

RB, Mountain Mission, and The Marines



By Anna Von Reitz

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I had a friend in High School who was a real cut-up. He signed me up for the Marine Corps and I signed him up for the Miss America Pageant.

Imagine the confusion and consternation of the Marine

MP's who showed up on our doorstep looking for an AWOL recruit named Ambrose Martin Riezinger?

Imagine my Father's consternation dealing with these two, who were convinced that there had to be a strapping six foot two recruit hiding somewhere behind my diminutive façade. After all, Ambrose showed up for the physical and intake interviews and he had excellent scores....

I sat hunched up in a chair like a molting bird through the whole fiasco.

That was my introduction to the Marine Corps. I remember watching those two Marines unconsciously falling into marching cadence as they swung down our long driveway to their car and saying to my Father, "Those guys are real boneheads."

"Yes," he replied, also watching their departure, but there was something wistful in his eyes. "They are real boneheads. That's part of what makes them who they are."

I didn't know then that I would fall in love with a Marine and that I would lose him in Vietnam. I could not imagine that the Marines would win a special place in my heart and there would always be a bond of sympathy between the Boneheads and me. Takes one to tell one, I guess.

Many of my Marine brothers have passed on. The whole cadre I knew from Vietnam is gone, except for one lonely Winnebago, who lives so far out in the woods that God can't find him for most of the week.

And now, another Brother has passed on: RB Young, a Marine, a preacher, a teacher, a friend, a researcher, a patriot, a dog-lover, a world-class diver, surfer, and snow boarder....the list could go on and on, but it could never explain all that "RB" was or how he touched so many lives, including yours.

The work he did as an independent researcher will change your life and the lives of millions of Americans for many years to come--- and except for this brief remembrance, you would never have cause to know that he ever existed, that he ever swooped like an eagle down the near-vertical face of a mountain, that he ever breathed the air of Big Sur and the Big Sky of Montana. He's gone, like the wind and a ripple.

Peacefully, in his sleep, with his dogs at his feet.

He lived a good life, a full life, but he was always ready to go at a moment's notice. When God called him home, you can bet his affairs were all tidy and his kit bag was packed tight. His Testament was written on the fly-leaf of his well-thumbed Bible and it was less than a paragraph, telling us what to do now.

RB never had kids of his own, but he adopted all the lost and lonely, all the troubled and confused cast-offs of all kinds and colors and ages that he found along the way. They became his children, quietly, the way grass grows, the way a Good Man finds his way into your heart. They are mourning today for what they had and what they lost, but they are also thanking God.

I know that I am feeling the same way. I woke up this morning with tears on my face. I was crying in my sleep over losing RB, but ironically enough, I know he is happy. I know he was ready. I know he is laughing at us and saying, "No, Dude, this is great....just put the coffee urn over there on that table...."

We will all miss him, those lucky enough to have known him, and we will all feel lessened by grief, because a bit of our own heart that was grateful and lucky and brave has gone on down the road with RB, crossed over the bridge where all his dogs are waiting for him, and where there's always a deep-powder ski slope ready to ride and a gentle blue ocean to dive in.

I had hoped to get him up to Alaska this summer for a little vacation time. He worked so hard all last winter, ferreting out the information that The Living Law Firm needed, getting his part all ready to go. In vain, I told him to get some rest. In vain, I told him to slow down.

He had a mission and he knew what it was better than I did. I was a bit taken back when, over Memorial Day Weekend, he announced that it was done. Completed. He'd found what he was looking for and he'd shared it with the world. His part, as he said, was finished. He could finally kick back - and he did. Just not quite in the way the rest of us were hoping for and expecting.

Good-bye, RB. Flights of angels sing thee to thy rest. May the Good Lord be your companion and His Love sustain you. May the ties that bind us, bind us still. Thank you, dear brother and friend.

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