

'Cost of War' — A Story by Craig Reed

By DANIEL PERDUE and LESHIA BYRGE
SHS Appalachian Studies Class

Have you ever wondered what the Vietnam War was like? If you are interested, then you should read the book *The Cost of War*. This book, which was authored by Craig Reed, gives you a pretty good insight into the Vietnam War. Even though it does not tell the entire story, it tells of the heartache that our county and our country went through.

The book features many of our Scott County natives that fought in the Vietnam War. The book chronicles the lives of these young men for the time period they served in America's longest war. The Museum of Scott County displays photographs, military artifacts, and special exhibits for the heroes of that time. Below are quotes taken from Craig Reed's *The Cost of War*.

DANNY W. CROSS: "The major thing I remember about Saigon was the smell. The people threw their garbage out in the street . . . the city had so many refugees . . . the people were living in cardboard boxes and in anything they could find."

LLEW STANLEY: "The worst thing . . . was a girl that had gotten burned with napalm. I still remember the sounds of her screams . . . one cooked child . . . the kid had nothing to do with it . . . I still remember the smell of burnt flesh."

JAMES MORROW: "The first guy in our company to get killed didn't get killed in combat. He was a black guy who was walking along the road and a white guy driving a truck swerved over and hit him."

EARL MCCANN: "What I found made my hair stand on end. All of the mines were facing toward us! The green boys had turned them the wrong way the night before. The mines are even marked 'front' and 'rear.'" If we'd exploded them without checking them . . ."

TED WILLIAMS: "They would fly us out in helicopters and kick us off, and there we were for a month by ourselves, just hunting. That's what it boiled down to."

DILLARD MASSENGALE: "What I wrote home was mostly lies. I figured that's what I should have written. I couldn't have written my mother and told her how bad it was."

DANNY JACKSON: "War is the ultimate game . . . they give you any weapon you want and say to you . . . kill these other men. I don't care which side you're on; the way you tell the winners from the losers is that the losers are never going to talk to you anymore."

TONY COFFEY: "They . . . took me to a first-aid station . . . my legs and hands were burned . . . the pain was as intense as anything I had ever felt."

ED WINDLE: "We owned where we were standing; the rest of it belonged to Charlie."

MICHAEL A. REED: "The hardest thing to adjust to was drinking out of a pop bottle, eating

good food, and sleeping in a bed. I slept on the floor the first week I was home.”

For more information about each of these Scott County Heroes and the stories behind the quotes, please read *The Cost of War* by Craig Reed. A special thank you is sent out to Mr. Reed for the amazing book he has written and to our soldiers who have fought for our country and our freedom.