

Missouri Marine Among Those Honored At Quantico **News**

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([newstribune.com](http://www.newstribune.com)) - Nearly 44 years after 1st Lt. Bernard Plassmeyer's plane went down in South Vietnam, the Westphalia native was among those honored April 25 at Marine Corps Base Quantico near Triangle, Va.



He was among 50 members of The Basic School's Class 6-67 - the sixth graduating class of 1967 - to have their names etched on a monument. Plassmeyer was the class honor graduate out of nearly 500 in his class.

Plassmeyer's brother, Norb Plassmeyer, was one of those attending the monument dedication as a guest of the Marine organizers. Norb Plassmeyer, who has lived on the home farm at Westphalia since returning there in 1971 after a brief career in the aerospace industry, is a lobbyist in Jefferson City.

He said the service given to the country by the class of Marines at the time his brother was in it and since then has been "overwhelming."

"Having the monument out there, it honors my brother, but it honors the whole class in a special way," he said. "So it is a great thing that will inspire future Marines as they train for service."

The monument's inscription reads: "This monument is dedicated to the 498 officers of Basic Class 6-67, and their families and friends, whose lives were changed forever by the war in Vietnam. Forty-three men from our class were killed in Vietnam, one man was killed in Lebanon, and six lost their lives in training. Over 200 members of our class were wounded in combat."

On Sept. 11, 1970, Bernard Plassmeyer was piloting an A-4E on a support mission near the A Chau Valley, Thua Thien Province. It appeared his plane was shot down by hostile groundfire. Evidence suggests he did not eject from the plane, which disintegrated upon impact.

He initially was listed as missing in action. In 1976, he was declared dead for lack of evidence to the contrary. His body has not been found.

Born in Westphalia, he attended St. Joseph Grade School and Fatima High School. He graduated from Parks College of Aeronautical Technology of St. Louis University with a degree in aeronautical engineering in 1966, and joined the Marine Corps in 1967. He had completed around 100 missions before his plane was shot down.

Donnie Shearer, retired gunnery sergeant and photographer of the image that was used on the memorial, fought in Vietnam while capturing photos of the conflict. At the dedication ceremony, he shared his perspective on the lieutenants of the class of 6-67.

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<http://www.kttn.com/kgozfm/modules/news/article.php?storyid=112297>

“So many were killed within three to four months,” Shearer said. “It was open season on lieutenants and platoon commanders. It was horrible. These are the Marines of the past.”

The monument was completed after more than 100 financial contributions and two years of work.