

# City soldier's mom attends dedication

11/15/82 TG (over)

By VICKI-ANN GAY  
Staff Reporter

David Anthony Francis, a brown-haired, brown-eyed young man who liked to help people, enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1966, when he was 17. Seven months later, he departed for Vietnam.

The telegram arrived at his widowed mother's home 143 days later. It said David, now 18, had died from gunshot wounds to the head during an enemy sniper attack at some place called Quang Tri.

On Saturday afternoon, in the wind and chill of a November day in Washington, D.C., two strong veterans lifted Sadie Francis Tigano high up to the gleaming black granite walls of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Balancing in their arms, she placed her hands at 25-East, Line 23, and touched the name of her son, Private First Class David Anthony Francis. "I was thrilled," said Mrs. Tigano. "It was just beautiful."

#### Stoughton VFW

Mrs. Tigano and her husband, John, both residents of 13 Myrtle St., made reservations in July to attend the monument's dedication this past weekend. They travelled by bus with Stoughton VFW Post 1645.

The delegation was led by William Harrington, chairman of the state Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, which raised \$250,000 to construct the monument. Though not members, the Tiganos were welcomed by the post.

"They treated my husband and me like one of their own," said an excited Mrs. Tigano this morning. "There were two Marines on the bus who took to the Gold Star mothers like they were our sons."

They reached the Marriott Hotel in Washington o

Thursday afternoon. On Friday, they found David's name and those of 12 other Taunton boys who died, among 57,939 others on the 250-foot tall, V-shaped monument.

#### Saturday Parade

Mrs. Tigano paid \$10 for a directory, thick as six telephone books, giving the location of each name on the monument. Noting the volume's size, she said, "You wouldn't believe this book is all boys who died."

The next day, 66-year-old Mrs. Tigano and her husband marched three miles in the parade with other Gold Star mothers, and spoke with Gen. William Westmoreland, commander of American troops in Vietnam.

At the monument's dedication, an old man dressed in a tattered World War One doughboy uniform, wearing shoes about his neck and holding tightly to an American flag, came up and hugged Mrs. Tigano.

"He said his wife was a Gold Star mother," she said. Cameramen came running to take photographs of Mrs. Tigano and the old man. "My God, I felt just like Elizabeth Taylor," Mrs. Tigano laughed.

#### Rest in Peace

Sunday morning, Mrs. Tigano was interviewed by cameramen from Boston's Channel 7, and by the time she got home last night, "the telephone was ringing off the

hook, I've been taking calls all morning," she said happily.

The Tiganos paid their own expenses for the trip. At times the wind was so cold it made Mrs. Tigano's jaws ache, "but I'd do it again and again," she said.

David, who attended Cohannet School, was the son of the late Anthony Francis. His sister, Janice Daigneault, now lives at 15 Myrtle St. with her four children.

His aunts are Alice Fontes of Willow Terrace and Louise Cook of Norton, and he has a cousin, Richard Lima of Taunton.

The dedication, Mrs. Tigano remembers, "made you feel as if you were at (the veterans') funeral. It was their funeral," she said, "and now they can rest in peace."



DAVID FRANCIS  
Killed in Vietnam