



COOLIDGE NATIONAL
**MEDAL OF
HONOR**
HERITAGE CENTER

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(Not for Publication)

Vietnam Veteran and Chattanooga Hero Captain Larry L. Taylor to Receive the Medal of Honor on September 5; “Welcome Home” Parade Honoring Taylor Scheduled for September 11 in Chattanooga, Tenn.

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. (September 1, 2023) – The [Coolidge National Medal of Honor Heritage Center](https://www.MOHHC.org) (Heritage Center) is honored to join President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. and the White House in announcing Vietnam veteran and Chattanooga hero Captain Larry Lowe Taylor will receive the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty. The Medal of Honor ceremony has been scheduled for 3:30 PM EST on Tuesday, September 5, 2023, at the White House. To learn more about Captain Taylor, his heroic act of valor on the night of June 12, 1968 near the village of Ap Go Cong, Binh Duong province, and various events being planned to honor this true American hero, please visit www.MOHHC.org/LarryTaylor.

“The Medal of Honor is the nation's highest medal for valor in combat, and we are honored that another Chattanooga will receive the Medal of Honor in the coming days,” said Colonel Frank Hughes (USMC, Ret), chairman for the board of trustees at the Coolidge National Medal of Honor Heritage Center. “Captain Larry Taylor’s Medal of Honor action is a story of someone who truly distinguished himself with courage and bravery with no regard for his own safety to ensure no man was left behind. We look forward to honoring him and sharing his story of courage and commitment with a new exhibit at the Coolidge National Medal of Honor Heritage Center.”

Then First Lieutenant Larry L. Taylor distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty while serving as one of the first Cobra helicopter pilots during the Vietnam War. Taylor was part of many harrowing operations, but one operation rises above all others. On the night of June 12, 1968, a four-man Long-Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP) team was surveilling a village occupied by approximately 80 North Vietnamese. A firefight ensued, and the soldiers quickly realized they were surrounded, which is when they radioed for air support. Taylor and co-pilot J. O. Ratliff, as well as one other Cobra Helicopter, flew over the firefight and provided air support until they were out of rockets and ammunition.

Realizing the LRRP team was surrounded with little, if any, options, Taylor radioed the team leader and made an

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unusual request. He asked the soldiers to create a diversion, run 100 yards from where they were and lie down in the grass. The soldiers followed his orders and were surprised as they quickly realized Taylor was landing his Cobra in the middle of the firefight and at significant risk to his life. Given how the Cobra Helicopter had no place to transport troops, Taylor quickly ordered the four soldiers to jump onto the helicopter skids and rockets pods and hold tight as he lifted the men out of the fight and to a safer location several miles away. The soldiers miraculously rescued on that night were David Hill of Visalia, Ca.; Robert Elsner of New York City; Gerald Patty of Maryville, Tn.; and William P. Cohn of Norwich, Ct.

For his heroic actions on that night, Taylor was awarded the Silver Star, which President Biden has now upgraded to a Medal of Honor that will be presented on September 5, 2023, at the White House in Washington DC. Upon receiving his Medal of Honor, Taylor will become the 33rd Tennessee and the 6th soldier with ties to the Chattanooga area who have received our country highest military award for valor.

Captain Taylor concluded his four years of military service with the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment in West Germany. With the 1st Squadron, 4th U.S. Cavalry, 1st Infantry Division, Taylor flew well over 2,000 combat missions in the UH-1 and Cobra helicopters. He was engaged by enemy fire 340 times and was forced down five times. He was awarded 61 combat decorations, including 44 Air Medals, the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry, two Bronze Stars, and four Distinguished Flying Crosses. After leaving the Army, Taylor operated a roofing and sheet metal company in Chattanooga where he has also remained active in several veterans’ organizations. Now retired, Taylor and his wife, Toni, reside in Signal Mountain, Tenn.

Tennessee Governor Bill Lee said, "I am proud to congratulate Captain Larry Taylor on becoming the 33rd Tennessean to receive the Medal of Honor and extend my deepest gratitude for his remarkable acts of valor. We are forever indebted to Captain Taylor and all Tennessee heroes who have gone above and beyond the call of duty to defend our nation and her people."

After receiving the Medal of Honor, Taylor will return to Chattanooga where the Heritage Center is partnering with [Hamilton County](#), the [City of Chattanooga](#) and the [Chattanooga Area Veterans Council](#) to hold a special Patriot Day and “Welcome Home” Parade to honor Captain Taylor as the newest Medal of Honor recipient and a true American hero. The parade will officially start at 11:30 a.m. on Monday, September 11, and will conclude with a public ceremony at 1 p.m. where local, state and national dignitaries will make comments honoring Larry Taylor and his heroic act of valor on June 18, 1968, during the Vietnam War.

The parade will officially kick-off with a special flyover of multiple Vietnam-era Cobra and other modern-day helicopters along the parade route in downtown Chattanooga. Taylor will lead the parade as the grand marshal with the US Army’s 1st Infantry Division Mounted Color Guard and Band from Fort Riley, Kansas. The parade will start at the intersection of MLK Boulevard and Market Street. The public is invited to line Market Street, and continue down Market Street to W. Aquarium Way, which is where the parade will make a left turn toward the Coolidge National Medal of Honor Heritage Center at the Aquarium Plaza.

“Chattanooga is the Birthplace of the Medal of Honor, and I encourage everyone to bring their children downtown on September 11 and line Market Street to help honor Larry Taylor as a true American hero and help celebrate the important heritage of the Medal of Honor whose birthplace, like Captain Larry Taylor, is right here in Chattanooga,

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Tennessee,” said General BB Bell, chairman of the National Advisory Board at the Coolidge National Medal of Honor Heritage Center.

Fifty years later, this daring feat is now recognized as deserving of the nation’s highest award for military valor; the Medal of Honor. A medal whose birthplace, like Captain Larry Taylor, is right here in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Leading the parade down Market Street will be the Commanding General's Mounted Color Guard that will represent Fort Riley and the U.S. Army in a highly professional and polished display of cavalry horsemanship and military tradition. These men and women portray the U.S. Cavalry as they appeared in the mid to late 19th century. Following the Mounted Color Guard will be the 1st Infantry Division Band, which is the musical ambassador for the United States' premier fighting force. The Big Red One Band represents the 1st Infantry Division for military ceremonies and the communities that support the American Soldier.

Chattanooga Mayor Kelly said, “What a privilege to have in our midst one of America’s living heroes worthy of the Medal of Honor, our country's highest award for military valor in action. Let’s come together to celebrate and recognize one of our own and put Chattanooga’s famous spirit of patriotism on full display as we honor Medal of Honor recipient Captain Larry Taylor on September 11th.”

Hamilton County Mayor Weston Wamp continued, “I am humbled to serve as County Mayor as we honor the county’s first Medal of Honor recipient in more than seven decades. There is no greater role model to represent the values of Hamilton County than legendary Vietnam veteran Larry Taylor, whose valor as a Cobra pilot is finally being appropriately recognized. All residents of Hamilton County should take great pride in sharing this once-in-a-lifetime celebration with our hometown hero.”

The parade will also feature a variety of high school bands and JROTC units from schools located throughout Chattanooga and the surrounding community. In addition, ROTC units from universities throughout the region will be marching in the parade alongside various veteran organizations representing all branches of the military and varying conflicts from the Vietnam War to the War on Terror. For additional information on submitting a parade entry, interested parties should contact Bill Norton by email at bill@metroservices.com.

At approximately 1 p.m., the parade will conclude with an official ceremony in front of the Coolidge National Medal of Honor Heritage Center. The public is encouraged to attend the ceremony where [Medal of Honor recipient Leroy Petry](#), who is the president of the [Medal of Honor Society](#), along with other national, state and local dignitaries and representatives of the US Army will make remarks to honor Taylor and his heroic actions during the Vietnam War.

The public is also invited to visit the Coolidge National Medal of Honor Heritage Center in Chattanooga, Tenn. and learn more about Captain Larry L. Taylor and other Medal of Honor recipients associated with this region as well as explore why Chattanooga is known as the birthplace of the Medal of Honor.

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About the Coolidge National Medal of Honor Heritage Center:

Opened in February 2020, the [Coolidge National Medal of Honor Heritage Center](#) is situated in the heart of the birthplace of the Medal of Honor – Chattanooga, Tennessee. The 19,000 square-foot facility features life-sized, immersive exhibits that

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memorialize our nation’s highest military award for valor, honor its national heritage and recipients, and educate future generations of Americans about the six character traits embodied by the Medal of Honor and its recipients: Patriotism, Citizenship, Courage, Integrity, Sacrifice and Commitment. For more information, visit www.MOHHC.org or our social media pages: Facebook: [@TheFirstMedals](https://www.facebook.com/TheFirstMedals) / Instagram: [@TheFirstMedals](https://www.instagram.com/TheFirstMedals) / Twitter: [@TheFirstMedals](https://twitter.com/TheFirstMedals) / YouTube: [@TheFirstMedals](https://www.youtube.com/TheFirstMedals)