

Lee Michael Halstead

- Date of birth: November 22, 1944
 - Home of record: Lansing, Michigan
 - Status: KIA
 - Lieutenant Halstead was Killed in Action in an air crash on September 29, 1968
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Navy Cross

Awarded posthumously for actions during the Vietnam War

The President of the United States of America takes pride in presenting the Navy Cross (Posthumously) to First Lieutenant Lee Michael Halstead (MCSN: 0-94751), United States Marine Corps Reserve, for extraordinary heroism while serving as a Pilot with Marine Light Helicopter Squadron ONE HUNDRED SIXTY-SEVEN (HML-167), Marine Aircraft Group SIXTEEN, First Marine Aircraft Wing, in connection with operations against insurgent communist (Viet Cong) forces in the Republic of Vietnam. On 29 August 1968, Lieutenant Halstead was Aircraft Commander aboard an armed UH-1E helicopter providing support for a UH-34 helicopter assigned to evacuate three wounded Marines from an area southwest of DaNang in Quang Nam Province. Seeking to determine the source of enemy fire, he boldly commenced a low-level pass over the friendly position and immediately came under intense hostile fire, which struck a box of ammunition in the crew's compartment. As the evacuation helicopter prepared to land, Lieutenant Halstead skillfully delivered covering fire on the hostile positions. Suddenly, the transport aircraft was damaged by enemy fire and crash-landed in hostile territory 500 meters from the friendly unit. With complete disregard for his own safety, Lieutenant Halstead commenced an approach to the disabled aircraft while simultaneously expending all remaining rockets and delivering a heavy volume of machine-gun fire around the damaged helicopter. Although the evacuation aircraft was receiving intense enemy antitank rocket and small-arms fire, he fearlessly continued his gallant efforts and executed a landing beside the downed crew members. Despite the hostile fire impacting nearby, he steadfastly remained on the ground until all the survivors had boarded his aircraft and, skillfully maneuvering his dangerously overloaded helicopter through the accurate fire, sustained additional damage as he departed the hazardous area. His heroic actions and extraordinary aeronautical skill inspired all who observed him and undoubtedly saved the lives of five Marines. By his courage, intrepid fighting spirit, and selfless devotion to duty in the face of grave personal danger, Lieutenant Halstead sustained and enhanced the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.



General Orders: Authority: Navy Department Board of Decorations and Medals

Action Date: August 29, 1968

Service: Marine Corps

Rank: First Lieutenant

Company: Marine Light Helicopter Squadron 167 (HML-167)

Regiment: Marine Aircraft Group 16 (MAG-16)

Division: 1st Marine Aircraft Wing