citadel. In 1961, he was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army. After a tour of duty in Korea, Bird was appointed to be Officer in Charge of the Joint Service Casket Team securing the body of assassinated President John F. Kennedy on November 22, 1963.

In 1966, his military duty took him to Vietnam, where he was promoted to Captain. While serving as Commander of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry, he was shot in the head by a sniper while jumping out of a helicopter. Bird was shot on his birthday, the day that was to be his last day of war duty, before being transferred to a desk job. As a result of his wounds, he was confined to a wheelchair for the next 17 years of his life.

Bird's decorations include the Bronze Star for Valor, the Bronze Star for Merit, the Air Medal, the Purple Heart, and the Army Commendation Medal.

Bird's name will be one of 25 added to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial this year. The dedication ceremony for the new names on the wall will be held on November 11, 1987 in Washington. The Memorial is dedicated to those who died directly as a result of wounds suffered in the combat area of Vietnam and is administered by the National Park Service. All names must be approved by the Defense Department.