

HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB19
MARCH 10, 2021

To Chairman Proehl and members of the House Transportation Committee:

It is hard to believe that almost 52 years ago I first met Gene. As an aside, we never called him Gene—he was always Spot to us. He was tall, slender with reddish hair and freckles head to toe! Hence the nickname Spot. I don't think that many of us knew his real first name—just Spot.

I encountered Spot when I was newly assigned to C company 2nd Battalion /16th infantry Rangers of the First Infantry Division----often referred to as The Big Red One. Our unit was working out of a small firebase {Lorraine} near Lai Khe,VN. Spot was at this small jungle firebase recuperating from recent wounds. Our unit was engaged in an operation so we had some free time to talk about home, the army, etc. Almost immediately Spot took us "under his wing." Being brand new to the jungle and combat we had much to learn. Certainly we had months of training but Spot in his quiet, humble way took us to school sharing insights, tactics and the do's and don'ts of jungle warfare. He was a good teacher and outstanding soldier and most importantly a good man.

To this day (50 +years later) seldom does a day go by that I don't think of him and that fateful June morning. Early that morning we were awakened by machine gun fire. Spot was the first to engage the enemy, most assuredly saving many of us as we were just waking up on the jungle floor. Spot was killed instantly but his initial engagement bought us precious seconds to prepare. I have never forgotten Spot or the events of that early morning.

After decades I was finally able to track down a close cousin of Spot, Donna Watson. My search was successful through the wonderful efforts of a librarian near Spot's hometown and later the kindness of a nursing home administrator that knew Spot's parents. This is all a story unto itself ---should we ever meet I will explain further.

For almost 10 years now Donna and I speak regularly sharing stories about Spot, our families and life in general. I believe that this connection has been a blessing for both of us.

Senator Bowers I want to assure you and your legislative colleagues that Gene Myers was a fine soldier and most worthy of this honor/recognition.

Again, THANK YOU for your gracious manner and efforts on Gene and his family's behalf. If I can provide any additional information/documentation or enhance his recognition in any way, please call.

Respectfully,

Dave Blatt
Pineville, PA