

VETERANS NEWS AND NOTES

SOME OF THE TOUGHEST TRAINING IN THE MILITARY IS ACTUALLY ENJOYED BY SOME PRETTY TOUGH AMERICAN VETERANS WHO HAVE LOST THEIR SIGHT: MEMBERS OF THE BLINDED VETERANS ASSOCIATION, OR B-V-A. THEY SPEND A LONG WEEKEND OF RIGOROUS U-S ARMY MOUNTAIN RANGER TRAINING AT CAMP FRANK D. MERRILL MILITARY BASE IN GEORGIA. ACTIVITIES INCLUDE HIKING UP A ROCK-STREWN TRAIL; CLIMBING CLIFFS; RAPPELLING ON A SYNTHETIC ROCK WALL; SHOOTING LIVE FIRE FROM SHOTGUNS, ASSAULT RIFLES, AND PISTOLS; AND COMPETITIVE FOOTRACES. IN ADDITION, THE VETERANS ARE TREATED TO A BARBECUE, A FISH FRY AND A CRITTER COOKOUT. THE VETERAN-TRAINEES ARE ALL LEGALLY BLIND AND FROM SEVERAL ERAS OF SERVICE. B-V-A IS THE ONLY VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION EXCLUSIVELY DEDICATED TO SERVING BLINDED VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES. ITS OPERATION PEER SUPPORT INITIATIVE, WHICH ARRANGES THE TRIP, HELPS NEWLY BLINDED VETERANS LOOK AHEAD TO THE POSSIBILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES THEIR LIVES STILL PRESENT, THROUGH SOCIAL ACTIVITIES, COUNSELING, AND EDUCATIONAL FORUMS ON BENEFITS AND REHABILITATION. LEARN MORE AT B-V-A--DOT--ORG.