Press Release

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10th Mountain Division (LI) and Fort Drum Announce Vietnam-Era Gold Star Family Member to Speak at Annual Ceremony

FORT DRUM, N.Y. – Members of the Fort Drum and North County communities gather annually with Gold Star families during Mountainfest to honor friends, battle buddies, and loved ones who died in service to the nation. The Annual Remembrance Ceremony is an open-to-the-public event focused on keeping the stories of sacrifice made by 10th Mountain Division and Fort Drum Soldiers not just a part of a legacy, but also a foundation for our present-day readiness.

Guest speaker for this year’s Annual Remembrance Ceremony will be William Havener, Jr., a Gold Star family member whose father, an Air Force aviator, died 50 years ago in a training accident at then Camp Drum.

Air Force Capt. William Havener served with the 174th Tactical Fighter Group out of Syracuse, when his A-37 aircraft crashed on Oct. 5, 1974. Havener had flown more than 200 combat missions in Vietnam and during the Pueblo Crisis in Korea.  He received the Distinguished Flying Cross and four Air Medals for his service.

“The aperture for this ceremony is bigger than the division and installation,” said Brig. Gen. Matt Braman, 10th Mountain Division (LI) deputy commanding general – support. “The North Country is home to an incredible legacy of service in its own right, as home to veterans and Gold Star family members who may have never worn the 10th Mountain patch, or served locally, but are a part of who we are and why we serve with pride.

“As we remember the more than 300 service members we’ve lost since 9/11, as we pause to reflect on how their sacrifice must inform our readiness today, we do not take for granted that there are so many in our community who share our grief and fuel our momentum with their own stories of sacrifice,” Braman added.

Havener Jr., an Oswego County public health engineer, was only 7 at the time of his father’s death. He spent many years compiling photos and stories about his family history, while making inquiries about the training accident. In 2023, Fort Drum officials invited him to Range 35 in the vicinity of the crash site.

“It was good to see the site, physically, because I have the account from the accident report, but I wanted to see where it happened with my own eyes,” Havener Jr. said at the time. “Honestly, it was only this last year that I really wanted to visit the site. I was very glad for this chance and appreciative of everyone who set this up so we could finally do that.

“I am honored to have the opportunity to share my father’s story here where he was training at the time of his death, where his brothers- and sisters-in-arms are still working to meet that task.  Front lines change, but the daily risk service members assume for the sake of our nation endures.”

Havener Jr. will join the 10th Mountain Division (LI) and Fort Drum command team in laying a wreath at the base of the Military Mountaineers Monument during the ceremony.

“On this Vietnam Veterans Day, I’d like to extend an invitation to our North Country community veterans and Gold Star family members to attend the Annual Remembrance Ceremony,” Braman said. “You are more than welcome – you’re needed.  Your stories matter.  Your sacrifices are not forgotten.  You are incredibly important to the 10th Mountain Division; Fort Drum is your home too.”

The ceremony will be held from 11 a.m. to noon Monday, June 17, in Fort Drum’s Memorial Park.

If a veteran or Gold Star family member would like to be added to the Annual Remembrance Ceremony invitation list, please send your request via the Contact Us link at the bottom of the Fort Drum website ([www.home.army.mil/drum](https://usg01.safelinks.protection.office365.us/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.home.army.mil%2Fdrum&data=05%7C02%7Clisa.r.albrecht.civ%40army.mil%7C085c14ccfddc4e79a95808dc4fef35e7%7Cfae6d70f954b481192b60530d6f84c43%7C0%7C0%7C638473136025541038%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=PJqbby4BlbQoT%2BE5Pc4w9sRmOpVhAsnlsmtTOWNnBw4%3D&reserved=0)).

An article about the 1974 plane crash is available at [www.dvidshub.net/news/456372/around-and-about-fort-drum-capt-william-havener-and-1974-plane-crash](https://usg01.safelinks.protection.office365.us/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.dvidshub.net%2Fnews%2F456372%2Faround-and-about-fort-drum-capt-william-havener-and-1974-plane-crash&data=05%7C02%7Clisa.r.albrecht.civ%40army.mil%7C085c14ccfddc4e79a95808dc4fef35e7%7Cfae6d70f954b481192b60530d6f84c43%7C0%7C0%7C638473136025547005%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=YiE1f12DkRAeume0em4E9g6s0FZFdfMbN0E1%2FBTOjRg%3D&reserved=0).

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