

4Apr65

***DRAEGER, WALTER FRANK, JR. (MIA-KIA) (4 Apr 65) (VNAF advisor)** must have been flying a VNAF A-1H)

Citation:

The President of the United States takes pride in presenting the Air Force Cross (Posthumously) to Walter Frank Draeger, Jr. (3053337), Captain, U.S. Air Force (Reserve), for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against an opposing armed force as Pilot of an A-1 Skyraider with Detachment 10, 1131st Special Activities Squadron, in action on 4 April 1965, over North Vietnam. On that date, Captain Draeger volunteered to fly as a Fighter-Advisor with the Vietnamese Air Force into an area of known heavily concentrated antiaircraft artillery. He participated in a highly successful bombing mission of a vital Viet Cong target, contributing materially to its destruction. On the return flight from the primary target, Captain Draeger's flight leader was shot down by hostile ground fire. Captain Draeger immediately called for search and rescue assistance. Although completely alone and within range of the hostile ground fire, he orbited the area of his downed flight leader until the unarmed search and rescue aircraft arrived in the vicinity. Upon arrival in the area, over which Captain Draeger was flying protective cover, the unarmed rescue aircraft requested fire suppression assistance. Captain Draeger commenced a firing pass to allow the rescue aircraft to safely enter the area. With complete disregard for his own personal safety, he made the strafing run into the hostile fire. Ignoring the air bursts from shore batteries, Captain Draeger pressed his attack and, in so doing, sacrificed his own life. Through his extraordinary heroism, superb airmanship, and aggressiveness in the face of hostile forces, Captain Draeger reflected the highest credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.