



San Diego City Attorney Jan I. Goldsmith

NEWS RELEASE

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Chief Deputy City Attorney Joe Cordileone Awarded Marine Corp Silver Star *Cordileone saved fellow Marines while under direct fire and was wounded in the process*

San Diego, CA: Chief Deputy City Attorney Joe Cordileone will be awarded the Marine Corp Silver Star for his bravery in combat. Cordileone and his unit were involved in the Battle of Khe San during the Vietnam War. On April 30, 1967, then PFC Cordileone and his company attacked a North Vietnamese stronghold known as Hill 881 South.

Cordileone's company knew the enemy was dug in and waiting for them. The enemy was entrenched in hidden bunkers and had already set up pre planned fields of fire. Cordileone's company was completely surrounded in a clearing, while pre planned mortar fire rained down upon them. As his fellow marines were being killed and injured, Cordileone worked to pull them from the line of fire.

PFC Cordileone's platoon commander was knocked unconscious by one of the blasts, as Cordileone and his fellow Marines, attempted to evacuate him, another mortar blast struck, killing the platoon commander and two of the Marines and wounding Cordileone and another Marine as well.

Now, 46 years later, the Silver Star will be awarded to Chief Deputy City Attorney Joe Cordileone for his gallantry in action against the enemy. Although it was recorded as one of the worst battles of the war, very few men in the unit were recommended for awards at the time. However, more than forty years later, John Admire, a former platoon commander who was transferred shortly before the battle met up with men from his old unit at a reunion. As he listened to their reports he couldn't understand why so few had been recommended for awards. It was then he learned that those in a position to recommend awards had been killed. He began interviewing the survivors. Because he had been their platoon commander, regulations permitted him to recommend the Marines for awards. He presented the Marine Corps with affidavits from the survivors describing which of their fellow Marines deserved recognition.

"We are honored to have one of our own deputies receive this award for gallantry in action," said City Attorney Jan Goldsmith. "Chief Deputy Cordileone truly exemplifies extraordinary heroism along with the men and women that risk their lives for our country."

The Marine Corp Awards Ceremony will be held on Friday, September 20, 2013, at 7:45 a.m. at the Marine Corp Recruit Depot in San Diego.

EDITORS: Photo of Lance Corporal Cordileone, 1968 attached for your use
Credit: Joe Cordileone

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