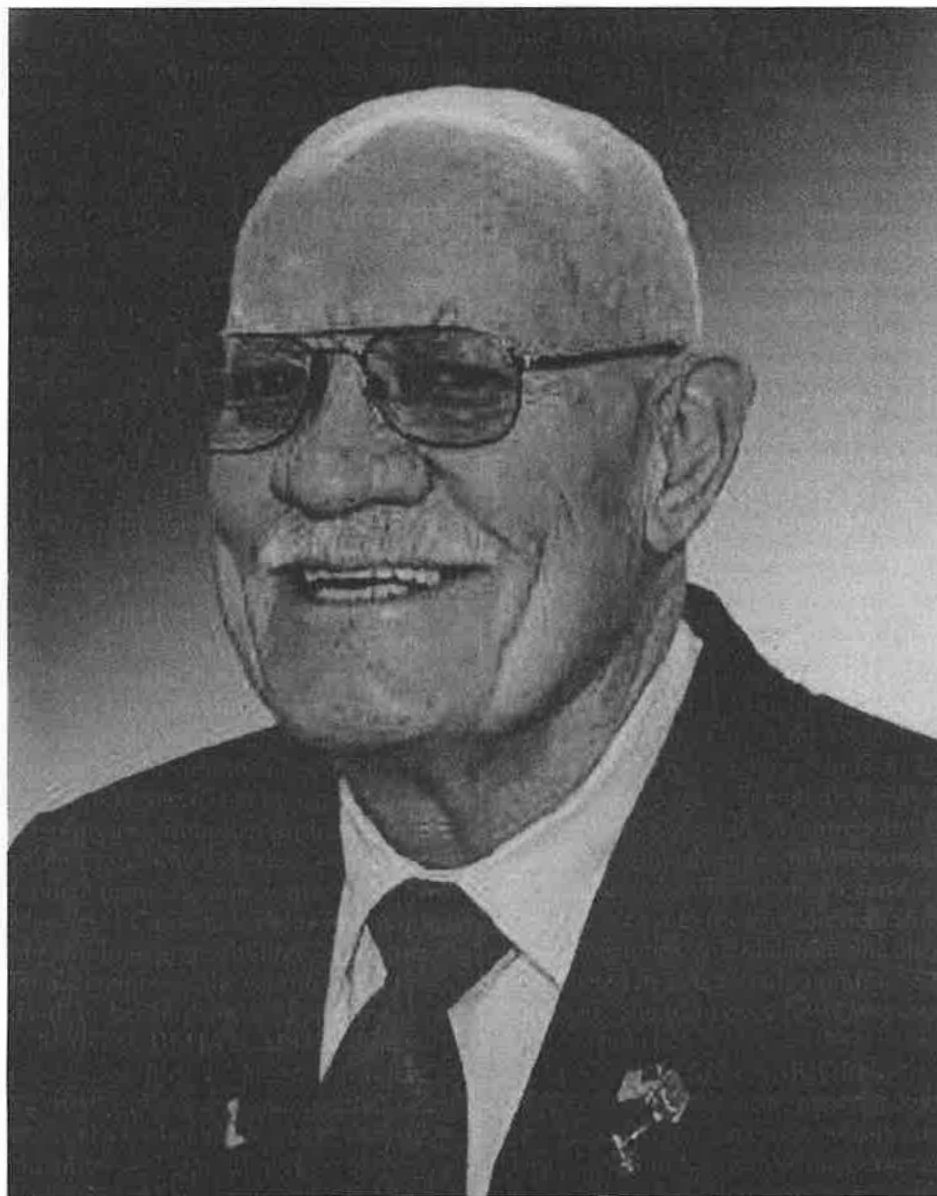


Col. John W. Guy, USMC (Ret.) Distinguished Alumnus

by Julianne Couch
Alumnews Editor

Fast Facts

Education: BS Petroleum Geology '59, M.A., UW; Asian History, University of San Diego
Resides in Powell, Wyoming
Occupation: Colonel, United States Marine Corps, retired
Selected accomplishments: Former president, UW Alumni Association
College of Arts & Sciences Distinguished Alumni Award, 2007
Best known for: Silver Star Medal for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action in the Republic of Vietnam.
Family: Wife, Darlene (Malisch), three children, Tammy, Shelly and John Jr.
Hobbies: Reading history and military magazines; hiking the back country searching for items of geological or archaeological interest.



John Guy, BS Petroleum Geology, '59

Wyoming State Auditor and retired Air Force Col. Rita C. Meyer can think of no one she'd "rather share a foxhole with than John Guy." Former gubernatorial candidate Raymond B. Hunkins believes Guy's efforts in northwest Wyoming during his campaign were the reason his campaign did so well in that part of the state. "If John had been the candidate instead of the candidate's surrogate, we might have done even better!" Milford W. Eversole claims that "if John Guy were ever injured, he will probably bleed brown and gold." Retired Air Force Lt. Col. William V. Woodward asserts: "John Guy's life has been a unique inspiration to young graduates and a source of great pride to the university he loves."

These are just a few of the testimonials that demonstrate why Col. John Guy has been named a Distinguished Alumni UW or 2008.

Guy is a Wyoming native who says he attended UW because that is where his friends went. He says he was not academically prepared so dropped out and joined the Marine Corps. When he returned he earned his degree and then competed for a commission as a Marine sergeant. "I made the grade and went back on active duty, integrated into the regular establishment, and the rest is history."

His education continued with course work at the University of Hawaii's East-West Center and at the Univer-

sity of San Diego. Juggling school with ever-increasing responsibility and rank in the Marines slowed down his degree progress, so it took many years for him to complete the requirements for his MA in Asian History. "It took me a total of 20 years and four different colleges to complete something I always wanted to do."

While at UW, Guy was a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity. He remembers an especially fun time leading the fraternity in the Homecoming parade. He wore, among other apparel, "cowboy boots and a girls checkered skirt and used a bathroom plunger as a drum majorette's baton," to lead the group along the parade route.

Perhaps in spite of that rambunctious behavior, a series of promotions over his 38-year military career culminated in his achieving the rank of Colonel. As Hunkins points out, "The Marine Corps doesn't grant promotions very easily, just like it doesn't give out medals very easily. John has received plenty of both, and in doing so has brought honor on himself, his family, his state, and of course, the University of Wyoming."

Guy's distinguished career included service with the 2nd Battalion, 1st Ma-

rines when it was deployed during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. "We knew Guantanamo Bay was to be held at all costs until we could receive follow-on forces within the week. And that if the Cuban and Russian Forces were to attack and overrun the Naval Base, then there better not be any Marines alive – fight to the last man. That is how we saw it at the time," he said.

His unit was transplanted to the 3rd Marine Division on Okinawa, where he served as Rifle Company Executive Officer before assuming command of Headquarters and Service Company, 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines. He was then transferred to Hawaii where he served until 1967 as the Enemy Order of Battle officer. Also during these years, Guy saw service in Vietnam, first in 1964 as a training advisor then as an Assistant Plans Officer in 1970 and 1971.

It was in 1969 that Guy's actions in Vietnam earned him the Silver Star Medal. He was serving as Acting Senior Advisor to the 6th Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, Army of the Republic of Vietnam at the Tam Ky Airport, Quang Tin Province. While coordinating an operation by radio contract intended to clear an area for an air

strike, the airfield came under intense small arms fire from a North Vietnamese Army battalion. While continuing to maintain radio contact, Guy was wounded in the face by a bullet which lodged in his jaw. According to the citation, "Despite extreme pain and temporary paralysis of his legs, he continued to operate his radio, realizing that the operation was at a critical point where proper coordination could mean the difference between a complete victory and the escape of the enemy, and that he was the only one thoroughly knowledgeable of the situation. As a result of Maj. Guy's continued courageous and professional performance of duty after being severely wounded, 168 North Vietnamese were killed in action, while only eight friendly soldiers were killed."

"I am very lucky to be alive," Guy said. "There were close calls before, but this one hit close to home. When the military surgeon extracted the bullet from an AK-47, from my jaw, I decided to have it hung on a chain. So, once a year I wear it around my neck on the 25th of February – 'bullet day' – to commemorate life."

Guy has received numerous medals and citations over his career, including the Silver Star; two Legions of Merit; Bronze Star with Combat "V"; Purple Heart; Meritorious Service; Joint Service Commendation; Navy Commendation with Combat "V"; Combat Action Ribbon; Navy Unit Commendation with Bronze Star; and Meritorious Unit Commendation with Bronze Star. In addition, the Vietnamese government awarded Guy the Cross of Gallantry with Gold and Silver Stars; the Honor Medal, First Class; and the Staff of Honor, First Class. The Republic of Korea awarded him the Korean Order of National Security Merit. "I call the place for my awards, plaques and other memorabilia my 'I love me' room," he explained. "Late at night, while softly walking through those rooms, I hear the past whispering to me. I am a very lucky man – relatively healthy, alive, with a supportive family whom I love and receive their love in return. I have been blessed!"

After Guy retired in 1990, he turned his energy to civic pursuits, among them serving the University of Wyoming. "I wanted to give back to the university and the best way to do it was via the UWAA. Being retired, I could devote time and effort, working alongside Robbie Darnall and others who wanted to keep supporting our college in this manner."

The Distinguished Alumni award has a special meaning for Guy. "I have watched over the years those who have received the DA award and understand the caliber of those recipients, and feel honored by the Alumni Association and the university to be considered in their league." ❧