From: Joe Barnes <superjoe04@yahoo.com>

Date: September 29, 2015 at 13:41:12 CDT

To: Jim Campbell <jkcampbelljr@gmail.com>

Subject: Yesterday

Reply-To: Joe Barnes <superjoe04@yahoo.com>

Jim,

I wanted to send you (and everyone involved) a sincere thank you for yesterday. It was truly awesome for me for 3 primary reasons.

1. I have not been to Washington DC since my deployment and certainly have not had many conversations with older vets. This gave me a whole new perspective on how much I have in common with our older warriors, both in experience and sacrifice.

2. Impossible not to think about my Dad the whole day. As time passes after Dad's passing, I go through longer periods without really reflecting about him and how he molded me in the person I am today (which can be a horrible feeling when you realize how long it has been since my last true reflection about him). This was not an issue yesterday, as he was front and center in my brain all day...which was very good for my soul/spirit.

3. I really took hold of the message that "history is lost, if we don't share our experiences." My vet (Vietnam) said he has tried to forget everything about Vietnam, and by the end we were talking very freely about it. I have no doubt it was therapeutic for him by being able to share his experiences which in return was therapeutic for me.

Near the end of the trip, I was asked "what was you favorite part of the trip?" by numerous people. This was an easy answer for me as it was spending time with Tom at the Vietnam Memorial as I could see it had a large affect on him reading the names of his lost brothers. It also made me reflect on Dad's time overseas and the sacrifice Mom and him made during that time.

My answer is now changed. Without a doubt, the best part of the trip was the homecoming. I asked Tom, 1 simple question as were walking through getting greeted/thanked by so many people....I simply asked, "I imagine this is a little different than your homecoming from Vietnam?" As I could see his eyes filling up with emotion (with his wife by his side), he said, "this is truly amazing" I shook his hand one more time and told him he deserves all of this (emotion now filling up within me after seeing his reaction) and I was on my way.

Needless to say, I was not one bit tired for my 1 1/2 hour drive home. Semper Fi, Joe Barnes