Army Aviation Hall of Fame 2007 Induction - Atlanta, GA

Retired BG John C. "Doc" Bahnsen Jr. graduated from the U.S. Military Academy with a commission in the Armor branch in 1956.

Following airborne training and his basic Armor officer course, he became an Army aviator in 1957.

In due course, Bahnsen became rated in both fixed wing and rotary wing aircraft, culminating in his transition into the new AH-1G Cobra gunship in 1968.

The combination of Bahnsen with the Cobra became one of the most lethal weapons systems of the Vietnam War.

He had the uncanny ability to be where the enemy least expected him to be, finding and killing them, then looking for more.

Bahnsen exploited that instinctive sixth sense with a combat effectiveness that knew no peers.

He did multiple combat tours where his 24/7 presence and leadership carved out new thresholds of aviation combat effectiveness, almost beyond emulation or replication by his peers in combat.

His awards and decorations included the Distinguished Service Cross, five Silver Stars, four Legions of Merit, three Distinguished Flying Crosses, the Bronze Star Medal with three Valor devices, two Purple Hearts, the Meritorious Service Medal; 50 Air Medals, three with Valor devices; and the three Army Commendation Medals, one for Valor.

He had his own mortality reminders and left several Cobra helicopters for recovery with extensive combat damage.

A warfighter with the warrior ethos, Bahnsen was always, always on the attack-attack-attack.

His tactics, techniques, practices and procedures literally re-wrote the book on the fly for future Army aviators to seize and surge to even higher levels of combat effectiveness.

No citation can really capture the incredible career of "Doc" Bahnsen, and his way-out-there stretching of one's career possibilities in Army aviation.