

LELAND S MCCANTS III**Class 34A-67**

is honored on Panel 35W, Row 9 of
the Vietnam Veterans Memorial

Full Name: LELAND S MCCANTS III
Wall Name: LELAND S MCCANTS III
Date of Birth: 10/31/1948
Date of Casualty: 12/30/1968
Date of Death: 12/30/1968
Home of Record: ALEXANDRIA
County of Record: CITY OF ALEXANDRIA
State: VA
Branch of Service: ARMY
Rank: 1LT
Casualty Country: SOUTH VIETNAM
Casualty Province: KIEN HOA
Status: MIA



1LT McCants was assigned to Battery B, 3rd Battalion, 34th Artillery. He served as a Forward Observer with Company A, 3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division. He died while saving another soldier from drowning.

Leland is buried at Becks Lutheran Church Cemetery, Lexington, Davidson County, North Carolina

From the wall-usa.com

I was in the same unit in Vietnam.

I served in the same unit with Lt McCants. He was our Lt. in charge of our artillery. He was very proud of his roll and handled it very well. The information listed about him is not accurate, as he had been in country for a while. He was assigned with us at least as early as July of 1968. He died by jumping in and saving another soldier and then just slipped under the surface. We searched very intensely and even used some small helicopters that were supporting us. The real ironic thing is that earlier that day he had said that if he were to die there, he wanted to have made an impact. He did. I was an RTO for the Company Captain and was in the same command group as Lt. McCants. Frank Martinolich (A/3/60, 9th Infantry)

Frank Martinolich
January 14, 2004



Remembering Leland McCants, III

Name: Leland Stanford McCants III

Rank/Branch: O2/US Army

Unit: Battery B, 3rd Battalion, 34th Artillery, 9th Infantry Division

Date of Birth: 31 October 1948

Home City of Record: Alexandria, VA

Date of Loss: 30 December 1968

Country of Loss: South Vietnam

Loss Coordinates: 100531N 1062149E

Status (in 1973): Killed/Body Not Recovered

Category: 3

Aircraft/Vehicle/Ground: Boat

Other Personal In Incident: (none missing)

REMARKS: DROWNED IN RIVER CROSSING

SYNOPSIS: On December 30, 1968 1Lt. Leland McCants of Battery B, 3rd Battalion, 34th Artillery, 9th Infantry Division, was an artillery forward observer with an infantry company from the same division. During the unit's patrol in Kien Hoa Province, South Vietnam, a river crossing was required and the crossing operation one of the men fell into the river. McCants, in an effort to rescue the man, went after him and subsequently drowned. There is no further information on the first man. Two rifle companies made intensive ground searches and there were searches by helicopter along the stream, including the Rach An Binh and Naga Tu Kinh rivers, but no further information was learned.

Dept. of the Army

HQ, 3rd Battalion, 34th Artillery

A letter from LT McCants' commander to the family

Leland has been one of the most outstanding young officers I have had in the battalion. His bravery, sincerity and maturity gained him the respect of all who had the privilege of being associated with him. By coincidence I have had much more personal contact with Leland than with other forward observers. It always gave me a good deal of confidence to know that he was the forward observer with a particular operation since I had absolute confidence in his ability. You can be proud of Leland. He is the type of young man all of would like to have for a son. Leland has given much to this organization and the people in it.

AWARD: AIR MEDAL

TO: Leland S. McCants,III
First Lieutenant, Field Artillery, United States Army,
Co. A, 3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division

DATE OF ACTION: 14 April 1968 to 10 August 1968

THEATER: Republic of Vietnam

FOR: Meritorious achievement while participating in sustained aerial flight.

AUTHORITY: By direction of the President.

Lieutenant McCants distinguished himself by meritorious achievement while participating in sustained aerial flight in support of combat ground forces of the Republic of Vietnam during the period 14 April 1968 to 10 August 1968. During this period Lt. McCants actively participated in more than twenty-five (25) aerial missions over hostile territory in support of counterinsurgency operations. During all of these missions he displayed the highest order of air discipline and acted in accordance with the best traditions of the service. By his determination to accomplish his mission, in spite of the hazards and by his outstanding degree of professionalism and devotion to duty, he has brought credit upon himself, his organization and the service.

AWARD: Bronze Star Medal for Heroism

(with 'v' device-First Oak Cluster)

TO: Leland S. McCants, III
First Lieutenant, Field Artillery, United States Army,
Battery B, 3rd Battalion, 34th Artillery, 9th Infantry Division

DATE OF ACTION: 23 October 1968

REASON: For heroism in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. First Lieutenant McCants distinguished himself by valorous actions on 23 October 1968 while serving as a forward observer with Co. A, 3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry on reconnaissance in force mission in Kien Hoa Province. Lt. McCants, disregarding his own safety, exposed himself to enemy fire for more than four hours as he called in air strikes and artillery on enemy positions resulting in complete devastation of the enemy. LT McCants' personal bravery and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, the 9th Infantry Division, and the United States Army.

AUTHORITY: By direction of the President.

AWARD: SOLDIERS MEDAL

TO: Leland S. McCants, III
1st Lt., Field Artillery, U.S. Army,
Battery B, 36th Battalion,
34th Artillery, 9th Infantry Division

DATE OF ACTION: 30 December 1968

FOR: Heroism not involving actual conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. First Lieutenant McCants distinguished himself by valorous actions on 30 December 1968 while serving as Artillery Forward Observer with Co. A, 3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry on reconnaissance in force mission near Mo Cay, Keim Hoa Province. As a man of his company began to flounder while crossing a large canal, Lt. McCants, with selfless disregard for his own safety, immediately entered the water and saved the life of his drowning companion by pushing him to the safety of shallow water. LT McCants sacrificed his own life to save his comrade. The heroic actions of LT McCants were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, the 9th Infantry Division and the United States Army.

AUTHORITY: By direction of the President.

AWARD: Bronze Star Medal

TO: Leland S. McCants, III
First Lieutenant, United States Army,
Battery B, 3rd Battalion, 34th Field Artillery,
9th Infantry Division

DATE OF ACTION: 18 March 1968 to 30 December 1968

THEATER: Republic of Vietnam

REASON: For meritorious service in connection with military operations against hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam.

AUTHORITY: By direction of the President.

From: <http://oldestsis.tripod.com/leland.html>
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