

A Tribute to Joe Galloway, War Correspondent and Journalist

I am extremely saddened by the passing of my friend, Joe Galloway, on August 18, 2021.

In 2000, I had the privilege of meeting Joe at the *Rendezvous with War Symposium* sponsored by the VVA and my alma mater, the College of William and Mary. Joe took the time to speak with me—and encourage me--about the new high school elective I was teaching, *The Lessons of Vietnam (LOV)*. He made the offer to meet my students at The Wall during our spring DC field trips whenever he could. And, of course, he kept his promise. Joe also served as a valued resource for my students, as well as a member of our *Bridges—The Lessons of Vietnam* Newsletter Advisory Board, for many years. He made a tremendous difference to so many.

I'd like to share an essay published in our 2004 *Bridges Special Edition* written by one of my students after meeting Joe on our *Lessons of Vietnam (LOV)* class field trip:

A Storyteller...and a Hero

By Sara Burns, *Lessons of Vietnam Class, 2004*, Millbrook HS, Raleigh NC

In 1965, Joseph L. Galloway found himself in a distant and foreboding place of sweltering heat and thick vegetation. This young, ambitious journalist cautiously waited for what Vietnam had in store for him. It was not what he expected. He bore witness to and was part of a series of savage, bitter battles in the Ia Drang Valley. He saw a place of tangible fear, anguish, and desperate hope turn into the birthplace of heroism and brotherhood. In a world where all they had was each other, the boundaries between race, religion, and heritage dissipated. As the battles intensified, soldiers fell one-by-one. As Mr. Galloway recounted, "They gave their lives, not for a president or policy, but for each other." The soldiers he encountered in the Ia Drang Valley had an everlasting effect on him. Mr. Galloway now feels he was fated to witness their bravery and self-sacrifice to memorialize for history their actions and deeds.

Meeting Mr. Joe Galloway at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on April 16th was both an honor and privilege. His quiet dignity and resilient spirit were inspiring—and his candid, articulate words have stayed with all of us.

*Afterwards, when I viewed The Wall up close, I was able to look past the 58,235 inscriptions and see individual people with their own unique stories. As Mr. Galloway wrote in *We Were Soldiers Once...and Young*, "[I] wondered what it would be like if they had had the chance to serve this country "by their lives instead of by their deaths." He helped us better understand the pain the wound we call "Vietnam" has brought to our country—and why it has taken so long for it to begin to heal.*

This thoughtful journalist calls himself merely a "storyteller," and he only wishes for the names of the men he fought beside never to be forgotten. He believes as long as we remember them, they will never really be gone. However, I, like many of my classmates, consider Mr. Joseph Galloway a hero, not only for saving lives on the battlefield, but also for sharing the legacy of his brave comrades with the rest of us.