

PRITZKER MILITARY LIBRARY

more than a library...it's an experience

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PRITZKER MILITARY LIBRARY TO HOST ITS 200TH PROGRAM FEATURING U.S. NAVY MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT THOMAS G. KELLEY

CHICAGO, IL – It was the worst possible time to break down. On June 15, 1969, Lt. Kelley was leading a column of eight Navy river assault craft along the rivers and canals of the Mekong Delta. But only moments after one of the carriers broke down, unable to move, it came under heavy fire from the bank of the river. They needed time to fix the problem. Kelley saw no choice; he moved his own craft between the stricken carrier and the Viet Cong, directly into the line of fire.

The Pritzker Military Library is proud to welcome Medal of Honor recipient Thomas G. Kelley for an interview with Ed Tracy on Thursday, May 22nd. This event marks the 200th free, public program at the Pritzker Military Library. The presentation and live webcast will begin at 6:00 p.m., preceded by a reception for Library members at 5:00 p.m. It will also be recorded for later broadcast on WYCC-TV/Channel 20.

Kelley's first service was during the Cuban Missile Crisis in the Caribbean. A few years later, the Boston native volunteered to serve with the U.S. Navy's River Assault Division in Vietnam. His bravery under fire would come at a very high cost: shrapnel tore through the armor protecting his command area and knocked him to the deck below. Unable to move and barely able to speak, Kelley continued to direct the battle until the carrier was repaired and able to move again; only then did Kelley lose consciousness and fall into a coma. The shrapnel had destroyed one of his eyes and part of his skull. After reconstructive surgery, Kelley was declared physically unfit for duty, but he lobbied for – and was granted – a return to service.

Kelley received the Medal of Honor on May 14, 1970. He retired from the U.S. Navy as a captain in 1990 and worked as a civilian in the Department of Defense for several years. He currently serves as Secretary of the Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services.

"We are extremely honored that Capt. Kelley is joining us for this special event," said Ryan Yantis, Executive Director of the Pritzker Military Library. "Having an interview with a Medal of Honor recipient for our 200th public event marks an important milestone for our Library. It is also very fitting that Ed Tracy, our Executive Producer for Programs, will be hosting this interview. Ed's exceptional work on our programs, events and collections has been vital to our success."

Now in its fifth year, *Medal of Honor with Ed Tracy* has featured interviews with more than twenty-five of America's greatest military heroes and their riveting stories of courage under fire. The 2008 season includes upcoming appearances by Medal recipients in June and throughout the rest of the year, leading up to the 2009 Medal of Honor Convention in Chicago.

Seating for this event is limited, so reservations are strongly recommended. Call 312.587.0234 or email events@pritzkermilitarylibrary.net.

For more information, please visit www.pritzkermilitarylibrary.org/events.

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About the Pritzker Military Library

The Pritzker Military Library is a private, non-partisan research library located at 610 North Fairbanks Court in the Streeterville neighborhood of Chicago, near the Magnificent Mile. The mission of the Pritzker Military Library is to acquire and maintain an accessible collection of materials and develop appropriate programs focusing on the Citizen Soldier in the preservation of democracy.

The 5,000 sq. ft. facility features over 27,000 historical, reference, biographical and rare books on military subjects, over 800 original antique military posters and prints, and other military artifacts from private donors and the collection of COL (IL) James N. Pritzker, ARNG (Ret.). Since opening in October 2003, the Library has produced over 190 programs including author events, one-on-one interviews with Medal of Honor recipients, and Chicago's only monthly public affairs program on military issues, *Front & Center with John Callaway*. Evening programs in the Library's McHenry Atrium are presented free of charge in front of a live audience, broadcast live on the Internet, and recorded for later broadcast on WYCC-TV/Channel 20, a PBS affiliate. Programs are also available as audio podcasts on the Library website and at iTunes. A complimentary reception for Associate Members with wine and light refreshments precedes each evening program. Books are provided for purchase and signing at author events by The Book Stall at Chestnut Court.

To learn more, please visit pritzkermilitarylibrary.org.

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