

Borgman's military service earns honors

BY P.G. GENTRUP
Contributor

John Borgman, born in Aurora, Nov. 2, 1932, on Sunnyside Avenue to Ernest and Elsie Borgman, was the quint-essential Special Forces Green Beret, serving three tours in Vietnam, earning the highly coveted master parachutist badge, serving the nation for more than 20 years, and leading the last battalion size combat jump in Vietnam in 1968 with 500 men under his command.

For his faithful and dedicated service, Borgman will be honored Saturday, May 14, at Trinity Christian Church on Pribble Road in Lawrenceburg at 6 p.m.

He had two sisters, Donna, who passed away in 1976, and Catherine, who lives in Versailles.

Borgman attended St. Mary Grade School in Aurora, and still is a faithful member of St. Mary's where he regularly attends Mass. Borgman, baptized

at St. Mary in 1932, will attest that four generations of his family have attended the school and belonged to the parish since 1906.

His three grandchildren, Elsa, Evan and Elliot, attend St. Mary now.

Borgman graduated from St. Mary in 1946 and from Aurora High School in 1950. He went earned a degree in business management from Indiana University School of Business, and played on the IU Junior Varsity Basketball Team.

In 1955, he entered the United States Army and eventually became a Special Forces Green Beret. As a master parachutist, he earned the badge with a gold star representing 100 airborne jumps but exceeded that easily. He also wears the parachutist badge with a star to denote a combat jump.

Borgman took his basic training and



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AIT at Fort Carson, Colo., and then attended officer's candidate school where he was commissioned a second lieutenant, eventually rising to lieutenant colonel. He attended Airborne Jump School at Fort Benning, Ga.

He was sent to serve in the European Theater from 1956 to 1959 in Germany and returned to the USA from part of 1959 to 1961. He then was assigned to Vietnamese Language School to prepare as an American adviser in 1962 attached to a South Vietnamese Airborne Unit.

After one in Vietnam, Borgman returned in 1963 to Charlottesville, Va., and then to Fort Bragg, N.C. from 1964 to 1966. From 1966 to 1967, he was assigned to Thailand and then left to serve two more tours in Vietnam in 1967, 1968-1969. He left Vietnam and went to Bad Toelz, Germany, from 1969 to 1973, and then returned home to serve from 1973 to 1975 at Arlington Heights, Ill., until his retirement.

More than half of Borgman's military service was overseas. His last official airborne jump was from Bad Toelz, Germany, May 14, 1973, while training men for low level jumps from a height of 700 feet.

Borgman also led the last battalion size Combat Jump in Vietnam in 1968 with 500 men under his command. He also made a jump from 4,000 feet from a hot air balloon while in Belgium.

With three objectives, Borgman entered the military to become a platoon leader, company commander, and a battal-

ion commander and he highly succeeded.

He was awarded a parachutist badge from several countries, including the USA, Vietnam, Thailand, Philippines, France, Belgium, Germany, Denmark and Greece, while he made airborne jumps with the men he was training.

Among his several medals and ribbons, Borgman received the Expert Shooting Badge for Pistol and Rifle. He was awarded the National Defense Service Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, Army Commendation Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters, Parachutist Badge, Expert Infantryman Badge, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Combat Infantryman Badge, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with one silver star and two bronze stars, Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters, Senior Parachutist Badge with star for combat jump, Master Parachutist Badge with gold star, Bronze Star Medal with "V" for Valor with two oak leaf clusters representing three awards of this medal earned for heroism in combat.

The list goes on: Armed Forces Honor Medalist Class, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm, Legion of Merit, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with silver star representing six awards of this medal, Presidential Unit Citation, Meritorious Unit Citation, Vietnamese Presidential Unit Citation, Republic of Germany Sports Medal in Gold, Valorous Unit Badge, Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with palm Unit Award, along

with the several airborne wings from foreign nations.

While stationed at Bad Toelz, Germany, he met and married his wife, Marianne, in 1972. After retirement, they returned to Aurora where Borgman joined the First National Bank, which is now US Bank.

He was appointed to the advisory board and became a director in 1980. He retired as vice president in 1991, and remains on the board of directors.

In 1994, Borgman was elected to Aurora City Council and for a short time was appointed mayor. He has 22 continuous years of service as an Aurora councilman, and has been active in various clubs and organizations including a lifetime member of the American Legion, VFW and Vietnam Veterans of America.

He also is a member of the Lions Club and Knights of Columbus. Borgman was inducted as a Kentucky Colonel and serves in the Dearborn County Hospital Auxiliary for which he has volunteered for more than 17 years.

Borgman's family, faith, community and our nation are extremely important to him. He and Marianne, have one daughter, Chrissy, who is married to Dave Meek, and they have three children, Elsa, Evan and Elliot.

The Borgmans enjoy all the time they get to spend with their-family and attend many functions and ballgames with them.

Borgman is an American hero, a combat veteran, and was the leader of many men in combat situations.

"I took care of my men," said Borgman.