

Mid-Michigan Honor Flight



Mission XXI – April 29-30, 2025



A PRAYER FOR VETERANS

Proud of our nation,
they answered her call,
defending the freedom
and safety of all.

On land or on sea,
or in jets high above,
they went out of duty
and honor and love.

But however they served, Lord,
wherever they went,
please bless them
and help them
to know what it meant.

And help us to thank them
on their Honor Flight day,
for we owe them far more
than we ever could say.

God's blessings to you!

Trinity Lutheran Church & School
Reed City, MI



Thank you for accompanying us on Mission #21 and making it a wonderful experience! Please accept this book as a token of our appreciation. It was our privilege to share this day and many experiences with you. The photos that you submitted with your application appear in this book and your Veteran experiences have been placed into it to capture your place in our history.

"It is never too late to thank a Veteran"

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*Official Hub of the
Honor Flight® Network*

Acknowledgment

First and foremost, we remember, thank, and praise every Veteran that has ever served, sacrificed, and defended our Nation and our Freedoms! The Board of Directors of Mid-Michigan Honor Flight would like to take a moment and offer a Special "Thank You" to the volunteers, donors, and businesses that made Mission #21 a success. Our Hero Honorees, and their Guardians were treated to "The Trip of a Lifetime". This first-class event was made possible by the dedication and hard work of the Mid-Michigan Honor Flight Board of Directors and our Flight Support Staff. To our many Volunteers, MMHF gratefully acknowledges your time, dedication, and hard work, we could never complete a Mission without you.

Our Special thanks to: Gerald Ford Airport employees, Traverse City Golf and Country Club, Grand Traverse Veterans Cup Hockey Tournament, the Meijer Family Foundation, 5 Star Printing, Coins with Pride, B and B Printing, Project Hero Hugs, the Les and Anne Biederman Foundation, Holes 4 Heavens Heroes, T. & C. Mulford, A. DiPoala, and all of our other Donors.

The number of hours put into a single Honor Flight Mission is mind-boggling. Between 2,000 and 2,500 volunteer hours were dedicated to making Mission #21 a resounding success. Our Staff and Volunteers again delivered the Trip of a Lifetime to our Veteran Honorees! Our simple directive "What is the best choice for our Veterans" drives us to make every Mission better than the last. We are able to make each Mission come together because of the generous and loving commitment that everyone contributes to our Nations Heroes.



The Tootsie Roll Tale

For too many Americans, November 11th signals “that 3-day weekend before Thanksgiving.” Others know it’s Veterans Day and feel it deeply. But for many people, Veterans Day is a vague and fuzzy concept, lacking a compelling memory; a story, a visual aid; something tactile to focus on. Those are the ones you want to hand a piece of candy to. A couple of weeks before Veterans Day buy a bag of those tiny Tootsie Rolls, the ones called *Midgees*. Put some in your pocket and begin handing them out, along with this story:

After World War II, the Korean peninsula was divided into the communist North and the democratic South. While South Korea was recovering and rebuilding, North Korea was arming to the teeth, receiving countless tons of

weapons, munitions and war supplies — and encouragement to use them — from Mao’s China and Stalin’s Soviet Union. In June of 1950, North Korea invaded the lightly-defended South with infantry, tanks and artillery, nearly rolling up the entire country. South Korea had no tanks, anti-tank weapons or artillery. Then a coalition of UN member nations, led by the US, intervened.

After weeks of bitter fighting, North Korean forces were pushed ‘way back over the border at the 38th Parallel. For a brief and shining moment, it

appeared the invasion had been defeated — and the North’s Russian and Chinese sponsors had taken a slap in the face. Mao’s response shouldn’t have come as a surprise, but it did. He sent a million-man army against the allies.

A VETERANS DAY STORY



THE FROZEN CHOSIN

By November 26, 10,000 men of the First Marine Division, along with elements of two Army regimental combat teams, a detachment of British Royal Marine commandos and some South Korean policemen were completely surrounded by over ten divisions of Chinese troops in rugged mountains near the Chosin Reservoir. Chairman Mao himself had ordered the Marines annihilated, and Chinese General Song Shi-Lun gave it his best shot, throwing human waves of his 120,000 soldiers against the heavily outnumbered allied forces. A massive cold front blew in from Siberia, and with it, the coldest winter in recorded Korean history. For the encircled allies at the Chosin Reservoir, daytime temperatures averaged five degrees below zero, while nights plunged to minus 35 and lower.

Jeep batteries froze and split. C-rations ran dangerously low and the cans were frozen solid. Fuel could not be spared to thaw them. If truck engines stopped, their fuel lines froze. Automatic weapons wouldn’t cycle. Morphine syrettes had to be thawed in a medical corpsman’s mouth before they could be injected. Precious bottles of blood plasma were frozen and useless. Resupply could only come by air, and that was spotty and erratic because of the foul weather.

High Command virtually wrote them off, believing their situation was hope-

less. Washington braced for imminent news of slaughter and defeat. Retreat was hardly an option; not through that wall of Chinese troops. If the Marines defended, they would be wiped out. So they formed a 12-mile long column — and attacked.

There were 78 miles of narrow, crumbling, steeply-angled road — and 100,000 Chinese soldiers — between the Marines and the sea at Hungnam. Both sides fought savagely for every inch of it. The march out became one monstrous, moving battle.

The Chinese used the ravines between ridges, protected from rifle fire, to marshal their forces between attacks. The Marines’ 60-millimeter mortars,

capable of delivering high, arcing fire over the ridgelines, breaking up those human waves, became perhaps the most valuable weapon the Marines had. But their supply of mortar rounds was quickly depleted. Emergency requests for resupply were sent by radio, using code words for specific items. The code for 60mm mortar ammo was “Tootsie Rolls” — but the radio operator receiving that urgent request didn’t have the Marines’ code sheets. All he knew was that the request came from command authority, it was extremely urgent — and there were tons of Tootsie Rolls at supply bases in Japan.

Tootsie Rolls had been issued with other rations to US troops since World War I, earning preferred status because they held up so well to heat, cold and rough handling compared to other candies.

Tootsies From The Sky

Tearing through the clouds and fog, parachutes bearing pallet-loads of Tootsie Rolls descended on the Marines. After initial shocked reactions, the freezing, starving troops rejoiced. Frozen Tootsie Rolls were thawed in armpits, popped in mouths, and their sugar provided instant energy. For many, Tootsie Rolls were their only nourishment for days. The troops also learned they could use warmed Tootsie Rolls to plug bullet holes in fuel drums, gas tanks, cans and radiators, where they would freeze solid again, sealing the leaks.

Over two weeks of unspeakable misery, movement and murderous fighting, the 15,000-man column suffered 3,000 killed in action, 6,000 wounded and thousands of severe frostbite cases. But they reached the sea, demolishing several Chinese divisions in the process. Hundreds credited their very survival to Tootsie Rolls. Surviving Marines called themselves “The Chosin Few,” and among themselves, another name: *The Tootsie Roll Marines*. Join me in sharing their story — and some Tootsie Rolls. Connor OUT





*To our veterans ...
... we thank you for your service.*

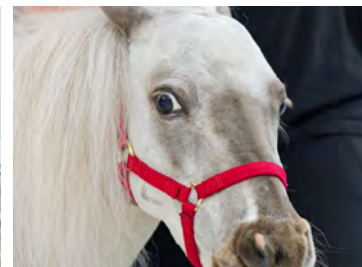


Marines. Vietnam. July 28, 1968 – July 29, 1972. Sgt. I was a radio operator, grunt in Vietnam. When I got back I went to York Town, VA to the Naval Weapons Station, where I served security. Purple Heart & Navy Commendation Medal.





Army. Vietnam. 1965 – 1985. SFC. In Vietnam I was Airborne Infantry. Then I became a cook & for the majority of the time I was food service. I cooked for generals and officers. Vietnam Campaign Medal, Army Commendation Medal.

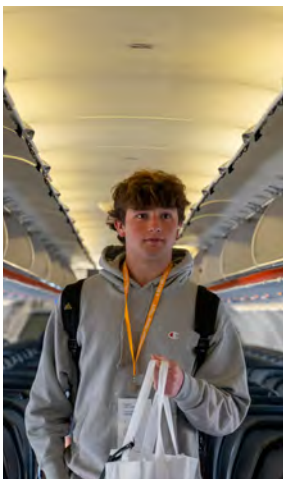


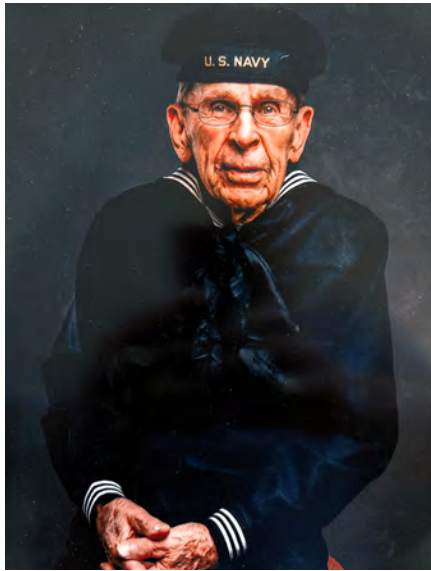


Army. Korea. September 9, 1954 enlisted; released from active duty June 1957; released from reserve obligation September 8, 1962. I was with the Army Security Agency. After training, I was in Okinawa for two years. I worked with classified information. Good Conduct, Medal Award: Marksman (Carbine)



Air Force. Vietnam. January 8, 1972 – July 30, 1976, Sgt Hospital Administration January 2, 1978 – June 23, 1995, SMSGT Select Recruiting Service Avionic Radar Tech (Supervisor), Supt Air Force Job Classification Section, MI. AF. Recruiting Operation Supervisor, MI. AF. Advertisement NCOIC, Classification Supervisor, MI. AF Recruiting Service F Flight Supervisor, USAF Recruiter. Senior Master Sgt. Select. 1st four years worked at hospital at Oscoda. After a year of college I re-upped and worked Electronics-worked on aircraft systems-radar navigation. with the 8th Air Force, in Barksdale, Louisiana. Then I became a recruiter. Regular recruiting, supervisor, advertising in recruiting. In charge of job classifications in San Antonio. Operation NCO in Detroit and Lansing. In charge of the NEPS sites. Awards: 3 Meritorious Service Medals, 3 Accommodation Medals, 1 Presidential Unit Awards, Vietnam Service Ribbon, 4 Good Conduct Ribbons, Marksman Ribbon, Iraq Service Ribbon, 3 USAF Recruiting Silver Star Medals.



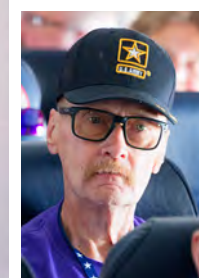


Army. Vietnam.



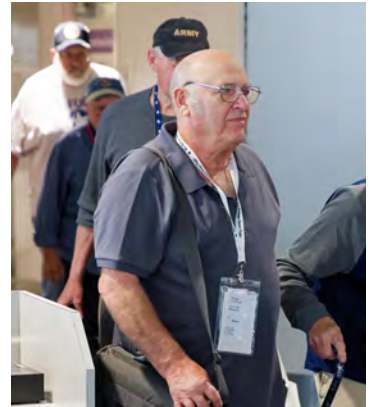


Army. Vietnam. March 1969 – December 1970.
Spec. 4. Infantryman.





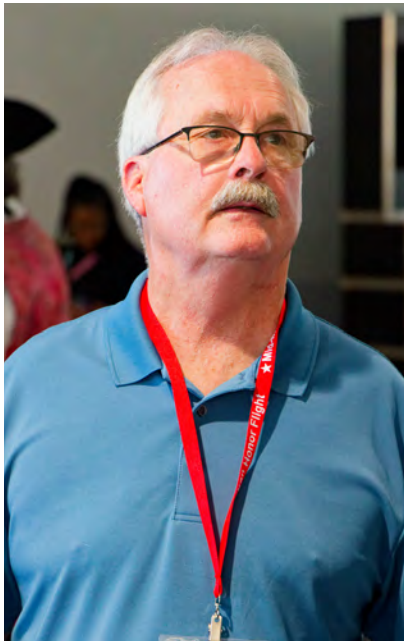
Army. WW II.





Army. Vietnam. 1968 – 1971. E-5 Sgt. I did a couple different things. I went to Fort Knox for basic. In Vietnam I was assigned to 11th Light Infantry Brigade. As time went on during my year, I realized there was no end in sight. It was disorganized for us, as we didn't have any ideal who the enemy was. During the day it was different than it was during the night. If the sun came up in the morning I was still alive. After I came back, I was put on Body Escort. I worked on this for six months. I went all over the country doing this. Vietnam Campaign Medal and assorted Vietnam medals.





Army. Vietnam. January 1971 - December 1973; Reserves January 1974 - 1995. S. Korea, also Ordinance Detachment EOD Commander, Ft. Sill, Ok, in Germany during Desert Storm. Pentagon during Hurricane Andrew. Red Stone Arsenal & Aberdeen Driving. Ground major clean-up of chemical weapons sending a white cloud 45,000' in the air. Burning 20,000 WP rifle grenades. ARCOM, NASM, AFEM.



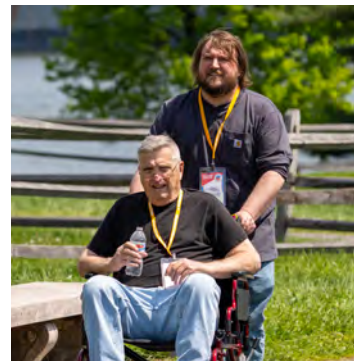


Air Force.
Vietnam.





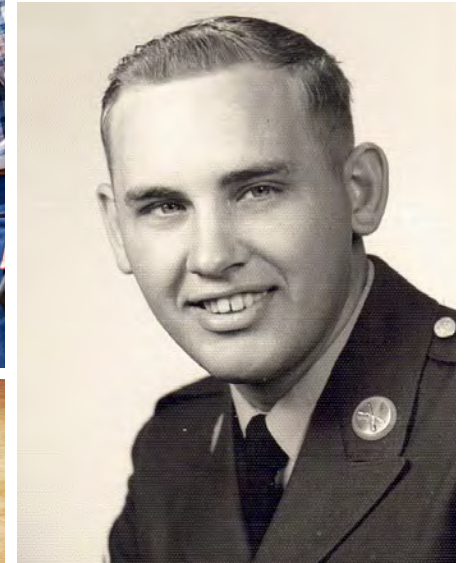
Army. Vietnam.





Army, Air Force. Vietnam. Army November 1969 – 1972, Air Force 1972 – 1976. E-4 SPC, Army E-5 Staff Sgt. In the Army, I went to Vietnam. I was supply. After my 1st deployment I was sent to Germany. I worked for the 8 Inf. I worked G-2, Army Intelligence. I worked directly with the Major. In the Air Force, I adjutant. My first assignment was at Lowry near Denver Colorado. I worked for the IG-Inspector General. I also worked for the base commander, a two star general, General Pattlo. I was sent to Florida, the 31st Tact Fighter Wing at Holmsted AFB. I worked directly with the Wing Commander-a full bird colonal. After that I went to a short term assignment at Galena, Airport. I ran a small post office that was a courier service. Then I went to Rutgers University in NJ. I was assigned to 485th Air Force ROTC Detachment. Vietnam Campaign Medal in the Army I received the Air Force Commendation Medal, from the Air Force.



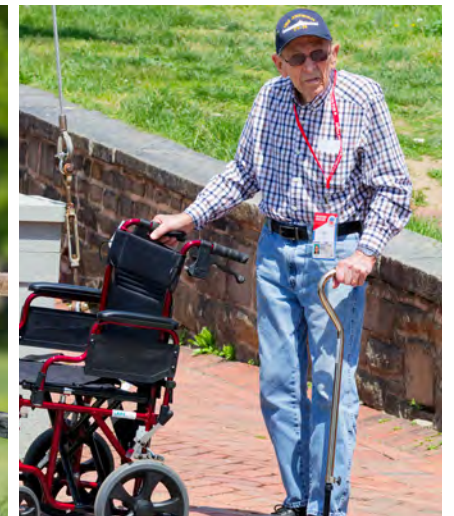


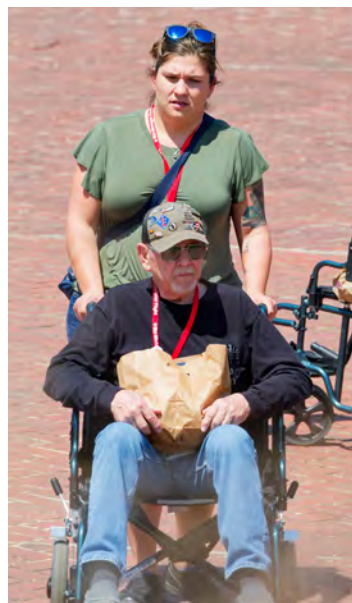
Air Force. Vietnam. Sep 1, 1964 - Aug 31, 1968.
E-4 Sgt. Teletype & Crypto Maint. Comm Center,
Installing. I was trained to repair all of the teletype
and crypto gear. I was sent to Japan and we installed
com centers. Afterwards, I was sent to Offutt SAC
Headquarters. I received two medals, good conduct
and one for marksman.





Navy. Vietnam. March 1968 – December 1971. CS 3. Received Service Award.





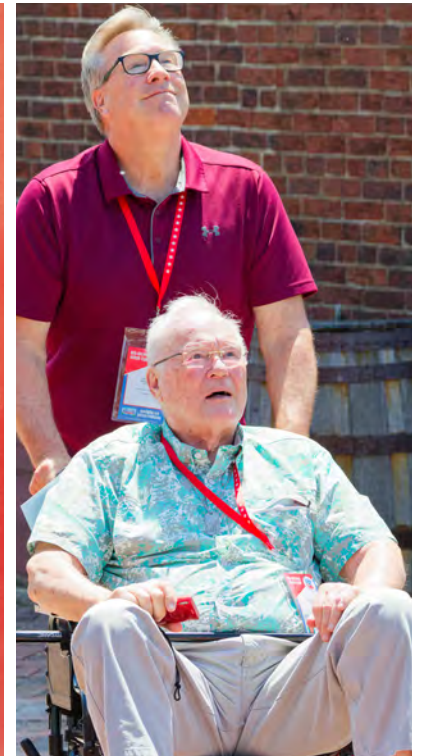
Army. Korea. February 1955 to January 1957. SPC 4. Trained as a Tanker on an M48 tank at Fort Knox. I fired the guns on them. I served in Korea for 13 months, stationed with the 24th Infantry Division. We were right up at the DMZ, serving as security if the North Koreans ever started it up again. From December of 1955 and returned home on a ship and on Jan. 22nd of 1957, you were discharged at Fort Sheridan, Illinois. In Korea, I was a Tank Driver the tank M46 (a newer tank). It had two 30 cal and a 50 cal on top. It had a 90mm shells. It was a big one! You never wanted to stand behind it when they shot them off!! I received the Good Conduct Medal.



Navy. Korea. May 16, 1958 – July 31, 1959. EM2, E-5. It was during peacetime but with the trouble in Beirut and Egypt, we were at sea and could see the shore where the British were bombing. We were there to rescue Americans, about a mile off shore. We were schedule for an 18month cruise but it took 36 months to complete the mission.



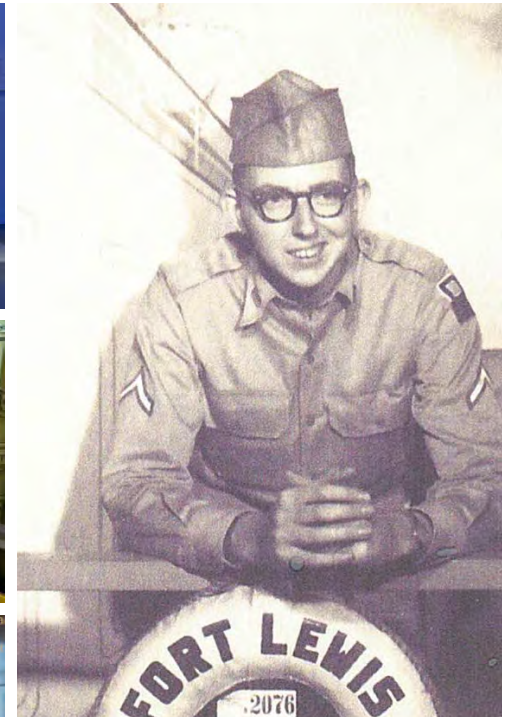
Army. Vietnam. August 1964 – August 1967. E-5 SPC-5. Dental Hygienist. Riflemen award, Distinguished Good Conduct medal. I got to see Paris, France and traveled a lot. We were in charge of NATO Headquarters people-coming into our dispensary. While at the dispensary we wore white medical clothing and couldn't wear our uniforms. I was under a Colonel Jimenez. He later became head, Attorney General of the Dental detachment at Washington DC.





Army. Vietnam.
December 7, 1965 –
December 1, 1967.



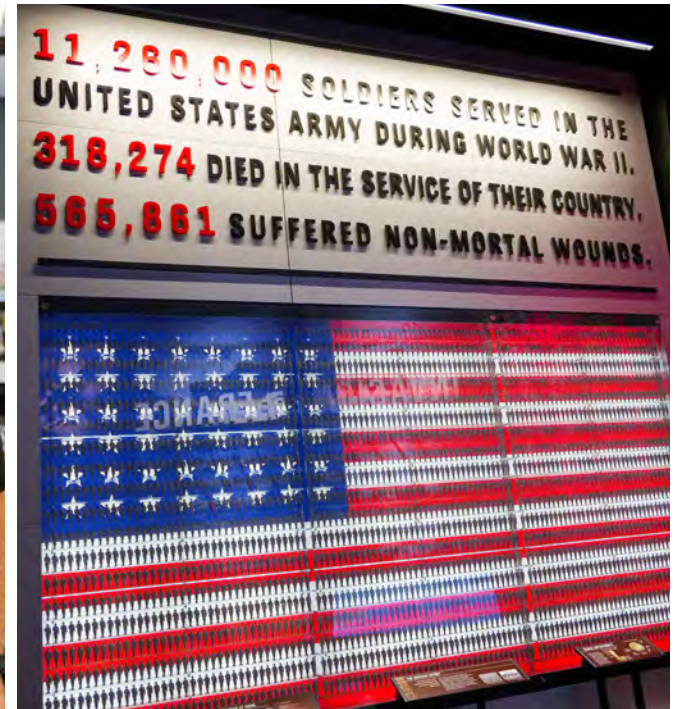


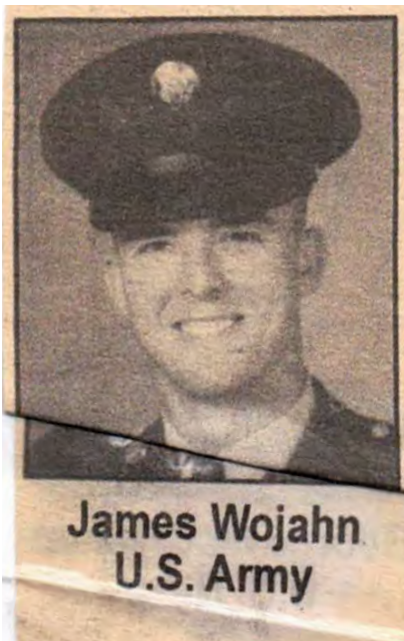
Army. Korea. 10/12/1956-10/11/62. E-3 PFC. Light Vehicle Driver Radar Plotter.





Army. Vietnam. 1965
– 1967. Spc 5. Army
Accommodation Medal.





Marines. Vietnam.





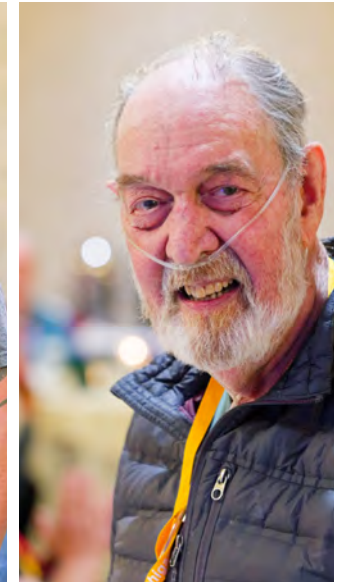


Air Force.
Vietnam. August
11, 1969 – August
10, 1973.





Navy. Vietnam. November 3, 1958 – September 22, 1962.





Army. Vietnam. September 10, 1969
– September 11, 1971. E 5. Honorable
Discharge. Purple Heart, Bronze Star,
Combat Infantry Medal.





Army. Vietnam. July 12, 1966 – July 11, 1968.





Army. Vietnam. 1965 – 1967. SPC-4.
Infantry in the Big Red 1. He was on the
ground in Vietnam and he was a radio
man. He was injured when he was
shot. Purple heart, Vietnam Campaign
medal.





Army. Vietnam. September 1, 1965 - August 20, 1967.
Sp. 4. 63C20 Track Mack. I saw a lot of the country.



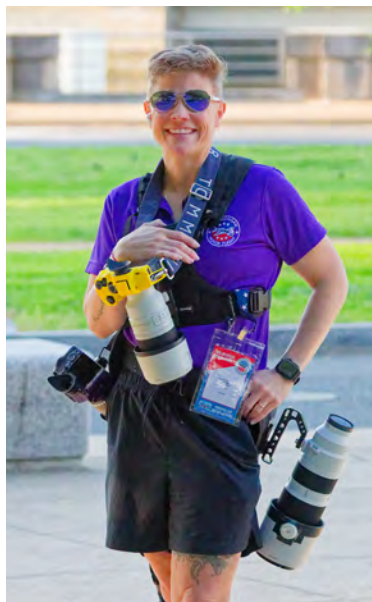
Army. Vietnam. 1969 – 1970. E-4 SPC-4. I was in motor pool. I took care of a 155 Self Propelled Howitzer. I was mechanic for the top half-a gun turret mechanic. When I first got there, I was sent out to a base our in the boonies-it was called the Sugar Mill. We could see all the way around from our set up. You couldn't see anything except sugar cane & rice paddies. It was the first place I went to. On this road, there were rice paddies and on the other side was sugar cane. Every morning the villagers would have to walk through perimeter every day to come and go to work in the sugar mill. The kids would talk to us & we'd give candy to the kids & we'd give cigarettes & food to the villagers. Usually it's only military that could go in there but this was out in the field and they had no other way to go to work. It had constintina wire and our hooches along the way & they would just come and go. My mom use to send me a care package every month. To this day, I still don't know how they got it there, so fresh? Mom sent me pound bags of M&Ms & green grapes. Some how they got to me in great condition. I received the Vietnam Campaign Medal & a second medal for serving over there.



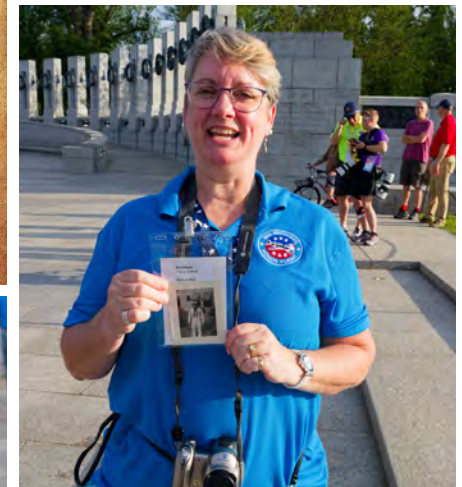


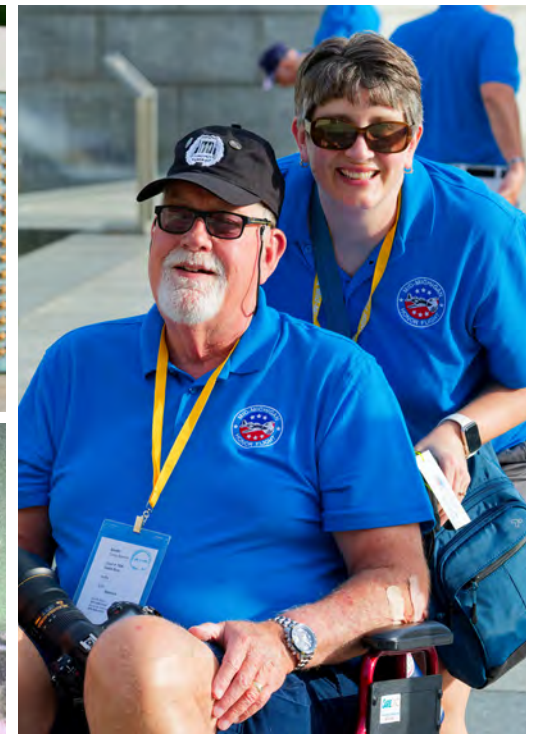
Navy. Vietnam.





Army. Vietnam. August 1968 – August 1974. In Vietnam January 1969 – April 1970. SPC-4 E-4. I was artillery. I was an assistant gunner on a 155 mm howitzer-towed split trail. I was on that for a few months. I was in Charlie Battery, 2nd & 17th Field Artillery. We were refitted 105mm towed split trail. I was gunner on that for the rest of my tour. We were air mobile. We were helicoptered into our landing zones. Vietnam Campaign medal, received Army Commendation Medal with a V device for Valor. I wrote a book about my experiences in Vietnam. It's called "40 Years to Clarity". I'm in the middle of writing my second book.



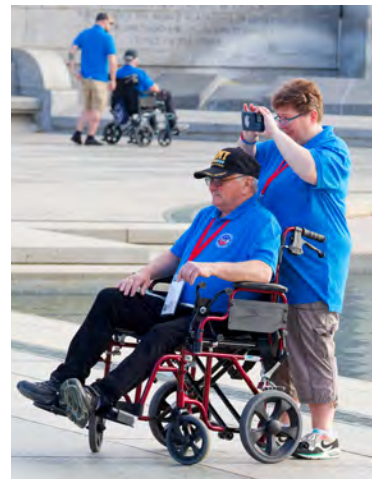
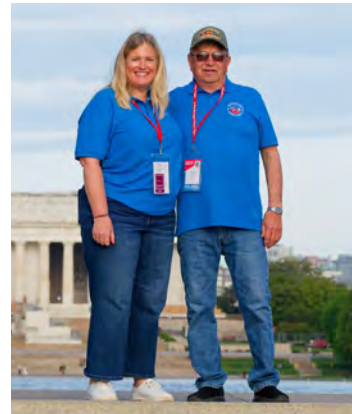


Army. Vietnam. December 8, 1967 – December 7, 1973. Assignment 199 INF BDE USARV Medals and Badges: National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Combat Infantryman Badge.

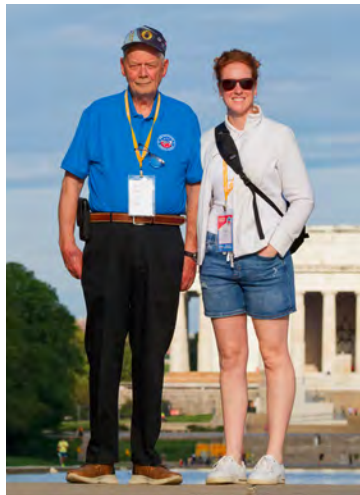




Marines. Vietnam.



Army. Vietnam. August 1968 – March 1970.



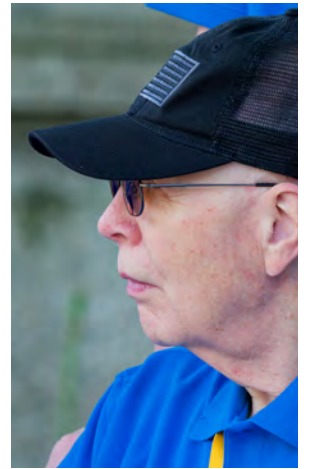


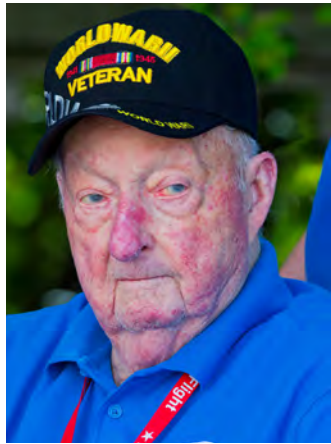
Army. Vietnam. Sp4.



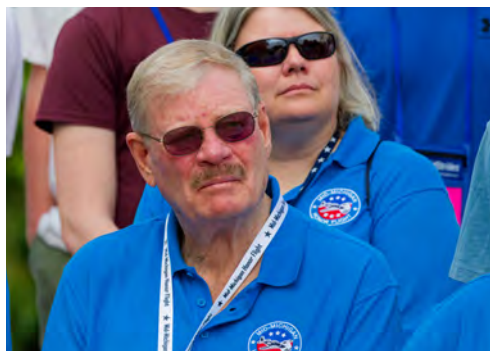


Navy. Vietnam.





Navy. WW II. 1946 – 1948. Seaman. USS Antiam CV-36.





Army. Vietnam.





Army. Vietnam. Inducted in January 1966, Basic, AIT @ Fort Campbell, 27th. Combat Engineers. Vietnam from August 1966 – August 1967. Returning from Vietnam, I went to Fort Riley. E-4 SPC-4. I served with the combat engineers. I drove truck and front end loaders with 11 Armored Cav. We made sure that they got where they had to go. We worked on roads and air strips. We even were building a base camp for the Green Beret. They were supposed to be the first ones there, but we were there before them building the base camp. We built the base camp using connex and it was all underground. Vietnam Campaign Medal and others.







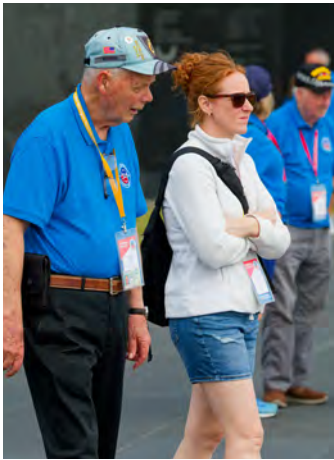


Navy. Vietnam. March 1961 – March 1, 1965. Second Class Petty Officer. Aircraft Mechanic. Flying on and off a carrier. Vietnam Exp. Medal - Vietnam Service Medal - Sea Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal - Shellback Ribbon.



Army. Vietnam. April 1968-Feb 1969, Vietnam
End of service August 12, 1970. CWO-2. I went
to flight school, then they picked me to go to
Cobra school for an extra three weeks. I went
to school for a total of 37 weeks. AH-1G was
the Cobra School where I became a Cobra
Helicopter pilot. National Defense Medal, Good
Conduct Medal, Army Aviator Badge, Vietnam
Services Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Two
Distinguished flying Crosses, Purple Heart, Army
Commendation Medal Awarded for Valor. Air
Medal with 15 Oak Leaf Clusters.





Navy. Vietnam.

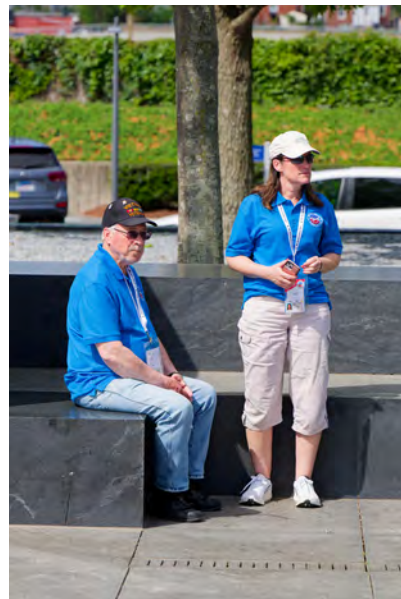




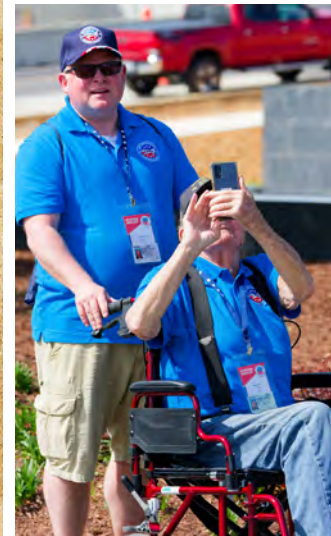
Army. Vietnam. May 12, 1969 – June 19, 1972.
E-4, Spc. 4. 63B20 Wheel Vehicle Mechanic. Spent time in Berlin, Germany. Got married to my girlfriend from East Jordan and had my eldest son in Germany.



Army. Vietnam. August 1959 – August 1961.
SPC 4. Started out after basic. Artillery
training command. After training they kept
some of us back to train troops coming up
behind us. We were at Fort Sill. I was moved
to become First Sgt's clerk. I enjoyed the job.
I got a Good Conduct Medal.

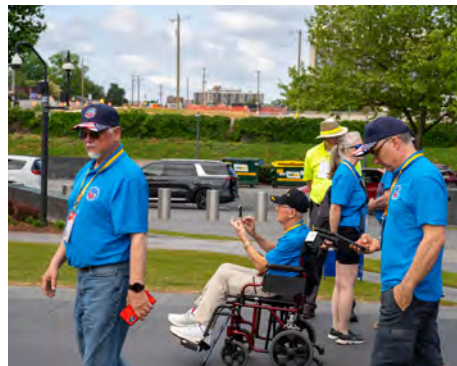


Army. Vietnam. I went into the Army October 1966. I to Vietnam: October 1967 – October 1968. Upon completion of Vietnam, I received an honorable discharge. E-5 SPC 5. I was sent to medical training and I became a medic at Fort Sam Houston in Texas. In Vietnam I was a combat medic and I was with an infantry battalion. When I was a medic over there, we were on a search & clear mission. I was 20 years old. We came upon a village-and a little boy came & told me, mama-san having a baby. I went with him and found her having a baby in in a grass hut on a dirt floor. Then snipers started shooting at us from across the river. The captain came to me before the delivery and asked what we were going to do? I stayed there & told the captain, if anyone get hurt to let me know. He called in artillery and I could hear the shells whistling over head while I was delivering the baby. I delivered a baby boy. We loaded her into the medivac helicopter & sent her to a hospital in Chulai. I earned the bronze star for valor with a V device on it, because of this delivery. Later we were supposed to go to Cambodia and as a medic I was supposed to take supplies but the supplies I had, were next to non-existent. I spent almost a month gathering supplies from various clinics and hospitals, so we'd be equipped to go on this mission. At the last minute, they cancelled Cambodia and because I worked hard to make sure we were equipped, I was given a second bronze star. I went to Australia for R&R. We flew from Camron Bay to Darwin, Australia. We flew on a commercial 707. We went to the northern tip to refuel. We then flew from Darwin to Sydney. The Australians were great people! It was a wonderful trip. After experiencing Australia I checked how much leave time I had. I had a week so I requested going back to Australia, I was told that I'd have to have a pass port & a Visa. So I received my documents & when the leave started I went to the Australian Embassy to get the Visa. Travel ended up not working out so after waiting for my flight for two days, I hopped a military flight & ended up in Taipei, Taiwan! Had a wonderful time & ate the best pizza I ever had.





Air Force. Vietnam.





Army. Vietnam.





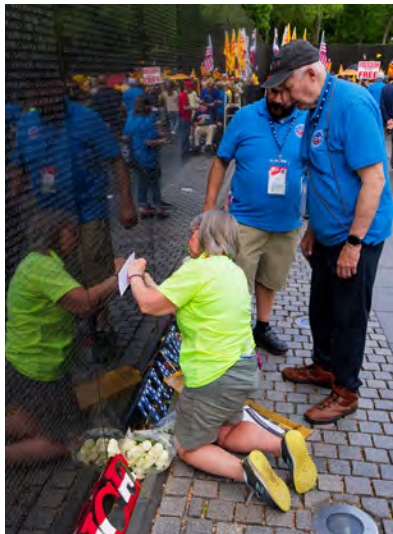
Navy. Korea. March 9, 1952 – February 9, 1960. AE2. Aviation electrician (AE2 Rank) Aircraft maintenance. Good Conduct Medal.



Marines. Vietnam. 1968 – 1974.
Radio Operator. Ever step on a
booby trap? National Defense,
Combat Action, UNS, UNC, VC of
Gallantry, UN Civilian Cross of
Gallantry.



Army. Vietnam. 1972-1975
plus 1 year reserve.





Army. Vietnam. November 14, 1966 – Nov 14, 1968. Spec 4. Military Police on an Army Base, Stationed at Fort Lee, VA. In 1967-68 we had riots in DC every weekend. They protested when Martin Luther King Jr was assassinated. They burned 1200 buildings in Washington, DC. We were in DC within 5 hours after his death. I was there 13 nights and that weekend, there were over 30,000 troops – Army & Marines – there and we saved the White House & the Capitol Building. I traveled in a van that had a portable jail in it and we traveled all Virginia, West Virginia and the northern half of North Carolina and we picked up AWOL military personnel. We took them to Fort Eustis, Virginia, near New Port News and put them in the stockade. I worked security detail for the burial ceremony at Arlington for Robert Kennedy Sr. Our job was to keep the people who were in boats on the Potomac River, in their boats. There were so packed in to watch the procession crossing the river.





Marines. Vietnam. Aug 1969-May 1971. E-3 LCPL. We were the last combat unit in the bush. We were the last Marines to fight there. We went from fire fight to civilians in five days. They sent us home on a slow ship, because we needed to decompress. We lived in the villages with the villagers. The CPL ran our KAG unit. I was second in command as a LCpl. We protected the civilians and trained them to fight with us. It was interesting living with the villagers. We got to know their culture & we enjoyed our time with them. Our group was only there four months. Vietnam Campaign Medal & various medals.





Navy. Vietnam. August 1968
– April 1970. Fireman E3.
I saw some of the world I
would not have seen.

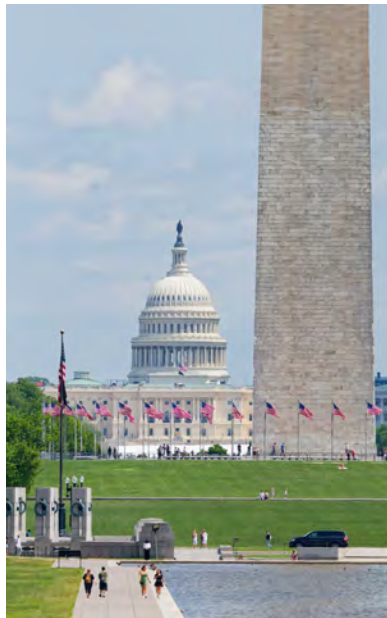


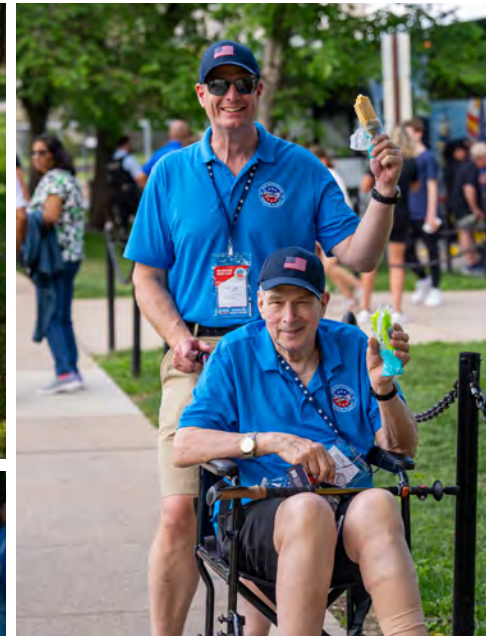
Air Force. Vietnam.





Air Force. Vietnam.



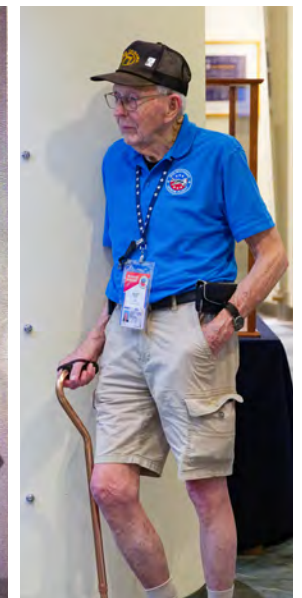


Navy. Vietnam. August 1966 – April 1970.

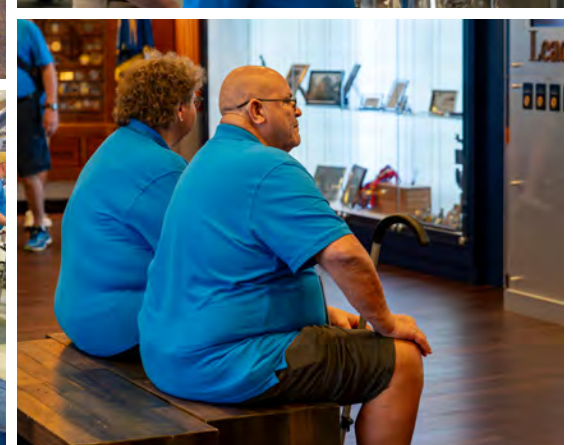
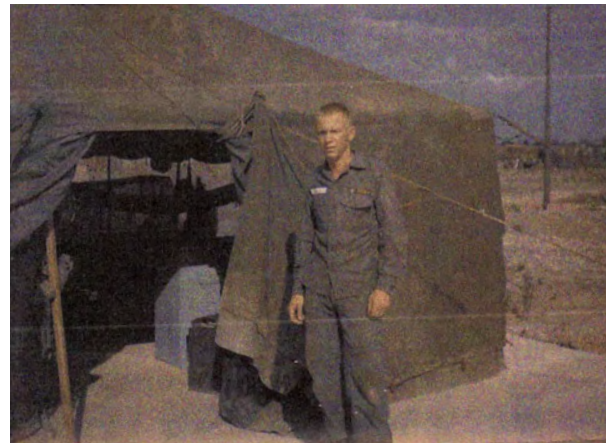
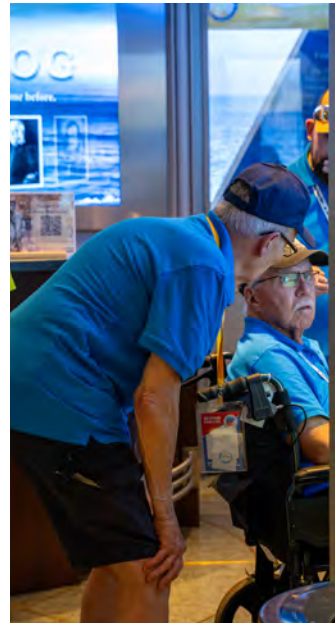




Army. Vietnam. March 68 – December 1970.



Army. Vietnam. October 1969 to Vietnam 1970. Early separation May 9, 1971. E-4 SPC 4. I was in artillery. I lost a lot of hearing due to that. I was on a self propelled 175 Howser. that would shoot 22 miles. We did a lot of raids. We covered for RVN people & our people. We covered a lot for convoys coming through Black Mountain pass. Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal and the Good Conduct Medal.





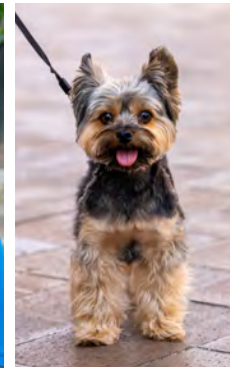
Army. Vietnam.



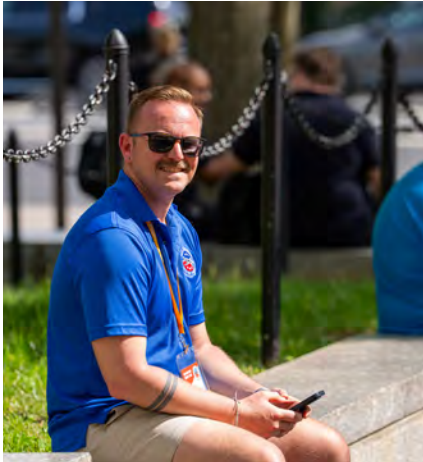


Marines. Vietnam.

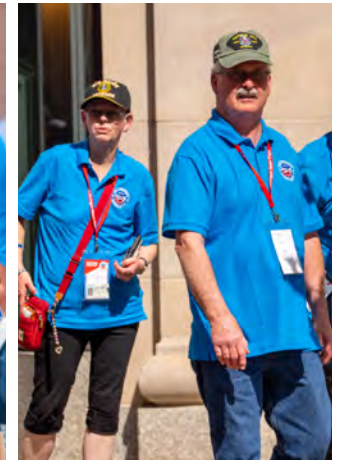




Army. Vietnam. May 20, 1971 – May 19, 1977. Spc. 4 Infantryman 11C20. Infantryman 11C10 then forward observer 11C20. I am now retired. I retired in December 2012. I was an automation engineer and in sales. I finished my career automating all of Fastenal Industries Distribution Centers and I did all of the Sortation Equipment for 10 Amazon Distribution Centers.



Army. Vietnam.





Navy. Korea. 1955 – 1959. EN-3 (Engineman 3rd. Class). We had diesel engines so I learned, some repairs, I worked mainly in the engine room. I spent a year in Hawaii on the the USS Finch DER 328. We were between conflicts so not much was going on.



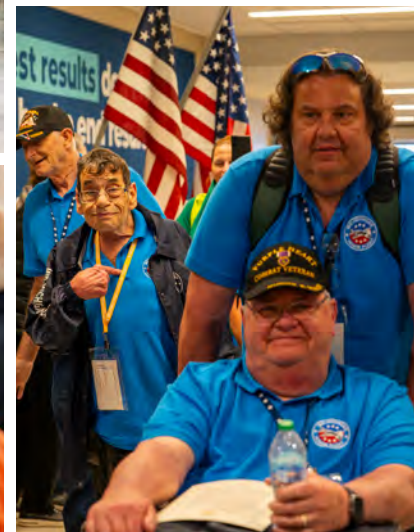
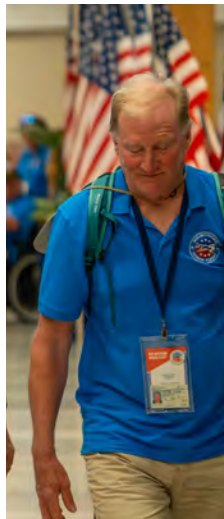


Army, Coast Guard. Vietnam. 1972-1974. SPC-4. I was a truck and tank mechanic. I received sharpshooter medal. I was sent to Germany. Our platoon took a weeklong trip down the Danube River. We did another field trip to Nuremburg and saw the "burning of the castle."





Army. Vietnam.
Sergeant. Linked
with Army Rangers.
Rare Army Air
Medal, 100+ hours
in helo. Bronze
Star, cross of valor.





Air Force. Vietnam.





Navy. Vietnam.





Army. Vietnam.



Army. Vietnam.





Army and
then Army
National Guard.
Vietnam. E4.
Tank mechanic.
Spent some
time in
Germany.





Army. Vietnam.





Army. Vietnam. June
1972 – December 1992.





Army. Vietnam.



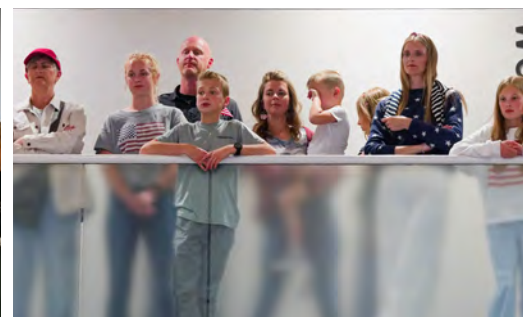


Army. Vietnam. February 4, 1970 – February 8, 1973. SPC-5. I was a helicopter mechanic-68 E-20. Propeller & rotor repairman. In Vietnam cross trained for turbine & engine repair, basically replacing the turbine engines. We had a mortar attack when I was doing turbine repair. I went to Sydney, Australia for R&R when I was in country. Met one of my buddies from AIT training in Sydney & we had a good time for the week that we were there together again. After Vietnam I was married and we went to Texas to Fort Hood or the remainder of my enlistment. I met my wife on a blind date before I shipped out to Vietnam. We wrote lots and lots of letters to get to know each other & then I married her when I got back from Vietnam. We've been married 54 wonderful years!





Navy. Vietnam. Active Duty Navy February 1967 – March 1969, Naval Reserves October 1965 – Ret. March 1, 1989. E-4 PO-3. During active duty, I was teletype communications yeoman, the base was at Binh Thuy, on the Botic River in the Mei Kong Delta. We had a support team there, where they maintained the river boats. My original enlistment was two years active where I spent 18 months in Vietnam. I extended that an extra 30 days. Following the end of my enlistment I went into reserves. In I worked as a yeoman I worked at the admins office and maintained enlisted service records. I worked in the office and worked payroll. I later became supervisor of the unit. I had to select department heads. Eventually we got an E-7 in to take charge of the unit. I had several jobs-on the shipboard unit-like a department head. Every drill weekend I ran the admins office. When I first went on active duty-I went to communications school in Norfolk, VA. For my dream sheet orders-three of us received orders to Saigon. We had to attend three weeks of survival school. That was at Little Creek, VA. The three of us went to Saigon on a commercial flight. Once we arrived in country, we were split up to three different bases. I later was back with one of them. We listened to Armed Forces Radio and Adrian Cronauer. "Good Morning Vietnam!" Robin Williams did a great portrayal of him! Vietnam Campaign Medal-two medals. Our unit received the unit citation award. I have the good conduct medal. All my markings on my uniform are in gold.



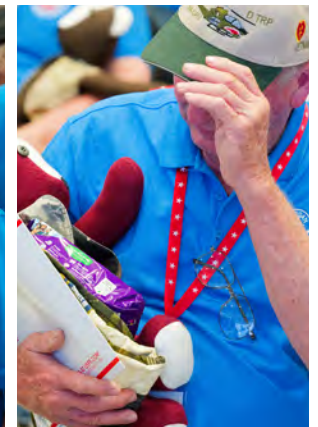


Army. Vietnam. July
1964 – March 1987.





Air Force. Vietnam.



Welcome Home

I watched a young soldier take his seat on the plane.
The guy by the window said, "son what's your name?"

He said, "Hi I'm Jimmy, just back from overseas
and when these boots touch down in Texas, I'm gonna drop to my knees.

Because I ain't seen my wife in 18 months and 14 days."
The man smiled at him and said, "well let me be the first to say:

Welcome Home, Welcome Home,
It's good to have you back where you belong.
You fought hard for this land you love,
and I thank you for all of us.
We're proud to call you one of our own,
welcome home."

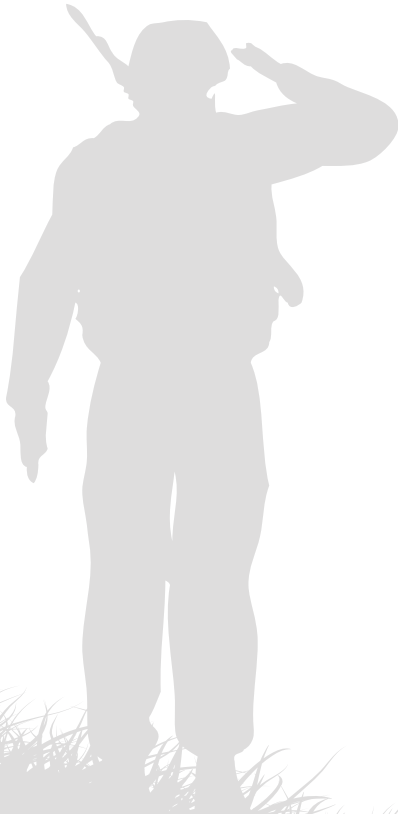
Then the man looked away and said, "I know how you must feel.
I spent two long years in Vietnam and I got back to Jacksonville.
There were protest sign and picket lines and some girl spit in my face.
Hey I was just a kid tryin' to make this world a safe place."

Then his voice started trembling, in his eyes I saw a tear.
He said, "I didn't need a hero's welcome but it'd been sure nice to hear..

Welcome Home, Welcome Home,
It's good to have you back where you belong.
You fought hard for this land you love,
and I thank you for all of us.
We're proud to call you one of our own,
welcome home."

Well the band was playin,
and the crowd was cheering,
as we came walking through that gate.
Then the soldier stopped and turned to the man
standing near him,
he saluted him and said, "Sir I know it's a little late but...

Welcome Home, Welcome Home,
It's good to have you back where you belong.
You fought hard for this land you love,
and I thank you for all of us.
We're proud to call you one of our own,
Welcome home....."



APRIL 29-30, 2025 FLIGHT

Donald Bartell	Ismael Figueroa	James Morrison	Patrick Stray
Daniel Benson	Richard Flowers	Frederick Mullin	Harold Swindell
Paul Benthem	Randall Foster	Stephen Nagelkerke	Carl Thompson
Jerry Blevins	Allen Greenman	Joseph O'Neill	Ronald Thompson
Robert Burke	Michael Giba	Henry Osterhouse	Peter Thomson
Lonnie Busch	David Hadder	Tommy Patterson	Ronald Thorpe
Lynwood Butler	Daniel Herald	Donald Pechumer	Gustaf Vander Veen
Gary Cessna	Jerry Herweyer	Jean-Claude Racicot	Thomas VanSweden
Dennis Chester	Keith Hoffman, Sr.	Richard Reed	Samuel Wabeke
James Clark	Ronald Hollis	James Rosin	Clifford Wares
Thomas Cronkright	Richard Johnson	Gilbert Schroeter	John Wikstrom
Ralph Deibert	William Kingsbury	Hughie Slane	Jeffrey Wilcox
Peter DeJong	Ronald LeBourdais	Craig Smith	Robert Wilk
Andrew Dewitt	Thomas Malvitz	David Smith	James Wojahn
Andrew Dewitt II	Nick Marino	James Smith	Byron Wolf
Patrick Dewitt	Clay Maxwell	Harold Sodeman	Gregory Woolcott
Solon Dewitt	Rolland Meteer	Jerry Spate	Robert Zimmer
James DiSpirito, Jr.	Cloyd Miller	Andrew Starring	
Timothy Duffy	Buford Millner	Dale Stordahl	
William Duncan	Jon Morren	James Stover	

Once a SOLDIER



Always a SOLDIER

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