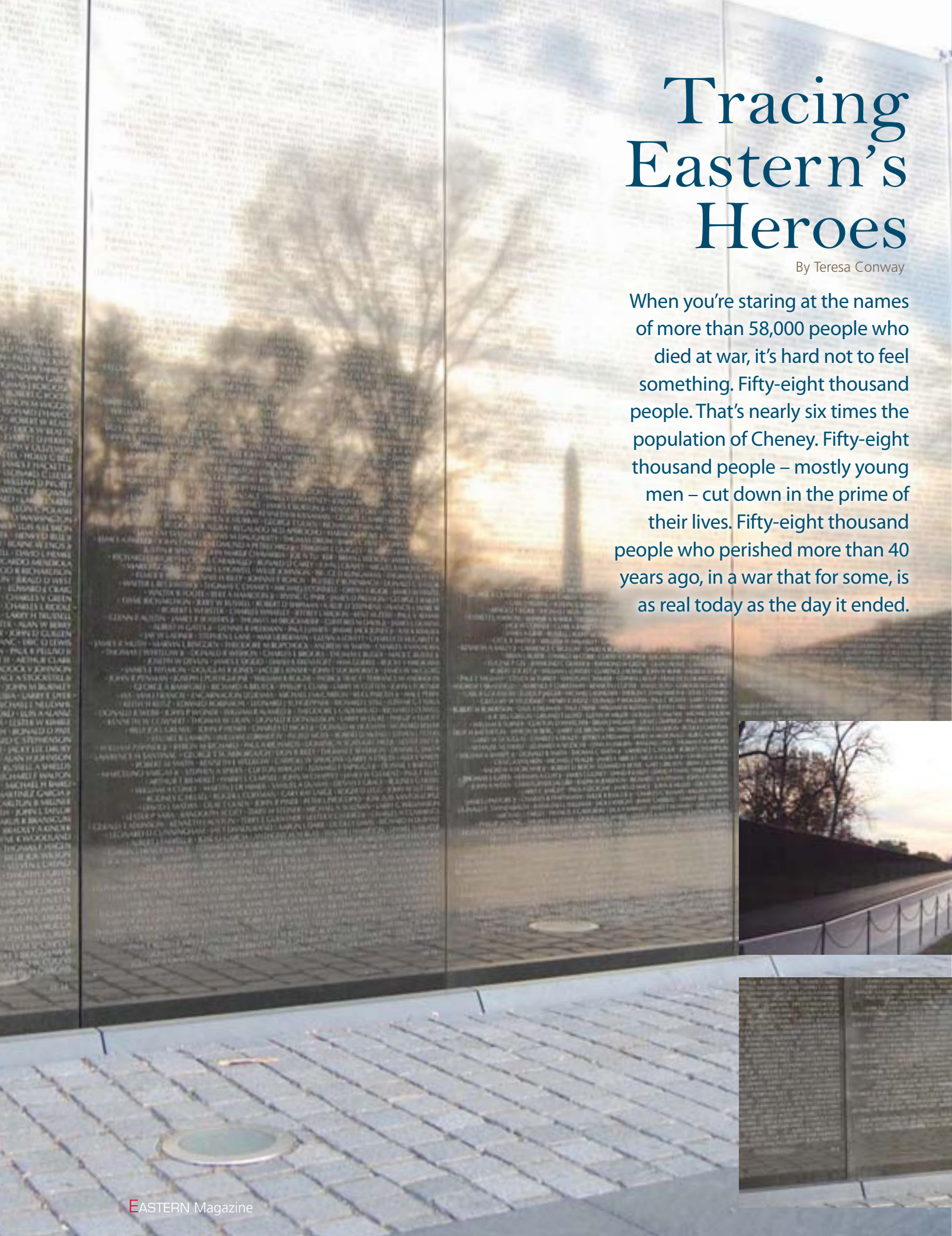


Tracing Eastern's Heroes

By Teresa Conway

When you're staring at the names of more than 58,000 people who died at war, it's hard not to feel something. Fifty-eight thousand people. That's nearly six times the population of Cheney. Fifty-eight thousand people – mostly young men – cut down in the prime of their lives. Fifty-eight thousand people who perished more than 40 years ago, in a war that for some, is as real today as the day it ended.



"Someone has said that art expresses what words cannot: The Wall is for me a case in point," says Jim Mulligan ('69 BA mathematics). "Facing the Wall with the names of over 58,000 heroes is just emotionally overwhelming – [I feel] love for these 'gentle heroes,' and [I am] so honored that a friendship existed with some of them."

For the past 19 years, Mulligan, who lives and works in Virginia, has faced the Vietnam Veterans Memorial every Veterans Day to pay tribute to those who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Mulligan was a student at Eastern Washington State College during the years many of the people whose names are now etched on the Wall died. Discharged from the U.S. Army in January 1966, he entered Eastern as a 21-year-old freshman ex-GI. He did not have to serve in Vietnam, yet he has never forgotten those who did.

"The memorial was dedicated in 1982, and a few years passed before a visit finally made sense to me," says Mulligan. "The controversy about the memorial and its propriety as such caused some reluctance."

But that initial reluctance was soon replaced by a dedicated effort to remember those who died in Vietnam – especially those who were Eastern students.

Mulligan now visits every Veterans Day unless travel or work does not permit him to. "Early morning Veterans Day visits are quiet, no crowds, and with luck, the sun coming up behind the Capitol and Washington Monument reflecting on the Wall, the eastern leg of which points to the Washington Monument," says Mulligan. "That early in the morning I can spend a few quiet moments paying respect to those on the Wall and especially to Randy, Rich and Mickey."

Randy Van Turner. Richard Harold Walker. Michael (Mickey) Irwin Hanneman. All three attended Eastern. All three died in Vietnam.

"Randy and I went to junior high and [North Central] high school together," says Mulligan. "He lived only two blocks from me; so we knew each other well and were good friends. We played football in high school under Dave Holmes, who, as you know, later became the Eastern head coach. [I have] many memories of Randy. He was so warm and open, always on the verge of a smile. When I first met him on campus, he was nearing graduation and about to be married. Some of us neighborhood guys had a bachelor party for him."

"I knew Rich from high school and Mickey from athletics. We played against each other in summer park league baseball as 12-year-old kids, and later in football when he played for Gonzaga Prep."

For Mulligan, it's impossible to forget those young men and the journey through life they and their families did not get to take. That's what sends him back to the Wall every Veterans Day to find the names of not just Turner, Walker and Hanneman, but also the names of all Eastern students who made the ultimate sacrifice in Vietnam.

"These men gave their lives and I don't want them and their sacrifice to go forgotten," says Mulligan. "I think a soldier would not ask too much more than he not be forgotten if he loses his life. These were young men whose families lost as well. Each one left someone who no doubt remembers today." E

(For more information, visit: www.thewall-usa.com)



Jim Mulligan '69



There are 58,256 names on the Wall



Photos provided by Jim Mulligan

Below are the known names of Eastern alumni killed in Vietnam. The shaded names are the ones Mulligan has located so far. He plans to look up the remaining names and compile a photographic memorial.

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|-------------------|-------------------|
| RANDALL N ARNEY | OWEN T MCCANDLI |
| RICHARD D ATOI | RANDY VAN TURNER |
| Terry Bowerman | RICHARD H WALKER |
| Jerry Brown | WILLIAM P WALL |
| MONAG B BURCHIN | Jerone J. Warnick |
| Robert L. Gregory | Gregory Weightman |
| MICHAEL H HANEMAN | Al Wolf |
| VICTOR W HINDSON | RONALD G WOLFE |
| Roy Johnson | |