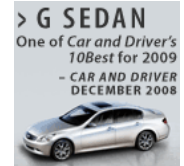




Monte Carlo  
LAS VEGAS RESORT AND CASINO

Looking for an Escape...  
Come to Vegas  
rates from \$59.95  
Click Here

RECENT EDITIONS  
Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat Sun



Sports

SAVE THIS | EMAIL THIS | PRINT THIS | MOST POPULAR | RSS FEEDS | POST A COMMENT

Jun. 07, 2009  
Copyright © Las Vegas Review-Journal

ED GRANEY: Retired Ranger true to his country



ED GRANEY  
MORE COLUMNS



Bill Anton, shown Saturday at Cashman Field before throwing out the ceremonial first pitch at a 51s game, is a disabled Vietnam War veteran who will be inducted into the United States Army Ranger Hall of Fame. Photo by John Lecher.

Recognizing that I volunteered as a Ranger, fully knowing the hazards of my chosen profession, I will always endeavor to uphold the prestige, honor and high esprit de corps of the Rangers.

Bill Anton has compressed vertebrae, two shot knees, a bum shoulder, no feeling in his feet, suffers from diabetes, beat bladder cancer and has post-traumatic stress disorder.

He is a man's man. Tough and dependable.

He also can't finish a sentence about a certain honor bestowed him without his voice cracking and tears falling from his eyes.

"Shocked, humbled and honored beyond belief," Anton said. "You can't politic for this. It has to come from your soldiers and NCOs. My men. They pushed for it. It touches me more than you can imagine."

He is a retired lieutenant colonel who in August will be inducted into the United States Army Ranger Hall of Fame, the first Nevadan to receive such recognition and a man who guided the most decorated Rangers unit of the Vietnam War. He has seen and experienced things few can comprehend.

Acknowledging the fact that a Ranger is a more elite soldier who arrives at the cutting edge of battle by land, sea, or air, I accept the fact that as a Ranger my country expects me to move further, faster, and fight harder than any other soldier.

Anton on Saturday evening threw out the first pitch at Cashman Field before the 51s-Tacoma game, a ceremonial toss on the day we again remembered the largest amphibious attack in military history.

His D-Day lob made it across the plate on a night meant to honor local disabled veterans, a 60-year-old lefty who also played a little football at Nebraska but whose love of sports always was bested by that of his country.

Never shall I fail my comrades. I will always keep myself mentally alert, physically strong, and morally straight and I will shoulder more than my share of the task whatever it may be, one-hundred-percent and then some.

He once was the country's highest-ranking ROTC cadet who later took part in the first tactical parachute jump onto a polar ice cap in Alaska.

If you fell into the water, you had three minutes to get out or die. If you fell in with as much equipment as Anton carried that day in 1971, you weren't getting out. You figure a first pitch wouldn't rattle him much.

"I did lose a little sleep over it this week," Anton said. "I wanted to get it over the plate. At least I did better than Mayor (Oscar Goodman)."

I knew there was something I liked about this guy.

Gallantly will I show the world that I am a specially selected and well trained soldier. My courtesy to superior officers, neatness of dress, and care of equipment shall set the example for others to follow.

Anton's son, Mike, is a Double-A pitcher in the Angels' organization, and his

Looking for an Escape...  
Come to Vegas  
rates from \$59.95 per night  
Click Here

Sponsored Links

**DON'T Pay for White Teeth**  
Learn the trick discovered by a mom to turn yellow teeth white w/under \$10

**Mortgage Rate Drops to 4.50% FIXED!**  
\$200,000 loan for \$708/month. Free Quotes - No SSN Rqd. Save \$1000s!

**I Love Unemployment!**  
Read How I Make \$6k a month posting text links on Google. As seen on TV

Most Popular Stories

- Harper brothers reunited on diamond
- Gaughan sees major problem
- Magic attempt to make another favorite disappear
- ED GRANEY: Suddenly, sports world all a-Twitter
- ED GRANEY: UNLV should call Smith's number
- REMATCH SET TODAY: Skyhawks sophomore earns wings
- ED GRANEY: Tuff-N-Uff? Sure, but not always skill to match
- NBA BETTING: Books lament LeBron's absence
- Mountain West Conference tournament extends Las Vegas stay
- NASCAR banks on GM backing

MULTIMEDIA

LUXURY LAS VEGAS

Sign up to

win

a romantic dinner for 2 and show

TICKETS TO LE REVE

LE REVE

daughter, Susan, is a presidential scholar from Georgetown University who works for Homeland Security. Anton moved to Las Vegas in 2003 from Maryland. He likes the weather here better. So does his sore and damaged body.

The effects of Agent Orange, like with so many veterans, have guaranteed him a life of physical struggle. But he expresses no regret in his words. No anger in his message.

He is entirely devoted to Company H (Ranger) 75th Infantry (Airborne), to the 177 men who served under him in Vietnam, to those who made this Hall of Fame moment possible.

"Every man we had deserves to stand with me" on Aug. 5 in Fort Benning, Ga., Anton said. "Never have I seen such gallantry and intrepid bravery every day as I did displayed by those men."

*Energetically will I meet the enemies of my country. I shall defeat them on the field of battle, for I am better trained and will fight with all my might. Surrender is not a Ranger word. I will never leave a fallen comrade to fall into the hands of the enemy and under no circumstances will I ever embarrass my country.*

He lost just one man in Vietnam. One day, he was injured extracting members of his team when his helicopter was shot down. So he called for another and went back in twice more to get more Rangers.

This is a courageous man who has led a fascinating life, a 100 percent disabled veteran who after his retirement in 1990 has dedicated himself to improving the lives of those who also fought.

*Readily will I display the intestinal fortitude required to fight on to the Ranger objective and complete the mission, though I be the lone survivor.*

"It's a good night to honor veterans," Anton said after his first pitch. "We are just a humble, normal group of guys."

I don't know much.

I know this: Bill Anton has led his life by the Ranger Creed, and nothing is normal about that.

Las Vegas Review-Journal sports columnist Ed Graney can be reached at **702-383-4618** or [egraney@reviewjournal.com](mailto:egraney@reviewjournal.com).

#### Share & Save



#### Sponsored Links

##### [1 Rule To Lose Your Gut](#)

I cut down 38 lbs of pure body fat in just 19 weeks with this 1 rule.

##### [Certification Schools](#)

U.S. News® Best for Quality & Value Fully Accredited - Learn More!

##### [DON'T Pay for White Teeth](#)

Learn the trick discovered by a mom to turn yellow teeth white w/under \$10

##### [Become "Six Sigma" Certified](#)

Villanova Six Sigma Certification 100% Online Program - Free Info.

[Buy a link here](#)

## Leave Your Comment

0 Reader Comments

#### Terms & Conditions

The following comments are provided by readers and are the sole responsibility of the authors. The reviewjournal.com does not review comments before publication nor guarantee their accuracy. By publishing a comment here you agree to abide by the [comment policy](#). If you see a comment that violates the policy, please notify the [web editor](#).

Some comments may not display immediately due to an automatic filter. These comments will be reviewed within 48 hours. **Please do not submit a comment more than once.**

Name:

Email:

**COMMENTS :**  
**(word count limit is 300)**



Current Word Count:

---

Note: Comments made by reporters and editors of the Las Vegas Review-Journal are presented with a yellow background.



[Contact the R-J](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Report a delivery problem](#) | [Put the paper on hold](#) | [Advertise with us](#)  
[Report a news tip/press release](#) | [Send a letter to the editor](#) | [Print the announcement forms](#) | [Jobs at the R-J](#)

Copyright © Las Vegas Review-Journal, 1997 - 2009  
Stephens Media, LLC [Privacy Statement](#)