

Remarks
2/4 Association Reunion Memorial Service
Camp Pendleton, CA November 8, 2018
LtCol Warren C. Cook Jr., 2/4 Battalion Commander

Good Morning. And, welcome home. It is an honor to host the 2018 2/4 Association Reunion here in sunny southern California. We have spectacular week planned with a variety of exciting events. However, before we get into the fun, we need to pause to remember our dead.

We remember all 1,109 Bastards who gave their last full measure. Those who lie asleep in ground beneath the shimmering haze of the Shanghai morning and amid the pounding rain at Corregidor, and those gazing over the glistening Subic Bay.

On this day we recall those 233 Magnificent Bastards who served in the battle of Dai Do and did not return to receive the grateful thanks of a nation. We remember those who still sleep where they were left — amid the rice paddies in the valleys and swamps of Vietnam — on the beaches and terraced hills surrounding Van Tuong Peninsula.

We remember those who lie buried in the rank jungles of Guam and Okinawa and in all the distant isles of the Pacific. And we remember those in the palm groves and allies of Ramadi. We remember those in bone chilling, rugged hills of Afghanistan.

We remember those who lie buried amid loving friends in the lovely cemeteries of our great Nation.

We remember those who lie in unknown resting places in almost every land, and those gallant men and women whose grave is unending sea. Especially do we remember those who died as prisoners of war, remote from their homeland and from the comforting presence of kin.

We recall, too, the staunch friends and families who loved and supported their Bastards through it all. And with that, the Magnificent Bastard salute those giants at Dai Do, who forged the soul of 2/4.

We are ever grateful.

In particular, we are grateful for one of the many Bastard Medal of Honor recipients.

The Congressional Medal of Honor was the creation of two of our greatest presidents. George Washington conceived the medal in 1782. Abraham Lincoln crafted it into law in 1861. The first Marine to win the Medal of Honor was Corporal John Mackie. While aboard the USS Galena on the James River in May of 1862, his ship came under intense fire from the bluffs overlooking the river. With the decks awash in the blood of his shipmates, Corporal Mackie led his Marines through a hail of iron and lead to man the cannons, whose crews had been killed or wounded. They drove off the attackers with well-aimed fire, thus in the estimate of all saving the ship and all of the lives of those aboard.

Many of the Bastards are cut from the same cloth as Corporal Mackie—and we're blessed enough to have one here today. Col Vargas—you are an inspiration.

Thank you.

And, thank you to all for attending the 2018 2/4 Association Reunion.

Welcome Home.