

# Ghosts of Combat Haunt Every Warrior

## Vietnam Vet discusses ways to help

No matter how well-adjusted returning or returned veterans appear, they are likely carrying wounds that cut deep, and that pain sticks with them for the rest of their lives, says Vietnam veteran Ord Elliott.

"When I came back from the war, I filed all that pain away as 'personal,' but it invariably came out in my creative writing, and I think that kept me much more sane," says Elliott, a former platoon commander with the Marines and author of *The Warrior's Silence*.

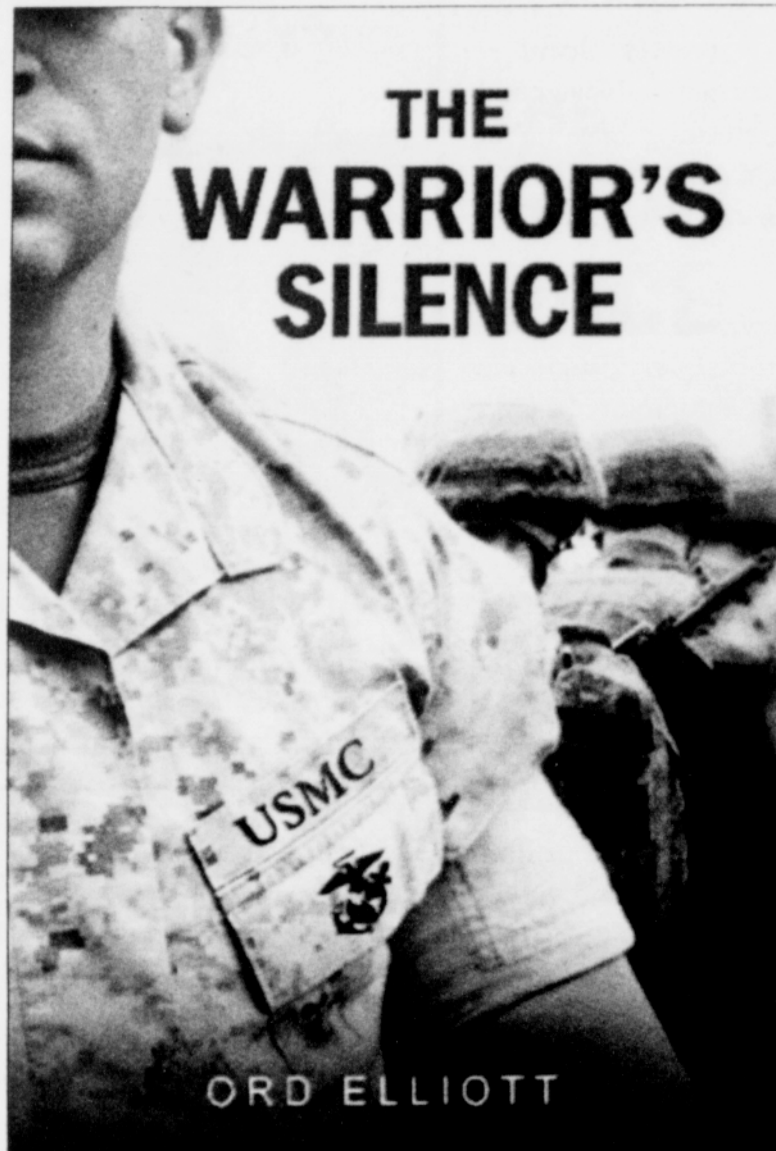
"I still feel a sense that something was lost within me from that war, and it kills me to think that our country's most recent wars have done the same to the latest generation of military personnel. When I hear reports of alarming suicide rates among soldiers and problems with drugs and homelessness, it reminds me of friends I've lost, and the lives they weren't able to have."

There are many avenues available to vets if they're having a hard time adjusting to civilian life after combat, he says.

Although most civilians can never understand the horrors of war, there are ways in which the families of veterans,

and others, can help:

- Make creative expression available: Elliott has heard story after story involv-



constructive ways. Thoughts and emotions, however, can also be expressed – released – in creative pursuits such as writing, art, music, even cooking.

- Patience and understanding: "You won't go wrong with loving tolerance while seeking the help of a trained professional to help your veteran work through problems like depression and anxiety," Elliott says. "It's important to provide emotional support, including helping vets who need it to get to appointments and joining in on family sessions."

- Thoroughly consider your vote: There are many outstanding efforts going on with non-profits that help today's returning vets, but the best medicine is prevention, he says. In 2001, when the Iraq War was gearing up, that same feeling of anticipation – excitement – washed over Elliott that he experienced before entering Vietnam. "I was surprised that I could feel that way, but then I quickly remembered all that I've been through with the reality of war," he says. "If families and citizens really want to help the men and women of the U.S. military, they will be wary of politicians who haven't been in combat and who are all too quick to the war trigger."

## Military Training Program Honored

The University of Portland's Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) was cited as the nation's top program in its category, winning the prestigious "Right of Line" award for the second time in eight years.

"This is huge recognition for our team here at UP – administrators, instructors, staff and students," said Col. Paul Huffman, the commander of the corps. "I could not be prouder of our accomplishments."

The north Portland school has approximately 120 Air Force ROTC students, placing it in the category of medium-sized detachments.

The detachment ranks third in the nation for the number of cadets per capita of undergraduate enrollment. The detachment also is in the top five percent for number of high school scholarship winners per capita of total enrollment. Ninety percent of the detachment's seniors are majoring in either engineering or nursing, "critical needs majors," Huffman said.



## AIR FORCE RESERVE

### Joint Base Lewis-McChord has part-time positions available.

The Air Force Reserve offers its members a variety of part-time job opportunities with full-time benefits including tuition assistance and low-cost health insurance. And, for specific part-time jobs, you may be eligible for a signing bonus of up to \$20,000.

Serving part-time in the Air Force Reserve allows you to serve at a base of your choosing, giving you the opportunity to serve your country while still providing you time to pursue your civilian career or further your education. It's an ideal option for those who have never been in the military as well as for those with prior military service in any branch.



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