



**SSG MANUEL BARRERA, USA (RET)**  
1 JUNE 1914 – 1 NOVEMBER 2012

SSG Manuel Barrera was born June 17, 1914 in a small town in Mexico near the Texas border. In December, 1942 he was living in Edinburgh, Texas when the United States entered World War II after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. He immediately enlisted in the U.S. Army and became a naturalized citizen of the United States. That was the beginning of a 30-year Army career as he served in the WWII Pacific Theater, the Korea Conflict and Vietnam. Throughout his entire career he carried the 71 M (Chaplain Assistant) MOS.

Before enlisting in 1942, SSG Barrera married his wife Virginia. Together they had 10 children who were born in places that reflect SSG Barrera's military assignments. Five were born in Harlingen, Texas while Manny was deployed overseas. The others were born in Germany; Fort Ord, California; Honolulu, Hawaii; and the youngest in San Antonio, Texas. San Antonio was their home upon his retirement in 1972. SSG Barrera was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal and others including his service campaign medals and service stripes. SSG Manuel Barrera received three George Washington Honor Awards (1960, 1961, 1963) presented by the Valley Forge Foundation for his essays on freedom which he submitted in the active duty military service member competition.

After his retirement in San Antonio, SSG Manuel Barrera attended college and continued his ministry at the Fort Sam Houston Chapel in a volunteer capacity. This continued until his health declined in 2010. He died on 1 November 2012, All Saint's Day, a fitting day for a retired soldier whose life was dedicated to assisting Chaplains as they provided worship and service to the military community at Ft. Sam Houston. He and Virginia were married 70 years. Virginia was a devoted wife and mother for all those years. She said that living with military families in Germany and being active in the Catholic Women of the Chapel taught her to speak and understand English. Virginia died in 2014 and is buried next to her beloved "Manny" at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery.



**CHAPLAIN (COL) CONRAD N. WALKER, USA (RET.)**  
2 MARCH 1932 – 25 MAY 2014

Chaplain Conrad N. Walker (Connie) was born March 2, 1932 in Herrick, Illinois. He lived there until he entered the University of Washington in Seattle, where he was a member of Sigma Nu Fraternity and played guard for the Washington Huskies. He was a heavyweight boxer holding titles in the Midwest and West coast. Upon graduation he gave up opportunities to play professional football to follow his call to ministry and entered the Luther Theological Seminary.

Upon graduation he was ordained a pastor serving first at Shiloh Lutheran Church in Elmore, Minnesota. In September 1962, he was called by his church to active duty in the U.S. Army as he had served in the US Army Reserves and Minnesota National Guard. He continued to coach boxing throughout his military career. Chaplain Walker served with the 101st Airborne Division in Vietnam and attended the Airborne, Ranger, and Pathfinder Schools at Ft. Benning, Georgia. He served with Special Forces in Thailand; the 1st Cavalry Division, Ft. Hood; US Forces Korea; 21<sup>st</sup> Support Command, Kaiserslautern, Germany; and U. S. Fifth Army, Fort Sam Houston. He was a master parachutist having made hundreds of jumps with troops to include one combat jump in Vietnam with the 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Brigade. He was awarded the Silver Star, Bronze Star with Valor, Legion of Merit, and Purple Heart for his pastoral ministry under hostile conditions in Vietnam.

Following his retirement from active duty, November 1, 1990, he served as Senior Pastor at MacArthur Park Lutheran Church, San Antonio, Texas. In 1995 he began his new mission, Worldwide Retreat Ministry and remained active in that ministry until his death. He and his wife, Ann, were blessed with five adult children, many grandchildren, and great grandchildren. He was a member of the Military Chaplains' Association of the USA, National Chaplain for the Military Order of the Purple Heart, and International/National Chaplain for the 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Association. Chaplain Walker co-authored with J. Walker Winslow a dynamic book about his life story. Entitled, "The Leapin' Deacon—The Soldier's Chaplain," it was published in 2004 with the forward by General John "Jack" Vessey, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He also penned the Dust-off Prayer and Paratrooper's Prayer found on the back cover of the book.