

SPECIAL RECOGNITION CATEGORY

CREATIVE WRITING DIVISION

Sound of Thunder

TONY PAREDES

VA Medical Center

Cheyenne, Wyoming

Tony Paredes is a 48-year-old veteran of the Army *and* the Navy. All totaled, he served from 1976 to 1982, earning two honorable discharges. While serving in the Army, he wrote the poem, *Sound of Thunder* to reflect the sound of explosions and shootings that surrounded him. It helped him deal with the traumatic events he faced during his time in the service. Paredes says, “Putting my thoughts and feelings down on paper helps me cope with negative feelings and stress.”

For the past three years, Paredes has been working on a book, and he also writes poems and stories. He actively participates in the Help Hospitalized Veterans’ craft kit program at the VA Medical Center in Cheyenne, Wyoming, where he receives care. He hopes that through his writings, he is able to speak on behalf of others experiencing similar challenges. He says, “I hope others can read my writings and feel a connection to the emotions involved.”

