

News Releases

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DeKalb Student Creates Vietnam War Video

The Vietnam War has a personal meaning for DeKalb student Mandi Roach. Last summer the current Huntley Middle School eighth grader created a video montage about the Vietnam War as part of a summer school technology class.

Mandi said she was inspired to do the video by her father, Stuart Roach, a Northern Illinois University employee who has suffered health problems over the last year. Roach served in Vietnam from December 1969 to November 1970 where he spent his twenty-first birthday as a Spec. 4. He was stationed in the Charang Valley as a company clerk, a company armorer, and finally a truck driver who helped haul the Fourth Infantry into Cambodia.

Huntley assistant principal Jeff Smith and teacher Todd Hallaron played the video for the DeKalb School Board at the Oct. 3 meeting as part of a report on the middle school summer school program. The room was silent as images from the war flashed across the screen accompanied by the sound of helicopters and the haunting lyrics of “Goodnight Saigon.” The song was written by Billy Joel, but for her video, Mandi used a karaoke recording sung by her father. Roach said Mandi always told him she liked his version better than Joel’s.

Summer school students used iTunes, iMovie, and Windows Movie Maker to create the videos. This was the first year the technology component was offered in summer school for DeKalb students. “The goal was to make summer school more engaging for middle school students,” said Linell Lasswell, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. The students learned to use the technology while creating unique individual projects.