



Paul J. Cochran Veterans Memorial Park



The Story of a Fallen Soldier and his Gold Star Family

Paul Jeffrey Cochran was born on October 6th, 1947



Paul “Jeff” was born to his mother Beverly.

Paul knew at an early age his life would be an adventure.



He was always headed somewhere.

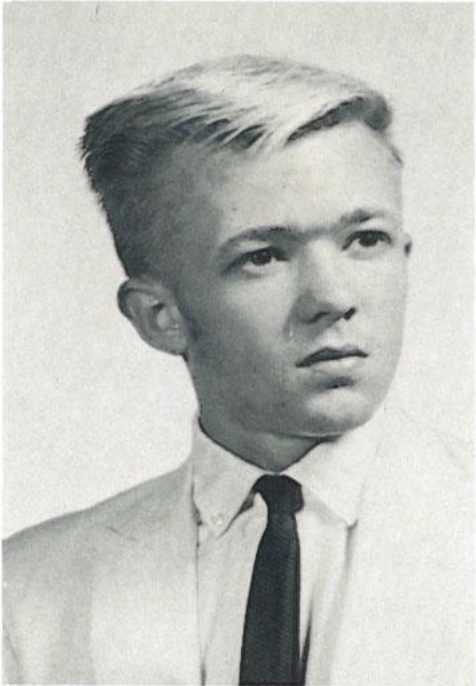
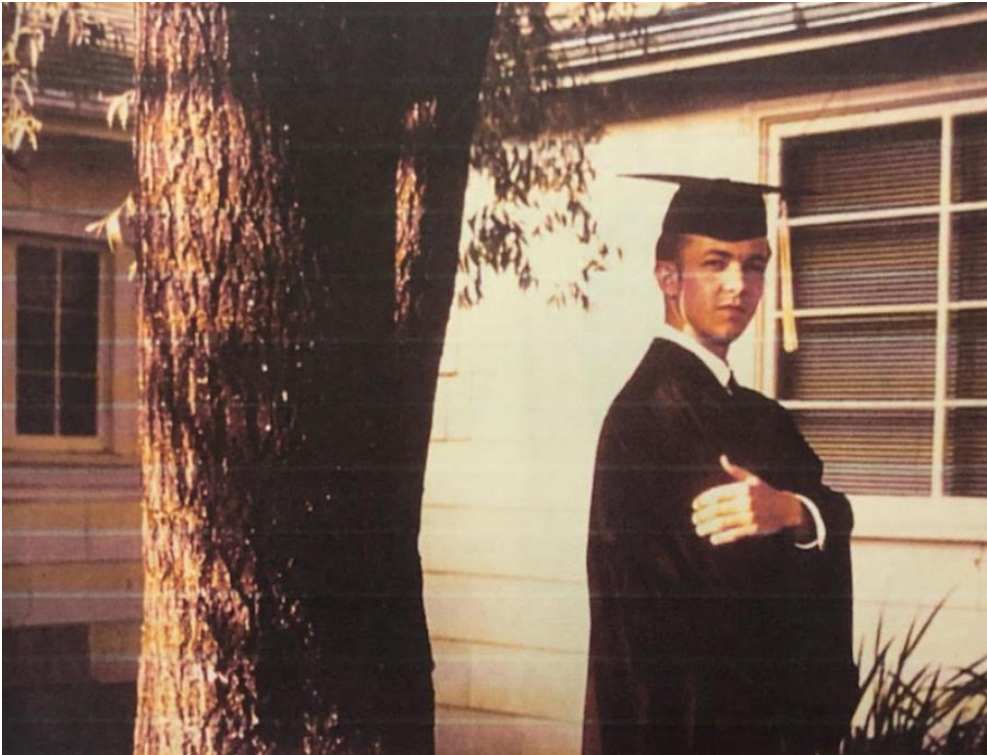
Paul Met Santa



Photo Credit – Cochran Family

- Paul was very selfless. At a young age, he always put others first.
- When he went to visit Santa, he asked for a new fridge for his mom's apartment instead of anything for himself.
- Even Santa was shocked at Paul's incredible kindness.

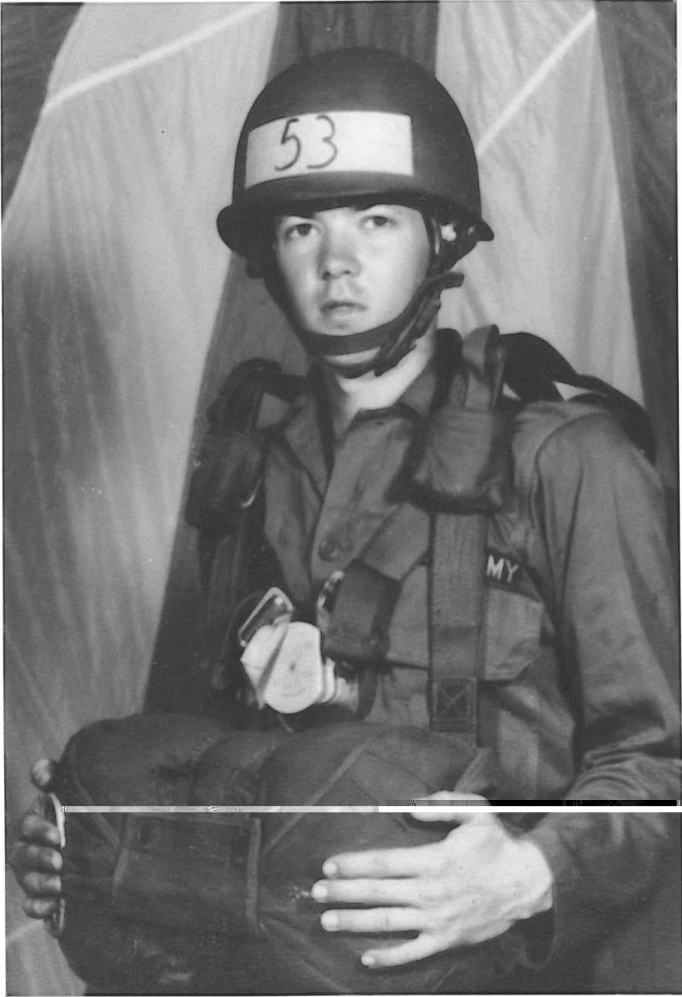
Paul “Jeff” Cochran attended Philomath High School during both his Junior & Senior Year. He graduated Philomath High School as a member of the Class of 1966.



PAUL COCHRAN

Paul played baseball, football, participated in speech competitions, served as the Sergeant-At-Arms of his senior class & was in the school play his senior year.

Paul volunteered to serve his country by enlisting in the United States Army in the fall of 1966. He attended US Army Airborne School and became a paratrooper.



He earned a set of US Army Airborne Wings to wear on his uniform.



Photo Credits – US Army, Cochran Family

Specialist Cochran deployed to South Vietnam in December 1967

Paul “Jeff” Cochran & His Grandmother outside the home on 1545 College Street



Photo Credit – Cochran Family

Paul was just 20 years old when he was Killed In Action fighting with the 101st Airborne Division “Screaming Eagles” in South Vietnam on May 1, 1968.



Bronze Star



Photo Credit: DoD

Purple Heart



Posthumous awards of the Bronze Star with Oakleaf Cluster for Bravery & Purple Heart Medal were received by his grandmother, Mrs. Marguerite Cochran.

Paul's Gold Star Mother, Beverly Marguerite Durham, passed away in August 2018.

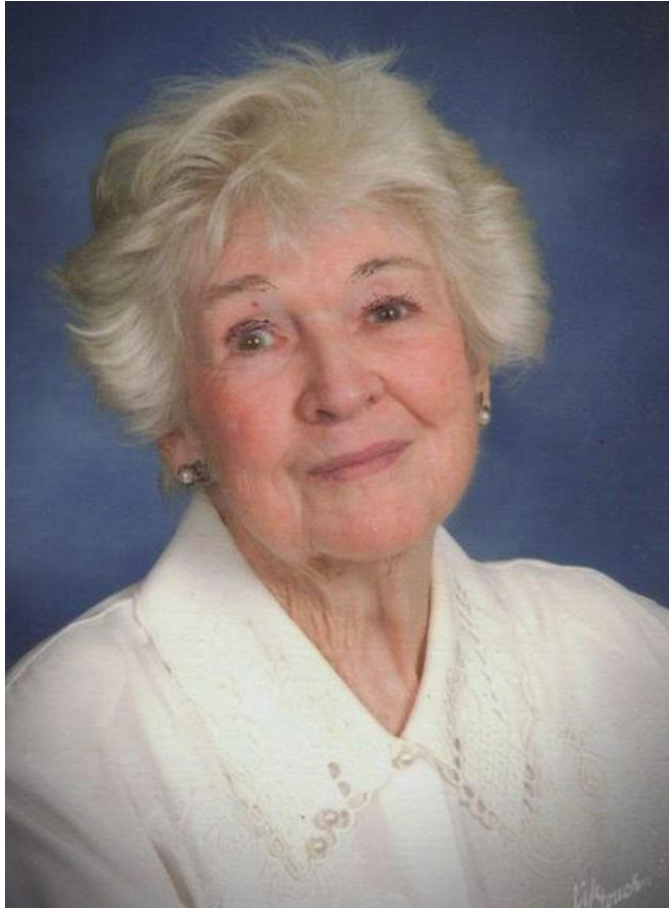


Photo Credit – Cochran Family

- Beverly asked in her will that Paul's teenage home on College Street be gifted to the City of Philomath for the purposes of creating a Veterans Memorial Park honoring her fallen son.
- Beverly's daughter, Shane Fritz, was assigned as the executor of her estate.
- Shane came to Philomath City Hall and met with the city leaders to share her mother's wishes in February 2019.



On May 1, 2020, petals picked from the rose bushes on the lawn of the house were placed on Beverly Durham's Grave at Mt Union Cemetery



As per one of Beverly's last wishes, the home was removed & a Veteran Park was constructed over the next five years to honor her fallen son.



Civic groups, church congregations, Oregon State ROTC cadets, a scout troop, local businesses, city officials, city employees, city advisory boards, area veterans, and countless volunteers all worked together to build the park. Oregon Parks and Recreation Department awarded a War & Memorial Grant to help fund the memorial.

Paul's Gold Star Sister, Shane, cut the ribbon on the new park on November 9, 2024.

Paul J Cochran's name appears on one of the granite columns at the new Oregon Vietnam Veterans Memorial dedicated on November 22, 2024. It is located on the capitol grounds at the corner of State & College Streets.



PAUL COCHRAN



DAVID STYLES

Specialist David Styles was Paul's classmate in the Philomath High School Class of 1966. He was drafted into the US Army and served as a combat medic in South Vietnam. He was killed in action in an enemy ambush on March 29, 1969. Their class pictures appear together in the hallway at Philomath High School. Now their names are memorialized together forever here in Salem outside the capitol.

Paul J Cochran's Name appears on the Vietnam Wall Memorial in Washington DC....



...alongside over 58,000 names of people who made the ultimate sacrifice during the Vietnam War. 710 of these names are Oregonians who represent 176 different Oregon communities. We must never forget those who served, those we lost, nor their Gold Star Families.