

# Medal of Honor A



Retired Army Lt. Col. Crandall shows what he thinks about the AH-64D *Apache Longbow* after he lands from an exciting flight. (Photo by Mike Goettings)



The DCMA Boeing Mesa staff — front row, from left: John Williams, Army Chief Warrant Officer 5 Edward Ollila, David Middendorf, Nick Salgado and John Graham; back row, from left: Larry Brown, Army Chief Warrant Officer 4 Brian McFadden, Patrick Harris, Army Lt. Col. David Kazmarski, John Edwards, Pete Wagner, Larry Phelps, Jenny McLain, E. Michael Huffman, Teresa Schneider, retired Lt. Col. Bruce C. Crandall, Al Winn, Chuck Allen, Obi Jones, Travis Williams and Gary Bishop

# Medal of Honor Recipient Crandall Flies Again at DCMA Boeing Mesa

By Nick Salgado, Priscilla Rodriguez and David Middendorf, DCMA Boeing Mesa

After soaring through the Arizona desert skies for a little more than an hour, retired Army Lt. Col. Bruce C. Crandall landed an AH-64D *Apache Longbow* helicopter in front of a ceremonial crowd assembled to greet the Medal of Honor recipient at Defense Contract Management Agency Boeing Mesa, Ariz., facility's flight line June 27.

Crandall, 74, returned to the Boeing Mesa plant, where he had been employed with the public works department after retiring from the Army. In commemoration of his return, he was asked to be a guest pilot in an *Apache Longbow* — part of a new shipment to be deployed by the Army.

**(Background Photo)** The AH-64D *Apache Longbow* is one of the world's most versatile and survivable fighter helicopters. (Photo by Mike Goettings)

Crandall once said that the Bell UH-1 "Huey" helicopter was "the best helicopter ever built." After his flight in the *Apache Longbow*, he had a change of heart, saying, "It's the difference between driving a Volkswagen and driving a Maserati."

Equipped with integrated digital avionics, an advanced weapons system and T700-GE-701C engines, the *Apache Longbow* is one of the world's most versatile attack helicopters. The helicopter is capable of flying 182 mph, carrying a 30 mm M230 chain gun and a mixture of missiles and rockets on its stub-wing pylons.

Crandall received the Medal of Honor for his bravery in the Vietnam War while flying a UH-1 "Huey" helicopter during the Battle of Ia Drang — the first major battle involving the United States. During this battle, Crandall dodged his "Huey" in and out of enemy fire to deliver supplies to troops on the ground. Crandall went above and beyond the call of duty when he made multiple trips back and forth in order to evacuate more than 70

wounded soldiers. This battle was portrayed in the book *We Were Soldiers Once ... And Young* and later in the movie "We Were Soldiers." Actor Greg Kinnear portrayed Crandall in the film.

Whether it was to witness Crandall's flying display or for the chance to shake a true hero's hand, many attendees of the ceremonial flight said they wouldn't have traded the experience for anything in the world.

Crandall is one of the most recent recipients of the Medal of Honor — the highest military honor the president of the United States can present to a service member. He was presented the medal Feb. 26 by President George W. Bush at the White House. 

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