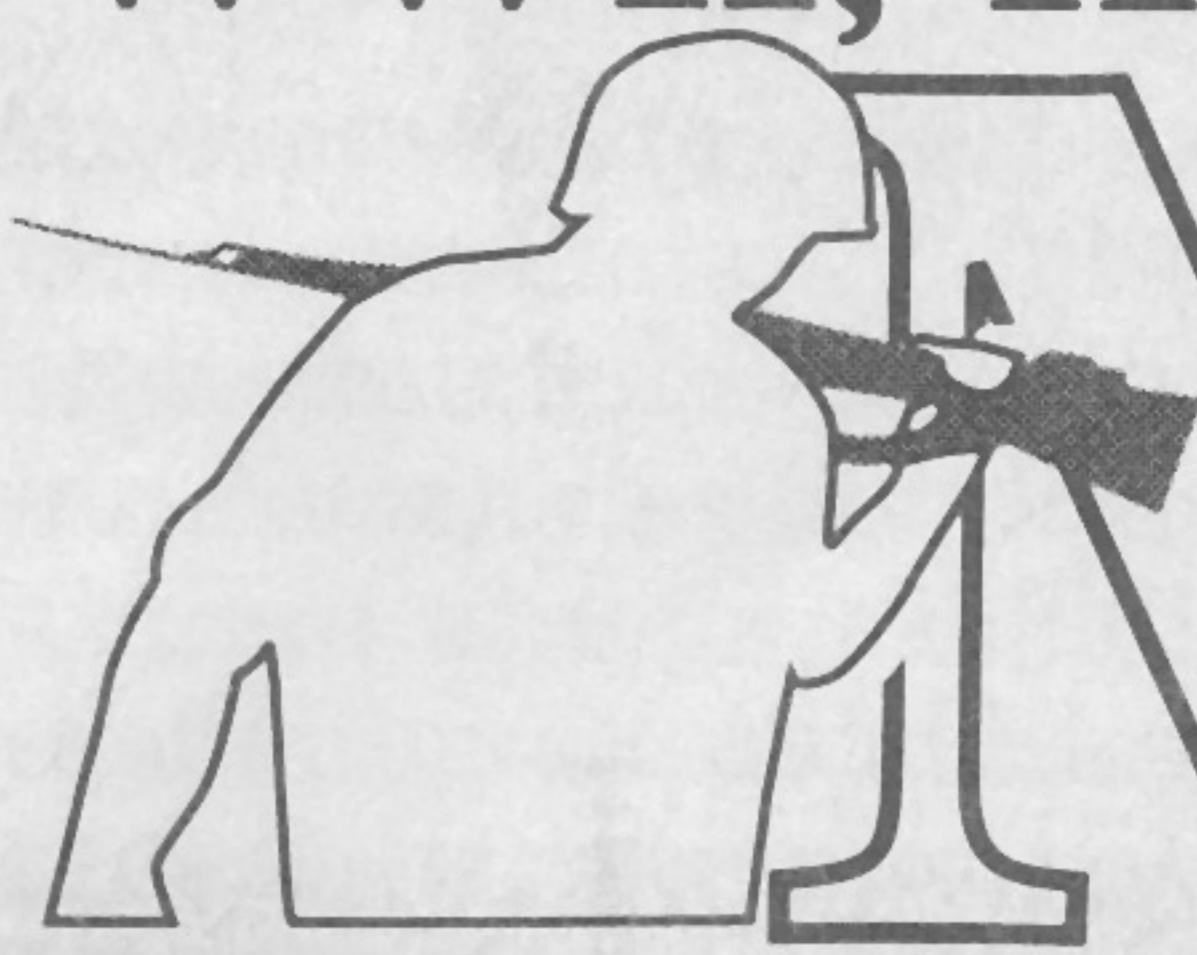


WWII, Korea, Viet-Nam, Cold War & Today



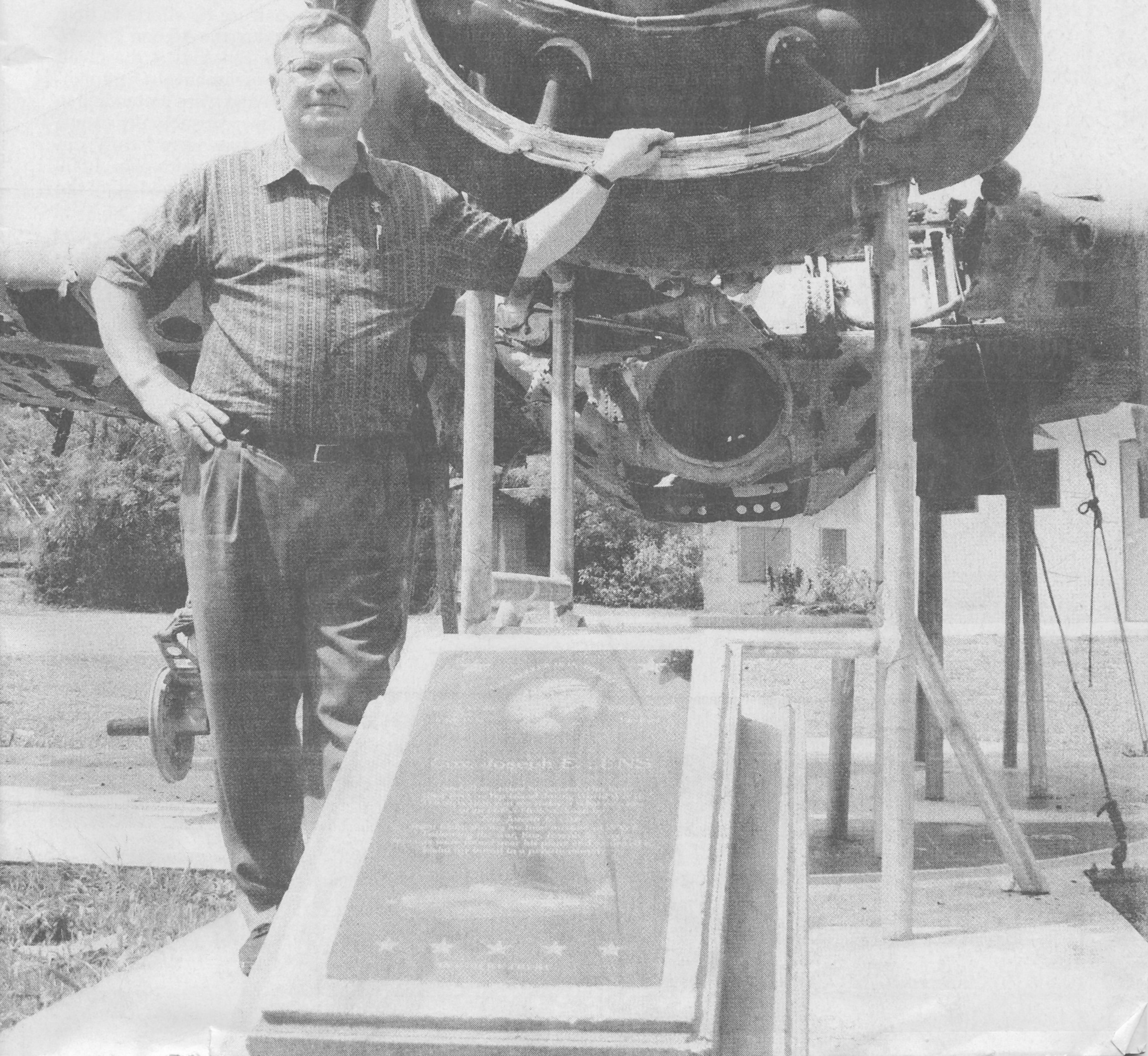
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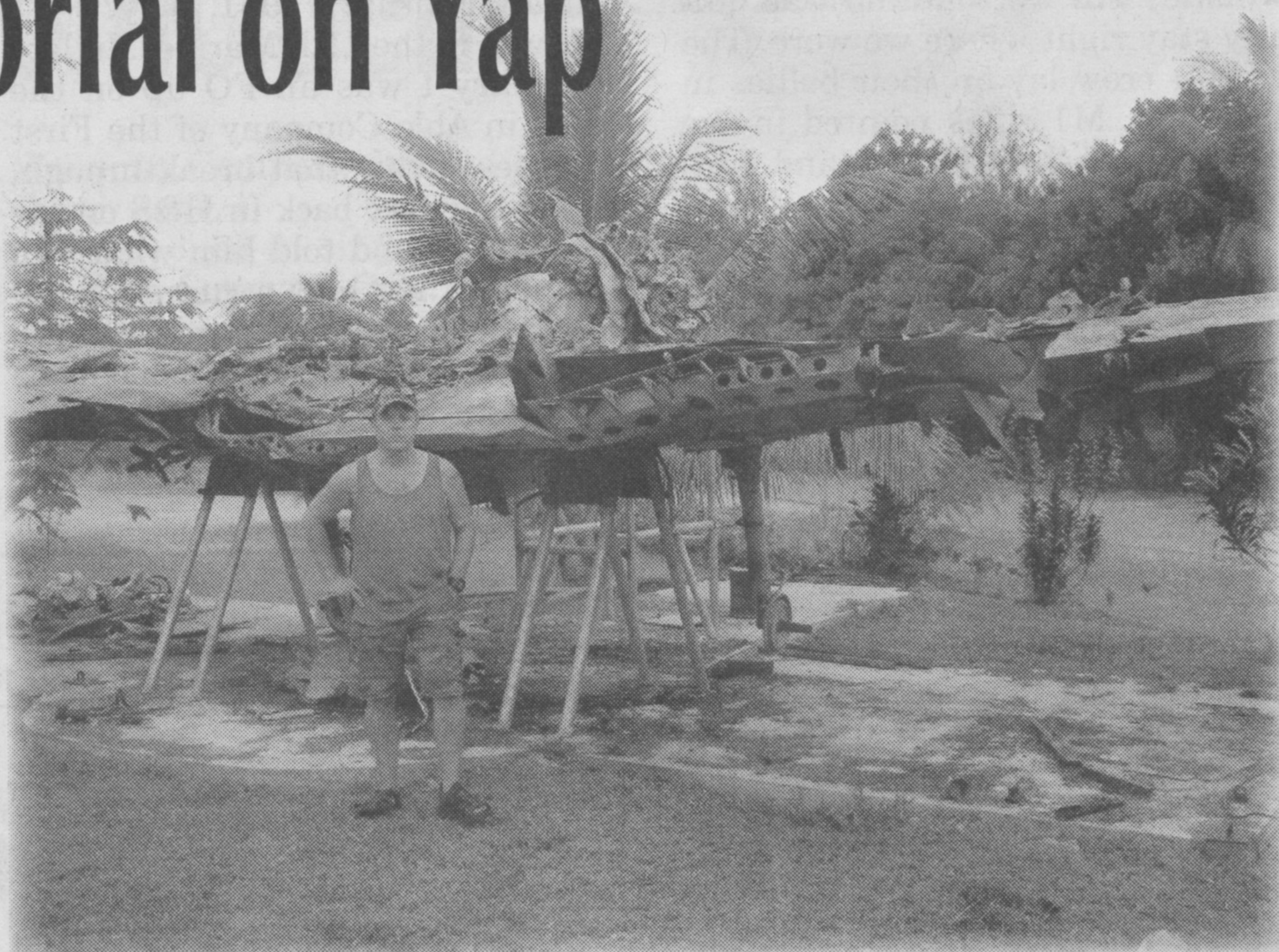


WWII memorial on Yap

**Patrick Thomas
Ranfranz, Cameron, WI**

The Yap Visitors Bureau (YVB) and the Missing Air Crew Project (MACP) dedicated of one of the most unique WWII memorials in the Pacific on 27 July 2010. The newly constructed site displays the wreckage of a plane flown by Ens. Joseph Cox symbolizing the tremendous sacrifice and loss of human life near this Pacific Island during WWII. The YVB and MACP have been working together for several years to preserve and remember this very special group of soldiers.

In the historical context of WWII and the Pacific theatre, American losses near Yap (now part of the Federated States of Micronesia) were substantial. Strategically located between the Philippines and Guam, Japanese occupied Yap was targeted almost daily from June 1944 to August 1945 at the cost of hundreds of American men, 110 of



Patrick Ranfranz (Missing Air Crew Project Founder) stands next to the Ens. Cox F6F-5 Hellcat wreckage in October 2008 after the wreckage was moved from the approaching Yapese landfill.

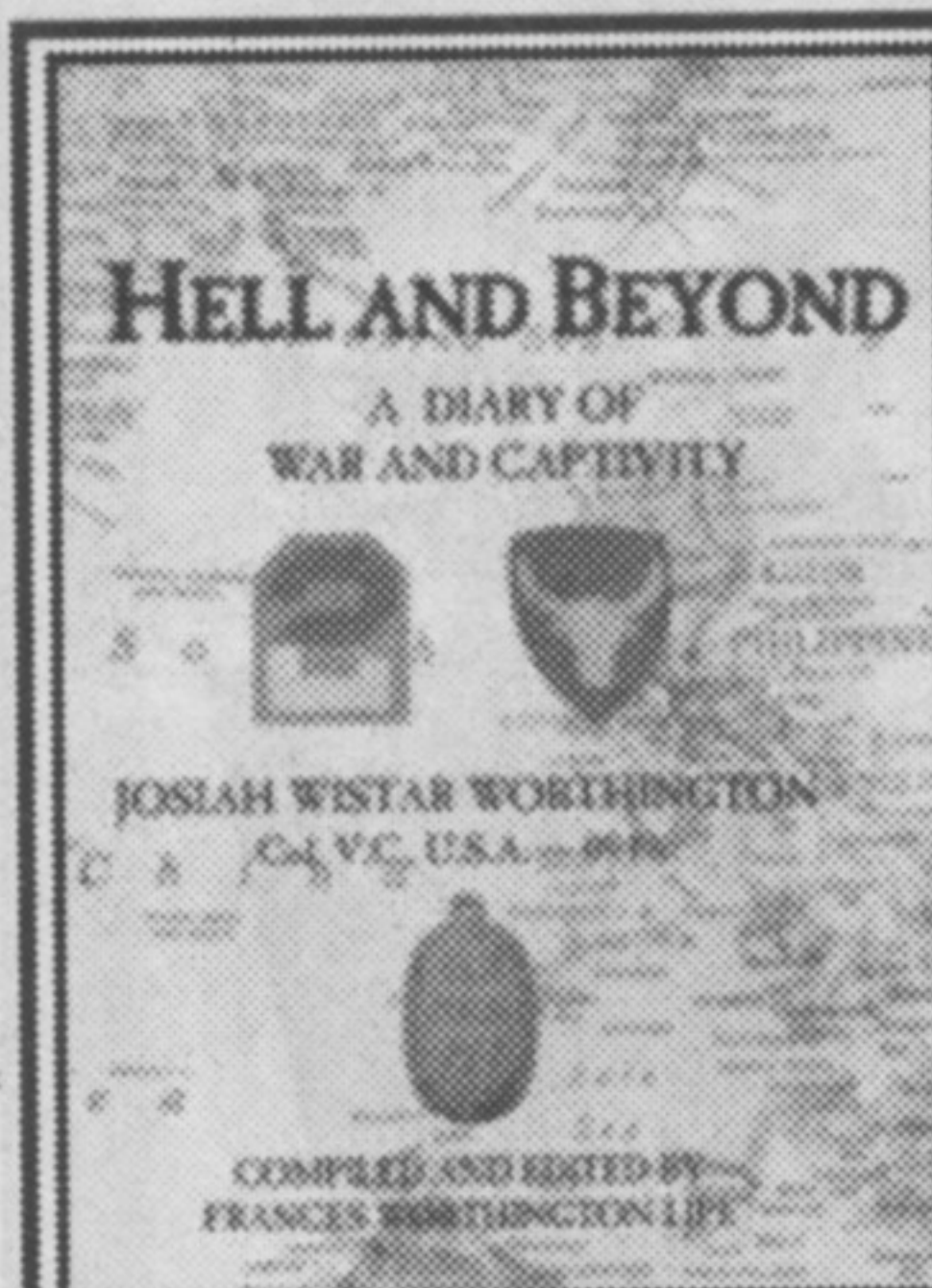
which remain classified as MIA. Pat Ranfranz (from Cameron, WI), founder of the MACP has spent over 20 years researching Yap during WWII and the stories behind each soldier and his mission, hoping to preserve their memories for generations to come. Pat's uncle is among the soldiers who remain MIA.

The memorial displays the actual wreckage of an F6F-5 Hellcat flown by Ens. Joseph Cox (from Idaho), one of 36 planes American planes that fell near the island. Joseph's plane was shot down with three other Hellcats from the USS *Enter-*

prise on 6 September 1944, and was only recently recovered moderately intact. "It is truly one of the most unique wrecks and now memorials in the Pacific," explains Pat. "After the war, most of the wreckage throughout the world was picked over and removed. Fortunately, the Yapese have respected the wreckage as grave sites and taken care to preserve them and remember the American men who lost their lives during the war."

Joseph's plane was spared from the expanding Yap landfill in 2008 and relocated to government-held land. Displayed on a concrete pad next to a sign and memorial marker describing the man, the plane and the mission, the YVB together with the MACP were able to construct one of the finest memorials to American men lost in WWII's Pacific theatre.

Attending the dedication were Ellis Cox, Joseph's 90-year-old brother, Yap Governor Sebastian Anefal, US Ambassador Peter A. Prahar and other dignitaries. For more information about the memorial and Missing Air Crew Project, visit www.missingaircrew.com or www.visityap.com.



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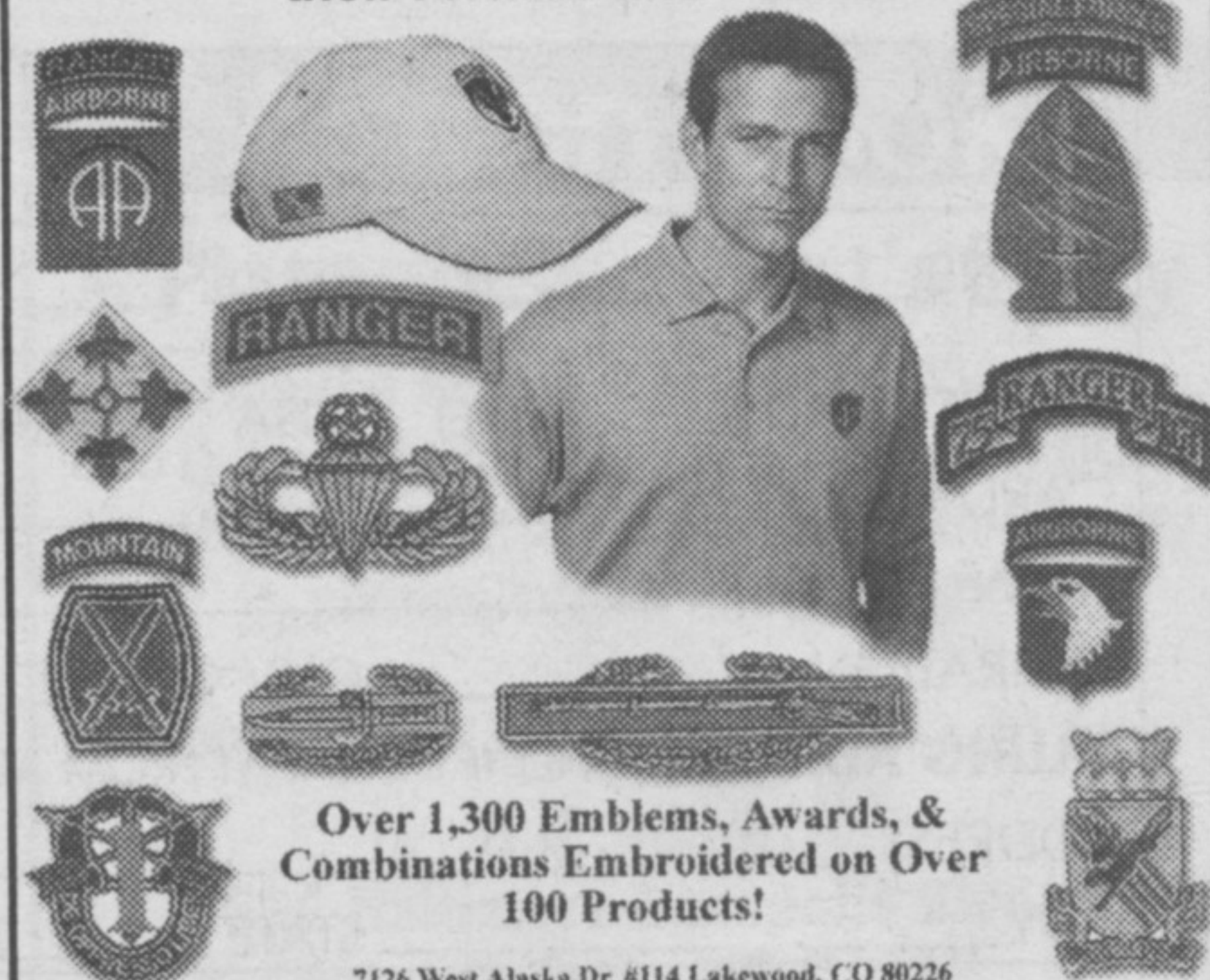
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