



The President of the United States, in the name of the Congress,
with pleasure is presenting the MEDAL OF HONOR to

LIEUTENANT CLYDE E. LASSEN
UNITED STATES NAVY

for service as set forth in the following
CITATION:

For extraordinary gallantry and heroism at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty on 19 June 1968 at sea and aircraft commander of a search and rescue helicopter, attached to Helicopter Support Squadron 30 (HS-30), Detachment ONE (DETACHED) F-16, embarked on USS T-ESB-10 (T-ESB-10), during operations against enemy forces in North Vietnam, Lieutenant Clyde E. Lassen, Junior Grade, USN, displayed the utmost courage and heroism above and beyond the call of duty. On 19 June 1968, while on duty as aircraft commander of the helicopter, he heroically landed in a clear area near the base of the Hill, Nam, due to the dense undergrowth, the survivors could not reach the helicopter. With the aid of three divers, Lieutenant Lassen successfully accomplished a hoist rescue two times at the appropriate position. His actions were extremely brave as the fate of the three men depended, and the helicopter collided with a tree, sustaining a heavy damage. Despite rubbing the aircraft and maintaining clear of the ground obstructions, Lieutenant Lassen remained in the area to make another rescue attempt, but he was unsuccessful in effecting a rescue. Disregarding a dangerously low fuel state and significant damage to his aircraft, he was determined to make one final attempt, in spite of imminent enemy opposition and the loss of three divers. Lieutenant Lassen, fully aware of the danger in clearly remaining his position in the water, turned on his landing light and completed the landing. On this attempt, the survivors were able to reach their way to the helicopter. On 19 June 1968, Lieutenant Lassen demonstrated and successfully executed additional heroic actions at sea, which had the same fine essence of high courage, boldness, and heroism as the actions described above. His courage and daring actions, determination, and extraordinary heroism in the face of great risk assure and ensure the finest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

Commander Clyde Everett Lassen
1943-1994

Cdr Lassen became the first naval aviator and the 80th Navy man to be awarded the Medal of Honor for bravery in Vietnam. His list of decorations include the Air Medal, Presidential Civil Citation, Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with four service stars, and Vietnam Campaign Medal with three stars. Cdr Lassen's captives, LTJG Lufky Cook, received the Navy Cross and the two air aviators, Petty Officers Bruce Dallas and Don West, received the Silver Star.

