

“Friendship”

In 1967 I was 10 years old and in the 4th grade. My brother was in Vietnam, the driver of an Armored Personnel Carrier. A letter I had written to him went astray and ended up at another battalion: Company C, 9th Medical Battalion, 9th Infantry Division. One of the men wrote back to me asking how I had come to write to them. They also asked me to please keep on writing to them. My mother encouraged me to do so and I did. I kept up the correspondence over the year. As my mother and I would prepare packages to send to my brother, we would also get one ready for our new friends. I received many moving and heartfelt messages thanking us for thinking of them and helping to boost their morale. They spoke of how important it was for them to know that people back home had not forgotten them. I still have their letters and postcards. They mean a great deal to me. As a teacher, I have shared them with my students each year, either for Veteran's Day or Memorial Day. Keeping up the spirit, I have also had my students write Christmas cards with letters to servicemen and women overseas. The students would be thrilled if they got a reply.

I also have my POW bracelet from the early 70's. I wore it until the end of the war. I did find out that the soldier, Lt. Col. Daniel F. Maslowski, had been released on Feb 12, 1973. He had been held prisoner for 1017 days.

My own brother was fortunate enough to come home, but was emotionally scarred. Unfortunately, I lost a cousin, PFC George Sauls Jr. My husband lost a cousin as well, Patrick J. Sughrue.

—Carol, Troy