

STATEMENT OF
C. DOUGLAS STERNER
CURATOR, MILITARY TIMES "HALL OF VALOR"
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, HOMELAND DEFENSE, AND
FOREIGN OPERATIONS
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
FEBRUARY 29, 2012
WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of my fellow veterans, past and present, who have answered the call of duty in the service of our great nation.

I would like to begin by acknowledging the great achievement of my wife Pam, who in 2004 authored a policy analysis that became the basis of the Stolen Valor Act of 2005, and then doggedly pushed it through the 109th Congress. *Roll Call* described that effort as "the largest piece of legislation affecting military awards since a 1918 act of Congress gave birth to the "Pyramid of Honor."¹

Last week the United States Supreme Court heard oral arguments in a case out of California wherein Xavier Alvarez, while running for public office, falsely portrayed himself as a recipient of the Medal of Honor. His conviction at the District Court level was overturned in 2010 by the Ninth Circuit Court which ruled Alvarez exercised his Constitutionally-protected right of free speech in his false representation.

Cases like that of Alvarez, commonly called "Stolen Valor," are rampant; demeaning not only the awards falsely claimed but frequently resulting in great cost to the government. The cases of 8 men charged in Seattle in 2007's "Operation Stolen Valor" cost the Department of Veterans Affairs \$1.4 million. There have been many more, and there remains much additional such fraud to be uncovered. ("Exhibit A" provides a brief listing of a small fraction of recent cases we have dealt with.)

For more than a decade F.B.I. Special Agent Tom Cottone was the Bureau's lead agent for Stolen Valor Cases. Mr. Cottone had hoped to be here today but his other important work precluded his attendance. I have included (Exhibit B) his letter to me detailing his work on Stolen Valor cases and the important role my own database of award recipients played in his investigations. It contains what he would have testified to today, could he have been present.

In fact, while I hope that the Supreme Court fails to find merit in the Ninth Circuit Court's decision in Alvarez, there is one point raised by the Justices that has considerable merit. They noted in their opinion striking down the Stolen Valor Act: **"Preserving the value of military decorations is unquestionably an appropriate and worthy governmental objective that**

¹ Gottleib, Tom, "An Act for Valor," *Roll Call*, December 11, 2006

Congress may achieve through, for example, publicizing the names of legitimate recipients.”²

In fact, in the General Orders (“Exhibit C”) issued by General George Washington in 1782 that established our military awards system, in addition to calling for those individuals who falsely claimed military awards to be “severely punished,” the General also noted: **“The name and regiment of the person so certified are to be enrolled in the Book of Merit, which will be kept at the orderly office.”** This was the first call for a database of military award recipients.

Presently there exists no such “Book of Merit” for any award other than the 3,474 men and one woman who have received our highest decoration, the Medal of Honor. Agent Cottone points to the value a more comprehensive awards database would serve in his letter, and post-Stolen Valor Act examples further attest to such a need in addition to and in support of that law.

In 2009 *The Dallas Morning News* reported that as many as 14 of the 67 Texas residents issued Legion of Valor license plates, identifying them as recipients of one of our two highest levels of military awards, were frauds. The newspaper further reported: **“TxDOT officials say it's hard to actually verify an individual's claim, even with documents. There is no central database the federal government keeps of military awards. Instead, they are scattered between sites in St. Louis and Washington, D.C., essentially forcing the honor system to be the backbone of the application process. ‘Without a database, we're hamstrung,’** Mr. Craig (Mike Craig, deputy director of vehicle titles and registration, TxDOT) added. The closest thing there is to one is a list maintained by decorated Vietnam veteran and military historian Doug Sterner, who helped pass the Stolen Valor Act legislation. When TxDOT began its investigation, officials turned to Mr. Sterner's Web site.”³

I could detail such cases of Stolen Valor for hours. On a related issue however, and although the word “stolen” may be a little strong, there is another manner wherein legitimate military heroes are being “robbed” on a regular basis.

Twelve years ago in Indiana, after watching the movie “Saving Private Ryan,” Monty McDaniel decided to research his uncle who was killed in the Normandy invasion. Mr. McDaniel was surprised to learn his uncle **may** have been posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, second only to the Medal of Honor, but there was no family record of that award. After months of diligent research he found the evidence in an Army General Orders, not only of his uncle’s high award but that of one of his comrades, who also gave his life in that historic battle. In 2001 both dead heroes were finally properly honored, decades late. The parents of both men, two of the most decorated heroes of World War II,

² United States of America vs. XAVIER ALVAREZ, AKA Javier Alvarez, United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, No.08-50345, August 17, 2010, Page 27 (11868)

³ Monteverde, Daniel, “TxDOT cracking down on phony war heroes issued military honor license plates,” *The Dallas Morning News*, August 15, 2009

died in the 1990s never knowing of the great heroism or high award earned by their dead sons. (“Exhibit D”)

This example of a legitimate hero denied his military awards by lapses in paperwork is NOT unusual. In February 2007 I received an email from Jan Girando, a woman in Kansas whose deceased father was one of the fewer than 4,000 men to receive the Navy Cross in World War II. Her efforts to have her father memorialized at Arlington National Cemetery had resulted in four fruitless months of back-and-forth between the Navy and officials at Arlington National Cemetery. The Navy, for its part, couldn’t even find a record that her father had served on active duty. Ms. Girando notes (“Exhibit E”) that after contacting me, “Six days later, I was informed that Arlington National Cemetery had ordered my father’s marker.” (Following Ms. Girando’s most recent letter I have included a letter she sent in 2008 to the Chairman of a Congressional Committee at a time when we had legislation before Congress calling for a database of military awards. It includes a detailed time-line of her efforts.)

The closest thing to any database of Army awards that exists to my knowledge is an enumeration published by the Army Human Resources Command.⁴ In that listing Army HRC shows that a total of **848** Distinguished Service Crosses were awarded in the Vietnam War. *The Military Times* “Hall of Valor” which I curate, currently contains the names and citations for **1,068** Vietnam War DSC recipients, all supported by Official orders in our paper files, preserving the accounts of the valor of 220 of that war’s most highly decorated heroes, otherwise lost to history because of poor record keeping.

The problem of heroes “lost to history” has not improved. Seeking the citations for Silver Star awards in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in 2007, *The Baltimore Sun Reported*, “**The Army denied a March 2006 Freedom of Information Act request for the narratives, first on the grounds that it couldn’t find all of them.**”⁵ In fact, I personally submitted FOIA requests for the citations for Silver Stars posthumously awarded to 24 men in these wars, and in 22 cases there was no record of their award in their OMPF (Official Military Personnel File) in St. Louis.

In this *Information Age* of unprecedented technological advance and the Internet, it is unconscionable that the Department of Defense cannot keep track of its heroes and wounded warriors. Further, we have learned recently that even our Nation’s most hallowed grounds, Arlington National Cemetery, has failed to properly use technology to properly preserve the memory of our veterans who have died.

I hope to demonstrate to you today that a database of Military Awards is an achievable goal, and a worthy one, not only to serve as a tool to thwart acts of Stolen Valor and fraud against the government, but as a noble effort to preserve for posterity, the great service, sacrifice, and valor of America’s veterans. We owe them much and, and not the least of what we owe is a diligent effort to properly preserve the record of their deeds and their sacrifice.

⁴ <https://www.hrc.army.mil/TAGD/Awards%20and%20Decorations%20Statistics%20by%20Conflict>

⁵ Wood, David, “Army blocks `narratives' of heroism,” *The Baltimore Sun*, December 9, 2007

CLAUDE DOUGLAS STERNER

Curator

Military Times “Hall of Valor”

www.militarytimes.com/hallofvalor



Doug Sterner is a veteran of service in the United States Army (1969 – 1972) and served two tours of duty in Vietnam as an Army Combat Engineer. He is a Life Member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and in 1998 was appointed by Governor Bill Owens to two terms (1999 – 2006) on the Colorado State Board of Veterans Affairs, subsequently being elected to that Board as its Chairman.

Following his honorable discharge from the Army, he worked for three years in the Montana State Department of Corrections, followed by eight years in the ministry. From 1984 to 1998 he worked in the multi-family housing industry before returning to college to obtain a degree in Computer Information Systems from Pueblo (Colorado) Community College. During his final semester in 2000 he simultaneously was employed there as an instructor in Computer Information Systems and continued in that position until 2006.

In 1992 Doug and his wife Pam began a program of free, patriotic, city-wide celebrations in their home town of Pueblo, Colorado, inviting and bringing recipients of the Medal of Honor to meet local citizens. That effort from 1992 – 1997 resulted in Pueblo being named “America’s Home Of Heroes,” based on the fact that at that time the city was the only city in America that was home to as many as four living recipients of our Nation’s highest award. Their efforts culminated in Pueblo hosting the 2000 Medal of Honor National Convention and unveiling a memorial that is one of only four National Medal of Honor Memorials. In 1997 Doug was presented the Congressional Medal of Honor Society’s rare and distinctive “Distinguished Citizen Award.”

In 1998 Doug launched a website, Home Of Heroes (www.homeofheroes.com) to document the citations and biographies of our Nation’s Medal of Honor recipients. His website today receives more than 10 million hits each month. In 2001 he expanded his efforts to document recipients of the Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, and Air Force Cross, each Service’s highest award and the second-highest military award. After achieving over 99% completion of these two top-levels of awards by 2005, he expanded to start tracking and posting the estimated 130,000 Silver Stars awarded in history.

Doug’s database efforts led to the unmasking of hundreds of individuals falsely claiming unearned military awards, and for his teamwork efforts with F.B.I. Agent Thomas A. Cottone, Jr. to deal with cases of Stolen Valor, he received a certificate of appreciation from

F.B.I. Director Robert Mueller in September 2004. One month later his wife Pam, as part of her studies in Political Science at Colorado State University-Pueblo, authored a policy analysis that became the basis of the Stolen Valor Act of 2005 enacted by the 109th Congress and signed into law by President George W. Bush.

In 2008 Doug partnered with *Military Times* (a Gannett Company), publishers of *Army Times*, *Navy Times*, *Air Force Times*, *Marine Corps Times*, and other government-related publications. At that time his database was expanded in an ambitious effort to include all awards above the Bronze Star and integrated into a “Hall of Valor” online database administered by *Military Times*. He continues his work today as Curator of that “Hall of Valor”, frequently cited as the largest and most complete unofficial database of U.S. Military award recipients.

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MILITARY TIMES HALL OF VALOR

The *Military Times* “Hall of Valor” currently contains the names and in most cases textual citation for nearly 100,000 of an estimated 400,000 awards above the Bronze Star in history. Entries are fully vetted through FOIA and/or obtaining official citations. While this remains a daunting project and a work in progress, the following illustrates levels of completion achieved to date:

- ❖ **The citation is posted for each and every one of the 3,475 Medals of Honor and equivalent 23 Marine Corps Brevet Medals awarded in history.**
- ❖ **The citation is posted for each and every one of 194 Air Force Crosses (100% Complete) and 6,939 Navy Crosses (estimated at least 99.9% complete) in history. The names of 13,458 Distinguished Service Crosses (estimated 99.9% complete) are posted with citations for nearly 10,000 of these awards.**
- ❖ **Based on the above, the Military Times Hall of Valor is at least 99.9% complete for the top TWO LEVELS of military awards (24,089 total) in history, with full-text citations for 20,569 of these (85%) and at the least a synopsis for the remaining 3,520 awards.**
- ❖ **SILVER STAR: The “Hall of Valor” currently contains 24,365 awards of an estimated 130,000 Silver Stars (4th highest military award) awarded in history, and in most cases these include the textual citation for those awards. Additionally we have a separate off-line research database containing the names of in excess of 50,000 additional awards yet to be vetted for inclusion.**
- ❖ **DISTINGUISHEDSERVICE MEDALS: The “Hall of Valor” lists nearly 7,000 of an estimated fewer than 8,000 awards of the third highest U.S. Military Award, with textual citations for the majority of these awards.**
- ❖ **There are tens of thousands of additional awards, below the Silver Star but above the Bronze Star (comprising the top 8 levels of military awards), in our ongoing effort to digitize all such awards.**

Thanks in large part to the better record-keeping practice of the Marine Corps, we believe that the Hall of Valor now contains:

- ❖ **The name of 95% of all Marines in history who have received any award above the Bronze Star (26,000+ awards), and in most cases a textual citation**
- ❖ **The name of Marine Corps former Prisoners of War, estimated at 100% complete for the Korean War to present, and 98% complete for World War II.**
- ❖ **The name of at least 97% of all Marines in history to achieve flag rank, with a rate of at least 95% completion for their earned awards**
- ❖ **The name of each and every Marine who achieved aerial ACE status, including at least 95% completion on their earned awards.**

ADDITIONALLY, and with reference to other services, we believe the “Hall of Valor” contains:

- ❖ **The names and textual citations for every member of the Marine Corps and Air Force to receive a Silver Star or higher in the Wars on Terror, what we believe to be all citations for the top two level awards to members of the Army and Navy in these wars, and at the least the name and a synopsis for 60% of the U.S. Army Silver Star recipients in these wars.**
- ❖ **The names of each and every former Prisoner of War (all services) from 1954 to present (100% complete), and 99% complete for the Korean War POWs of all branches, and 99% complete for all U.S. Navy POWs in World War II.**
- ❖ **The names and in nearly every case textual citation for EVERY award presented from the inception of our awards system in the Civil War through the beginning of World War II. (This excludes the WWI Citation Star, estimated at somewhere around 20,000 awards; we have posted nearly 10,000 of these and have citations on hand for an additional 6,000 of these awards, simply awaiting transcription).**
- ❖ **At the least the names and a synopsis for what we estimate to be at least 95% of the awards of the Silver Stars to members of the Army Air Forces in World War II, 75% of these awards to U.S. Air Force Personnel in both Korea and Vietnam.**
- ❖ **The names and in most cases textual citation for at least 85% of all U.S. Navy personnel who have been awarded the Silver Star from the Korean War to present.**
- ❖ **The names and in most cases textual citation for 95% of the Silver Stars or higher to a Navy Medical Officer or Corpsman in history.**
- ❖ **The full-text citation for nearly every graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy who has received a Silver Star or higher in history.**

Father, every effort is made in our online entries to identify the home towns of award recipients, track death and burial data, and often to include a photograph of the award recipient. The following is a screen-shot of the “Hall of Valor” entry for Marine Captain Julian Dusenbury, father-in-law of United States Congressman Joe Wilson (R-SC) who earned both the Navy Cross and Silver Star in World War II and suffered the loss of a leg.



Julian D. Dusenbury

Place of Birth: Bishopville, South Carolina
Home of record: Claussen, South Carolina

Julian Dusenbury was awarded both the Navy Cross and Silver Star in World War II. During combat action he was shot by a sniper resulting in his being in a wheelchair for the rest of his life. His daughter married Joe Wilson, who currently serves as a United States Congressman from South Carolina.

AWARDS AND CITATIONS



Navy Cross

[See more recipients of this award](#)

Awarded for actions during the World War II

The President of the United States of America takes pleasure in presenting the Navy Cross to Captain Julian D. Dusenbury (MCSN: 0-10786), United States Marine Corps (Reserve), for extraordinary heroism as Commanding Officer of Company A, First Battalion, Fifth Marines, FIRST Marine Division, in action against enemy Japanese forces on Okinawa, Ryukyu Islands, 7 May 1945. During an assault against strongly fortified enemy positions which threatened the advance of the entire front, Captain Dusenbury repeatedly braved intense hostile fire to insure the success of his company's advance. When one of the platoon commanders was seriously wounded during a critical phase of the assault, he reorganized the platoon and, in the face of intensified enemy fire, led it in continuing the attack. Fearlessly moving among his entire company front to coordinate the advance of the troops with supporting tanks, he personally directed the fire of the tanks in destroying several Japanese strong points. Although painfully wounded during the initial stages of the advance, he refused to be evacuated and continued to direct the attack until Japanese resistance was broken and the positions overrun. By his initiative and indomitable fighting spirit, Captain Dusenbury served as an inspiration to his men, and his leadership throughout was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

General Orders: SPOT AWARD: Serial 61534 (SofN Signed April 16, 1947)

Action Date: 7-May-45

Service: Marine Corps Reserve

Rank: Captain

Company: Company A

Battalion: 1st Battalion

Regiment: 5th Marines

Division: 1st Marine Division



Silver Star

[See more recipients of this award](#)

Awarded for actions during the World War II

(Citation Needed) - SYNOPSIS: Julian D. Dusenbury (MCSN: 0-10786), United States Marine Corps, was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in action at Peleliu, Palau Islands on September 15 & 16, 1944.

Action Date: September 15 & 16, 1944

Service: Marine Corps

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
Witness Disclosure Requirement - "Truth in Testimony"
Required by House Rule XI, Clause 2(g)(5)

Name: Claude Douglas Sterner

1. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) you have received since October 1, 2008. Include the source and amount of each grant or contract.

NONE

2. Please list any entity you are testifying on behalf of and briefly describe your relationship with these entities.

I will be testifying on behalf of *The Military Times* "Hall of Valor", a Gannett Publications. I am currently employed to administer the "Hall of Valor," an online database of military awards for *The Military Times*.

3. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) received since October 1, 2008, by the entity(ies) you listed above. Include the source and amount of each grant or contract.

NONE

I certify that the above information is true and correct.

Signature



Date

February 9, 2012

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EXHIBIT A – “Snapshot” of recent Stolen Valor Cases”

On September 27, 2008, the U.S. House of Representatives passed HR 6837, naming a Post Office in Las Vegas for purported war hero Irving Joseph Schwartz. Following passage of that bill, reporters for the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* became suspicious when Mr. Schwartz's claimed Silver Star Medal was not found in (unofficial) awards database maintained by myself, a private citizen...the only existing such database. Further investigation found that Mr. Schwartz's claims of heroism were false and that Nevada Representatives Jon Porter and Shelley Berkley had been duped. The November 9, 2008, *Review-Journal* story under the headline "Attention reveals lie about WWII record - Post Office legislation exposes veteran's fabrication" placed these members of Congress in the embarrassing situation of having to pull that bill from Senate consideration.

This was not the first time Members of Congress fell victim to false tales of heroism. In 2008 the entire Pennsylvania legislature was embarrassed when it passed legislation calling on the U.S. Congress to upgrade the Vietnam War Silver Star Medal of Terry Calandra to the Medal of Honor, actions being put forward by Pennsylvania Senator Arlen Specter. Suspicion was raised when Mr. Calandra's purported Distinguished Service Cross was not found in the same privately maintained database, and further investigation failed to find a legitimate record of the Silver Star as well. Senator Specter has withdrawn his request and requested further investigation by the F.B.I.

The lack of an official database of military awards has resulted in numerous cases of fraud including recent news reports showing:

- \$1.4 Million dollars in VA Fraud in Seattle by eight individuals, all of whom were getting VA Benefits based upon fraudulent documents. None of the eight had served in combat or earned the medals that were used to substantiate their claims, and two of them had never served in the military.
- In Texas an investigation using the same unofficial database found that 14 of 67 individuals driving with "Valor" license plates (indicating receipt of the military's two top awards) had been obtained with fraudulent documents.
- In Rhode Island, Bruce Cotta MAILED in a U.S. Government envelope, paperwork for and a Distinguished Service Cross (purchased on the Internet) purportedly being belatedly awarded him. Congressman Patrick Kennedy presented the award in a public ceremony, touting Cotta as “Rhode Island's most decorated Vietnam veteran.” The U.S. Congress subsequently passed legislation to name a Post Office for the man who was subsequently convicted of mail fraud for his clever scheme to make himself a DSC recipient.
- In Tennessee 14 people were indicted for using fraudulent documents to obtain \$1.9 million in VA Benefits.
- In Virginia a man driving with Silver Star license plates was found to have not received that award. Currently I have another individual in that same state who has obtained Prisoner of War (POW) license plates with a fraudulent DD-214, when in fact he never served in combat. In Colorado I have another case of a man driving a vehicle with Purple Heart license plates, also obtained with a forged DD-214...when in fact he was never wounded in action.

EXHIBIT A – “Snapshot” of recent Stolen Valor Cases”

- On Veterans Day 2008 the City of Fairhope, Alabama, named purported Distinguished Service Cross Recipient Bob Fass "Veteran of the Year" and selected him to lead the annual Veterans Day parade. Subsequent records checks found Fass to NOT be a recipient of that award, second only to the Medal of Honor, and found multiple other lies in his military biography.
- In Indiana Congressman Peter Visclosky helped Ken R. Coleman get his Silver Star Medal, giving credibility to his claim which turned out to be false upon investigation.
- In New York Representative Eliot Engell presented a Distinguished Service Cross to purported WWII Prisoner of War Edward G. Kopf in a public ceremony. No record of his heroism could be found in official records, nor is there any record of him being a prisoner of war.
- Believing him to be the recipient of the Silver Star and four Purple Hearts, former Congressman John Doolittle once introduced Glenn Marshall in a Congressional Hearing as a "**Hero of Khe Sahn.**" At the head of efforts to build a \$1 Billion casino, Marshall's fabrication unraveled when we learned he was still in high school when that famous battle occurred. When charges were filed against another phony hero, this time in his district, Congressman Doolittle issued a press release noting: *"A national searchable database would insure that only those members of our Armed Forces, past and present, who were either wounded in battle or served with distinction receive the special recognition and the rightful honor they deserve. Our decorated military veterans deserve to have integrity maintained in the awarding of military decorations."*
- In 2008 a *Chicago Tribune* investigation "**Found that the fabrication of heroic war records is far more extensive than you might think. Take the online edition of Who's Who, long the nation's premier biographical reference. Of the 333 people whose profiles state they earned one of the nation's most esteemed military medals, fully a third of those claims cannot be supported by military records.**"
- In 2009 Associated Press Reporter Allen Breed reported that the **"There are only 21 surviving POWs from the first Gulf War in 1991, the Department of Defense says. Yet the Department of Veterans Affairs is paying disability benefits to 286 service members it says were taken prisoner during that conflict, according to data released by VA to The Associated Press. A similar discrepancy arises with Vietnam POWs. Only 661 officially recognized prisoners returned from that war alive -- and about 100 of those have since died, according to Defense figures. But 966 purported Vietnam POWs are getting disability payments."** Breed further cited one specific case:" Edward Lee Daily of Clarksville, Tenn., collected more than \$412,000 in disability and medical benefits over 15 years before being exposed. He forged paperwork not only to show he was a POW, but that he'd been wounded by shrapnel and given a battlefield promotion to first lieutenant. Sentenced to 21 months in prison and ordered to pay restitution...the government has recouped just \$7,000.

EXHIBIT B – Letter from (former) F.B.I. Agent Thomas A. Cottone, Jr.

February 14, 2012

Thomas A. Cottone, Jr.

North Building - Apt. #1406
601 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Mr. C. Douglas Sterner – Curator
Military Times Hall of Valor
6338 Wingate Street, #203
Alexandria, Virginia 22312

Doug,

Unfortunately, I will not be able to join you on February 29, 2012 and testify before the Subcommittee on National Security, Homeland Defense and Foreign Operations regarding the extensive problem of individuals who fabricate their military service records and make false claims to military awards, as well as the necessity for a national database that, at the very least, lists the names of those service members who have been awarded the Purple Heart, Bronze Star with “V” device, Silver Star, Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, Air Force Cross, and the Medal of Honor.

In 1782, when General George Washington authorized the first military award, The Honorary Badge of Military Merit, that would later become the Purple Heart in 1932, he understood the need to protect that award from those who would falsely claim to have earned it so he included these words in the order, “Should any who are not entitled to the military honors have the insolence to assume the badges of them, they shall be severely punished.” He also noted in that same General Orders, the need to preserve an accurate listing of award recipients stating: ‘The name and regiment of the person with the action so certified are to be enrolled in the Book of Merit, which will be kept at the orderly office.

I believe that the Subcommittee would benefit from a brief summary of our experiences dealing with those individuals who did not heed the words of General Washington, and who have literally stolen the valor of our military service members by wearing and making false claims to their awards that were legitimately earned at a very high price.

When Congress first enacted Title 18, United States Code, Section 704, the law only prohibited the unauthorized wearing or manufacture of military awards and decorations in general. Specific awards were not mentioned and the penalties were a minimal fine a term of imprisonment of up to six months. Because of the low penalties, the law was rarely enforced.

EXHIBIT B – Letter from (former) F.B.I. Agent Thomas A. Cottone, Jr.

As you know, Colonel (then Platoon Sergeant) Mitchell Paige was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions on Guadalcanal during World War II. After receiving the Medal of Honor, Colonel Paige started what would become a personal 40-year mission to confront and expose hundreds of individuals that falsely represented themselves as being actual Medal of Honor recipients.

In 1994, as a direct result of the efforts of Colonel Paige, Title 18, USC, 704 was amended to increase the penalties for wearing or selling a Medal of Honor to a maximum fine of \$100,000.00, and/or up to one year in prison. At that time however, the revised code did not address the fraudulent use of the other, often rare and highly esteemed so-called “lesser awards” presented to men and women in military service.

In April 1995, in my capacity as a FBI Special Agent, I attended a military memorabilia and gun show in Totowa, New Jersey and encountered an individual by the name of Robert Nemser, who was openly selling numerous military awards and medals, two of which were an Army Medal of Honor and an Air Force Medal of Honor.

After speaking with Mr. Nemser, I successfully purchased both of the Medals of Honor, and subsequently arrested him under the newly amended Title 18, USC, 704.

I did not realize the magnitude and scope of the problem until I had the opportunity to meet Colonel Paige and start attending public events with him and following-up on leads that he provided to me. At every Medal of Honor convention that I attended with Colonel Paige, I would encounter an individual that was either illegally wearing the Medal of Honor or falsely claiming to be a Medal of Honor recipient.

In 1995, I was made aware of the case of Illinois State Judge Michael O’Brien who was claiming that he was awarded the Medal of Honor, not once, but twice, and had two framed Medals of Honor in his chambers. Because he was only making verbal claims to having been awarded the Medal of Honor, he could not be charged under the existing Title 18, USC, 704. The Medals of Honor were confiscated from him and he resigned from the bench in disgrace.

In December 1996, as a result of my ongoing nationwide investigation, H.L.I. Lordship Industries, the only official government contract manufacturer of the Medal of Honor, and the largest manufacturer of all other military medals, pled guilty in United States District Court, Newark, New Jersey to the illegal manufacture and sale of 300 Medals of Honor during the previous three year period.

H.L.I. Lordship Industries was fined the maximum amount under the Federal Sentencing Guidelines and was debarred from receiving any government contracts for at least fifteen years.

Unfortunately, most of the 300 “illegally manufactured” Medals of Honor remained in circulation and the problem of individuals falsely claiming to be Medal of Honor recipients continued.

EXHIBIT B – Letter from (former) F.B.I. Agent Thomas A. Cottone, Jr.

Although my investigation initially focused on individuals falsely claiming to be Medal of Honor recipients, I expanded the investigation as I frequently received complaints from Veterans organizations and private citizens regarding individuals who were wearing, or falsely claiming receipt of other awards for valor such as the Navy Cross, Air Force Cross, Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star, Bronze Star with “V” device and the Purple Heart.

One of the difficulties I encountered during my investigation was the ability to quickly determine if an individual was in fact a legitimate recipient of the Medal of Honor, or any lesser award such as the Navy Cross, Air Force Cross, Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star or Purple Heart.

Although I had access to military records through the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC), you, and your database, were always my first point of contact to determine if an individual was a legitimate recipient of a particular award for “valor.”

I have never found your database and information to be inaccurate, and on some occasions, your database was more accurate than the information contained in the records of the NPRC.

Although, I have investigated hundreds of individuals that have either worn or falsely claimed unearned military awards, I feel that it would be useful to briefly mention a few of the more significant cases that illustrate the ongoing problem and the need for a national database that is accurate and readily accessible to the general public, the media, and government agencies.

In October 2002, the Commandant of United States Marine Corps, General James Jones, honored me at an elaborate ceremony at Marine Barracks, 8th & I, Washington, DC where

I was designated as an “Honorary Marine” for my efforts in investigating individuals who wear, or falsely claim unearned military awards. Another individual, Navy Captain Roger Edwards was also being honored at the same ceremony for his 35-year career in the military where he was believed to have served heroically on many occasions.

When I was introduced to Captain Edwards, who was in uniform, I observed that he was wearing numerous awards and decorations for valor to include the Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star with “V” device, Purple Heart (with three Gold Stars indicating receipt of a total of four Purple Hearts), Defense Meritorious Service Medal (with Oak Leaf Cluster), Navy/Marine Corps Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, Navy /Marine Corps Commendation Medal (with three gold Stars), Army Commendation Medal (with “V” device and three Oak Leaf clusters indicating receipt of four awards), the Combat Action ribbon and numerous other significant awards.

Due to my experience investigating individuals who wear and falsely claim military awards, I became suspicious of Captain Edwards and subsequently reviewed his

EXHIBIT B – Letter from (former) F.B.I. Agent Thomas A. Cottone, Jr.

military personnel file, which confirmed that Captain Edwards never earned any of the valor awards that he was wearing, and many of the other awards listed in his biography.

Captain Edwards was subsequently court-martialed and pled guilty to wearing approximately twenty-five unearned awards, including all of the awards for valor.

In April 2004, in Long Valley, New Jersey, I attended the funeral Mass of Marine Lieutenant J.T. Wroblewski, who was killed in a firefight in Iraq, along with ten of his fellow Marines.

During the Mass, and the ceremony that followed, I observed an individual wearing the dress blue uniform of a Marine Captain. The individual sat with Lt. Wroblewski's parents in the front pew of the church and he stood at the head of the casket at the ceremony following the Mass.

As the individual was walking toward the reception, he passed in front of me and I noticed that he was wearing the Navy Cross, the Silver Star, Bronze Star with "V" device, three Purple Hearts and numerous other awards for valor and outstanding service.

Again, due to my experience investigating individuals who wear and falsely claim military awards, I became suspicious of the "Marine Captain" and interviewed him in the parking lot of the church. After identifying myself as a FBI Special Agent, and advising him of his rights, I asked him about the awards he was wearing and where he served. Based on his answers, I determined he was lying and then asked him if he ever served in the military to which he replied "No."

I then asked him, when was the last time he wore the uniform and he admitted that he wore it at the New Jersey Governor's Inaugural Ball and at many other public events.

I then examined the contents of his wallet, which contained membership cards to every military fraternal organization, and observed his vehicle, which displayed official New Jersey Marine Corps license plates. Upon returning to his house, I recovered other Marine Corps uniforms and equipment.

He was charged under Title 18, USC, 704 and subsequently entered the Federal Pre-Trial Diversion Program.

As you know, the instances of where individuals would falsely claim, verbally or in writing, to have earned the Medal of Honor, and other "valor" awards, continued to increase in frequency, which necessitated that Title 18, USC, 704 be amended to allow prosecution in those situations.

Due to you, and your wife Pam, "The Stolen Valor Act of 2005" was unanimously passed, and signed into law by then President, George W. Bush in December 2006.

EXHIBIT B – Letter from (former) F.B.I. Agent Thomas A. Cottone, Jr.

Unfortunately, in spite of the “Stolen Valor Act of 2005,” many individuals continue to wear and falsely represent that they were awarded the Medal of Honor, and other awards for valor in combat.

I firmly believe that a readily accessible national database, containing the names of service members that are recipients of our nation’s highest awards for valor in combat, as well as the continued and aggressive enforcement of “The Stolen Valor Act,” would not only honor the true recipients of those awards, but would maintain the integrity of all military awards and decorations.

In conclusion, I offer this quote from President Abraham Lincoln, “Any Nation That Does Not Honor Its Heroes Will Not Long Endure.”

The opinions expressed in this letter are my personal opinions based upon my 35 years experience as a FBI Special Agent and they may not necessarily be those of the FBI as an agency.

Semper Fidelis!

Thomas A. Cottone, Jr.,
FBI Special Agent (Retired) (1972-2007)
“Honorary Marine”

EXHIBIT C – George Washington G.O. Establishing U.S. Military Awards System.

THE HONORARY BADGE OF MILITARY MERIT.



General Washington understood the value of personal decoration for gallantry or meritorious conduct, and on August 7, 1782, issued the following order from his headquarters at Newburg.

“Honorary badges are to be conferred on the veteran non-commissioned officers and soldiers of the army who have served more than three years with bravery, fidelity and good conduct; for this purpose a *narrow piece of white cloth of an angular form* is to be fixed to the left arm on the uniform coats; non-commissioned officers and soldiers who have served with equal reputation more than six years, are to be distinguished by two pieces of cloth set in parallel to each other in a similar form. Should any who are not entitled to these honors have the insolence to assume the badges of them, they shall be severely punished. On the other hand, it is expected that gallant men who are thus designated will, on all occasions, be treated with particular confidence and consideration.

“The General, ever desirous to cherish a virtuous ambition in his soldiers, as well as to foster and encourage every species of military merit, directs that whenever any singularly meritorious action is performed, the author of it shall be permitted to wear on his facings, over his left breast, the figure of a *heart in purple cloth or silk*, edged with narrow lace or binding. Not only instances of unusual gallantry, but also of extraordinary fidelity and essential service in any way shall meet with a due reward.

“Before this favor can be conferred on any man, the particular fact or facts on which it is to be grounded must be set forth to the commander-in-chief, accompanied with certificates from the commanding officers of the regiment and brigade to which the candidate for reward belonged, or other incontestable proofs, and, upon granting it, the name and regiment of the person with the action so certified are to be enrolled in the Book of Merit, which will be kept at the orderly office.

“Men who have merited this last distinction to be suffered to pass all guards and sentinels which officers are permitted to do. *The road to glory in a patriot army and a free country is thus opened to all.*

“This order is also to have retrospect to the earliest days of the war, and to be considered as a permanent one.

* * * * *

“*Sunday, August 11, 1782.*

“In order to prevent misapplication of the honorary badges of distinction to be conferred on the non-commissioned officers and soldiers, in consequence of long and faithful service, through any mistake or misapprehension of the orders of the 7th inst., the General thinks proper to inform the Army that they are only attainable by an uninterrupted series of faithful and honorable services.

Local veteran receives long overdue

Staff Sergeant Lawrence W. Gunderson has been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism, this country's second highest honor for valor, second only to the Medal of Honor. The award was presented posthumously in a ceremony held Monday, July 22, at Fort Snelling, nearly 58 years to the day after Gunderson was killed in World War II in action near St. Lo, France. The award was accepted by Gunderson's brother, John D. Gunderson of Stillwater, also a veteran.

Lawrence Gunderson was born in Grant Township on Oct. 31, 1920, the oldest of 11 children born to William and Clare Gunderson. He attended school in District 76, Stillwater, and was inducted into the Army on Aug. 7, 1942, and went to Camp Roberts, Calif., for basic training. On March 5, 1943, his unit sailed for Africa. In July 1943, he was deployed to the British Isles in preparation for D-Day. His company landed in France as part of the invasion of Normandy on June 9, 1944.

On July 25, 1944, his company, Co. F, 9th Infantry Division 60th Infantry Regiment, was pinned down by heavy enemy fire from machine guns and an anti-tank gun. According to documentation from Headquarters First United States Army dated 17 October 1944, in the general orders awarding Gunderson the Distinguished Service Cross posthumously, Gunderson, "with complete disregard for his personal safety," armed only with a rifle and several grenades, maneuvered within close range of the machine gun and, exposing himself to observed fire from the gun, "single-handedly wiped out the entire crew with grenades. Fearless and aggressive, he then attacked the crew of the anti-tank gun at point blank range. Though subject to direct small arms fire and receiving wounds in this encounter that proved fatal, his



Lawrence Gunderson was inducted into the Army on Aug. 7, 1942, at the age of 21. He was killed in action on ~~June 9~~ ^{July 25}, 1944, following the invasion of Normandy.

attack was so fierce that all members of the German anti-tank gun crew were killed or wounded. As a result of his action, the company was able to continue its advance." The documentation concludes, "The extraordinary heroism and dauntless courage displayed by Staff Sergeant Gunderson in single-handedly destroying an enemy machine gun nest and an anti-tank gun crew set an inspiring example to this entire company and is in keeping with the highest traditions of the Armed Forces."

Lawrence Gunderson was buried in the United States Military Cemetery Ste. Mere Eglise #2, located 20 miles

southeast of Cherbourg, France. In 1948, his remains, at the request of his parents, were returned to Stillwater for burial in St. Michael's Cemetery, Bayport.

Gunderson's parents received the personal effects -- pictures, two prayer books, Combat Infantry Badge, Good Conduct Ribbon, Distinguished Unit Ribbon, wallet, watch, etc. -- their son had with him when he was killed. But they never received or knew that their son had been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. His family might never have known had it not been for a man from Indiana, Monty McDaniel. McDaniel was watching the movie "Saving

honor for extraordinary heroism



Shown with Sen. Mark Dayton at the award presentation ceremony are Lawrence Gunderson's siblings, from left, Marge Trent, Sen. Dayton, John Gunderson, Mary Reeves, Rita McMenomy, Len Gunderson, Dave Gunderson and Mark Gunderson. Missing from photo are Bill and Joe Gunderson.

Private Ryan." which includes scenes of a cemetery overlooking Omaha Beach in France, the same cemetery where his uncle, Paul Edwin Alexander, is buried. Paul Alexander, a staff sergeant with the 60th Infantry, was killed in action on June 14, 1944.

McDaniel got to thinking about his uncle's grave and got on the internet. During his internet search, he found that the American Battle Monuments Commission has a web site listing all the soldiers missing in action or buried overseas. When he type in the name of his uncle, he was surprised to learn that Alexander had been honored posthumously with the Distinguished Service Cross. The Cross was awarded on Oct. 17, 1944, in the same order awarding the honor to Lawrence W. Gunderson, but no one ever told the family.

McDaniel wondered if there were other families, like his, who lost someone in World War II knew about the list.

McDaniel didn't just wonder, he contacted the Washington County Veterans Service Officer who in turn contacted the Gunderson family. The Gundersons began contacting government officials to get their brother his deserved recognition in October of

2001. Nine months later, Staff Sergeant Lawrence Gunderson was finally honored for his heroic actions in the service of his country during the ceremony at Fort Snelling. Senator Mark Dayton presented the long overdue Distinguished Service Cross.

EXHIBIT E– Jan Girando Letters

Getting It Right: Validating Awards and Preserving America’s Most Elite Heroes

Re: Lt. (j.g.) Victor Laverne Miller, Navy Cross, WWII

There is nothing more heroic than serving our country, and nothing more important than honoring the heroes who serve. Especially when one of them is your father.

My dad, Curtiss Helldiver pilot Lt. (j.g.) Victor Laverne Miller, served aboard the USS Franklin in WWII and won the Navy Cross and two Air Medals. He died in 1985, leaving no military records or documentation.

Subsequently, I learned that because he won the Navy Cross, he could be memorialized in Arlington National Cemetery. I dug up what I could in my meager family records, then called Arlington. I was told all I needed to do to get the process rolling was provide documentation. I sent them what I had, but it was insufficient. Their request had sounded simple. It wasn't.

The Internet was slow going. I did find additional bits of information here and there that helped round out the picture, but there seemed to be no site that could verify his Navy Cross. Inquiries were met with military-speak: “You need to fill out a SF180 to get the DD214 -- try the Navy Yard.” I knew this was meant to be helpful, but nothing in the entire sentence made sense to someone with no military background. Even worse, I knew some of the records from his era had been lost to fire in St. Louis. Daunting.

I continued fighting the informational labyrinth rather unsuccessfully for weeks until I came across Doug Sterner’s website *Home of Heroes*. With little hope, I forwarded him a brief e-mail offering the facts I had unearthed about my father so far and asked if he could help verify the Navy Cross.

I sent the note at 3:19 p.m. on February 19, 2007. I expected no answer. At 4:56 p.m. I had one. It was that easy. I had been researching for months. This took Doug Sterner minutes.

In his extensive database, Mr. Sterner located a citation synopsis from the Navy Yard verifying that my father was awarded the Navy Cross. He sent a scan of the page to me and to my contact at ANC. He also phoned her personally that afternoon to verify the information. The next day he supported that information further by sending both of us a scan from “*Navy Cross, Officers and Enlisted Men of the United States Navy Awarded the Navy Cross Dec. 7, 1941 -- July 1, 1945*” published by the Navy Department’s Office of Public Information in 1945.

Six days later, I was informed that Arlington National Cemetery had ordered my father’s marker.

On July 11, 2007, a military funeral with full honors was held for Vic Miller’s family at Arlington. Three generations of family members from six states attended. Because of

EXHIBIT E– Jan Girando Letters

Doug Sterner, we now put a wreath in front of our dad's marker each Veterans Day and rest assured that those yet to come will be as proud of his service and heroism as we are.

Who knows how many American families are in similar circumstances, trying to locate military records that validate the nation's highest service honors bestowed on their loved ones. They may not have their loved one's service number. They may not have the unit in which their loved one served. But they have a name, and that's all it takes to quickly locate and accurately vet the information through Mr. Sterner's database.

Why put people through months of confusion and anxiety when all they're trying to do is validate and take pride in their loved one's heroism? Let's humanize this process. Let's have a place that can cut through the miles of red tape and give people the information they need. The importance of Mr. Sterner's work cannot be overstated. It is accurate and well-researched. And it works.

We can -- and should -- make it easier for Americans to recognize and honor their most elite heroes.

Janice Miller Girando
5001 West 120th Place
Overland Park, KS 66209

2/6/2012

JANICE MILLER GIRANDO

August 14, 2008

The Honorable Ike Skelton
Chairman of the Armed Services Committee
Representative of Congressional District
Number 4 of Missouri
514-B North West Seven Highway
Blue Springs, Missouri 64014-2733

Re: H.R. 3769 (S2610), The Military Valor Roll of Honor Act of 2007

Dear Congressman Skelton:

Thank you so much for your kind reply to my letter of May 28, 2008, asking for your support on *The Military Valor Roll of Honor Act of 2007*, and for the amplification you provided regarding Congressman Duncan Hunter's National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 (H.R. 5658).

As you suggested, it is of great interest to me, particularly the language from House Report 110-652 referencing the establishment of a searchable database listing individuals who have been awarded military medals for valor.

I'm certainly glad Congressman Hunter has brought this significant issue to the attention of Congress, however the language in the report appears to have a loophole when it states this will pertain to "... at least a Roll of Honor for the Medal of Honor."

I have spoken to a representative of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society. As you know, it is a not-for-profit organization chartered by Congress. Based on that conversation, I believe the list of Medal of Honor recipients already exists!

It is for other award recipients like my father, who won the Navy Cross in WWII, that we need the expanded database searchable by the general public.

Here's an example of why. As I mentioned in my earlier letter, my father died in 1985. Due to family circumstances, most of his records pertaining to his military service and Navy Cross were lost. In an effort to have him memorialized in Arlington National Cemetery, I began searching the Internet for any information regarding my father's military career.

The following timeline illustrates the difficulty a private citizen faces when trying to locate information about his or her loved one's military honors.

EXHIBIT E– Jan Girando Letters

- 10/15/06 I began informally searching the Internet for information related to Dad's service career. Without a service number and with very little information about his service background, I looked up Ness City, Ness County, USS Benjamin Franklin, and various combinations of wording to locate any relevant information. I did uncover some data upon which to build.
- 12/13/06 I placed the first call to the Internment Services Branch of Arlington National Cemetery; they said they needed the DD214 to validate his eligibility. I did not know what this was and began researching it.
- 1/4/07 I sent a letter to the Internment Services Branch of ANC and attached two Change of Duty orders from 1945 that I had located, the Release from Active Duty orders from 1945, a copy of an Army and Navy Legion of Valor letter indicating approval if documents could be supplied, and all other information including what I believed to be his service number, enlistment date, etc.
- 1/16/07 I located a copy of Dad's Honorable Discharge form dated October 1, 1956, and sent them to ANC.
- 2/16/07 ANC said they needed a copy of the actual citation or the General Orders.
- 2/19/07 I came across the website HomeofHeroes.com and sent the Webmaster the information I had to this point.
- 2/20/07 Through his extensively researched records, Webmaster and Vietnam veteran Doug Sterner was able to verify my father's Navy Cross award. He phoned ANC to verify this personally.
- 2/21/07 ANC accepted Doug Sterner's verification. It was now 5 months after I began the search.
- 2/22/07 (est.) I completed the SF 180 and mailed it to St. Louis. I figured out what a SF180 was while researching the DD214.
- 4/10/07 My father's headstone was installed in ANC.
- 6/6/07 (est.) I received word from St. Louis that Dad didn't have a DD214 since he never saw active service.
- 7/11/07 The memorial service with full honors took place at ANC and was attended by 34 family members from 3 generations who gathered from 8 states.
- 9/15/07 I received the Navy Cross certificate along with a letter from the Navy documenting all of Dad's awards, including two Air Medals. It was now 48 weeks since I began my search.

It had taken nearly a year to locate this information.

EXHIBIT E- Jan Girando Letters

Clearly, we need to do better in honoring those whose sacrifices have resulted in our nation's highest awards for valor.

And we can.

The capability is there, the money for such a significant undertaking will be nominal, and certainly the Secretary of Defense will come to the same conclusion when he reports on or before March 31, 2009.

Because of my intimate experience with this issue, I would be happy to be called for any hearing that is held in conjunction with the Secretary of Defense's report. Please contact me if my testimony can be of value.

Again, thank you so much for your feedback and continued help.

Best regards,



Jan Girando
5001 West 120th Place
Overland Park, Kansas 66209
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EXHIBIT F– Helping Congressman Issa restore an Award History

San Diego Tribune

Scattered records tell long-lost stories of valor

By Steve Liewer

STAFF WRITER

November 17, 2008

ESCONDIDO – Kathy Herbert of Escondido knows that her father shed his blood defending his country and returned from World War II a hero.

What bothers her is how the U.S. government seems to have forgotten.

“I’d like to have acknowledgment from the government of what he did,” said Herbert, whose father died almost a quarter-century ago. “It’s disheartening, with all their technology, they can’t keep track of the men and women who have earned these awards.”

Herbert knew the bare facts from a yellowing newspaper clipping and a few sentences in a regimental history book she found among her father’s personal effects.



Staff Sgt. Robert J. Hutson, who grew up in Julian and was then 22, earned the Distinguished Service Cross – the Army’s second-highest award for combat valor. Hutson received it for actions in Italy on July 5, 1944.

Hutson and another soldier charged a pair of German machine-gun nests from which gunners were firing on wounded troops. They killed 11 German soldiers with their rifles and a grenade.

Herbert hit a brick wall in her sporadic efforts to obtain government records that would verify her father’s bravery in battle. The Department of Defense could barely document that he had ever served.

None of the military branches keeps centralized records of the men and women it rewards for valor. Although the nonprofit Congressional Medal of Honor Society tracks recipients of the highest combat award, the Medal of Honor, no one maintains a complete list of the other medals.

Pentagon officials frequently blame their lack of documentation for pre-1973 awards on a fire that year at a government warehouse in St. Louis. The blaze destroyed millions of personnel records.

EXHIBIT F– Helping Congressman Issa restore an Award History

Each year, hundreds of veterans or their families run into this barrier. Some of them write to their congressional representatives for help. Others give up in frustration.

The lucky ones find Doug Sterner, a Vietnam War veteran from Pueblo, Colo., who has spent thousands of hours retrieving stories of valor from forgotten government files.

Sterner discovered that the National Archives keeps all “general orders” the armed forces issue when they approve medals. Few people in the Pentagon or congressional offices – the places where most requests are directed – know about this back-channel way of obtaining award citations.

Using the Freedom of Information Act, Sterner has compiled a database with records for at least 120,000 of the estimated 750,000 valor awards the Pentagon has issued over the years.

Many of them are posted on his Web site, homeofheroes.com. Sterner has helped to verify the valor of hundreds of veterans and debunk the false claims of others.

Sterner was the driving force behind the Stolen Valor Act of 2006, which criminalizes false claims of valor. Now he is pushing for legislation that would require the Defense Department to create a searchable, public database for valor awards. Although the bill has been introduced in both houses of Congress, it appears unlikely to move out of subcommittees before the end of the current legislative session.

Last month, Herbert found Sterner's site and wrote to him. He confirmed that her father had earned the Distinguished Service Cross and told her how to get the citation. Working through the office of Rep. Darrell Issa, R-Vista, Herbert received a copy of the general order documenting the award just before Veterans Day.

Herbert had known about her father's life after the war. He became a purchasing agent, scuba diver and private pilot. He taught school and later worked for General Atomics before starting R.J. Supply Co., an industrial-supply business in San Diego.

Hutson was friendly and outgoing, but he rarely told his war stories. They died with him when he succumbed to cancer in 1984.

Now Herbert is glad she can reassemble the missing parts of his life for her daughter, Sarah.

Sarah is a college student studying in Italy, not far from the scene of her grandfather's heroics, and is absorbing World War II history.

“We wanted to bring some little pieces of information together,” Herbert said. “It's kind of a legacy we can leave with her.”

EXHIBIT G-- Military Order of the Purple Heart Call for Database



MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART National Headquarters

5413-B Backlick Road, Springfield, VA 22151
703-642-5360 Fax: 703-642-1841

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For information contact:

Nat'l Public Relations Director Ray Funderburk

(662) 772-5811 Mobile (901) 326-5611

Email: mophpr@bellsouth.net

October 5, 2007

Springfield, VA--"It is a National shame that a private citizen in Colorado maintains better records of American heroes than their own Government," said Henry Cook, National Commander of the Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH). "Even the Department of Defense has to go to Doug Sterner in Colorado to verify some awards presented to combat heroes."

Sterner has created a data base with digitized names and citations for some 35,000 of the top three levels of awards (Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, Air Force Cross, Army Distinguished Service medal and Navy Distinguished Service medal). All of this by himself and without outside funding.

He has further compiled the names and General Orders numbers for more than 80,000 of an estimated 120,000 recipients of the Silver Star.

Sterner's data base is widely used by all branches of the military as well as the FBI. If a person appears to be phony in their claim of holding bravery medals, the FBI goes to Sterner for possible verification of the individual's awards.

"Regardless of the cost to the Federal Government, we must begin to organize our records. How many people know that a half-million records of awards to members of the Navy and Marine Corps are maintained on index cards in boxes at the Navy yard in Washington, D.C.

That is pathetic," said Cook.. "With the state of the art electronics we have today, all records should be digitized and available for recall."

"Some families have spent years trying to find out what their loved one did to merit an award. Some parents never received medals for valor even though their loved one was awarded them posthumously. It is a disgusting situation," Cook sighed.

Cook went on to elaborate on the need for instant recall of awards. "We have documented cases where families were denied the right to bury their loved ones in Arlington National Cemetery because the records were lost. Parents have died not knowing their son was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and was a hero. These stories are all too plentiful and it is a National disgrace."

"We have an obligation to those who have gone into combat and been killed or wounded to at least recognize their sacrifices by maintaining their heroic deeds in a data base. The MOPH is in total support of the '*Military Valor Role of Honor Act of 2007*' being introduced by certain Members of Congress."

EXHIBIT H- Information on creating a Purple Heart Database

The Purple Heart, while low in precedence among U.S. military medals, is one of the most revered. Presented to members of our armed forces who are killed or wounded in action, it represents personal sacrifice. Award of the Purple Heart also, justifiably, moves the recipient to the "head of the line" in terms of Veterans assistance and benefits.

Because of this stature, the Purple Heart is one of the most frequently falsely claimed awards. There currently exists no complete database of Purple Heart recipients. Generating such a database is NOT a major problem. Below are details that could result in such a database

NAVY AND MARINE CORPS PURPLE HEART AWARDS.

According to the Department of the Navy, casualties for these two services from 1930 to present are:

Branch	Killed in Action	Wounded	Total
U.S. Navy	39,579	50,599	90,178
U.S. Marine Corps	38,377	190,496	228,873

This puts enumeration of Navy/USMC deaths and combat woundings at **319,051**, a reasonably accurate number for awards of the Purple Heart. These cases (KIA/WIA) are tracked by "Casualty Cards" unique to the Department of the Navy. Such casualty cards are similar to the two Marine Corps Casualty Cards shown below:

Casualty card for Raymond Hoffman, recipient of both the Navy Cross and Silver Star in World War II and subsequently KIA:

U.S.M.C. CASUALTY REPORT		DATE	CARD No	CAS. NO.
NAME HOFFMAN, Raymond George		RANK Sgt	CLASS USMC	IDENT. NO. 286789
ORGANIZATION CoH, 3Bn, 26Mar, 5MarDiv, FMF		TYPE OF CASUALTY KIA - 11	AREA PAC	DATE OF CASUALTY 2Mar45
DATE APPT/ENLIST 2Jul40	PLACE OF APPT/ENLIST Pittsburgh, Pa	DATE ACTIVE DUTY	PRIOR SER. MISC. STA. No	MARITAL S
DATE OF BIRTH 27May20	PLACE OF BIRTH Jeannette, Pa	LEGAL RESIDENCE Jeannette, Pa 36		AVCAD
NEXT OF KIN Mr. George L. Hoffman		RELATION Fath	ADDRESS OF KIN Jeannette, Pa.	
BENEFICIARY (Name and Address) DCE: Mr. George L. Hoffman, Father, Address above.				
PLACE OF CASUALTY Iwo, Volcano Is	NATURE OF WOUND 8-46-001 *** GSW, Head.		PRESENT STATUS	
REMARKS (Additional Information - Disposition of Remains) Buried Grave#1271, Row#14, Plot#5, 5thMarDiv Cemetery, Iwo, V.I., 10Mar45*				
DATE OF SOURCE OF REPORT MARCORPS. 5thMARDIV REP#35. REC'D CAS DIV 24Mar45.		CHECKER RELL		
NAME HOFFMAN, Raymond George		RANK Sgt 40	CLASS USMC *	IDENT. NO. 286789

EXHIBIT H- Information on creating a Purple Heart Database

Reverse of Hoffman casualty card:

*Burial Bulletin#16 fr Hqs, 5thMarDiv(rein)dtd 10Mar45, rec'd 21Mar45(1j)
 Service Record Book received JUL 4 1945 (mc)
 ***Cert. of death rec'd fr zone 20Jul45. (fs)
 % Father req remains ret to Sherman W. Mason, 201 N. First St. Jeannette, Penn., for pyt burial in Sacred Heart Cem, Jeannette, Penn. Appl dtd 20Oct47. (beo)

Casualty Card for John Slagle, Recipient of the Navy Cross in WWII:

		Marianas Islands.	
		Co. B, 1st Bn, 25th Mar, 4th Mar Div, FMF, Marshall Islands.	
1-5039		4-39-44	
Born:	14 Dec 1921	at	East Brady, Pa.
Enl:	29 Jul 1940	at	Pittsburgh, Pa. 8-11-40
Prior service: No.			
36 RESIDENCE: Kittanning, Pa.			
KIN: Mrs. Dorothy B. Slagle, wife, [REDACTED] Kittanning, Pa.			
13 HISTORY: * 31 Jan 44 Wounded in action at Marshall Is. *** RAD#100323 fr CG, 4th Mar Div to MARCORPS SECRET #33972 rec'd 2-14-44.			
* 15 Jun 44 Wounded in action at Saipan, Marianas Islands.			
13 Report #11 fr 4th Mar Div, FMF, to MARCORPS rec'd 7-12-44. *** Evac.			
SLAGLE, John Wilson		30 Plt Sgt.	USMC 289704

Reverse of Slagle Casualty Card:

*Date taken fr Secret Ltr fr CO, Hq, 25th Mar, 4th Mar Div, FMF to GMC dated 2-10-44 rec'd 5-2-44. (adr)
 *Date taken fr Secret Ltr fr SMO, USS CALVERT to Chief of BuM&S, dated 6-28-44, rec'd 8-5-44. (T)

***Evac. destination unknown.
 Gunfire wound in heel. Evac. to USS SOLACE. Fr Secret Ltr fr CO, Hq, 25th Mar, 4th Mar Div, FMF to GMC dated 2-10-44 rec'd 5-2-44. (adr)

***WOUND, gunshot back. Slightly wounded. Condition favorable. Trans to USS SAMARITAN 6-24-44. Secret Ltr. fr SMO, USS CALVERT to Chief of BuM&S, dated 6-28-44, rec'd 8-5-44. (T)

Trans to USNH, PSONY, Bremerton, Wash 18 Aug 44. Daily Pers Rep fr USNH, PSONY, Bremerton, Wash dtd 18 Aug 44 rec'd 2 Jan 45; also states psychoneurosis, war neurosis (emc)

EXHIBIT H– Information on creating a Purple Heart Database

Each of these cards has the following information on the casualty (Purple Heart Recipient) which is critical to history, as well as to research:

- ❖ Full Name
- ❖ Service Number (Except in post-1968 cases where SSNs are used)
- ❖ Rank
- ❖ Unit
- ❖ Date of Birth
- ❖ Place of Birth
- ❖ Home of Record
- ❖ Nature of Casualty (KIA or WIA)
- ❖ Date of Casualty
- ❖ Status of Casualty (Wounded: EVC (Evacuated), RTD (Returned to Duty), etc.
- ❖ Place of Burial in cases of KIA

Based on experimentation I believe it is not unreasonable that a good data entry clerk can enter this information at a rate of 50 records per hour. That would translate to 6,381 man-hours to enter all Navy/Marine Corps casualties into a digital database. For the cost of employing FOUR data entry clerks for 42 weeks, such a complete database of Navy/USMC Purple Heart recipients would be achievable.

ARMY AND AIR FORCE PURPLE HEART AWARDS.

While Army/Air Force Purple Hearts become somewhat more challenging, generally recorded in General Orders or Special Orders, there do exist digital records that can be imported to get immediate results.

NARA maintains a database of nearly all World War II Killed in Action, as well as a Korean War Casualty Database containing records of 109,975 Army casualties. (This database includes casualties who were not killed in a combat action and some woundings not related to combat that would not qualify for Purple Heart awards that need to be parsed out.) The Coffelt Database also maintained by NARA includes all Vietnam War killed (all branches of service) as well as other casualty databases.

Importing these various databases, parsing out duplicates, and identifying non-combat casualties would still result in an extensive ready-made database of casualties from World War II to present at very little initial cost as a great starting point.

By combining existing databases into a single, comprehensive database, and then supplementing it with records from issued General Orders, a rather complete database of Purple Heart recipients is achievable. On the next page is a sample Army General Orders illustrating how these awards are published in official documents from World War II, such General Orders being generally on file at NARA in College Park, Maryland.

EXHIBIT H- Information on creating a Purple Heart Database

HEADQUARTERS 63D INFANTRY DIVISION
APO 410 US ARMY

GENERAL ORDERS) 19 March 1945
NUMBER 49)

Award of the First Oak Leaf Cluster to the Purple Heart. I
Award of the Purple Heart. II

I. AWARD OF THE FIRST OAK LEAF CLUSTER TO THE PURPLE HEART - By direction of the President, under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, 22 September 1943, as amended, the First Oak Leaf Cluster to the Purple Heart is awarded Paul Culbreth, 34679126, Staff Sergeant, Infantry, 253d Infantry Regiment, for wounds received on 1 March 1945, in Germany.

II. AWARD OF THE PURPLE HEART - By direction of the President, under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, 22 September 1943, as amended, the Purple Heart is awarded to the following from units indicated:

Rank	Name	ASN	Arm or Service	Location	Date of Wound
<u>253d Inf Regt</u>					
Pvt	Robert R Barber	32285933	INF	Germany	7 Mar 45
T Sgt	Archie J Bayer	12199611	INF	Germany	8 Mar 45
Pvt	Stanley L Becker	36912538	INF	Germany	7 Mar 45
Pvt	William B Clarke Jr	44036499	INF	Germany	7 Mar 45
2d Lt	Edward A Huscher	0558785	INF	Germany	6 Mar 45
Pfc	Joe N Jimenez	38246574	INF	Germany	7 Mar 45
Pvt	James F McNerney	36457365	INF	Germany	23 Feb 45
Sgt	John H McVeigh	19097725	INF	Germany	7 Mar 45
Pfc	Salvatore T Panico	42071704	INF	Germany	7 Mar 45
2d Lt	Arthur F Perrella	01050031	INF	Germany	8 Mar 45
Capt	Angello E Pilla	01290123	INF	Germany	27 Feb 45
Pvt	Frank Rappa	3041044	INF	Germany	5 Mar 45
Sgt	Stanley R Somerville	35174559	INF	Germany	7 Mar 45
S Sgt	Edward L Warmoth	34966270	INF	Germany	7 Mar 45
Pfc	Dale A Wright	38593062	INF	Germany	27 Feb 45
<u>254th Inf Regt</u>					
1st Lt	Bernard L Rosen	01080320	INF	Germany	9 Mar 45
<u>255th Inf Regt</u>					
Pvt	Martin Kurtz	42182040	INF	France	7 Mar 45
T Sgt	Thomas E Quinn	35098944	INF	Germany	4 Mar 45
<u>63d Div Arty</u>					
Pfc	Jack Colston	38403801	FA	France	18 Feb 45
<u>861st FA Bn</u>					
Cpl	Vaughn H Mountz	33237518	FA	Germany	25 Feb 45
Pfc	James L Nelson	33645216	FA	Germany	6 Mar 45

As with the Navy's casualty cards, this is information that is quickly and easily transcribed into a digital database (although the information available is not as extensive).

Further, at present in the process of entering award citations (and recommended as part of a comprehensive digitizing of award citations), when text in a citation references wounds received in an action, I note that wounding in my database. This alone can recover indications of a Purple Heart worthy award, often in cases where an award was made under a "lost" special order or in which a lapse in record-keeping failed to even track that combat wounding.

EXHIBIT I– ENDORSEMENTS of Military Times Hall of Valor

❖ EDITORIAL - Stopping fakers

ARMY TIMES

March 5, 2012 edition

The case of Xavier Alvarez, convicted for falsely claiming to be a Medal of Honor recipient, made it to the Supreme Court on Feb. 22, effectively putting the federal Stolen Valor Act on trial.

The case boils down to whether lies told by Alvarez, 53, about his service are constitutionally protected free speech. During his run for a seat on a California district water board in 2007, Alvarez falsely claimed he had served in the Marine Corps and had received the Medal of Honor.

Supporters of the law, which makes it a crime to falsely claim military medals, say Alvarez and his ilk are con artists who steal an unearned share of the prestige associated with military valor.

Critics of the law note that theft and fraud already are crimes. They say giving the government responsibility to decide which lies are criminal and which are harmless poses a danger to First Amendment rights to free speech.

Lying about military valor awards is abhorrent. But it's a waste of time and money dealing with such lowlifes through the legal system. What's needed is a comprehensive national database of military medal winners.

Pentagon officials have resisted calls for such a database, saying it's virtually impossible to create a comprehensive list.

Not so. Military Times' own Hall of Valor, compiled over years of research by its curator, Doug Sterner, shows such a list can be built if the interest and will are there. Our database now contains more than 98,000 citations for Silver Stars and higher, including 100 percent of the Medals of Honor, Navy Crosses and Air Force Crosses awarded.

Of course, such an effort would require the services to straighten out their disjointed processes for awarding and recording medals.

But if this problem is serious enough to require a federal law to combat it, surely such a database is an idea worth pursuing.

❖ Office of Secretary of Defense - Defense POW & Missing Personnel Office (DPMO)

I have found the "Hall of Valor" collection to be the most expedient and accurate public resource available to search for appropriate valor awards and honors. In general, submitting research requests through the Human Resource Command and G-1 Administrative branch are time consuming and require long drawn out processes of paperwork. I only wish you had all awards on file and not just the top tier. The Army HRC has a good system for current war awards data, but has lacked the system and structure for past conflicts which is where the majority of fraudulent cases stem from.

More importantly, my specific work with Mr. Sterner and the Hall of Valor organization to provide me timely and historically accurate Prisoner of War Records collection has been exceptional. The Defense POW and Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) is