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Veterans Day

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Star  Journal

Local veteran becomes VFW quartermaster

Hall experiences how the military changed after 9/11



Veteran Brad Hall sits in a humvee while holding his government-issued rifle after a patrol in Baghdad.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF BRAD HALL

By Skye Melcher

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An Army veteran has joined the local VFW years after serving and working through what it was like to be a civilian again.

VFW Post 2591 Quartermaster Brad Hall, 40, first joined the Army in 1999. He finished basic and airborne school in 2000. He was then stationed at Fort Bragg in North Carolina.

"I was an airborne cannon crewmember," Hall said. "I jumped from planes and fired howitzers."

Hall wanted to join the military after growing up with both his parents serving in the Army.

"Really, it was familiar to me, it wasn't something unusual," Hall said. "I was 18, I say, like most teenage boys, I wasn't applying myself to anything futuristic, so I said, 'Yeah, I'm just going to into the military, so I'm good.'"

Hall was a paratrooper for the 82nd airborne division.

It was his job to jump out of planes and secure airfields.

"All the training was dangerous, all the field problems, everything was dangerous," Hall said. "It wasn't to me at the time because it was my job. We were just doing what we were supposed to do, so I didn't think of it as being dangerous."

Hall was deployed to Iraq in 2003 during the initial push.

"So when George Bush was on the TV, we were invading, we were already invading," Hall added.

His unit went through several cities in Iraq and a front-line reporter, Karl Zinmeister, traveled with them. Zinmeister later published a book called "Boots on the Ground" that detailed those travels and the 82nd airborne unit.

Hall was in the military when tragedy struck New York City on Sept. 11, 2001, and he saw how military operations shifted.

"It was peaceful. All the training was just training. Most people I was with treated it like training and were joking," Hall



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said. "And when 9/11 happened, I was on battalion staff duty and I was at headquarters. I was called into the office and told to lock the doors."

Hall and many others were in there, and the next thing they knew, they were drawing weapons and waiting for orders to go.

"82nd is a quick reaction force, so anywhere in the world within 18 hours. It got really serious at that point," Hall added.

Hall's unit stayed on post when the first brigades were sent to Afghanistan, but when the Iraq situation happened, his brigade was sent. Thousands of U.S. troops deployed to Iraq for the battle to oust the country's leader, Saddam Hussein.

Hall said being in Iraq was like a relief but still worrisome. It was a hard-to-explain situation; they were finally able to do their job, but on a personal or moral level, he questioned if he wanted to do this.

After Hall came back from Iraq, he never deployed again. After his deployment, he struggled and had the option to either re-enlist or get out. He chose to leave due to his daughter being born during that deployment and not being able to meet her until she was a year old.

"I was going to go back in, well, in that time frame, all my exit paperwork had not been correct," Hall said. "I didn't catch it. I was just a soldier, I wasn't any type of office personnel, so I didn't know what I was looking for when I was exiting."

Getting back in was a bigger fight than just staying out, so Hall went through a few civilian jobs before landing in Sedalia.

Hall said it was horrible when transferring back to civilian life and he struggled with

Brad Hall's unit stands together to take a picture during their deployment.



Brad Hall poses for a picture while smoking during his deployment in 2003 after making it to Baghdad.

finding his place in the civilian structure.

"Whenever you're training, everything is 24/7 and constant. It doesn't brainwash you, but it develops you and structures you," Hall said.

Hall added that everything someone does in the military is bigger than themselves. Once a soldier becomes a civilian again, there is no one telling them what to do and they have to make their own way.

By the time Hall joined the VFW Post 2591, he had been through a lot of struggles and support on his own but found commandery in the group. He joined the VFW after Post leadership reached out to him.

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Navy vet remembers her service in World War II



World War II Navy veteran, Spec. T 1st Class Euphemia Zahringer, 99, of Sedalia, poses for a photo in October at Cedarhurst Assisted Living. Zahringer served as an instructor and taught radio navigation and instrument flight in a simulator from 1943-45 in Corpus Christi, Texas, and Hawaii.

PHOTO BY FAITH BEMISS | DEMOCRAT

By Faith Bemiss

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In late October, with precision and articulation, World War II Navy veteran Euphemia Zahringer, of Sedalia, recalled her service in a program called Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES) between 1943 and December 1945.

Zahringer, a resident of Cedarhurst Assisted Living, will reach the century mark in April 2023. She was born in 1923 in northern Minnesota to Sam and Dora Orlich. Her decision to enter the Navy came after attending two years of college. She noted her father favored the idea, but her mother wasn't as receptive. Zahringer entered boot camp in New York City, was trained in Atlanta, Georgia, and was stationed in Corpus Christi, Texas, and eventually Hawaii.

"I had two years of college, and I really didn't know what I wanted to do, and there was a war on, and it wasn't going well for us," she explained. "And so, I joined the Navy."

While in the Navy, she was an instructor who taught radio navigation and instrument flight in a simulator.

During her service, Zahringer said they worked hard.

"We were trying to get the pilots

educated and out and get them into the war," she noted. "There were some periods where we would go six and eight weeks without a day off."

"We were just really pushing it," she continued. "But it was interesting, and I enjoyed it — but we worked."

She wasn't the only enlisted woman in her area.

"We were called WAVES, Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service," Zahringer said. "The Navy didn't want anyone to think that the WAVES were a separate organization."

WAVES were the Navy's reserve force for women. According to the National Air and Space Museum, the program was "approved by Congress and signed into law by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1942; the WAVES program recruited women between 18 and 36 years old (and officers between 20 and 50) to serve onshore in the continental United States. Many of these women, starting in 1944, also served in Alaska and Hawaii."

"When we joined, we were in for the duration of the war, plus six months," she added. "Luckily, the war didn't last forever."

"In the beginning, America was not prepared," she added. "I hate war, but I've always felt that that was



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World War II veteran Euphemia Zahringer smiles as she shows her bicep at the "Women at War" display at the Nicholas-Beazley Aviation Museum in Marshall.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CEDARHURST

necessary. We were attacked, and we had to respond, and it wasn't for sure in the beginning if we were going to win."

Her most poignant memory of serving during World War II was how necessary it was that she do a

good job.

"We realized what we were trying to do; I hate to say it, we were trying to get men prepared to go out and go to war," she explained. "And possibly get killed."

"As my grandfather used to say,

'why don't they send us old guys?'" she continued. "Well, the reason was that we needed the young ones who had the strength. Unfortunately, only the best are sent out to be killed."

She added throughout the war, they would hear about Hitler's atrocities toward the Jews, and she thought, surely, one couldn't do that.

"Then, at the end of the war, you would see it in the newsreels at the theatre a week later," she said softly. "They showed Dachau (Concentration Camp). You couldn't imagine that this could happen."

In 1947, Zahringer married the late Keith Zahringer, an aviation metalsmith 1st class, who was still serving in the Navy. Since he was initially from Sedalia, the couple moved back to the area after his discharge.

Because of her experience in flight instruction, her friend and fellow resident Amanda McCord suggested Cedarhurst take Zahringer to visit the Nicholas-Beazley Aviation Museum in Marshall. So, the last week of October, Cedarhurst Life Enrichment Director Connie Chevalier took several residents, including Zahringer, to the museum.

Chevalier noted the museum was terrific, and Zahringer added she didn't realize Marshall had such an immense history in aviation.



Sitting in front of a Barling NB-3 aircraft, Navy veteran Euphemia Zahringer poses for a photo at the Nicholas-Beazley Aviation Museum in Marshall.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CEDARHURST

"It's really quite large," Zahringer said. "They are the first ones to have an aviation school — it started not too long after the Wright Brothers."

When asked for advice, Zahringer said, "take care of yourself."

"I'm very glad I did join the Navy," she noted. "It was an experience I will never forget."

"And, how do you live to be 100?" she asked. "Keep breathing; you can't start taking care of yourself at 99. You have to start taking care of yourself as a young person."

She added one needs to exercise,

eat right, and sleep well.

Chevalier noted the younger generation needs to realize the knowledge of older people.

"I'm just in awe of their knowledge and the stories they pass down," she said. "They're not just old people."

"You sit down and talk with them, and you learn more about history through their eyes," she continued. "And if you take their wisdom, it helps you in your journey in life."

Faith Bemiss can be reached at 660-530-0289 or on Twitter @fjbemiss.

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Veteran Charlie Gerke serves family and country

Navy and National Guard service was right for him



Charlie Gerke served in the Navy and National Guard. He lives in Sedalia with his wife, Beverly, and has three daughters, a son, and seven grandchildren.

PHOTO BY CHRIS HOWELL | DEMOCRAT

By Chris Howell

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Sedalia veteran Charlie Gerke has the distinction of serving his country in two branches of the military over the span of 41 years.

"I was in the Navy first, then the Army National Guard," Gerke said. "I joined the Navy in 1966 and got out '71. And then joined the guard in '85 and got out in '07."

As a young man growing up in Sedalia, Gerke didn't know he was destined for a life in the military.

He attended Catholic school, as did most of his relatives.

"It was more laid back then," he recalled. "You didn't have all the problems you have nowadays. I started going to Sacred Heart School in February 1959 and there's been a member of my family

going there ever since."

Gerke's life, and the lives of many others in the Baby Boomer generation, were suddenly changed by the Vietnam War. The country had a military draft, and Gerke received an unwanted advance from the government.

"I got a letter from Uncle Sam that said, 'I want to see your body,'" Gerke remembered. "Now it's Vietnam, and I said, 'No, I'm going to the Navy.'"

Thinking it was safer than the Army or Marines, he prepared to ship out.

"I had the 120-day delay plan. I joined in October and didn't report to the Great Lakes until February," Gerke recalled. "I left for the Navy one morning, I had a cousin come home that afternoon

from the Navy, and his younger brother joined the month after I did."

Gerke used his self-control to make his stint in basic training easier to tolerate.

"Ten weeks, it wasn't bad," Gerke said. "A lot of it was your mindset; if you went there with the idea that's going to be easy, it was rough. If you went there knowing it wasn't going to be easy, it was a lot better."

He was assigned duties as a jet mechanic working at Cecil Field in Florida.

"I worked on the A4s first, then transitioned to A7s," Gerke said. "I was stationed with Air Wing PA 81, the first ship I went on was the Shangri-La, and then John F. Kennedy on its first voyage overseas."

Gerke set sail on three

"It was just something I enjoyed, and I would do it again."

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Gerke served in the Navy from 1966 to 1971 and cruised to the Mediterranean three times on three different aircraft carriers.

different aircraft carriers on three separate tours of the Mediterranean ocean: The World War II-era Essex class USS Shangri-La, super-carrier USS John F. Kennedy, and supercarrier USS Forrestal, newly refitted after a devastating fire in Vietnam.

But Gerke had developed a drinking problem that was having unintended consequences on his health.

“I was a heavy drinker in the military,” Gerke confessed. “I had such a beer gut I could set a beer on it and if I had a straw, I could drink with no hands.”

He also wanted a future the



Sgt. First-Class Charlie Gerke served 22 years with the Army National Guard. Gerke retired from the Sedalia Street Department and lives in Sedalia.

Navy didn’t seem to offer.

“I got out of the Navy,” Gerke said. “The biggest reason is it was a nine-month cruise, and I wanted to get married sometime in the future. It was no life for a married man, in my opinion.”

Out of the Navy, he went back to work doing concrete construction.

“I went to State Fair, which was a blessing for me because I was out of high school for six years by the time I got out of the Navy,” he said. “If I had to go to Warrensburg, Central Missouri, I’d have been lost.”

Fortunately, what would become State Fair Community College had

just opened in Sedalia.

“They just started up a program in 1968, it was Plywood U then,” Gerke said, happy to find a place he fit in. “It was small and you were a name instead of a number. That’s where I met my wife 49 years ago.”

Beverly Gerke was a freshman and Charlie was a sophomore when they started dating. Six months later, they were married.

Gerke and Beverly raised a family in Sedalia.

“We were married seven years before our first daughter was born,” Gerke said. “Then we had three daughters 20 months apart and eight years later, we had a son.”

Bad news came in 1985 when Gerke heard Social Security was faltering.

“I knew I needed something for retirement,” Gerke said. “A friend of mine talked me into trying the National Guard for a year. And 22 years later, I got out.”

Trained in Lexington, Gerke was called up for a tour in Iraq in 2005.

“When I went overseas, everybody said, ‘I’m gonna pray for you,’” Gerke said. “No, you pray for the spouses because they gotta do their job, your job, plus worry about you being in danger. Our son was 12 years old, so she was raising a teenager. She had good family support and she’s come through like a champ, but she had to take care of all the bills, everything. All I



Charlie Gerke reflects on a flag given by the Army National Guard in recognition of his 22 years of service and sacrifice.

PHOTO BY CHRIS HOWELL | DEMOCRAT

had to worry about was myself.”

While serving in the National Guard, Gerke held down a job with the Sedalia Street Department.

“It was good to have a job that was steady and had benefits,” Gerke said. “Where I was working before didn’t have benefits.”

The Gerkes now have seven grandkids and a beautiful home. They also have the security that comes with a military retirement.

“In ‘89, my wife had thyroid cancer and it covered it,” Gerke recalled. “Then after I retired, I’ve had the left side of my neck cleaned

out and I had a middle lobe of my right lung removed, I had a stent put in and all of that cost me nothing through Medicare and military insurance.”

Gerke looks back on his time serving both family and country as a decision that was right for him, perhaps not right for everybody.

“It was just something I enjoyed, and I would do it again,” Gerke said. “It was my choice to join and my choice was right, in my opinion.”

Chris Howell can be reached at 660-530-0146.



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Senior airman returns to school to help others



Kristian Smith, U.S. Air Force, is the president of the Student Veterans Organization at the University of Central Missouri.

PHOTO BY SARA LAWSON | STAR-JOURNAL

By Sara Lawson
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Kristian Smith is a senior airman with the U.S. Air Force and is studying kinesiology at the University of Central Missouri.

Smith did not initially plan on joining the military but changed his mind.

“My dad was in the Air Force as well and he passed away from cancer shortly after I graduated,” Smith said. “In the beginning, I didn’t think the military was in my cards. I didn’t think I was going to join the military, but as his health was steadily declining, I wanted to make him proud.”

Smith joined before graduating high school and his father was able to see him enlisted.

“Honestly, it’s been the

best decision I’ve ever made,” Smith said.

Smith has been enlisted for three years and is a sophomore at UCM.

“I knew I wanted to come back to school,” Smith said. “I took a break initially from school when I first joined, really focused on my military career and what I wanted to do.”

Smith lived in Warrensburg for about a year before deciding to return to school.

“UCM was, obviously, the most logical choice, they’re the closest and they have a really good military presence here (on campus),” Smith said.

Smith said the aspect he likes most about kinesiology is that he gets to help people.

“I want to help other people, maybe who have been injured or maybe have

“Honestly, it’s been the best decision I’ve ever made.”

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Kristian Smith, center, is awarded the John L. Levitow award.
PHOTO COURTESY OF KRISTIAN SMITH



Kristian Smith is a senior airman with the U.S. Air Force.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KRISTIAN SMITH

a hard time walking,” Smith said. “That’s probably the biggest thing that pushed me into doing physical therapy is that I could probably help other people.”

As a student, Smith works with the Military and Veterans Success Center as a work-study student and serves as the president of the Student Veterans Organization.

Smith is also involved in the ROTC program at the University of Missouri.

“Kris is one of our excep-

tional students ... he’s just very involved with our students in our program,” Director of Military and Veteran Services Courtney Swoboda said.

Smith said he appreciates having a support system at the university.

Smith is originally from Colorado Springs, Colorado, but chose to attend UCM because of its proximity to Whiteman Air Force Base.

“Being in the reserve, you can kind of live anywhere you want as long as you report

to Whiteman Air Force Base every month,” Smith said. “So UCM was actually the reason I moved out here — UCM and Whiteman was.”

Smith said he is grateful to have the resources provided by the Military and Veterans Success Center at UCM.

“Being in the reserve is cool because I’ve been able to go to different offices, so I don’t strictly stick to my career ... I’ve gotten to experience different outlooks of what the Air Force looks like and not just

what I do,” Smith said.

Smith said being in the military has given him a different perspective on the world.

“Being in high school and being in the military, you don’t think about a lot of things,” Smith said. “When you join the military, you realize, ‘oh snap, this is what’s going on in the world right now.’”

Smith said he plans to serve in the military for 20 years.

“I love it, I love what I’ve done,” Smith said. “I want to grow. That’s my biggest thing,

I want to grow as a person and in my career.”

Smith said he would like to become an officer and a pilot or become a physical therapist for the Air Force.

“I love sports and I love to work out,” Smith said. “Just being athletic and just being able to move was probably the biggest factor of what made me choose (kinesiology) cause it was something I was really passionate about.”

Sara Lawson can be reached at 660-747-8123.





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Grigsby works to prevent military suicide



Gary Grigsby poses for a photo with his grandchildren, Dylan Godfrey and Gillian Godfrey, and his wife, Anita Grigsby.

PHOTO COURTESY OF GARY GRIGSBY

By Meliyah Venerable

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Gary Grigsby served in the United States Marine Corps. He was on active duty for almost four years during the Vietnam War and served as an inactive reserve for several years after.

Grigsby grew up in Slater, where he played football and dabbled in music. He had his sights set on attending the University of Missouri in Columbia. He had offers to a few colleges to play football, but with his goal being Mizzou, he left football to chase after his new career.

During his junior year at MU, he heard there would be a draft lottery. He decided he would join the Marines through a program that would require two six-week summer camps, or one 10-week summer camp.

"The news headlines read that they were going to do a lottery for the draft," Grigsby said. "They were going to draft people, even out of college. I happened to go through the student union and they had a Marine Corps table and they had a PLC program... then they would give you reserve status so you would not be drafted out of college. Upon finishing your degree and graduation, you would be commissioned to second lieutenant and go to Quantico for basic school.

"That's how I got into the military. My dad was in the Navy. It wasn't in the options I had thought about. But I knew I wanted to maybe teach for a few years, music was one of the

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areas. I wanted to go to law school too."

During his time in the Music program at Mizsou, Grigsby met his wife, Anita. He recalled the first time they met and the time leading up to their first date.

"I needed some extra rehearsal," Grigsby said. "So I asked her if she would. At the end of it, I said that I would buy her a beer. So we went on with the performance. A couple weeks after the performance, we were at the same student recital and I was several rows behind her. I didn't actually see her until she stood up and said, 'Hey Gary, what about my beer?' Then we planned our first date and its history from there."

While in the Marines, Grigsby was stationed in Quantico, Cherry Point, North Carolina, and he spent some time overseas as well.

When asked why the Marines, Grigsby said the only reason he could really come up with was the uniform. He was really drawn to the color and look of the uniform.

During his time in boot camp, Grigsby said he was underestimated because he was a music major in college. He said he was picked to demonstrate pugil sticks. He remembers winning the exercise and proving that he was, in fact, as tough as everyone else.

During active duty, Grigsby became a legal officer, something he said he enjoyed because he liked to find solutions to problems.

He now serves as the Commander of the American Legion Department of Missouri and serves on the Governor's Challenge team, which helps provide suicide awareness and prevention, especially within the military, active duty, veterans and their families. Grigsby is passionate about suicide

prevention.

"War is not a fun thing," Grigsby said. "We are now understanding what PTSD is. That is regrettable as a side effect or as an outcome of having served our country. War is horrific. Humans don't respond to that kind of negative type of situation."

"As a veteran, I'm very active with my local post, as well as the district and the department level. I think we need to be aware of the veteran suicide rate. We need to be able to refer those people who might be in distress to services that are available now. Because a lot of suicides are preventable."

Grigsby now directs two handbell choirs in Warrensburg and has announced for the Marching Mules for 45 years. He and his wife both taught music in the various states they have lived in. He said that while teaching, there was a time when he could use his watch to find a certain pitch, but the students could never figure out what he was doing.

"I would listen to my watch. And not 'tik-tok tik-tok' like my students thought," he said. "It had a tuning fork in it that was right about F-sharp, so I could make that interval if it was a simple one. I would listen to my watch and my students thought I would just come up with a pitch."

Although he enjoyed his time in the Marines and occasionally regrets not being on active duty longer, he is grateful for the things he has now.

"Sometimes I have regretted not staying on active duty," Grigsby said. "But who knows, I might not have made the move to Warrensburg. I might not have had other opportunities I've had in my life."

Meliyah Venerable can be reached at 660-747-8123.



From left, Jim Helmig, Dylan Godfrey, Gillian Godfrey and Gary Grigsby. Helmig was the principal at Martin Warren Elementary. PHOTO COURTESY OF GARY GRIGSBY

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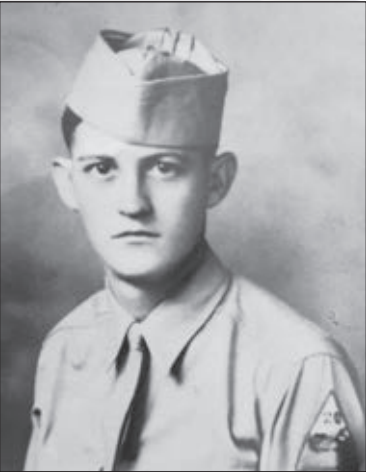
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Pfc. Donald R. Ellison
Army
1952-1954
Korean



CW4 George Fairfax
Army
1954-1984
Vietnam

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UNITED STATES ARMY



E-5 Melvin Ficken
Army
1968-1971
Vietnam



Pvt. Bill J. Griffith
Army National Guard
1955-1957
Korea



Lt. Col. Russell Jackson
Army
1997-2020
Iraq and Afghanistan



James M. Gregory
Army
1973-1975
Vietnam



Sgt. David Henderson
Army
1969-1971
Vietnam



Sgt. E-5 David W. Scheid
Army
1968-1970
Vietnam



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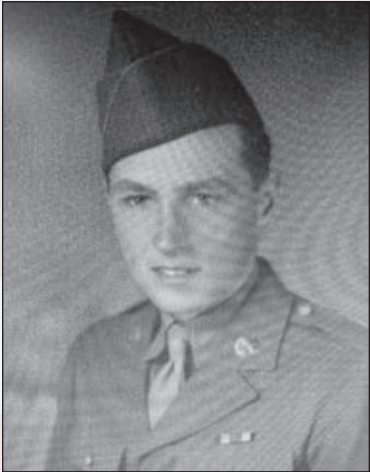
UNITED STATES ARMY



**1st Sgt.
William M. Jackson**
Army
1942-1945
World War II



E6 L.F. (Frank) Johnson
Army
1953-1955
Korea



Pfc. Paul M. Kellner Sr.
Army
1942-1945
World War II



**Tech. 5
Orville F. Jennings**
Army
1942-1945
World War II



Spec. Danny Keeton
Army
1989-1997
Desert Storm



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UNITED STATES ARMY



SP-5 E-5 Gary Kirk
Army
1969-1971
Vietnam



Staff Sgt. Ralph A. Kurtz
Army
1943-1948
World War II



Pfc. William K. Leicher
Army
1953-1955
Korea



Sgt. Donald Leo Klein
Army
1952-1954
Korea



SPC 5th Class Virgil Kurtz
Army
1958-1961

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UNITED STATES ARMY



**Sgt. John
Edward Loucks**
Army
Korea



Ronald Dean Loucks
Army
1975-1981



T-5 Robert L. McGinnis
Army
1944-1946
World War II



Lt. Col. Russell H. Miller
Army
1942-1945
World War II



Sgt. Kenneth G. Moon
Army
1966-1968

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UNITED STATES ARMY



**Capt. Mendy
(Rinehart) Peters**
Army
1997-2003



**SSgt. Rudolph
"Rudy" Rouchka**
Army Air Force
1942-1945
WWII



**Spec. 4th Class
Mick Selken**
Army
1970-1972
Vietnam



Pfc. Norman Powers
Army
1945-1946
WWII



**Pvt. Ronald
Clayton Scott**
Army
1942-1945, 1951-1952
World War II and Korea

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669335/1

A portrait of a young man with short brown hair, wearing a U.S. Army camouflage uniform and a matching garrison cap. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. An American flag is visible in the background to his left.

A black and white portrait of a young man in a military uniform. He is wearing a garrison cap and a light-colored shirt with a dark tie. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a neutral expression. The background is out of focus, showing some foliage and a building.

A portrait of a smiling man in a military uniform, likely a pilot, with several medals and ribbons on his chest. He is wearing a dark uniform jacket over a white shirt and a dark tie. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

A black and white portrait of a young man, likely a soldier, wearing a military uniform. He is wearing a garrison cap, glasses, and a collared shirt with a tie. He is smiling at the camera. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

**Sgt. Jesse L.
(Jake) Sumners**
Army
1943-1946
World War II

H O N O R I N G A L L W H O S E R V E D

A graphic celebrating Veterans Day. It features a large, stylized 'V' in dark blue. Above the 'V' are several red stars of varying sizes. To the right of the 'V', the word 'HAPPY' is written in red, uppercase, sans-serif font. Below 'HAPPY', the word 'Veterans' is written in a large, dark blue, cursive script font. Below 'Veterans', the word 'DAY' is written in red, uppercase, sans-serif font, flanked by two horizontal lines. At the bottom right, the number '660-4' is written in a large, dark blue, sans-serif font. The background is a light blue sky with white clouds at the top and a pinkish-red gradient at the bottom.



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UNITED STATES ARMY



Sgt. Rolla G. Waisner
Army
1943-1947
World War II



E4 Charles Wansing
Army
1953-1955
Korea



Staff Sgt. Raymond Warbritton
Army
1944-1946



Spc. Gregory A. Wyrick Sr.
Army
1987-1995
Gulf War



Sgt. Bobby Joe Young
Army/Air Force
1942-1945
World War II and Korea



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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE



Staff Sgt. Roy A. Bemiss
Air Force
1975-1981
Vietnam Era



**Tech Sgt.
Webster J. Brown**
Air Force
1975-2004
Desert Shield
and Desert Storm



**Staff Sgt.
Douglas B. Bultemeier**
Air Force
1988-1996
Desert Storm



Sgt. Jerry Connery
Air Force
1966-1970
Vietnam



**Master Sgt.
Steven Ray Crane**
Air Force
1990-2010
Afghanistan and Iraq

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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE



**E6 W.T. (Tom)
Cunningham Jr.**
Air Force
1973-1993
Vietnam
and Desert Storm



**Staff Sgt.
John Dumitrascu**
Air Force
Afghanistan



**Senior Airman
Sarah N. Dumitrascu**
Air Force
2016 to present



Lt. Col. Tom Fitzpatrick
Air Force
1965-1987
Vietnam



Sgt. Jesse Hamilton
Air Force
1968-1972

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A black and white photograph of three soldiers in military uniforms standing in a field. One soldier is holding a large American flag on a pole. The background is a soft-focus landscape with trees and a bright light source, possibly the sun.

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE



**Afc. Floyd Jackson Jr.,
1st Sgt. Floyd Jackson
Sr. and MSgt.
Tommy Roberts**
Air Force
Floyd Jr.: 2022-Present
Floyd Sr.: 1979-2006
Roberts: 1973-1997
Floyd Sr.: Operation Joint
Endeavor, Operation
Enduring Freedom,
Operation Iraqi Freedom,
Global War on Terror,
Operation Southern Watch,
Desert Shield, Desert Storm
Roberts: Vietnam War, Desert
Shield, Desert Storm



**Master Sgt.
Chad M. Kreisler**
Air Force
1986-2008
Enduring Freedom



E4 Cameron W. Lewis
Air Force
2022



Capt. Thomas Mellinger
Army: 1958-1961
Air Force: 1962-1984
Vietnam



TSgt. Jim B. "Hank" Odle
Air Force
1947-1951 and 1955-1972
Vietnam

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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE



**Senior Master Sgt.
Patrick S. Robinson**
Air Force
1992-2017



**MSgt. Rudy Valle and
TSgt. Dom Valle**
Air Force
Rudy: 1965-1991
Dom: 2000-2021



**Chief Master Sgt.
Carlie L. Williams Jr.**
Air Force
1961-1985



Sgt. Randy Silvey
Air Force
1970-1974
Vietnam (1970-1971)



**Senior Airman
Bernie A. Williams**
Air Force
1978-1981




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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE



**Tech. Sgt.
Jeffrey D. Williams**
Air Force
1977-1992



**Staff Sgt.
Michael T. Williams**
Air Force
1959-1962
Vietnam



**Chief Master Sgt.
Chad Ziegelbein**
Air Force and Space Force
1994-2022



**Senior Master Sgt.
Larry R. Williams**
Air Force
1965-1989
Vietnam



**Senior Master Sgt.
Paul D. Williams**
Air Force
1967-1993



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UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS



Cpl. Greg Bird
Marines
2006-2011
Afghanistan/Iraq



Sgt. Robby Joe Kreisler
Marines
1988-1994
Gulf War and Desert Storm



Sgt. Patrick J. Mergen
Marines
1960-1964
Vietnam



**Lance Cpl.
Chance G. Jennings**
Marines
2019-2022



Maj. Charles E. McGinnis
Marine Corps
1969-1991



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Sgt. Robert
(Bob) Rinehart

Marines

1962-1966

Vietnam



Cpl. Eddie Wise

Marines

1956-1958

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UNITED STATES NAVY



E7 Donald E. Bartlett
Navy
1953-1975
Korea and Vietnam



Storekeeper Third Class John L. Knaus
Navy
1944-1946
World War II, South Pacific




E7 Bruce Meyer
Navy 1972-1994
Vietnam



Gunner's Mate Paul M. Kellner Jr.
Navy
1963-1968
Vietnam



Petty Officer 1st Class Kathy McGinnis
Navy
1977-1987



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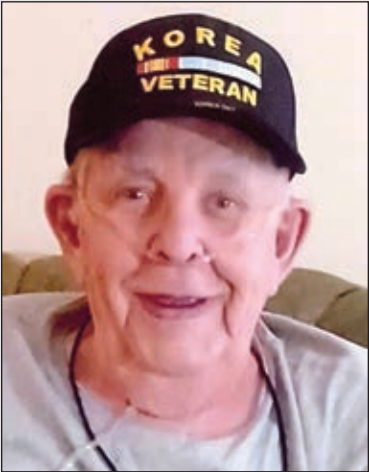
UNITED STATES NAVY



**Petty Officer 1st Class
William G. Moss**
Navy
1962-1969
Vietnam and Cold War



Pvt. Bill O'Neill
Navy and Marines
1947-1952
Korea



CS2 Melvin Poundstone
Navy
1950-1954
Korea



**Gunners Mate
Charles W. Sanders**
Navy
1942-1945
World War II



Tech. Scot D. Schultz
Navy
1984-1987

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UNITED STATES NAVY



David A. Street
PM2 Navy
Staff Sgt. Army
1952-1999
Korea



Yeoman 2nd Class
Charles Ziegelbein
Navy
1964-1967



E4 Jeremiah J.M. Young
Navy
1995-1999
Desert Storm

“INVICTUS”



OUT OF THE NIGHT THAT COVERS ME,
BLACK AS THE PIT FROM POLE TO POLE,
I THANK WHATEVER GODS MAY BE
FOR MY UNCONQUERABLE SOUL.
IN THE FELL CLUTCH OF CIRCUMSTANCE
I HAVE NOT WINCED NOR CRIED ALOUD.
UNDER THE BLUDGEONINGS OF CHANCE
MY HEAD IS BLOODY, BUT UNBOWED.
BEYOND THIS PLACE OF WRATH AND TEARS
LOOMS BUT THE HORROR OF THE SHADE,
AND YET THE MENACE OF THE YEARS
FINDS AND SHALL FIND ME UNAFRAID.
IT MATTERS NOT HOW STRAIT THE GATE,
HOW CHARGED WITH PUNISHMENTS THE SCROLL,
I AM THE MASTER OF MY FATE
I AM THE CAPTAIN OF MY SOUL.

BY WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

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