



**Ronald Lee Beckett Co A-2**

*This jovial little man from the hills of West Virginia won countless friends with his A-squad clowning talent, unselfishness, and conscientiousness. With a hearty laugh when it was needed most, Beck assured himself of success in every endeavor.*

**Born** – 3 Feb 1939, Logan, WV.

**To USMA** – Came from Logan, WV. Appointed by West Virginia 6th. Nicknames “Bucket”, “Bucks”, “Papa Bear”. Classmates Paul DeVries (Mama Bear) and Jim Blesse (Baby Bear).

**Died** – 23 May 2000 (age 61) at Grasonville, MD. Buried at Crownsville, Veterans Cemetery, Crownsville, MD.

**Military Awards** – 3 Bronze Star Medals (2 with V), Purple Heart, 5 Air Medals, Soldier’s Medal, Army Commendation Medal, 2 Meritorious Service Medals, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Combat Infantryman’s Badge.

**Schooling** – Master’s Degree in Political Science, University of Alabama, Command and General Staff College, Army War College.

**Family** – First Wife – Nancy Farley Beckett – 2 daughters (Natasha and Natanya) – Second Wife - Jane Walker Doyle Beckett Donahue – 3 step-children – 2 grandchildren.

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Ron served on active duty in the Army (Infantry) for 22 years, retiring in 1983, with the rank of Lt. Colonel. His first assignment was with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle Group, 14th Infantry, 25th Infantry Division in Hawaii. He then served in Vietnam (first tour – Platoon Leader, Door Gunner Platoon, 120<sup>th</sup> Aviation Battalion), Vietnam (second tour – Company Commander and Staff Officer, 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division), Ft. Benning, GA (Infantry Advanced Course), Tuscaloosa, AL (University of Alabama), Vietnam (third tour – Senior District Advisor, Long Khanh Province), Chester, PA (ROTC Instructor, Widner College), Ft. Polk, LA (Commander, Correctional Control Facility and Executive Officer, 1<sup>st</sup> Training Brigade), Ft. Leavenworth, KS (Command and General Staff College), Ft. Bragg, NC (Attache Training), Monterey, CA (Defense Language Institute, study of Russian). Germany (Chief, Europe / NATO Branch, Security Assistance Division, U.S. European Command, EUCOM), Carlisle, PA (Staff and Faculty, Army War College).

After retiring from active duty in the Army, Ron worked as an Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Anne Arundel County, MD, where he worked for the next 17 years. His last position before retirement was Associate Superintendent, Business Management Services.

Footnote - Upon successfully surviving Plebe year, the three friends (Ron Beckett, Paul DeVries and Jim Blesse) decided they would room together as Yearlings. Early in the year, an altercation with three upperclassmen gave the friends the nickname "The Three Bears". Ron, though not the oldest, was respected for his fairness, maturity, and overall leadership and became known as "Papa Bear". Paul, the oldest and always concerned about his roommates' academic and spiritual well-being, became known as "Mama Bear", and Jim, the youngest and most free-spirited of the three, became "Baby Bear". The nicknames, as well as the friendships, lasted a lifetime.