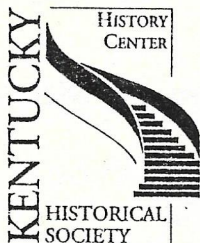


*Kentucky Historical Society
Highway Marker Program*



Dedication of
Historical Marker

for

SGT RONALD L. NIEWAHNER



Saturday, May 20, 2000

1:00 p. m.

KENTUCKY HISTORICAL HIGHWAY MARKER

Marker #2046

SGT RONALD L. NIEWAHNER

*Born in Covington, SGT Niewahner
(1948-1968) distinguished himself
by heroic actions in Vietnam. As
squad leader in Co. B, 1st Bn., 5th
Inf., 25th Inf. Div., U.S. Army,
he evacuated fallen comrade in
bullet-swept area. Fatally wounded
returning to rescue second soldier.
Awarded Bronze Star, Silver Star,
Gallantry Cross, and Purple Heart.
Presented by Villa Hills Historical Society*

*Location: Villa Hills, Niewahner Dr. &
Valley Trails Dr., Kenton Co.*

PROGRAM

| | |
|---|---|
| <i>Master of Ceremonies</i> | <i>Robert Kramer</i> |
| <i>Presentation of Colors</i> | <i>American Legion Post #20, Elsmere</i> |
| <i>Pledge of Allegiance</i> | <i>Ed and Lou Niewahner</i> |
| <i>Military Remarks</i> | <i>William K. Clark</i> COL US Army (RET) |
| <i>Invocation</i> | <i>Rev. Raymond Hartman, Pastor</i> St. Joseph Church |
| <i>Comments and Introduction of Speaker</i> | <i>Dr. James Claypool, Kenton Co. Chair</i> Historical Highway Marker Program |
| <i>Keynote Address</i> | <i>The Honorable Louie B. Nunn</i> Governor of Kentucky, 1967-71 |
| <i>Remarks</i> | <i>Charles Meyers, Chief District Engineer</i> Covington Department of Highways Kentucky Transportation Cabinet <i>Ron Bryant, Curator of Rare Books and</i> Director of Library Reading Rooms Kentucky Historical Society |
| <i>Family Comments</i> | <i>Jim Niewahner</i> |
| <i>Marker Unveiling</i> | <i>Millie Niewahner, Gayle Starks,</i> <i>Renee Berkley, Governor Nunn</i> |
| <i>Music</i> | <i>Jennifer Taphorn, Vocalist</i> "I'm Proud to be an American" |
| <i>Balloon Release</i> | <i>Villa Hills Historical Society</i> |
| <i>Recognition of Special Guests</i> | <i>Mike Sadouskas, President</i> Villa Hills Historical Society |

Adjournment to River Ridge School for light refreshments

Our Gratitude To:

Villa Hills Historical Society
Mike Sadouskas, President
Ed Niewahner, Vice President
Sue Kramer, Secretary
Sister Teresa Wolking, Treasurer
Lois Hall, Board of Directors
Bob Kramer, Board of Directors
Steve Devoto, Board of Directors
Steve Schletker, Board of Directors

Kenton County Historical Highway Marker Program
Dr. James Claypool, Chair

James C. Codell III, Secretary
Kentucky Transportation Cabinet

Charles Meyers, Chief District Engineer
Covington Office, Department of Highways

Mike Reckers, District Traffic Engineer
Covington Office, Department of Highways

Kevin Graffagnino, Director
Kentucky Historical Society

Kentucky Historical Society
An Agency of the Education,
Arts and Humanities Cabinet

.....

*The Kentucky Historical Highway Markers is a
program of the Kentucky Historical Society in cooperation
with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet.*

For information about the program contact:

Dianne Wells
Kentucky Historical Society
100 West Broadway
Frankfort, KY 40601-1931

Telephone: 502-564-1792
Fax: 502-564-0475
E-mail: Dianne.Wells@mail.state.ky.us



We, the brothers and sisters of Ronald L. Niewahner, and the children of Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Niewahner, deceased parents, and our families, express our sincere gratitude to all those who have participated in any way in the founding of this marker to honor our brother.

Our parents, who were most saddened by the tragedy of his death, would be deeply grateful for the honor you are bestowing on him.

Thanks to each and every person who has joined us today in celebrating this memorable event.

Ed Niewahner, Millie Niewahner,
Jim Niewahner, Lou Niewahner,
Mike Niewahner, Gayle Starks,
and Renee Berkley

IN MEMORIAM



JIM OSBORN/The Post

Edward Niewahner holds a display case with his brother's medals.

Marker honors the spirit of a hero

By Peggy Kreimer

Post staff reporter

The last time Ed Niewahner saw his brother Ron, Ron was napping on Ed's sofa after Thanksgiving dinner in 1968, just before shipping out to Vietnam.

But the image Ed replays most is the one described in a letter from Ron's infantry commander explaining how Ron, tall and skinny and 10 days past his 20th birthday, ran through a bullet-swept field to carry a wounded man to safety and then raced back to save a second man.

Young Ron Niewahner won a Silver Star for saving two lives. But he never saw the medal, just as he never saw the shrapnel that sliced into his shoulder and killed him in that field.

It was Dec. 13, 1968. He had been in Vietnam 17 days.

One minute Ron Niewahner was the kid down the street who stocked shelves at Fedders Market, shot pool in his friends' basements and fell asleep on his older brother's couch. The next minute he was rushing into death to save someone else.

"I guess you could call him a hero," said Ed Niewahner.

That's what the Villa Hills Historical Society will be calling him next Saturday, when it unveils a highway marker in his honor at the corner at Niewahner Drive and Valley Trails Drive in Villa Hills. The marker will tell the story of the only soldier from Villa Hills to die in Vietnam.

But Ron Niewahner's story didn't end in Vietnam, Ed said.

"It's been 31 years, but he's still part of the family."

Ron was the sixth of Mildred and Jock Niewahner's eight children.

"If you go to any of my brothers' or sisters' homes, you'll see his picture hanging on the wall. We get together annually for a campout, and we'll hang his picture, and now Mom and Dad's picture, on a tree. We don't just give up," said Ed Niewahner.

"They may be gone, but they're still with us."

Sometimes Ed Niewahner looks at his nieces and nephews and wonders what Ron's children would have looked like.

"We figure he would have been the father of five children. He loved kids," Ed said.

The picture isn't as clear on his job. Ron was still a carefree kid when he enlisted in the Army. He might have ended up as an over-the-road truck driver like another brother, Mike.

He would have been the joker in the family, Ed Niewahner said. He had his own pool cue as a teen-ager, so by now he

See **MARKER** on 6K